

brent apprenticeship strategy

2017-2020



BRENT **2020**



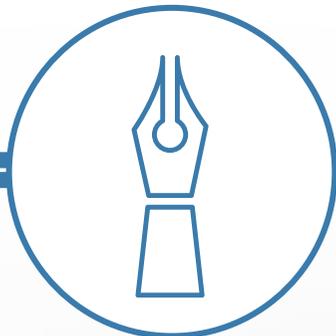
foreword

Brent Council is committed to the continued expansion and development of all apprenticeship programmes within the council and the borough. One of the Brent 2020 priorities is to lift people out of poverty and dependence on benefits by making them more employable and offering appropriate pathways to employment.

Creating a strong and prosperous Brent that is resilient and resourceful can only be achieved if we have a highly trained, engaged and flexible workforce and can continue to attract and retain the very best talent to live and work in our borough. Apprenticeships can make a positive contribution to this by creating opportunities for young people and by providing a framework for the workforce, of all ages, to undertake relevant qualifications and/or re-training, helping to raise skills and aspirations.

The government's vision for Apprenticeships 2020 highlights the value of apprenticeships to economic prosperity and its recent apprenticeship reforms have called for a substantial rise in the number of apprentices. Brent Council has a responsibility in helping to create these opportunities both as an employer and as a strategic leader in the community. The introduction of the apprenticeship levy provides the means to fund skills development aligned with council and borough priorities although the levy will not fund apprenticeship salaries.

Cllr Butt
Leader of the Council



An objective of the council's workforce strategy is to have a workforce that is engaged, customer led, collaborative, skilled and innovative.

The strategy contains four priorities:

- 1) workforce planning and managing potential
- 2) performance and development
- 3) leadership and management
- 4) engagement, reward and well-being

Apprenticeships will be a contributory factor in delivering these priorities and having the type of workforce we need. Apprenticeship activities sit primarily within the workforce planning and managing potential priority. In addition to supporting Brent's wider Employment and Skills agenda it's crucial that we continue to take positive action in utilising apprenticeships as part of our council's workforce strategy.

This Apprenticeship Strategy offers the opportunity for the council to provide entry routes into the organisation and local businesses, particularly for young people, as well as enable our existing workforce to undertake relevant apprenticeship qualifications aligned to current and future skills needs.

Adopting a more strategic approach as to how we attract, retain and develop our workforce to meet our communities' needs both now and in the future is vital. Apprenticeships are an integral part of this.

Cllr Tatler
Cabinet Member for regeneration, growth and employment and skills

introduction

The government revealed its plans to create three millions apprentices by 2020 in its apprenticeship reform plan and introduced a new apprenticeship levy on 1 April 2017. The levy is equivalent to 0.5% of the pay bill for employers whose pay bill is in excess of £3 million. The apprenticeship levy is estimated to be £380,000 pa for Brent council with potentially another £295,000 from community schools in Brent. The levy gives employers control of apprenticeship funding thus empowering them to influence the apprenticeship and training market.

Brent Council is committed to being a good employer and maintain its excellent track record in employing a workforce which reflects the community.

This document sets out the Apprenticeship Strategy for Brent Council as an employer and the positive action that we will take in our approach to apprenticeships as part of our workforce strategy. It also supports the Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy 2015-17 in delivering some of its core objectives.

This is a three year strategy, spanning the period 2017-2020. It is intended to be a dynamic document which will be regularly reviewed and updated in response to local and national changes. It will be overseen by Human Resources and Employment and Skills.

The strategy will also be used to inform council Services, Local Businesses and Workforce Plans to help identify the actions that individual service areas and or businesses can take in support of this strategy and in meeting the specific skills challenges they face. The Apprentice Strategy also supports and works alongside other talent and entry to work initiatives such as work experience, traineeships, graduate programmes and internships as part of our wider talent approach.



strategic context

1. Meeting current and future skills needs

The working age population in Brent is due to increase by 11,200 from 2015-2020 with increasing demand for job opportunities in the Borough. Meanwhile Brexit means that the EU workforce in London may reduce meaning that there could be fewer EU applicants, especially in health and social care. Some service areas, particularly within the Adults and Children's areas are already experiencing skills shortages as competition for skilled workers who can work across organisational boundaries increases. Adopting a more strategic approach to 'growing our own' future workforce will become increasingly important if we are to ensure we have the capacity and capabilities we need. Providing opportunities for existing staff to utilise apprenticeships, particularly higher level apprenticeships, to gain skills and progress their career will further help to develop talent pipelines within the organisation.

