



**EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT COVER SHEET**

<b>Title of Report:</b>	Apprenticeship update – May 2023 reporting	To be marked with an 'X' by Democratic Services after report has been presented
<b>Meeting of:</b>	Corporate Management Team 24 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	X
	Pre Cabinet 1 June 2023	X
	Leader's / Leader of the Opposition's Advisory Group 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2023/14 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	X
	Cabinet 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	
	Scrutiny Audit and Value for Money Council Services Committee n/a / Scrutiny Community Regeneration, Environment and Health and Well Being Committee n/a	



<b>Is this an Executive Decision:</b>	NO	<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	NO
<b>Is this in the Forward Plan:</b>	NO	<b>Is the Report Confidential:</b>	NO
<b>If so, please state relevant paragraph from Schedule 12A LGA 1972:</b>	n/a		

**Essential Signatories:**

**ALL REPORTS MUST BE IN THE NAME OF A HEAD OF SERVICE**

Monitoring Officer: **John Teasdale**

Date Signature .....

Chief Finance Officer: **Sal Khan**

Date Signature .....

**EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Report to Cabinet**

**Date: 26 June 2023**

**REPORT TITLE:** Apprenticeship update – May 2022 reporting  
**PORTFOLIO:** Andy O'Brien  
**HEAD OF SERVICE:** Andy O'Brien  
**CONTACT OFFICER:** Linda McDonald Ext. No. x1577  
**WARD(S) AFFECTED:** n/a

**1. Purpose of the Report**

1.1. To provide an update on ESBC progress against the apprenticeship target for public bodies.

**2. Background**

2.1. A public sector apprenticeships target was introduced by the government in April 2017 that set out a target for those public sector employers of over 250 employees (headcount) to employ an average of 2.3% of their headcount (not FTE) as new apprentice starts between 1 April 2017 and March 2021. A new target was set for 2021/22, remaining as apprenticeship starts equivalent to 2.3% of headcount, but removing the need to have achieved an average across a four year period.

2.2. We are required to report on our progress towards meeting the target annually, including no. employees, new starters and new apprenticeship starts. This was by 30<sup>th</sup> September each year.

2.4. From 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 the public sector apprenticeships target came to an end but there is a continued expectation that the public sector will continue increasing its commitment and focus on apprenticeships. However, we are still required to gather and report relevant apprenticeship data and report this for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

2.5. The reporting date has been moved forward to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023.

2.5 From 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017 we have been required to pay the apprenticeship levy, at 0.5% of our pay bill. This levy provides payment for tuition costs for apprenticeships, it is topped up by an additional 10% from the Government.

2.6 Apprenticeships must be for a duration of 12+ months; minimum of 30 hours per week; and spend 6 hours per week learning; be studying for an appropriate qualification.

### 3. Contribution to Corporate Priorities

3.1 There is no Corporate Priority as such since this is an update on progress to achieve a legislative requirement. Our approach in working towards achieving this target has been consistent with the Corporate Priority to deliver Value for Money Council Services.

### 4. Report

4.1 Progress in meeting previous target:

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Headcount at 31/3	354	346	270	270	265
Target	8	8 +2cf	6 + 6cf	6+5 cf	6
New apprentice starts	6 (3 new, 3 existing staff)	4 new	7 (5 new, 2 existing staff)	2 (existing staff)	3 (2 new, 1 existing staff)

4.2 As at 31 March 2023:

- Our headcount was **250** employees (not including casuals). Full time equivalent number was 226.
- The total number of new starters on the establishment was **25**. None of these were new apprentices. A list of these posts recruited is provided at appendix 1.
- The total new apprentice starts for 2022/23 is **4**. These were all existing staff, previous apprentices, continuing in their development and career at ESBC.

4.3 2022/23 continued the ongoing challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Council has responded exceptionally well in continuing to provide existing and new services to the public, but it continues to be very challenging to bring in new apprentices for the following reasons:

- Unsuitability of vacant posts to be advertised as apprenticeships
- The increased homeworking has brought with it difficulties in supervising and training new apprentices, whilst there has been increased office working from the latter part of 2021 this has not returned to pre-pandemic levels;

4.4 In the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 the number of new apprentices was 4, (up from 3 in the previous year) These were for the following qualifications:

- 2 x Professional Accounting/Taxation Technician Level 4 (FMU)
- Construction Technical Professional Building Control Level 6
- Chartered Town Planner Level 7

You will notice that 2 of the above qualifications are new apprenticeship professional qualifications.

- 4.5 The majority of apprenticeships (all except level 2) are programmes lasting over 1 year. During this year we continued to support 4 existing apprenticeships studying the following qualifications from previous years new starts:
- 2 x AAT Level 3 (FMU; HR & Payments)
  - 1 x Revenues, Welfare & Benefits Practitioner Level 4 (Revenues, Benefits & Customer Contacts)
  - 1 x Paralegal Level 3 (Legal)- completed January 2023
- 4.6 These are high quality apprenticeships and we have shown our long term commitment to these apprentices, as all of those beginning new apprenticeships this year are from previous cohorts. Since the apprentice scheme began, 9 colleagues who started with the Council as new apprentices are continuing in their career at ESBC. In January 2023, West Midlands Employers showcased one of our apprentices who is studying the Chartered Town Planner Level 7 qualification, in the regional promotion during National Apprenticeship week, and also featured in the Local Government Career Guide
- 4.7 We have engaged with the following providers to deliver apprenticeships during 2022/23:
- Burton and South Derbyshire College
  - IRRV
  - Solihull College and University
  - CILEX
  - Sheffield Hallam University
- 4.8 In 2022-23 the number of new starters (all staff, not including casuals or internal movers) was 25. This is the same as 2021/22. None of these were new apprenticeships.
- 4.9 We consider apprenticeships when looking at all vacancies. At recruitment authorisation stage we ask Managers to consider the suitability of the vacancy for an apprenticeship and this is included in the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Guidance for managers. HR staff supporting recruitment also discuss the potential of apprenticeships with recruiting managers. The majority of the roles were unsuitable to be apprenticeships. This was for the following reasons:
- insufficient hours;
  - duration of less than 12 months;
  - due to the nature of the job role, either require: an already qualified professional and/or senior officer;

- manual work that does not require any qualification or lengthy training;
- no apprenticeship qualification available.

