

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....21st June 2018

1. Title of Item/Report

Apprenticeship Update

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that gave an update on apprenticeships.

The Government had made a commitment to increasing the quantity and quality of apprenticeships in England to three million starts by the end of 2020. In order to support this commitment, with effect from April 2017, the government changed the way in which apprenticeship training in England was funded through the introduction of an apprenticeship levy, new apprenticeship standards and public sector apprenticeship targets.

Apprenticeships were a great way for organisations to improve the skills base of their employees. They were a way to recruit new staff, access new talent and to re-train or up skill existing staff of all ages and levels of experience in a wide variety of roles. However there had been criticisms of the operation of the levy with employers finding it bureaucratic, funding rules complex, and a lack of availability of high quality apprenticeships.

Concerns and issues from across the sectors on the operation of the new apprenticeship levy were reflected in Department for Education statistics published in May 2018 which showed a significant reduction in apprenticeship new starts since the introduction of the levy. This questions the effectiveness of the apprenticeship levy and it had been predicted that the government was unlikely to hit its target of 3 million new apprenticeships by 2020.

Notwithstanding the issues and barriers to spending the apprenticeship levy and accessing relevant quality apprenticeships the Council had performed well corporately with 54 Employees starting an apprenticeship in 17/18 (75% of the corporate public sector target). The Council would continue to work to identify appropriate apprenticeship opportunities and maximise the use of levy funds.

From 1 April 2018 the Government had also introduced an ability for

organisations to make available up to 10% of its levy funds to one recipient organisation to be spent on apprenticeship opportunities and it was proposed that subject to the availability of levy funding consideration was given to including this option in the delivery of apprenticeship opportunities.

The report provided an update on the Council's apprenticeship levy and progress towards the public sector apprenticeship target.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The issues and concerns regarding the apprenticeship levy and national performance statistics be noted.
2. The detail of the Council's Apprenticeship Levy and progress towards the public sector Apprenticeship target be noted.
3. A further update report be received in June 2019.
4. Subject to the Council's planned spend of the levy, the Director of HR, Legal and Communications, in consultation with Cabinet Member, can identify an organisation to use up to 10% of the apprenticeship levy as part of the Council's approach to delivery of apprenticeship opportunities.

3. Reasons for the Decision

As the political leaders of the organisation it is felt appropriate that Cabinet are informed of the Council's apprenticeship programme which will not only support workforce development, but also contributes to succession planning and the overall resilience within the workforce, whilst maximising the Levy spend.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillor Nigel Cooke declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 9 - Apprenticeship Update as he was the Chair of Governors at the Learning and Skills Service.

Councillor Jim Beall declared a personal non prejudicial interest in

respect of agenda item 9 - Apprenticeship Update as he was on the Governing Body at the Learning and Skills Service.

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight, 29 June 2018.

Proper Officer  
25 June 2018