



## **PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE**

### **INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE LEADER**

### **TOPIC – APPRENTICESHIP PARTNERSHIP**

### **PROCEDURAL INFORMATION**

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Chief Operating Officer, the Chief Executive and the Chief Finance Officer are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other relevant overview and scrutiny committee. In addition, all Members are notified.

If five or more Members from those informed so request, the Leader may require the matter to be referred to Cabinet for determination.

### **Contact Officers:**

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### **SUMMARY**

- Winchester City Council has an established and successful Apprenticeship Scheme. By offering a programme of life skills and community projects, it goes beyond what many employers offer in providing opportunities for learning and development. The success of this has been evident, with apprentices progressing on to higher qualifications and being successful in applying for permanent jobs both within the council and externally.
- The Council has benefited from the new skills and perspectives apprentices bring. Through their community projects they have represented the Council whilst having a positive impact on the community. The Council also benefits from the additional resource that apprentices provide, particularly in corporate activities such as Task and Finish groups.
- Other local authorities in Hampshire have expressed an interest in our scheme, and an intention to do something similar with their own apprentices. This has led to the Council forming plans to create a partnership with other district councils in Hampshire to create a joint apprenticeship scheme.

- Through this partnership we can offer an improved experience for the apprentices; they will be part of a larger cohort of apprentices, with whom they can share experiences and advice. They will gain experience of how other councils work by meeting with other apprentices and having opportunities to shadow each other, widening their knowledge of local government and the careers available within the sector. By pooling officer time and financial resources, the partnership will be able to build on our existing scheme and develop a more structured and effective programme of life skills and community challenges.
- As the Government continues to encourage employers to take on apprentices, the number of apprenticeships in Winchester is increasing. Therefore it is essential that the Council ensures its apprenticeship scheme continues to reflect best practice if it is to attract the best candidates and grow a skilled workforce for the future. We cannot compete with the higher salaries of local private sector companies, but we can offer some of the learning and development opportunities that have made apprenticeship schemes like Barclay's so successful.
- By negotiating them jointly, the partnership will be able to make savings on the cost of learning and development sessions. This will reduce the current cost to the Council, through economies of scale. It will also be possible to negotiate with the colleges and learning providers that deliver the apprentices' courses to ensure their services are better tailored to our collective needs and offer best value for money.
- The partnership will be trialled between July 2015 and August 2016. In March 2016 the partnership will be reviewed and a decision taken as to whether to continue beyond this.
- The partnership will be governed by Human Resources representatives from each participating council. As Winchester City Council already has an established and successful Apprenticeship Scheme, the partnership will be coordinated by Winchester during the trial period.
- The Government is reforming apprenticeships, including trialling a new funding mechanism. As these plans become clearer over the next twelve months, the partners will look for ways to enhance and improve the work of the partnership in response. This may include forming stronger links with economic development work and taking a larger role in promoting and facilitating apprenticeships within the local economy.
- Further details about the partnership arrangements are included in the appendix.

## **DECISION**

That the Head of Organisational Development be authorised to enter into a partnership with other councils for the delivery of a joint apprenticeship scheme between July 2015 and August 2016.

## **REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

The Partnership will offer a much richer experience for apprentices across the partner Councils through a more developed programme of life skills sessions and community projects. The Councils will subsequently benefit from having better skilled and experienced workforce. This option enables the Council to make the most efficient use of available resources to continue building on the success of the existing apprenticeship scheme.

Other options have been considered, including continuing to run the scheme ourselves or running a scheme on behalf of other councils. This option was chosen because it offers the best value for money and experience for the apprentices, in addition to being low-risk.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

Approval has been given for the creation of a part time post (3 days/week) to manage our scheme on a 12 month temporary contract. The responsibilities of this post will include coordination of the partnership. This will be paid for from the Council's existing budget for apprenticeships. Over the 12 months the total cost of this post will be approximately £17k. Subject to the post starting in September this will consist of £10k from the 2015/16 budget and £7k from the 2016/17 budget.

Each partner council will contribute £2000 towards a partnership budget that will be used to deliver the life skills programme for the 12 months from September 2015. Winchester City Council will contribute this from the 2015/16 budget for apprenticeships.

## **CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION**

Partner councils, CMT and the Leader have been consulted.

## **FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE**

n/a

**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED**

None.

**DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

n/a

**Approved by: (signature)**

**Date of Decision 28.08.2015**

**Councillor Stephen Godfrey – Leader**

## **Hampshire Apprenticeship Partnership** **Terms of Reference**

### **1. Terms of Reference**

- To coordinate the apprenticeship schemes of each of the partner authorities; with particular regard to learning and development.
- To look for opportunities to promote apprenticeships and share best practice.
- To effectively manage available apprenticeship resources to achieve best value for money.

