

TORBAY COUNCIL APPRENTICE STRATEGY

Human Resources January 2014

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1 Vision

Our vision is to make Apprenticeships the vocational option for young people within Torbay. Growing apprentices is an important component in the Council's plans to tackle issues such as rising unemployment and lack of work opportunities in the 16-24 age group. It will also support the Council to deliver the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Report 'Youth Unemployment in Torbay', which states that:

'Torbay Council must lead by example and use its influence to ensure that the young people in Torbay have access to:

- Right careers education, information, advice and guidance
- Right skills
- Right employment opportunities

This will, in turn, support the Council as one of the largest employers in Torbay to:

- Develop the right level of skills to meet the future requirements of the business, growing the workforce of the future
- Demonstrate Corporate Social Responsibility in supporting and aiding young unemployed people Torbay into training opportunities and career pathways
- Develop the skills of young local people
- Increase staff morale, productivity and retention
- Develop succession planning for an aging workforce

2 Background

Torbay Council has, for several years employed apprentices and has had a commitment to employ apprentices but has not had a formal strategy and recruitment plan.

The principal objectives of this strategy are to:

- Adopt a formal approach to increasing the number of Apprentices within Torbay Council during a defined time period by increasing the number Apprenticeships available for young people, with a specific focus upon skill shortages, disadvantaged young people, including care leavers, and those not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- Become a role model within Torbay for employing Apprentices within the wider business community, support the achievement of the outcomes of the Youth Unemployment in Torbay report June 2013.

<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/DemocraticServices/documents/s14132/Youth%20Unemployment%20Report.pdf>

- Support the recommendations of 'Torbay Gains' – Torbay Child Poverty Commission Final Report - November 2013.

<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/DemocraticServices/documents/s16864/Torbay%20Child%20Poverty%20Commission.pdf>

- Ensure that the strategy is flexible enough to meet the needs to the changing employment landscape within Torbay Council and the wider Public Sector.
- Develop succession planning for an aging workforce - Torbay Council employee age profile (appendix 3).
- Ensure that Managers, Trades Unions, Employees and partner organisations are aware of the Council's approach to the 'employing apprentices and their role' in delivering the strategy.
- Actively promote apprenticeships within the Council as a valuable vocational and recruitment option.
- Ensure that all support and funding options are identified and an awareness of such support is realised by Recruiting Managers.
- Ensure that Procurement policies and processes promote the employment of apprentices and work experience opportunities.
- To set an Apprentice target for the Council. (Appendix 1).

3 What is an Apprenticeship?

An Apprenticeship is a worked based training programme designed around the needs of the employer, which leads to a nationally accredited qualification. Apprenticeships can be used to train new and existing employees and/or allows individuals to gain new skills and qualifications whilst working.

Apprenticeships are open to all ages, although Government funding is prioritised towards young people, especially in the 16-24 age groups.

Apprenticeships last for a minimum of 12 months, but in some cases can last between 3 and 4 years if they are of a higher level apprenticeships in certain sectors.

4 What organisations are involved in supporting Apprenticeships?

- The Employer will work with the Training Organisations, who support the delivery of the training programme, carry out the assessment of the Apprentice and deliver additional skills and knowledge training as required in order for the Apprentice to complete the agreed training plan.
- The National Apprentice Service, part of the Skills Funding Agency, supports a partnership between the Employers, the Training organisation and the Apprentice. They provide impartial advice and guidance on funding, quality and choice of Training Provider.
- The Skills Funding Agency funds and promote adult further education (FE) and skills training in England, including Traineeships and Apprenticeships, in a way that supports economic growth.

For more information visit Apprenticeships.org.uk

5 Types and Levels of Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are available at Intermediate, Advanced and Higher level:-

- Intermediate Level 2 Apprenticeship Equivalent to five GCSE's at grade A-C.
- Advanced Level 3 Apprenticeship Equivalent to two 'A' levels.
- Higher Apprenticeship – Level 4 and above with some of the technical certificates equivalent to foundation degree level.

Whenever there is an appropriate vacancy or a new job created, managers will consider whether they can fill the post with an Apprentice. Apprenticeships will be part of the department's establishment and not an additional post.

Examples of areas that may be suitable for Apprentices

- Administration posts
- Technical posts
- ICT

- Customer Service
- Horticulture
- Building construction
- Engineering
- Social Care
- Education

There are 285 Apprenticeships at 3 different levels covering 1700 job roles

6 Roles and Responsibilities

Organisationally

Apprentices must be paid at least the Apprenticeship National Minimum wage, however, Torbay Council and associated organisations have formally agreed to pay the following which is reviewed at the same time as NJC reviews.

