

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

07 February 2012

Report of the Director of Central Services

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 APPRENTICESHIP REPORT

Summary

To update Cabinet on progress of the two cohorts of apprentices that have participated to date in the Council's Customer Services NVQ Level 2 programme, and upon the progress of the West Kent 100 in 100 campaign to increase the number of apprenticeship opportunities in West Kent.

1.1 Content

- 1.1.1 Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council Scheme – The three apprentices on cohort 1 all successfully gained NVQ Level 2 in Customer Services. One is now permanently employed as a Benefits Assessor. Two are on "paid apprentice" fixed term contracts of employment as Scale 1 Clerical Assistants - one contract to end on 29 February 2012, the other on 31 March 2012. It is uncertain at present as to whether these fixed term contracts will be extended. With regard to the three apprentices on cohort 2, one left after three months to employment as a trainee sports coach. One is employed as a Scale 1 Clerical Assistant "paid apprentice" on a fixed term contract up until 30 September 2012. The final one is due to leave the programme on 29 February 2012 and is currently seeking employment elsewhere and has had one firm job offer. We will be attempting to recruit three further apprentices for Cohort 3 in April 2012.
- 1.1.2 Members will be pleased to note that two of our officers, Katie Iggulden and Mike Harris, have both taken on additional responsibilities to act as mentors to the apprentices. This has provided them with personal development opportunities and has been very beneficial for the apprentices.
- 1.1.3 West Kent 100 in 100 Campaign – this is a joint project between The West Kent Partnership, Kent Apprenticeships, KCC, Kent Association of Training Providers, and Kent Association of Further Education Colleges. With regard to progress to date, as of 22 December 2011, there have been 111 apprenticeship opportunities in 66 companies of which 38 apprentices have started in 27 companies. There continues to be a concentrated media campaign to market this initiative including breakfast meetings with large employers and "learner events" at schools and

learner fairs. This campaign offers a range of apprenticeship opportunities in areas such as horticulture, childcare, business administration, and hospitality and catering.

1.2 Legal Implications

1.2.1 The Council is under no legal obligation to provide apprenticeships, but has elected to do so as a facet of its community leadership responsibilities. This is particularly important in the context of growing unemployment in the 18-24 year old market.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.3.1 The payment rate for apprentices is set nationally in accordance with National Minimum Wage legislation, and is currently £2.60 per hour. This equates to a cost of £5475 per annum for each of the three apprentices that join the Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council Scheme. This cost of £16425 per annum is funded from the Council's reserves.

1.3.2 The rate of pay for paid apprentices on a Scale 1 fixed term contract of employment is £13104 per annum. This is funded from the Revenue budget as such posts have been created by "stripping out" more complex tasks from existing posts within the Council's Establishment in order to provide "entry level" jobs for those on the Council's apprenticeship scheme whenever the opportunity arises.

1.4 Policy Considerations

1.4.1 Young People.

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 N/A

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

1.6.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

Background papers:

contact: Julie Beilby

Nil

Julie Beilby
Central Services Director

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	The apprenticeship scheme provides training opportunities for young people that would not otherwise be available.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	Yes	“
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		N/A

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.