### **2. Aims and Objectives of the Partnership**

- To give apprentices a broader experience and knowledge base, with the aim of increasing their future employability.
- To create a structured learning and development framework.
- To bring a younger workforce into local government and promote a public sector ethos.
- To provide a 'grow your own' platform at apprenticeship level. This will assist with succession planning and talent management.
- To share resources in a way that enables each council to deliver a well rounded apprenticeship programme.
- To raise the profile of apprenticeships in our districts; leading by example to increase the number of apprenticeships available.
- To improve our ability to recruit apprentices.
- To encourage apprentices to engage with their community through volunteering and 'community challenge' events.
- Where possible to offer opportunities for the skills development and local employment of NEETs.

### 3. Resources:

Council	Current resource (days/week)	Proposed resource (days/week)
Basingstoke	0.5	1
Havant & East Hampshire	1	1.5 (possibly more with a HR apprentice)
Winchester	2	3

Winchester has approval to recruit to a 3 day/week post on a temporary basis. This role will include the individual overseeing the scheme, coordinating the activities of representatives from each Council. It was felt Winchester is best placed to host the coordinating role for the initially as they currently have the most established scheme.

### 4. Budget:

Council	Annual Apprentice Budget (no. of apprentices)	Current Apprentice salary (hourly)	Proposed Apprentice salary (hourly)
Basingstoke	Approx. £86,000 (currently not held centrally) (6)	£4.50	£4.50
Havant	£30,000 (3)	£4.05	£4.64
East Hampshire	£30,000 (3)	£4.05	£4.64
Winchester	£60,000 (6)	£4.64	£4.64

Each Council will contribute £2000 towards the programme of life skills and community challenges.

It is proposed to try and align apprentice salaries across the scheme, to assist in attracting candidates and to enable flexibility between councils as part of the scheme.

Recruiting in July with appointment from September means the apprentice salary spend does not align with the financial year.

### 5. Governance

5.1. In signing up to the partnership, each Council is committing to working in partnership until September 2016.

5.2. In March 2016, the partnership will be reviewed to assess whether to continue and how the scheme could be improved.

5.3. The scheme will be governed by the representatives from each council. They will meet on a monthly basis with the scheme coordinator acting as Chair.

- 5.4. Decisions will be made at the monthly meetings by those present using a majority vote.
- 5.5. If another council wishes to join the partnership this will be considered by the partnership board.
- 5.6. If a Council decides to leave the partnership (e.g. if they have no apprentices) they are still committed to paying the £2000 (referred to in clause 7.1 below).
- 5.7. Expenditure will be monitored at the monthly meetings of the partnership board. If this exceeds the budget (£2000 per council, per year) any further expenditure will need to be decided and paid for upfront.
- 5.8. Coordinator and board to agree procedures for monitoring and evaluation of the partnership and the apprenticeship scheme.
- 5.9. Consistent branding, once agreed by the board, should be used by all partners when promoting the apprenticeship scheme.

## **6. Management**

The following sets out which aspects of the scheme will be managed centrally by the scheme coordinator and which will be managed locally. Each local representative will have responsibility for certain aspects of the scheme, and will work with the scheme coordinator to deliver it.

### **6.1. Central:**

- 6.1.1. To coordinate promotional activities, ensuring consistency in timing and content across the partnership. These activities will be delivered locally.
- 6.1.2. Organise training and a central induction for mentors. This should be an opportunity for the apprentices and mentors to meet and work together.
- 6.1.3. Work with participating authorities to establish a consistent Charter explaining the roles and responsibilities of apprentices, line managers, mentors and Learning and Development/Local apprentice scheme managers.
- 6.1.4. Negotiation with training providers (with local support) to achieve best value for money through economies of scale across the partnership.

6.1.5. Coordinate the recruitment process to ensure consistency in timing and content across the partnership. Recruitment activities will be conducted locally.

6.1.6. Coordinate the overall programme of life skills and community challenge programmes. Individual sessions will be arranged and delivered locally, with apprentices attending sessions at partner councils.

6.1.7. Development of the Apprenticeship Scheme brand.

6.1.8. Ensure consistency in apprentice's contracts across the partnership so that the same conditions concerning the apprenticeship scheme activities apply to all.

6.1.9. To identify opportunities for apprentices to work jointly across the partnership.

6.1.10. To maintain awareness of future changes to apprenticeships and ensure the partnership prepares for these.

## 6.2. Local:

6.2.1. To identify appropriate placements for apprentices within their council.

6.2.2. To liaise with the apprentice's line managers.

6.2.3. To identifying opportunities for local challenges and recruit mentors to support these.

6.2.4. To promote the scheme within their district.

6.2.5. Recruitment and matching of mentors to appropriate apprentices.

6.2.6. Maintain an awareness of apprenticeship opportunities within their local economic boundary, exploring best practice to ensure that the partnership becomes and remains the employer of choice for apprentices.