16-17 year olds	£3.99 (first year)	(£5.00 second year)
18-20 year olds	£5.03 (first year)	(£6.04 second year)
21 years plus	£5.03 (first year)	(£6.31 second year*)

*compliant with National Minimum Wage increases

- Apprenticeships are embedded into Torbay Council's Recruitment process and suitable roles are advertised as Apprenticeships
- It is an expectation that the majority of Apprenticeship courses will last for approximately 12 months. In the case of a course lasting longer than 12 months and an individual moving into the next age band then the higher rate of pay will apply for that individual on the successful completion of the first year of study/work placement subject to confirmation by the training provider and completion of agreed key units. Managers will need to liaise with training provider for appropriate evidence to support the incremental progression and then advise Human Resources as appropriate.
- The Apprentice will be an employee of Torbay Council and will be issued with a Fixed Term Contract which will incorporate the Apprenticeship Agreement. This will state that the Apprentice is undertaking an apprenticeship in a particular skill, trade or occupation with an accredited Training Provider. This will be used to reinforce the understanding of the requirements of the Apprenticeship.
- The minimum hours of employment for an Apprentice should be at least 30 hours per week and Apprentices will be given time off to attend college training days (if required as part of the programme) and will work full time during college academic

holidays. They will also be expected to attend and undertake relevant core training provided by the Council.

- The quality of support, mentoring and training that Apprentices receive will make a difference to their development and also their contribution to the organisation. Each Apprentice will be assigned a Mentor who is an experienced member of staff and who will ensure that they are settled into the organisation, keeping up with their studies and generally ensure that their Apprenticeship is running smoothly
- Towards the end of the Apprenticeship they will have access to a workplace Coach who will work with them on their career development and help them set future goals.
- Although permanent employment cannot be guaranteed at the end of an Apprenticeship, support will be given to apprentices to enable them to apply for suitable posts within the Council, partner organisations or externally
- At the end of the Apprenticeship Agreement the fixed term contract will terminate unless the apprentice has secured a permanent post elsewhere within the Council.
- Reorganisations. Apprenticeships are protected from redundancy and there is a commitment from organisation to continue the Apprenticeship to its end if reorganisation occurs.

Human Resources will:

- Lead on and manage the Apprenticeship programme, developing an action plan for to enable and support deliver of this strategy.
- Assist management in the identification of posts, provide advice in the learning elements of Apprenticeships and Recruitment.
- Develop Torbay Council Website for accessibility for future Apprentices.
- Liaise with NAS (National Apprentice Service) and identifying and contracting with training providers.
- Track, report and managing the development of the Apprentice Strategy, reporting to Senior Management.
- Allocate a Mentor and Coach to each Apprentice

- Co-ordinate an Apprentice peer group.
- Work with the Apprentice and Manager to identify substantive posts for the Apprentice to apply for at least 2 months prior to the end of their programme.
- Promote the value of Apprenticeships working with partner organisations as necessary.

Managers will:

- Identify with HR roles suitable for the Apprentice programme.
- Provide roles and practical work experience elements of the programme.
- Ensure individuals receive training and support in the workplace in line with the Council's Employment Policies and Procedures
- Release individuals to attend training required to complete the Apprenticeship programme.
- Undertake regular meetings and supervision to review individuals progress, agree targets and discuss any issues, or problems to an agreed framework
- Liaise with the outside training providers to ensure that the Apprentice receives appropriate support and training in order to complete the Apprenticeship
- Provide HR with regular Apprentice progression update.
- Notify HR of any changes in the Employment basis of the Apprentice at least one month prior to changes taken effect during the Apprenticeship contract.
- Inform and take advice from HR if there are any performance, competence or other issues.
- Work with HR and the Apprentice to identify substantive posts for the Apprentice to apply for at the end of their program.
- Promote the value of Apprenticeships within the Council and externally with partners and other businesses.

- When procuring contracts and commissioning services use the influence of the Council to ensure that Apprenticeships are an inheritance part of the contract or service and that the contracting organisation has a positive approach to employing Apprentices.

The Council will benefit from employing Apprentices by:

- Ensuring that young talent is encouraged and nurtured by investing in young people in the local community.
- Allow the Council to become a positive role model within the wider Community with regards to its Employment of Apprentices.
- Develop the skills required for the future needs of the organisation.
- Increase productivity and effectiveness while reducing costs.
- Support succession planning –particularly in areas of key skills or professions.
- Improve staff retention and loyalty.
- Be a cost effective training option for the Council as the Government can contribute to certain costs.
- Motivate the wider workforce by involving them in the Apprenticeship programme.
- Help existing staff learn new skills and adopt different ways of working which in turn may assist with skills shortages.

7. What to do next:

For more information please contact HRSupport@Torbay.gov.uk

Equality Statement

These guidelines apply equally to all Council employees regardless of their age, disability, gender, race, religion or sexual orientation. Care will be taken to ensure that no traditionally excluded groups are adversely impacted in implementing this policy. Monitoring will take place to ensure compliance and fairness.

Policy Feedback

Should you have any comments regarding this policy, please address them to the HR Policy Feedback mailbox –

HRpolicy@torbay.gov.uk

History of Policy Changes

This Apprentice Strategy was first agreed by members of the Full Council, Torbay Senior Leadership Team and Torbay Single Status Group in (Insert date)

Date	Page	Details of Change	Agreed by:

To be reviewed annually.