

MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS AT BRAINTREE

Agenda Item 5e

Portfolio Area: Efficiency and Resources
Report Presented by: Cllr Michael Lager

Background Papers: Organisational Development to meet Tomorrow's needs report to May Cabinet.

Options:

1. To designate suitable funded current and future vacancies as modern apprenticeship opportunities (currently there are 2 vacant and funded clerical officer posts in Exchequer – one 37hrs per week and the other 27.5 hours)
2. To split the above into 2 or 3 modern apprenticeship opportunities per vacant post
3. To create 6 new modern apprenticeships for the Council.

Risks: Set out in the report

Executive Summary

This report follows on from the Chief Executives report on Organisational Development presented at the May Cabinet.

This paper sets out proposals for increasing the number of modern apprenticeships at the Council by 6 – from the existing 4 to 10.

Decision

To agree option 1, 2 or 3 set out above.

Corporate Implications			
Financial:	Options 1 and 2 within existing budgets. Option 3 a cost of £29 640 in year 1 and £35 880 in year 2.		
Legal:	N/a		
Equalities & Diversity:	Set out in the report		
Customer Impact:	N/a		
Environment & Climate Change:	N/a		
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Local Committees		Partners
	Public		Staff
Key Decision:	No		
Public/Private Report:	Public		
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Appendix 1

Apprenticeships on offer

Main Heading	Apprenticeships available
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	Agricultural crops & Livestock; Amenity Horticulture; Animal Care; Dry Stone Walling; Environmental Conservation; Equine; Farriery; Fencing; Floristry; Game & Wildlife Management; Land-based service Engineering; Production Horticulture; Veterinary nursing.
Arts, Media and Publishing	Creative; Design; Game Testing; Information and Library services; Photo Imaging for Staff Photographers.
Business Administration and Law	Accounting; Advising on Financial Products; Business and Administration; Contact Centres; Customer Service; Marketing and Communications; Payroll; Providing Financial Services; Retail Motor Industry – Vehicle Sales; Sales and Telesales; Team Leading and Management.
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	Building Services Engineers; Construction; Electrical and Electronic Servicing; Electrotechnical; Heating, Ventilating, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration; Plumbing; Set Crafts; Surveying; Trees and Timber.
Education and Training	Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools; Learning and Development/Direct Training and Support.
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	Apparel; Building Products Occupations; Ceramics; Coating Operations; Driving Goods Vehicles; Electricity Industry; Engineering; Engineering Construction; Engineering Technology; Extractive and Mineral Processing Operations; Food Manufacture; Footwear and Leather goods; Furniture, Furnishings and Interiors Industry; Gas Industry; Gas Network Operations; Glass Industry Occupations; Industrial Applications; Marine Industry; Metal Processing; Nuclear Decommissioning; Passenger Carrying Vehicle Driving – Bus and Coach; Polymer Processing Operations; Print and Printed Packaging; Process Technology; Rail Transport Engineering; Rail Transport Operations; Retail Motor Industry-Roadside Assistance and Recovery; Retail Motor Industry-Vehicle Body and Paint Operations; Retail Motor Industry-Vehicle Fitting; Retail Motor Industry-Vehicle Maintenance and Repair; Retail Motor Industry-Vehicle Parts Operation; Saddlery; Sea Fishing; Sign Making; Specialised Process Operations (Nuclear); Textile; Traffic Office; Transport Engineering and Maintenance; Water Industry.
Health, Public Service and Care	Advice and Guidance; Children’s Care, Learning and Development; Community Development; Community Justice; Dental Nursing; Emergency Fire Service Operations; Health and Social Care; Housing; Laboratory Technicians; Optical; Pharmacy Technicians and Assistants;

Appendix 1

	Security; Youth Work.
Main Heading	Apprenticeships available
Information and Communication Technology	IT and Telecoms Professionals; IT Users; IT Professional.
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	Active Leisure and Learning; Aviation Operations on the Ground; Cabin Crew; Sporting Excellence; Travel and Tourism Services.
Retail and Commercial Enterprise	Barbering; Beauty and Therapy; Cleaning and Support Services; Hairdressing; Hospitality and Catering; Mail Services; Nail Services; Property Services; Purchasing and Supply Management; Retail; Spa Therapy; Warehousing and Storage.

Modern Apprenticeships

A Modern Apprenticeship is a scheme that is available for people aged 16 and over. They get paid a minimum sum of £80 per week and usually attend college once a week, for the whole day, where they have the support of a tutor.