6.2.7. To host events e.g. life skills events at their council.

6.2.8. To support the work of the central coordinator.



6.2.9. To form personal development plans for each apprentice that takes account of their qualification, experience in the workplace and participation in the life skills programme and community challenges.

6.2.10. To manage local employment and employee relations.

6.2.11. To manage communication regarding individual apprentices between the training provider, line managers and mentors.

6.2.12. To ensure apprentices receive an induction from their line manager.

## **7. Life Skills**

7.1. Each council will contribute £2000 towards the programme of life skills training and community challenges.

7.2. The following were identified as topics that should be included in the life skills programme.

- Financial Management
- Time Management
- Team working day
- Project Management
- Brathay/Community
- Drug awareness
- Customer Service
- Induction
- CV/Job search
- Interview skills
- IT Training
- Diary Management
- Interpersonal/Communications
- E-learning Minute Taking

7.3. These life skills sessions should be delivered at different council premises on a rotating basis. This will give the host council the opportunity to invite other members of staff under 25 where appropriate. On occasions two sessions may be needed if the total number of apprentices is too many for one session.

## **8. Community Challenges**

- 8.1. Apprentices should have the opportunity to take part in several community challenges each year. These should give apprentices the opportunity to plan and organise a way to give back to the community, e.g. raising money or volunteering.
- 8.2. Opportunities for community challenges will be identified on a local level, with the overall timing of activities and any cross-council working coordinated centrally.
- 8.3. Mentors for the challenges will need to be identified on a local level to support the apprentices with the development of their ideas.

## **9. Recruitment**

- 9.1. Identification of placements and writing of job descriptions and person specifications should take place locally. However this should be in consultation with the scheme coordinator to ensure consistency in wording, branding and timing.
- 9.2. The scheme coordinator will manage the timing of recruitment, to ensure that each stage of recruitment and consequently the apprentices' start dates are all aligned.
- 9.3. Shortlisting of applicants will also take place locally. Candidates will then be invited to an assessment/interview day, which will be delivered locally in accordance with a centrally agreed process.
- 9.4. Each apprentices' contract will contain consistent wording in relation to taking part in partnership activities.
- 9.5. There will be a central induction for all the apprentices to meet each other. However some aspects of this may need to be specific to each council, e.g. political make up.
- 9.6. Apprentices will also need a job specific induction delivered by their manager in liaison with the local representatives.

**10. Timescales and Milestones**

<b>May</b>	<p>Prepare terms of reference</p> <p>Prepare job description and person specification for scheme coordinator. Advertise internally at WCC for 1 week</p> <p>Prepare branding for the partnership</p>
<b>June</b>	<p>Submit terms of reference for approval</p> <p>Finalise apprentice opportunities</p> <p>Contact schools to inform them about the partnership and that opportunities will be posted beginning of July</p> <p>Ensure consistency in Apprentice job descriptions and person specifications</p>
<b>July</b>	<p>Adverts out for apprentices and mentors</p>
<b>August</b>	<p>Interview apprentices and make offers</p> <p>Identify mentors</p> <p>Ensure consistency in apprentice contracts</p> <p>Plan programme of life skills and community challenges for the year</p> <p>Arrange contracts with learning providers</p>
<b>September</b>	<p>Train mentors</p> <p>Match mentors and apprentices</p> <p>Apprentices start</p> <p>Central induction for apprentices and mentors</p> <p>Start college</p>
<b>October</b>	<p>Begin first community challenge</p>
<b>November</b>	
<b>December</b>	

<b>January</b>	
<b>February</b>	
<b>March</b>	7-11 <sup>th</sup> National Careers Week 14-18 <sup>th</sup> National Apprenticeship Week
<b>April</b>	
<b>May</b>	
<b>June</b>	1-7 <sup>th</sup> National Volunteering Week (Community Project)
<b>July</b>	

## **11. Communications and Branding**

- 11.1. Each Council should have consistent wording on their website about the apprenticeship partnership.
- 11.2. The partnership should also have a strong social media presence including sites such as twitter, facebook, youtube and pinterest.
- 11.3. PR and Communications teams from each council should be involved in considering branding for the partnership. The existing apprentices should also be involved in this.
- 11.4. Ideally the apprentices should have access to an online forum where they can communicate. This could be similar to the LGA's Knowledge Hub.

## **12. Risks**

- 12.1. If the costs exceed the contributions made by the partner councils, any further expenditure would need to be agreed and paid for upfront.

## **13. Future plans**

Once established the scheme can look to develop further. This could include:

- 13.1. Widening membership of the partnership to include more of the Hampshire district authorities.
- 13.2. To explore opportunities for income generation by offering the life skills programme and other training activities externally.
- 13.3. Look for opportunities to support local businesses with providing apprenticeships e.g. management of schemes and liaison with training providers through proposed new funding arrangements.