4.10 The performance review process outlines annual requirements for learning and development and any needs are looked through the prism of apprenticeships. More professional qualifications are becoming available now, and we have made engaged with the new Building Control Surveying Level 6 and Chartered Town Planning Degree Level 7 qualifications. A new apprenticeship in Arboriculture is being planned for expected September 2023 start. We are also exploring potential opportunities for new apprentices in the Licensing and Regeneration teams.

4.11 In addition to apprenticeships, we support colleagues to achieve other qualifications through the post entry training route. This is in addition to supporting colleagues to achieve full Membership status of their professional qualifications i.e. MRTPI (Planning) and CIEH Professional Examinations (Environmental Health). In 2022/23 this included the following qualifications (some ongoing):

- MSc Planning and Urban Leadership
- MSc Architectural Technology & Design
- MSc Environmental Health
- IRRV Level 3 Certificate in Revenues & Benefits

4.12 Other than items B; C; and D; it is not clear what information we are being asked to report on by the new date of 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023 for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. The following data has been prepared as previous reports, readiness:

- A. No. employees working on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 = 252
- B. No. employees working on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 = 250
- C. No. new employees (new starters) in period = 25
- D. No. new apprentice starts in the period = 4
- E. No. apprentices working on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 = 4
- F. No. apprentices working on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 = 4
- G. No. new apprentices (all new apprentice agreements) = 4
- H. Full time equivalent employees at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 (optional) = 226
- I. Proportion of apprentice starts as a proportion of new employee starts = 0%
- J. Proportion of total headcount that were apprentices on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 = 1.59%
- K. Proportion of apprentice starts between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 as a proportion of total headcount on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 = 1.60%

## 5. **Financial Considerations**

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Financial Management Unit: Lisa Turner – Chief Accountant Officer*

5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5.2 We paid £27,118 into our levy account during 2022/23, including the government 10% top up this was £29,807 and used £21,715 of our levy funds to pay for apprentice training during this period. Levy funds are available to fund courses, for this years continued apprentices and additional projected new starts. We have a credit balance of £22,824 unused levy funds available to spend at time of writing (11<sup>th</sup> May 2023). Utilising the apprenticeship levy funding to support training and development has resulted in less demand against the Corporate Training Budget during this period and this has been reflected within the Outturn report.

## **6. Risk Assessment and Management**

6.1 The main risks to this Report and the Council achieving its objectives are:

6.2 **Positive** (Opportunities/Benefits):

6.1.1 Provision of high quality apprenticeships and long term commitment to those apprenticeships that have started.

6.1.2 Utilisation of higher level apprenticeship opportunities in support of skills development in hard to recruit areas such as financial management.

6.1.3 The opportunity to use the levy funds for staff development, e.g. AAT courses, Chartered Town Planning, and Arboriculture.

6.3 **Negative** (Threats):

6.1.4 Lack of suitable vacancies and readiness of apprenticeship standards in order to create opportunities as an alternative to post entry training, limits ability to use levy for professional qualification training versus funding post entry training.

6.1.5 Covid-19 has affected the ability to support new learners in the workplace with the right level of supervision and training whilst homeworking.

6.1.6 Manager experience of some apprentice programmes can be a deterrent when considering potential new opportunities.

6.4 The risks do not need to be entered in the Risk Register.

## **7. Legal Considerations**

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Legal Team:  
John Teasdale – Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer.*

7.1 The main legal issues arising from this Report are as follows.

7.2 This progress Report, including narrative about the target set by Government for Apprenticeships, meets the requirements of 'The Public Sector Apprenticeship Targets Regulations 2017' and the 'Apprenticeships (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2017'.

## **8 Data Protection Implications – Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)**

8.1. A DPIA must be completed where there are plans to:

- use systematic and extensive profiling with significant effects;
- process special category or criminal offence data on a large scale; or
- systematically monitor publicly accessible places on a large scale
- use new technologies;
- use profiling or special category data to decide on access to services;
- profile individuals on a large scale;
- process biometric data;
- process genetic data;
- match data or combine datasets from different sources;
- collect personal data from a source other than the individual without providing them with a privacy notice ('invisible processing');
- track individuals' location or behaviour;
- profile children or target marketing or online services at them; or
- process data that might endanger the individual's physical health or safety in the event of a security breach

8.2 Following consideration of the above, there are no Data Protection implications arising from this report which would require a DPIA.

## 9 **Equalities and Health**

8.1 **Equality impacts:** The subject of this Report is not a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.

8.2 **Health impacts:** The outcome of the health screening question does not require a full Health Impact Assessment to be completed. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.

## 10 **Human Rights**

9.1 There are no Human Rights issues arising from this Report.

## 11 **Sustainability** (including climate change and change adaptation measures)

10.1 Does the proposal result in an overall positive effect in terms of sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures) N/A

## 12 **Recommendation(s)**

11.1 There are no recommendations, the report is for information purposes.

## 13 **Appendices**

12.1 Appendix 1: New starters spreadsheet