The aim of a Modern Apprenticeship, for the student, is to provide experience in a working environment, where they can gain a qualification (NVQ) that is practical as well as academic. Current examples are Business Administration, Customer Services and IT. This can be achieved in a variety of different job roles.

For the employer, it gives a chance to train the apprentice in the way that they wish, including style of work and processes to follow etc. It can also give support to other members of staff and if they want to offer a full time job at the end of the apprenticeship, it can help to reduce employee turn over.

Further opportunities: The student has the opportunity to gain their Maths and English Key Skills to a minimum of level 2, possible IT qualifications such as; CLAIT, BCS or their ECDL can also be available.

The structure of learning for a Modern Apprenticeship involves the student completing a number of modules. A few are mandatory while others can be selected from a wide range that can be applied in a more specific way to the job role. There are two sections to each module; one involving knowledge and the other is the gathering of evidence showing the student's capability from work done and the observation of colleagues and the tutor.

In my personal experience the Modern Apprenticeship scheme is an excellent and innovative way to enter the working world. It provides all the support needed and the extra training that can be received at the college is exceptional. The extra training can be used well in an environment such as Braintree District Council (BDC). The overall apprenticeship scheme, I personally found beneficial. It trains the student in working as a team and independently, and is very adaptable.

When taking on an apprentice it is important that you are willing to invest the time needed in them. This involves training them, providing enough work for them in a steady flow, being able to support their college work, but also treating them as a member of the team and not an 'add on'. The employer ends up with a valuable member of staff for their organisation and the student has the advantage of qualifications and experience for the job market, if necessary.

MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS AT BRAINTREE

What is an Apprenticeship?

An Apprenticeship is a blend of on and off-the job training that provides the individual with the skills they need for their chosen career, while earning a wage. The Apprenticeship is made up of a Technical Certificate, NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) and Key Skills as follows:

Technical Certificate

The Technical Certificate provides the underpinning theoretical knowledge that supports the NVQ. This usually takes place one day a week at a college.

NVQ

The NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) is the main part of the Apprenticeship and is made up of between 6 & 8 units.

Throughout the course the apprentice and their Assessor will collect evidence to prove knowledge and experience of the job and the specific client needs.

Key Skills

The Key Skills Certificates include Communication (English) and Application of Number (Maths) and provide the apprentice with skills relevant to their chosen career.

Who is an Apprenticeship for?

Anyone living in England who has yet to achieve a university degree can take an Apprenticeship. In 2007 the upper age limit was removed, so Apprenticeships are now available to everyone over the age of 16. This includes an adult apprentice scheme for those aged 25+. The requirements, payments and terms and conditions remain the same.

Who can take on an Apprentice?

Anyone can hire an apprentice. Apprenticeships are tailored to meet the specific needs of companies of all sizes and sectors.

How long does an Apprenticeship take?

There is no set time to complete an Apprenticeship as they vary widely in content and size. The length of time taken will depend on the ability of the individual apprentice and the employer's requirements. On average a modern apprenticeship to NVQ Level 2 should take the individual approximately 6 – 12

months to complete and to level 3, 12 – 18 months. Sometimes longer. Apprentices would either attend Braintree 4 days a week and attend college on the 5th or on the 5th day, have a training day arranged through the provider in the workplace.

What happens when the apprenticeship is completed?

Apprenticeships have the opportunity to apply for posts within the organisation. Otherwise the training and excellent work experience they have received will equip them for employment in other organisations.

What's involved for the employer?

- Braintree identifies the vacancies. This could be existing vacancies or the Council can create a role specifically for an Apprenticeship.
- Braintree will work with the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) to identify if the vacancy has an Apprenticeship framework. Example frameworks are attached at Appendix 1.
- The NAS will guide the Council in the selection of a training provider who can most appropriately deliver the Apprenticeship for the organisation. This could be through a local provider/partnership but could also be a provider outside the area. Many providers are now looking to provide training in-house so that the evidence provided for the NVQ is based in 'real work' rather than in simulation.
- The Council will ensure there is a suitable mentor in place for all apprentices and that all services are aware of the level the apprentice needs to be working at in order to develop their skills and meet their needs, those of the service and the organisation.
- The employment can be for a fixed term of the Apprenticeship i.e. 2 years

What is the NAS?

The NAS was established in April this year and will work with employers to bring a significant growth in the number of Apprenticeships on offer.

NAS will provide a system where the Council can advertise apprenticeship vacancies to a wide range of interested applicants through a user-friendly, web based service. The service will bring Braintree together with potential Apprentices in a simple, quick and effective way.

What are the benefits for Braintree?