2. Government reforms

The government's drive is to increase apprenticeships which will result in circa £380,000 of the Authority's budget being allocated to its apprenticeship levy. This approach is designed to attract apprentices and provide opportunities to progress to higher level apprenticeships which will be critical to ensuring we meet both our skills needs and fully utilise our levy fund.

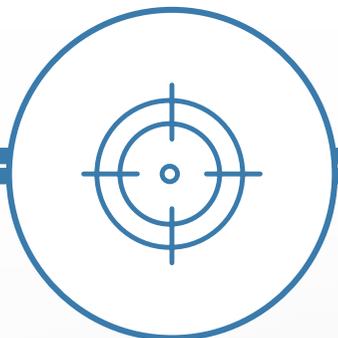
The government's goal is for young people to see apprenticeships as a high quality and prestigious path to successful careers, and for these opportunities to be available across all sectors of the economy, in all parts of the country and at all levels. This will support its aim for young people to get

the best start in life (English Apprenticeships: Our 2020 Vision). The National Apprenticeship Service has set a target for one in five young people aged 16-19 to be engaged on apprenticeships by 2019/2020.

Currently only 1.7% of the council's employees are apprentices. To meet the public sector requirement of 2.3% of the workforce, undertaking an apprenticeship will require the council to start circa 500 apprentices over the next four years. Against a background of public sector change it is, however, important that the increase of apprentices within the council is aligned to our future skills needs and not just to meet the government targets.

3. Supporting the council's strategic priorities

Providing apprenticeships and routes into apprenticeships are an integral part of the council's wider employment, skills and enterprise strategy 2015-2020 by helping to raise skills and aspirations. As a leader of public services and the largest employer in Brent, it is important that our workforce reflects the community we serve. Currently 15% of our workforce are under 25 compared to 27% amongst residents. The challenges for finding work are particularly acute for young people between the ages of 18-24 as well as care leavers, long-term unemployed, returners to the labour market and those with disabilities as they compete with more experienced candidates. Routes into apprenticeships can also be an alternative path for NEET prevention and consequent reduction in the number of NEETs. The council has a responsibility as an employer and strategic leader in helping to create opportunities for these disadvantaged groups.



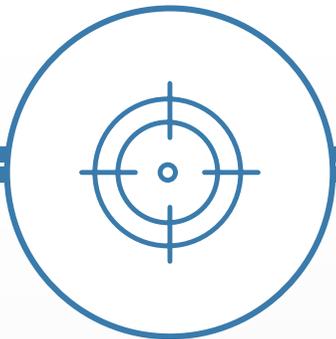
strategic aims

It is timely to review our approach to apprenticeships, in particular how we attract, develop and retain apprentices and deliver apprenticeship programmes

1 Support our workforce and skills needs in accordance with the workforce strategy

2 Support the Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy for 2015-2020 to increase employment opportunities for local residents

3 Increase the number of apprenticeships available in Brent, improving skills that meet labour market demand, in turn increasing the productivity of the workforce and pay for those in work



strategic priorities

PRIORITY 1

PROMOTE THE VALUE AND PROFILE OF APPRENTICESHIPS WITH LOCAL EMPLOYERS, WITHIN THE COUNCIL AND IN SCHOOLS

We will promote help apprentices to employers and to students as a good career route which can lead to progression to well-paid employment and/or higher education. We will challenge the poor perception and reputation through the provision of guidance and information to parents and other advisers.

PRIORITY 2

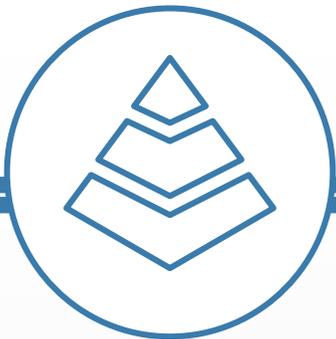
DEVELOP SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES OF APPRENTICES

We will help apprentices develop strong professional capabilities and be part of a highly capable, skilled and engaged workforce. This includes developing profession-oriented apprenticeships, at a variety of levels including higher apprenticeships (degree and masters level) and in areas where the council and or local business has identified skill gaps (e.g. social work, commercial and digital).

