
Council Meeting

18 October 2022

Booklet 1

Answers to Written Questions

1.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor J Lepoidevin

TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor R Brown, Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

TEXT OF QUESTION:

“Can the Cabinet Member confirm how much funding have we received from the Apprenticeship Levy in 2021/2022 and 2022/2023? What are the current improvements to our workforce in utilising this levy?”

ANSWER:

“As a Council we don’t receive Apprenticeship Levy funding, we pay into the Apprenticeship Levy. As a Levy paying employer (An employer with a pay bill of over £3million) each month 0.5% of the Council’s pay bill is taken by HMRC and deposited in our Apprenticeship Levy account. In addition to our payments, a further 10% is topped-up by the Government. This was a total of £1,126,842 for 2021/22 and based on the current figures will be £1,134,408 for 2022/23.

Apprenticeship Levy funding can only be used to pay for apprenticeship training and assessment for apprentices and cannot be used to pay for other costs associated with apprentices such as wages, statutory licences to practise, travel and subsidiary costs, work placement programmes or the setting up of an apprenticeship programme.

Levy funding lasts for 24 months and if it is not spent in this period it is reabsorbed by the Skills Funding Agency.

Responsibility for the effective utilisation of this funding sits with the Apprenticeship and Early Careers Team. The team are part of People and Culture within Human Resources and are responsible for managing the Council’s Apprenticeship Programme and delivering the actions set out in the Council’s Apprenticeship Strategy.

Apprenticeships are used to both recruit the next generation of talent and to upskill our current workforce.

The Apprenticeship and Early Careers Team actively engages with service areas across the Council to identify entry-level apprenticeship opportunities.

The team works with managers to undertake workforce planning activities where the recruitment of an apprentice can help with their current and future needs, including addressing skills gaps and succession planning.

In addition to the recruitment of apprentices aiding the organisation in planning for the future, they are also a vital in bringing younger people into the Council and to engage directly with candidates from under-represented backgrounds and/or with barriers to employment.

Apprenticeships are also used to develop our existing workforce, with the Apprenticeship Levy funding a wide variety of training and qualifications.

As with the newly recruited apprentice roles, the Apprenticeship and Early

Careers Team works with Heads of Service and Managers to identify service/role-specific apprenticeships that meet the development needs of both their service as well as individuals.

Numbers in post

As of the July 2022 there were 289 apprentices in post, undertaking 55 different apprenticeships ranging from Level 2 (GCSE) to Level 7 (Master's Degree).

Apprenticeship Title and Level	Number
Associate Project Manager – Level 4	39
Social Worker (Degree) – Level 6	27
Teaching Assistant – Level 3	27
Adult Care Worker – Level 2	22
Business Administrator - Level 3	15
Children, Young People & Families Practitioner – Level 4	15
Operations / Departmental Manager (CMI) – Level 5	13
Senior Leader (Master's) – Level 7	11
Early Years Educator - Level 3	8
Lead Adult Care Worker – Level 3	8
Business Analyst – Level 4	7
HR Consultant / Partner (CIPD) – Level 5	7
Team Leader / Supervisor (CMI) – Level 3	7
Early Years Practitioner - Level 2	6
Teacher – Level 6	6
Customer Service Specialist – Level 3	5
39 other Apprenticeship Standards with less than 5 people on each	66
Total	289

The Apprenticeship and Early Careers Team continues to work across the organisation to identify new opportunities where apprenticeships can be effectively utilised as the number of apprenticeship standards available expands and the needs of services evolves.

A recent Local Government Association Report for the period 2017-21 stated: *“Local authorities have often struggled to spend the Apprenticeship Levy in the four years since its introduction, although spending has steadily increased each year. Coventry City Council's Apprenticeship Levy spend is well above the national average and the tenth highest proportion of levy funds spent in England. Coventry has spent the highest percentage of levy funds of any Metropolitan Borough in England and also has the highest percentage spend of any of the 14 upper and single tier councils in the West Midlands.”*

Another way to look at the effective utilisation of Apprenticeship Levy funding is via the Public Sector Apprenticeship Target. All Public Sector bodies with more than 250 employees must return an annual report on their apprenticeship numbers. There are various metrics measured, but the main one is the requirement for to create apprenticeship starts equivalent to 2.3% of the cumulative headcount over this period.

The Local Government Association collates this data and have provided the following figures and commentary for the period 2017-21:

Coventry City Council's Apprenticeship Starts - Comparative Data					
2017-21 PS Target %			2017-21 Starts		
Actual Performance	National Ranking	Regional Ranking	Actual Performance	National Ranking	Regional Ranking
1.84%	29 th = / 142	4 th / 14	668	13 th / 142	3 rd / 14

“This was a very good performance that saw Coventry comfortably exceed the local government sector average of 1.2%.”

We don't yet have the comparator figures for the period 2021/22, but our performance increased to 2.15% which should see us continue to be well above the local government sector average when the comparative data is released.