

# The Apprenticeship Levy: Responding to the Challenge

| Challenge  | Response   |
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| Lack of knowledge regarding Apprenticeships / lack of resource within the organisation                                   | <p>Recruitment of an experienced Apprenticeship Lead / Project Manager on an 18 month fixed term contact. Purpose:</p> <p>To develop and maintain new strategies, policies and procedures for the Council in order to comply with the new apprenticeship levy rules and work towards the public sector apprenticeship target.</p> <p>To make effective use of the funding available to develop and up skill new apprentices and existing employees through apprenticeship training.</p>  |
| Buy in from Senior Management  | <p>Promotion of benefits to CEX and members. Confirmation of three strategic priorities as detailed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Employee centred approach - Apprenticeship training to be used to up-skill or re-skill existing staff. This will involve identifying employees wanting to progress in their careers, or to change roles. It will create opportunities for shadowing and drop in sessions to experience other areas, and may lead to a possible reduction in existing service training budgets, where exiting qualification training could be replaced with apprenticeships (e.g. CIPD and AAT qualifications).</li> <li>2. Outward facing approach/ social responsibility. With this, managers will identify suitable roles, posts will be advertised as apprenticeships (possibly on lower grades until qualified), and specific groups will be targeted by working with schools, charities and social care. Additional support will be needed in the work place to implement this approach.</li> <li>3. Succession planning approach. This focuses on hard to recruit posts and other areas suitable for succession planning. It will use apprenticeship training to allow existing employees to gain appropriate levels of experience and qualifications in order to gain promotion.</li> </ol> <p>Apprenticeships feature in WBC workforce strategy</p> |
| Perception of Apprenticeships e.g. for school leavers, low level qualifications, underpaid, change of contract required. | <p>Re-educated the workforce i.e. all ages, levels 2-7, new recruits and existing staff. Manager and employee guides produced, presentations given at team meetings, Q &amp; A sessions held for specific Apprenticeship programmes. Regular updates sent to all tier 4 managers and heads of service regarding newly released standards and available opportunities. Consideration currently being given to the term 'Apprenticeship'. Is this putting people off applying for roles and would 'trainee' attract more applicants? Age Appropriate minimum wage paid as a minimum for new recruits rather than the Apprenticeship wage and all roles evaluated. Information on Intranet.</p>   |

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| Communication with / take up from Schools   | Attendance at quarterly Schools Business Manager meetings with updates re: Apprenticeships and available opportunities. Quarterly schools newsletter includes Apprenticeship section. Presentations given at heads funding meetings. One to one meetings with Business managers and/or school heads where required to give advice and guidance on the recruitment of an apprentice and/or suitable apprenticeship standards.   |
| Suitability of programmes and/or standards not ready for delivery despite demand. | Worked with services to identify existing training needs then investigated possible ways in which these could be achieved via an apprenticeship. Having identified suitable options, negotiated with training providers regarding the possibility of running accredited qualifications in line with the delivery of apprenticeship standards. ILM management for example is currently being delivered in parallel with the Management Standard and our ASC provider include the Care Certificate and Diploma as part of a structured training programme. |
| Quality of Training providers/ training provision.                                | Don't rely on one provider and don't assume that they will all provide the same service. An apprenticeship standard can be delivered in a number of different ways. Negotiate and challenge. Ask questions about cost, quality, delivery, achievement rates, customer satisfaction and so on. Don't be afraid to ask for what you need. Don't be afraid to challenge where there are quality issues and even cease using a provider if necessary.  |
| Requirement for 20% off the job training whilst experiencing budget restrictions  | Dispelled the myth regarding 20% off the job training. Details regarding appropriate activities produced and benefits of apprenticeships promoted including increased knowledge and productivity (quotes obtained from managers).  |
| Requirement for Maths and English   | This has put several people off from applying, particularly those who left school a while ago and are unable to provide evidence of achievement. Support provided where required and reassurance given. Example exam papers provided to confirm level of knowledge/skill required.   |
| Procurement   | Worked in partnership with other Local Authorities (Framework v DPS) and reviewed current WBC procurement process in terms of suitability for Apprenticeships. Process simplified in order to reduce time delays.  |
| Numerous Contracts, agreements etc. issued by training providers                  | Standard templates produced and issued to all providers. These have been accepted by the majority and have saved time and effort in terms of review and consultation with the legal team.  |
| How to allocate funds fairly  | There is currently no limit on spend. Should we run short of funds however, all applications will be assessed in accordance with the school development plan/council strategy/service plan.  |

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