PRIORITY 3

ENSURE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We will ensure that apprenticeships are a key component of an inclusive council that reflects the community it serves. This includes promoting apprenticeships to those from under-represented groups and low socio-economic backgrounds and adapting recruitment processes accordingly, to emphasise the importance of potential rather than the finished product. Particular attention should be given to supporting care leavers and other vulnerable young people into apprenticeships (where appropriate) such as young people with Special Education Needs (SEN) and young offenders. More wrap-around support may be required for these priority groups.



PRIORITY 4

EMBED APPRENTICESHIPS IN OUR WORKFORCE

We will create apprenticeships that provide a modern employment offer and viable route into the local authority and the wider economy. This includes considering apprenticeships as part of workforce planning, location strategies, talent management, people strategies and career pathways.

PRIORITY 5

ENSURING QUALITY EXPERIENCES FOR APPRENTICES

We will make sure apprentices receive high quality training and feel engaged with the council and the work it does. This includes working with reputable training providers, complying with apprenticeship standards and securing senior and line management engagement to ensure accountability for the quality of the apprenticeship schemes.

PRIORITY 6

ENSURE A POSITIVE "RETURN ON INVESTMENT"
FOR OUR APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

We will build apprenticeship schemes that achieve the best mix of quality and efficiency. This includes working collaboratively across boundaries to ensure apprenticeships fit efficiently within workforce planning and maximise strategic outcomes of delivering apprenticeships within the resources available.

PRIORITY 7

WE WILL ACHIEVE 300 APPRENTICESHIPS ACROSS THE
COUNCIL, SCHOOLS AND BRENT WORKS BY 2020

The government target of 2.3% of the head count workforce includes the council and community schools but not apprenticeships within Brent's wider public services or business network. Currently this would mean a target of approximately 130 apprenticeships a year, 52 of which would be within the council. The council currently has 33 apprentices and 30 in 2016/17 have obtained apprenticeships through Brent Works.

challenges

There are some key challenges that we must overcome, in order to ensure the success of the Apprenticeship Programme.

1. Maximising the use of levy funds

The levy will be a significant cost to all local authorities, and it will be imperative to ensure that it is utilised as effectively as possible. Promotion of opportunities to young people, parents, managers and existing staff will be needed to ensure the funds in the levy account are maximised. The initial approach of the council will be to procure an apprenticeship strategic partner who will be able to provide access to a range of training providers and support the council in its apprenticeship programme. The council will need to spot purchase training once apprenticeship priorities are identified.

In addition, close collaborative working between local authorities will be needed to identify areas where apprenticeship frameworks may not exist and to align workforce strategies. Skills gaps areas, once identified, could become the basis for the design and development of new apprenticeship standards tailored to local authority roles.

It is important to maximise the use of the apprenticeship levy and get the most value for money for example through taking a collaborative approach to procurement across local authorities and other public sector organisations.

London councils is exploring the establishment of a collaborative Provider Framework (framework of pre-approved training providers) a procurement process requiring potential providers to demonstrate both quality and value for money, through a pre-qualification process. Local Authorities will then be able to select the most appropriate training provider from a limited group, through a process of mini competition. A collaboration between organisations will also enable greater ability to influence provision suited to local needs, and support the development of new tailor made apprenticeship standards.

2. Cost of apprenticeships

The levy can only be used for development and training. The cost of salaries and administration will have to be funded additionally. For the council this will be a balance of using some budgeted vacancies for apprenticeships, creating apprenticeships as part of departmental restructuring and utilising vacant roles for hard to recruit jobs.



3. Care leavers

Those leaving care have been identified as a particular group who find it hard to enter and sustain the labour market. It is especially difficult for those that have not had the opportunity, or developed the ability to navigate the complexities of finding and sustaining work. Whilst apprenticeships can provide an opportunity, research evidence has shown without the right support mechanisms and basic employability skills in place, many care leavers find it difficult to sustain and complete an apprenticeship. Consequently developing pre-apprenticeship work experience opportunities or traineeships which help prepare them for the world of work and enable the right wrap around support services to be identified and put in place would enable greater success. This strategy will link into the council's strategic approach to supporting and sustaining care leavers in employment.

4. People with a disability

Similarly we will work with a range of supported employment organisations to develop work experience opportunities for people who are unemployed and who have a disability. These individuals, by virtue of their disability are one of the groups furthest from the labour market. Identifying and creating effective ways of increasing access to education skills and training will help improve the life chances for individuals and assist their ability to become economically active.

