

APPENDIX O

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 13 APRIL 2010

Title:

APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

**[Portfolio Holder for Human Resources: Cllr Ms Denise Le Gal]
[Wards Affected: N/A]**

Summary and purpose:

Waverley's workforce age profile shows that it needs to recruit for the future. The apprenticeship scheme assists businesses by offering a route to harness fresh new talent whilst also offering career opportunities to young people who might not otherwise consider a career in local government. The purpose of this report is to seek authority for the introduction of an apprenticeship scheme from May 2010.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

This report relates to the Corporate Priority - Value for Money, Improving Lives.

Equality and Diversity Implications:

This report is compliant with equality legislation.

Resource/Value for Money implications:

The financial implications are detailed in the report.

Legal Implications:

This report is compliant with employment legislation.

Background

1. The Council's workforce age profile is such that an apprenticeship scheme would support managers in ensuring a continuing supply of motivated and well-qualified staff. Apprenticeships are the proven way to develop and train a workforce by addressing our skills gaps directly. Research has shown that the young people employed as apprentices are proving to be creative, bringing fresh ideas and ways of working to the Council.
2. Nationally the government has identified the need to have more young people in apprenticeships or training. Locally Waverley would be leading the way in promoting work-based learning opportunities for young people and this would compliment the work of Waverley Training Services in the community.

3. Apprenticeships are work-based training programmes designed around our skills and lead to national recognised qualifications.
- 80% of employers who employ apprentices agree they make their workplace more productive
 - 81% of consumers favour a businesses who take on apprentices
 - Employers who take on a 16-18 year old apprentice only pay their salary; the Government will fund their training
 - The minimum wage for apprentices is £95 per week
 - 88% of employers who employ apprentices believe that Apprenticeships lead to a more motivated and satisfied workforce
 - 83% of employers who employ apprentices rely on their Apprenticeships programme to provide the skilled workers that they need for the future

The Proposed Scheme

- The scheme would be aimed at 16 to 19-year-olds interested in a career in local government and would offer a two year placement as an Apprentice employed by Waverley
- An Apprentice Management Team would be established to manage the programme and each Apprentice would be mentored by a Waverley employee; an additional benefit of this would be the development opportunity this would offer to existing staff.
- Training would be provided by WTS or local colleges as appropriate.
- A support package for the apprentices would provide them with structured training in:
 - confidence building
 - assertiveness
- Towards the end of the apprenticeship placement additional personalised training would be put in place to support interview skills and writing applications
- The guarantee of an interview for apprentices who meet the minimum job criteria when applying for roles with Waverley.

Learning From Others

4. Kent County Council has operated an apprenticeship scheme for some time and their learning has been around the lack of understanding within the organisation about:
- what an apprenticeship involves
 - the responsibilities of placement managers
 - the expectations of young people
 - the lack of permanent positions for apprentices to apply for once they were actively seeking employment.

5. In order to ensure Waverley addresses these issues prior to launching the scheme it is suggested that an Apprentice Management Team is established and an internal communication campaign takes place to enhance understanding of the scheme
6. It is suggested Waverley's commitment to the Apprentices would be :
 - regular meetings with their Mentor , NVQ assessor and/or tutor
 - protected study time
 - monthly meetings with their fellow apprentices
 - access to College facilities
 - induction training to support their learning and development
 - meetings with their manager to discuss their progress and help them set goals
 - training in confidence building, assertiveness
 - support as they near the end of their apprenticeships. The support includes help with writing CVs and applications, and interview skills training.

Financial Implications

7. The training costs of the apprentices will be funded by the Government with Waverley meeting the salary costs. Waverley will be looking to offer an NVQ Entry Level qualification as part of the scheme.
8. The salary costs for 12 trainees would be as follows:

Year 1 = £60,000
Year 2 = £72,660
Total £132,660 over the two years, although there will be some phasing of starting dates in year 1 thereby reducing year 1 costs.
9. Given that it will be some months before apprentices are 'fully operational' it is reasonable to consider their initial costs as a start-up costs together with other administrative/office time in launching the scheme.

Recommendation

It is recommended that an apprenticeship scheme be established and that the £30,000 "start-up" costs be funded from the 2009/10 overall budget underspend, with the balance being funded from the vacancy factor in 2010/11, with future years' funding being agreed in next year's Star Chamber.

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