

## EMPLOYMENT AND APPEALS COMMITTEE

15 November 2022

### APPRENTICESHIPS

#### Report of the Strategic Director for Resources

Strategic Aim:	A modern and effective Council	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Cllr K Payne, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Performance, Change and Transformation	
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Ward Councillors		

#### DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

1. Notes the progress of our Apprenticeship programme and current position.

## 1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 In February and July 2021, the Employment and Appeals Committee approved an Apprenticeship Strategy for the Council. Members are updated of our progress by this report.

## 2 APPRENTICESHIP LEVY AND PUBLIC SECTOR APPRENTICESHIP TARGET

- 2.1 The Apprenticeship Levy and Public Sector Apprenticeship Target placed a 'target' on prescribed groups and public sector bodies with 250 or more staff, to employ at least 2.3% of their staff as new apprentice starts each year.
- 2.2 However, the target came to an end on 31 March 2022 although public sector employers are asked to continue to gather and report on new apprenticeship starts and total number of apprentices.

### **3 UPDATE ON OUR STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

- 3.1 Members have been supportive of the Strategy in that it reflects Rutland's context as an employer. Over the past year, we have also provided updates on the challenges of recruitment and retention and the complexities of the job market that have emerged since the pandemic.
- 3.2 By way of recap of our Vision as outlined in the Strategy:
- To deliver an Apprenticeship programme that is available to individuals from all ages, from those who have limited or no work experience/qualifications to those wanting a career change.
  - To embed Apprenticeships within the workforce and as an integral part of local workforce planning.
  - Apprenticeships to be recognised across the organisation as a highly effective means for us to build our pipeline of skills and future talent.
- 3.3 As the past year has progressed, it became clear that the actions identified began to be more challenging - a combination of changes/turnover within the HR team that has hampered our ability to drive forward the actions, prioritisation of HR input into our evolving Ways of Working, and emerging recruitment and retention issues on a scale that we had not anticipated. This has regrettably had a detrimental impact on our ability to achieve as much as we had hoped.
- 3.4 Our ethos has always been about quality and outputs rather than chasing 'numbers'. It is important therefore to reflect on what we have been able to achieve and then reset our goals going forward.
- 3.5 What we have been able to do:
- Apply a level of scrutiny of vacancies across the organisation. We continue to ask the question and will continue to pursue pro-active support to recruiting managers.
  - Promote the use of apprentices as qualification/professional development for existing staff. See para 4.1 below for a schedule of existing Apprentices standards being supported.

### **4 OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

- 4.1 The range of Apprentice programmes that we have supported has been wide ranging:

IT Application Specialist Level 2	IT Solutions Technical Level 3
Level 3 Advanced Health and Social Care	Level 2 Intermediate Health and Social Care
Level 2 Business Admin	Level 3 Business Admin
Public Service Operational Delivery Officer	Lead Adult Care Worker Level 3
Adult Care Worker Level 2	Adult Care Level 5
Social Worker Level 6	Chartered Surveyor Level 6
HR Consultant Partner Level 5	Accounting Taxation Level 7
Children Services Data Analyst	Team Leader/Supervisor Level 3

Creative Digital Design Level 6	Operations/Department Manager Level 5
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4.2 Our level of success has varied – with some staff not able to complete the programme or found it not as expected/too challenging.

4.3 As previously reported, some of our Apprentices struggled during 2020 and 2021 as the working environment shifted in response to the pandemic and they sought to pursue their career elsewhere. Currently we have two employees in **Apprenticeship positions**:

- IT Solutions Apprentice (IT)
- Design Officer (Learning and Skills – Virtual School) – this individual joined us in July 2021 on the Kick Start programme.

4.4 In addition, we have had the following success where individuals joining us as an Apprentice have gone onto other roles with the Council:

- Exams and Marketing Administrator - started as a RALS Business Administration Apprentice
- Trainee Planning Officer – commenced her time with Rutland as a Planning Support Apprentice and is now continuing her planning career and pursuing a Degree course as a Town Planner
- ICT Support Officer – progressed from ICT Apprentice to Assistant ICT Support Officer then to Support Assistant and now Support Officer
- Information Governance Support Officer – commenced employment with Rutland as a Business Administration Apprentice – has progressed his career in Administration and then promoted to Information Governance Support in January 2022

4.5 Most of our programmes are followed as **Apprenticeship standards** rather than Apprenticeship posts. Again, this is a good outcome and reflects the range and level of support we provide to staff as part of their development and growth and pursuit of further qualifications – see para 4.1. Our current active programmes are:

- Chartered Surveyor Level 6 – 2 employees
- Adult Care Worker Level 2 – 3 employees
- Social Worker Degree Level 6 – 3 employees
- HR Consultant Partner – 1 employee
- Children Services Data Analyst – 1 employee
- Adult Care Level 5 – 2 employees
- Town Planner – 1 employee

**TOTAL - 13**

## **5 NEXT STEPS**

5.1 We will continue, through our interaction with recruiting managers, to promote and encourage Apprenticeship roles wherever possible to develop our pipeline of 'trainees' into the organisation.

- 5.2 Support existing staff to pursue an Apprenticeship standard qualification as part of their ongoing development and growth.
- 5.3 Share and promote our good news stories through case studies and briefings across the organisation to demonstrate the success and benefit of both Apprenticeship posts and Apprenticeship standard qualifications.
- 5.4 Monitor and support the progress of existing learners to help them reach their goals and aspirations – and again showcase their positive experience.

Some recent feedback:

- “A is getting on really well. He has made links with a number of services and project at RCC and has always produced good work for them, correcting work when required and making changes when needed to. In terms of the course he is clearly enjoying it and says he is learning a lot. A met with his tutor in the first term and reported that his tutors seem very happy with how is getting on.”
  - “I have had quarterly meetings with B’s mentor on the course and she has been delighted with his progress. One of the projects he needs to complete will have real-life benefits for Rutland, in the form of more advanced analysis of certain aspects of children’s social care. He also has a formal exam coming up in a couple of weeks’ time and we have agreed study days as part of this. In this case I think our apprenticeship levy money has been well spent!”
  - “C has passed all her year one exams on the apprenticeship and will pass onto year 2 with no overhangs – her last two modules achieving 67% technology and 76% construction which we understand gives her a credit level grade.”
  - “D is doing extremely well on the course at the last academic review she was on target and had passed all assignments to date and attendance was 100%. We have another academic review in the next couple of weeks. She has just completed her first year placement and has passed she has now started her second year attending university.”
- 5.5 We will also keep a watching brief on the development of T Levels and look at opportunities to support students with work experience in the Council.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 None required.

## **7 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 7.1 To not pursue Apprenticeship roles and qualifications. However, as paragraph 4, the Council considers, and has experienced the benefits of Apprenticeship roles and qualifications.

## **8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Not applicable in relation to this paper which is provided as an update and current position statement. Funds for Apprenticeship courses are funded through the

Apprenticeship Levy.

## **9 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

9.1 None.

## **10 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) has not been completed because there are no risks to the rights and freedoms of natural persons.

## **11 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

11.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has not been completed as there are no equality issues arising from this paper.

## **12 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 None

## **13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 None

## **14 ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 Human Resource implications – the provision of Apprenticeship roles and qualifications is a key part of the development of our workforce.

## **15 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

15.1 There are no further recommendations arising from this report.

15.2 Whilst the Government has now ceased the Apprenticeship Target, the Council remains committed to Apprenticeship roles and supporting staff with Apprenticeship standard qualifications as a vital part of the development of our workforce.

## **16 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 There are no additional background papers to the report.

## **17 APPENDICES**

17.1 None.

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.