5. Disadvantaged young people

The challenges for finding work are particularly acute for young people aged 18-24 as they try to compete in the labour market against more experienced candidates. Offering good quality apprenticeship opportunities that provide

an entry and development route, and at a competitive salary, is vital if we are to attract and retain young people into apprenticeships. Research has shown that apprentices who start their careers with employers providing good quality programmes have a high commitment to the overall culture and aims of the business and provide a ready-made talent pool. There will be a planned approach to ensure apprenticeships are aligned to areas where they are sufficient employment opportunities at the end of their training programme. This approach will help stimulate the growth of apprentices, secure a return on investment and improve the council's reputation. In conjunction with education colleagues within the council we will also seek opportunities to access and utilise relevant funding streams to help disadvantaged young people overcome personal barriers to accessing training opportunities and employment.

6. Long term unemployed/returners to the labour market

Providing work experience pathways to apprenticeship, along with apprenticeship opportunities, would also assist the longer term unemployed and older workers returning to the labour market. Brent has an unemployment rate of 13% above the Greater London Average and over 40% above the national average. In addition a high proportion of higher than average proportion of Brent residents do not have the necessary basic skills. Whilst apprenticeships have tended to focus on providing opportunities for younger people, developing propositions and attractive apprenticeship opportunities for older workers would ensure that the opportunities considered the wider diversity of the population within Brent. Consequently we will ensure that the apprenticeship programme supports a mature entrant talent pool and continue to work with partner agencies to develop and promote relevant positions.

7. Cross-sector collaboration

By working across Brent's economy and strategic partners, we are more likely to further the agenda at pace and on a larger scale than could be achieved solely within the council. We should be collaborating on developing standards, raising the reputation of apprenticeships, marketing apprenticeships and procuring training.

For example, we partner with other employers to lead the development of apprenticeships standards that meets or current and future workforce requirements. e.g. health, the police, NW London College.

8. Long-term tracking

We need to be able to track what happens to an apprentice after they successfully complete the programme, to understand the impact that training has had on apprentice career outcomes and the benefits it has brought to the council, local business and community. Either through end of programme interviews and follow-ups, we ideally want to know what the apprentice progresses on to do, in what profession, at what grade and in what organisation (whether they stay in the council or not). This will allow us to assess whether we have successfully built our own talent and capability to fill skill gaps, rely less on contingent labour and increase social mobility.

9. Data collection

It is critical that reliable data on apprenticeships is collected to allow the council to report and publish its contribution towards the national target of three million apprenticeships, as well as its commitments to the Public Sector Duty and tracking of apprenticeship levy value. It will also be used to inform and evaluate policy and delivery initiatives, allowing us to make data-driven strategic decisions on a regular basis. With such ambitions to improve skills, diversity and quality, we need a baseline of data to understand where we are now, so we can plan where we need to be in the future and how we are going to get there. Qualitative information will also be required to quality assure the programmes, ensuring apprentices are delivering the roles agreed with managers and that they and the managers are being effectively supported.

apprenticeship strategy action plan

	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	BRENT 2020	ACTION	OUTCOME	ACTION OWNER	DUE DATE
1.	Promote the value and raise profile of apprenticeships	Employment and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish robust monitoring system to track the number of apprentices contractors employ Promote the different types levels and benefits of apprenticeships to managers Communicate case studies and success stories through a variety of communication media Draw up an annual calendar of workshops, events and activities to promote apprenticeships within Brent Appoint Apprenticeship Ambassadors Brent Works to engage all secondary schools with apprenticeship presentations and utilise ambassadors when appointed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing relationships between providers and employers are in place to promote increases in apprenticeship numbers 	HR/Employment and Skills	Ongoing
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Events held annually Raised profile for apprenticeships in Brent Schools partners and training providers are better informed of jobs and skills projections Increase in number of school leavers engaged in apprenticeships Teaching staff in schools have a better understanding of apprenticeships and their role in developing future workforce 	HR HR Brent Works	Ongoing
2.	Develop skills and capabilities of apprentices	Employment and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission future skills needs analysis based on employment growth areas and jobs pipeline predictions Publication of updates on future skills needs and Labour Market Information to schools/ training providers/ community particularly about new opportunities arising and future predictions for skills pipeline Develop links with local construction companies to create early opportunities for apprenticeships in the construction industry, also traineeships Encourage employers to offer progression in Apprenticeships at all levels and promote a progression scheme to increase take-up from residents Map training providers that meet requirements of opportunities brokered by Brent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprenticeships supply chain aligned to future business needs Increased interest and demand from employers for pre-apprenticeships and/or traineeships 	HR/Employment and Skills	July 2017
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement in work-readiness skills in order to help transition to apprenticeships and/or full time roles 	HR/Employment and Skills	Ongoing
					Employment and Skills	
					Employment and Skills	Apr17- Mar 18
		HR/Employment and Skills				