The benefits for Braintree include:

- Engaging with young people to begin a career in Local Government – links with the Council's priority to improve basic skills levels and vocational training opportunities in the District. As the largest employer in the District we have to demonstrate our fundamental commitment to this.
- Links to Braintree's priority to support our communities by being a regeneration ambassador in the District and ensuring all young people have the same outcomes and life chances
- Modern Apprenticeships demonstrate the organisations commitment to learning and development both internally and in the community. Developing the talent of young people will enable us to reflect the diversity of our District and consequently, be better placed to deliver services that meet the diverse needs of our customers.
- Apprenticeships enable the Council to invest in the future of the business.
- Apprentices can make the organisation more effective, productive and competitive by addressing skills gaps directly.
- Apprentices, through receiving relevant training, can have an immediate effect and make a real and more meaningful contribution to the business
- Improved talent recruitment and retention
- Apprentices are usually motivated and keen to learn. Their enthusiasm can also invigorate other staff members, which leads to improved productivity.
- The appointment of apprentices helps to address the age profile for work force planning
- Increased partnership working with providers

Current position

Braintree currently has 3 modern apprenticeships in IT and Customer Services, community Safety and Corporate Policy and Partnerships. There has also been a successful carry forward bid for a further modern apprenticeship in Human Resources.

The apprentices are on a two-year scheme, which develops the apprentice through the Foundation (NVQ Level 2) modern apprenticeship route and then on to the Advanced (NVQ Level 3) route.

As part of the programme the apprentices also form a resource pool which can be utilised across the whole organisation. This ensures that the

apprentice can maximise their knowledge and understanding of the Council and the services it provides.

Apprentices can apply for any internal vacancies in the organisation during the course of their apprenticeship.

Feedback from our existing apprentices has been extremely favourable as has the comments of their Managers and the extent of their involvement in the business and their contribution to it. A report from our apprentice in IT and Customer services is attached for interest at Appendix 2.

Proposal

It is proposed that the Council create a further 6 apprenticeships to tie in with the forthcoming end of the school year. This will bring the total to 10.

Options

1. To designate suitable funded current and future vacancies as modern apprenticeship opportunities
2. To split the above into 2 or 3 Modern Apprenticeship opportunities per vacant post
3. To create 6 new apprenticeship opportunities

Financial Implications

1. Within existing budgets
2. Within existing budgets
3. 6 apprentices Year 1 (NVQ Level 2) Year 1
 $6 \times (£95^* \times 52) = £29\,640$

6 apprentices Year 2 (NVQ Level 3) Year 2
 $6 \times (£115^{**} \times 52) = £35\,880$

*The employer will be responsible for paying the salary of the apprentice. All employed apprentices must receive a wage of no less than £95 per week.

** It is suggested that the Council raised this to £115 per week in the second year – although this is not a requirement of the modern apprenticeship scheme itself and therefore is optional.

Currently there is no funding allocated corporately for modern apprenticeships. Members are requested to consider funding the 6 new apprenticeships from balances or from underspends in the current year.

The Learning Skills Council (LSC) will fund all the framework training delivery costs.

Other possible sources of funding

Essex County Council are currently engaged in a major programme geared to creating circa 400 apprenticeships in the County. 120 of these will be in the Engineering and Manufacturing Industry. Another 300 apprenticeships will be in different sectors. The Essex Strategic HR partnership is linking in with ECC and will explore any opportunity for some shared working/funding.

More recently the East of England People Development Network have requested that EERA (East of England Regional Assembly) investigate the possibility of utilising the Future Jobs Fund for modern apprenticeships. This is a fund of £1 billion to support the creation of jobs for long term unemployed young people and to assist the Government's guarantee of a job or training place to all 18 – 24 year olds in Britain at risk of becoming long-term unemployed. There may be potential here.

Apprenticeships have also been identified as a priority theme for the Heads of HR across the region and Improvement East have identified this area as a priority for IE funding.

However, it must be said that if we wish to tie our recruitment of modern apprentices to the end of the current school year, it will not be possible to wait for the outcome of the above. Rather we should start reasonably conservatively and build from there, accessing funding wherever possible.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

To increase opportunities for all young people to ensure they have the same outcomes and life chances. To improve diversity in the workforce.

Risks

- Not seen to be addressing skills gaps.
- Failure to support our Community
- Failure to improve basic skills levels and vocational training opportunities in the District

Recommendations

To agree either option 1, 2 or 3 below

1. To designate suitable funded current and future vacancies as modern apprenticeship opportunities and/or
2. To split the above into 2 or 3 Modern Apprenticeship opportunities per vacant post
3. To create 6 new modern apprenticeship opportunities.