Meeting the Public Sector Apprenticeship Target Report September 2018

Data Publication- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council

Information returned to Gov.UK as part of the requirements to report on apprenticeship numbers and progress towards the 2.3% target. (Information returned on 26.09.2018)

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| Overall | Excluding Schools |
| Number of new employees who started in England between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018 **609** | **320** |
| Number of new apprentices in England between 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 **61** | **57** |
| Number of employees who were working in England 31 March 2018**4,439** | **2,445** |
| Number of apprentices who were working in England on 31 March 2018 **67** | **63** |
| Percentage of apprenticeship starts **10.2%** | **17.8%** |
| Percentage of total headcount that were apprentices on 31 March 2018 **1.51%** | **2.58%** |
| Number of apprentices who were working in England on 31March 2017 **48** | **45** |
| Number of employees who work in England 31 March 2017 **4,958** | **2,361** |
| Percentage of apprenticeship starts between 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 as a proportion of total headcount on 31 March 2017**1.23%** | **2.41%** |

1.What factors impacted your ability to meet the standards?

For general recruitment: Since the introduction of the levy, apprenticeship starts nationally have fallen starkly and the Department for Education (DfE) is facing calls for reform.

* The introduction of a digital account, has meant both the council and the CCG have experienced some issues in using this.
* The Introduction of a Register of Approved Training Providers (RoATP) and the Digital Account has caused issues in availability of providers and payments have been problematic for some current providers. New procurement regulations have required different contracting arrangements with providers coupled with the delayed introduction of the GM Public Sector Apprenticeship DPS which created additional pressures until this was fully operational. The arrangements have also caused issues with payments resulting in monies potentially lost, a great deal of resources have been applied to try to resolve. A waiver was introduced to enable current programmes to continue whilst the DPS was created and until it was fully functional.
* Contracting arrangements have been challenging with providers adding another layer of complexity.
* Introduction of the requirement for 20% off the job training, this has been problematic to introduce as different providers have different models and guidance is somewhat unclear in some areas
* Loss of a dedicated resource driving the Programme, we have been without this for almost 10 months
* Council existing ADR timeframe was not aligned to support timely recruitment
* Apprenticeships can span between 12 months and 4 years, a 2 year funding timeframe poses complications and anomalies and doesn’t allow for accurate forecasting of digital voucher spend
* Lack of available standards specifically in schools awaiting introduction of a number of new standards.

2.How did the target feature in your recruitment and skills training planning and what were the results?

* Protocol for advertisement of vacancies agreed and implemented and all appropriate roles are converted to apprenticeships, plan to do further work to expand this to differing levels so it includes higher level apprenticeships. There is a mix of new and existing staff in the reporting co-hort.
* Up skilling of existing workforce through apprenticeships introduced and embedded into the Annual Development Review Process.
* 4 approved providers signed up to Contracts and partnership working arrangements agreed and operational whilst GM Public Sector Apprenticeship DPS created and fully operational
* Targets have been almost met outside of schools with 98% recruited, above average compared to other LA’s locally.
* Attending ESFA events and linking in with LGA to monitor and benchmark our progress.
* Introduction of a ring fenced programme for LAC/Care Leavers which is now embedding and proving to be well received across the council. 5 positions supernumerary.
* Tameside has met 98% of target for council and 6% for schools. Performing well in terms of council but significant work planned and resource committed to improve schools target detail referenced in section 3.
* Proposed new protocol for apprentices at risk of no job at end of contract mirroring the “at risk” process to give access to vacancies prior to then being advertised internally. To include much more scrutiny at the RTF stage to look at succession planning and plan for end of contract. The majority of apprentices do go on to be employed permanently and this will ensure that there is a consistent expectation that if we train an apprentice it is with the view for them to become permanent members of the workforce..

3.What are you going to do to make sure you meet the target in the future?

**Actions to Improve outcomes for next reporting period general:**

* Commitment and recruitment of new dedicated resource person in post from 29.8.18
* DPS and contracting across GM is clear and consistent, collaborative working on tenders to streamline and ensure best value for money
* More apprenticeship standards being developed widening the scope and opportunities for new and existing staff
* ADR timetable is re aligned to support bi annual recruitment, ensuring process is timely and cost effective. Procurement will be streamlined and ensure best value, support longer term succession and workforce planning.
* Use of additional bespoke resource from LGA, sessions planned for early autumn, this will shape the strategy and allow sharing of good practice and identify priority actions.
* A strategy for promotion and celebration to begin which will support publicity, recruitment and progression. Use of case studies and promotional videos, blogs, attendance at recruitment fairs.

**Specifically in schools:**

* Networking/ collaborative working with Rochdale who are the best performing in terms of school recruitment
* ADR timetable realigned to support academic recruitment timescales
* Develop new working arrangements with HR consultants to embed “this is the way we support apprenticeship growth and recruitment in schools”. Using well established relationships to start the conversations
* Attendance at cluster meetings, using “circles of influence “to encourage interest and sign up.
* Encouraging sharing of a resource (apprentice) across a cluster of schools
* Attendance at Careers evenings and events, schools and colleges
* Scoping individual school needs and using this intelligence to procure bespoke programmes which will add value and attract interest.

4. Anything else you want to tell us?

Mitigating Factors influencing School targets specifically:

* The levy does not take into account the anomalies many local authorities have where they are in scope as a maintained school but they purchase external payroll support adding another layer of complexity adding challenges in terms of monitoring costs, spend and funding. This is the case for a number of schools in Tameside around 34%. Limited staff turnover within schools, vacancies are limited therefore limited opportunities to convert vacancies into apprenticeships
* Improvements planned to support better financial forecasting, on-going work with our finance, legal and audit teams to improve the system and processes and ensure best practice. New audit process in place to ensure adequate system and controls are in place to ensure that risks are controlled and minimised.

Further improvements Planned for LAC/Care Leavers

* Re introduction of unpaid work experience as a pathway to develop skills and experience and improve career choices. On-going package of support and coaching for managers (LAC/Care Leavers).
* We are about to launch a new booklet to help young people make informed choices and be clear about their individual pathway “Your Tameside OFFER”
* Increase of ring fenced vacancies for LAC/Care leavers from 5-8.