	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	BRENT 2020	ACTION	OUTCOME	ACTION OWNER	DUE DATE
3.	To ensure diversity and inclusion	Employment and skills Demand management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the take up of apprenticeships by making them more financially viable for adults and attractive to employers • Work with colleagues in LAC to develop and expand opportunities for care leavers • Amend the apprenticeship application form template to include an optional care leaver declaration and permission to advise the employer. • Utilise the extra financial support for employing apprentices with additional needs frameworks to support aspiring and developing managers. • Procurement to monitor the creation of apprentices opportunities and proportion filled by Brent residents via Social Value commitments made in council contracts • Ensure that apprenticeship commitments are included in Section 106 Planning Agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership/collaborative working between key agencies • Increased applications for Apprenticeships from under represented groups • Increase in number of Brent residents undertaking apprenticeships 	HR/Employment and Skills HR/Employment and Skills HR	Ongoing Ongoing
4.	To embed apprenticeships within the council workforce	Employment and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit apprenticeship lead to co-ordinate apprenticeship activity • Hold briefing sessions for departments on the opportunity to use apprenticeship funding for training existing employees • Work with departments e.g. CYP, CWB where learning and development activity is delivered, to ensure that the maximum amount of LBC training is funded through apprenticeship levy • HR build into organisational change processes consideration of creation of apprenticeships trainee roles in new staffing structures • Embed the use of apprenticeships within the council's workforce planning and succession planning. • Identify opportunities to use relevant supervisory and management apprenticeship frameworks to support aspiring and developing managers. • Procurement to monitor the creation of apprentices opportunities and proportion filled by Brent residents via Social Value commitments made in council contracts • Ensure that apprenticeship commitments are included in Section 106 Planning Agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeship programme is effectively co-ordinated and managed • Increase in number of higher level apprenticeships • Increase in number of higher level and range apprenticeships • Increase in number of trainee posts and departments building apprenticeship salary costs into budgets • Increase in number of Brent residents undertaking apprenticeships 	HR/Employment and Skills HR HR/Employment and Skills HR/Depts HR	Jan 18 Ongoing Ongoing

	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	BRENT 2020	ACTION	OUTCOME	ACTION OWNER	DUE DATE
5.	To ensure a quality experience for apprentices	Employment and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with training providers to ensure all vocational provision from Entry Level through to Level 3 have a recognised progression route into employment/ apprenticeships and or further study at a higher Level and that sufficient appropriate and relevant work experience/taster sessions are available for all students • Increase attraction of potential applicants through better use of social media and digital platforms incorporate clauses into Contracts and Standing Orders and Procurement Standards to ensure that opportunities to promote apprenticeship places are captured in relevant procurement exercises • Improve consistency of support from training provider through SLA. Develop protocols and standards. Disseminate to all providers. Monitor progress • Ensure every apprentice has own action plan and ensure progress is regularly monitored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased pool of applicants • Key skill gaps identified to continue to attract large numbers of apprentices and to progress them within the organisation • Increased use of social media to promote apprenticeships and how to access further information • Providers to ensure that progression pathways are always promoted to apprentices to ensure career development 	HR/Employment and Skills HR/Employment and Skills	Oct-17 May-17
6.	To achieve internally 200 apprenticeships by 2020	Employment and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities to use relevant supervisory and management apprenticeship frameworks to support aspiring and developing managers • Implement a three year recruitment strategy which progressively increases the intake of apprentices each year to achieve the public sector duty target of 2.3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist organisational skills needs and career pathways • Apprentices are recruited in line with organisations skills need • Public Sector Duty Target for apprenticeships are met 	HR/Employment and Skills	Mar-18
7.	To achieve externally 150 apprenticeships by 2020		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with external employers and business partnerships • Hold awareness raising event and celebration event for employers 			Ongoing Nov-Dec 2017
8.	Ensure that apprenticeship levy is fully utilised		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procure strategic partner for advice and access to training providers • Collaborate with strategic partners to create a training provider framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure full utilisation of levy 	HR/Employment and Skills	