

# TORBAY COUNCIL APPRENTICE STRATEGY

Human Resources March 2017

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## 1 Vision

An Apprenticeship is a worked based training program designed around the needs of the employer, which leads to a nationally accredited qualification. Apprenticeships can be used to train new employees and existing employees through further career development training opportunities. Apprenticeships are open to all ages. Apprenticeships generally last for a minimum of 12 months, but in some cases can last between 3 and 4 years if they are a higher level apprenticeship.

As a Council and employer at the heart of the Community it is our vision that working for the Council becomes the preferred vocational choice for anyone looking for an Apprentice opportunity within the local area.

Local government offers a wide range of jobs and opportunities for career development and working within local government is an excellent starting point for those leaving school or college and looking for their first job, those that may wish to switch career or considering returning to work after a break. We have successfully employed Apprentices for several years and have seen many individuals flourish through our Apprentice opportunities and career paths that Apprenticeships can often lead to.

### **Apprentices provide the Council with the opportunity to:**

- Enable the Council to develop the right level of skills to meet the future workforce planning requirements.
- Corporate social responsibility to support people into employment, training and career pathways with specific focus upon skills shortages, disadvantaged groups such as those leaving care or this not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- Become an employer of choice through being recognised as an employer that provides career progression and structured training.

## **2 Background**

In 2014, Torbay Council adopted the formal Apprentice Strategy 2014-2019. Forthcoming changes to the way in which Apprentices are funded in April 2017 have brought about a review of the previously approved strategy. This revised strategy commits to the original ethos of the Employing Apprentices Strategy, however, it also takes into account changes to Apprenticeships nationally, the financial landscape within Local Government and the way in which Apprentices are funded.

The principal objectives of this strategy are:

- The Council will aim to employ as many Apprentices in each financial year as the budget planning process permits. The number of new apprentice starts will take into account workforce planning considerations and what the workforce of the future will likely be, priority will be given to 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 (NEETS).
- To ensure that the strategy is flexible enough to meet the needs of the changing employment and financial landscape within Torbay Council and the wider Public Sector.
- To become a role model within Torbay as an Employer of choice for employing apprentices, working in partnership with other organisations such as Schools, Academies, Colleges, other local authorities and training providers. Actively promoting apprenticeships within the Council as a valuable career option.
- To ensure that the forthcoming changes to the way in which Apprentices are funded from April 2017 are maximised by the Council.
- To ensure that Managers, Trades Unions, Employees and partner organisations are aware of the Council's approach to the employment of apprentices.

### **The benefits of Apprentices:**

- Ensuring that young talent is encouraged and nurtured investing in young people in the local community.
- The Council becomes 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

- Support succession planning –particularly in areas of key skills or professions and managers of the future
- Be a cost effective CPD and training option for the Council, as the Apprentice levy will fund training costs.
- Motivate the wider workforce by involving them in the Apprenticeship programme.

**Working for the Council our apprentices will have:**

- Structured training with personal development plans for the apprentice which will support organisational development and workforce planning requirements.
- Earn a wage above the Apprentice minimum wage on the Torbay Council Apprentice pay scale which is reviewed each year. The will be incremental progression for apprenticeships lasting longer than 12 months subject to completion and progression of training.
- On completion of Apprenticeship, the opportunity to apply for jobs within the council and or partner organisations.
- Become an employee of the Council on a fixed term contract with access to all the benefits that being an employee of the Council attracts such as access to Pension Scheme, Employee Reward Scheme, i-Gain, and holiday pay.
- Learn transferable skills, a trade or occupation with an accredited Training Provider. This will be used to reinforce the understanding of the requirements of the Apprenticeship.
- Be employed for a minimum hours of 30 hours per week and be given time off to attend college training days (if required as part of the programme). Apprentices will work full time during college academic holidays.
- Be provided with relevant in-house training in addition to the Apprenticeship training.
- Work with experienced staff and have access to support in the form of a work buddy, mentor and/or a coach.
- Provide a diverse range of job and career roles for Apprentices with scope for career progression in some areas.

- Towards the end of the Apprenticeship they will have access to a 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 with other organisations.
- Apprenticeships are protected from redundancy and there is a commitment from organisations to continue the Apprenticeship to the end of the training if reorganisation occurs.

**Human Resources will:**

- Lead the Apprenticeship programme, developing an action plan to enable and support delivery of the strategy, linking in with wider Workforce Planning Strategy.
- Provide advice to managers regarding Apprenticeships and Recruitment.
- Be the main contact with The Apprentice Service, training providers and the Skills Funding Agency.
- Allocate a Mentor and Coach to each Apprentice to ensure that support throughout employment.

**Managers will:**

- Identify with HR roles that are suitable as Apprenticeships.
- 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.
- Ensure full induction is undertaken.
- Release individuals to attend training required to complete the Apprenticeship and internal training.
- Undertake regular meetings and supervision to review individuals progress, agree targets and discuss any issues or problems to an agreed framework.

- Liaising with HR and the training providers to ensure that the Apprentice receives appropriate support and training in order to complete the Apprenticeship.
- Provide HR with Apprentice progression update on a regular basis.
- Notify HR of any changes in the employment status of the Apprentice at least one month prior to changes taken effect during the Apprenticeship contract.
- Work with 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 inherent part of the contract or service and that the contracting organisation has a positive approach to employing Apprentices.

**For more information regarding Apprentices please contact the HR Organisational Development and Well-being Team:**

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### **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](mailto:HRpolicy@torbay.gov.uk)

### **History of Policy Changes**

This Apprentice Strategy was agreed by members of the Full Council, Torbay Senior Leadership Team and Torbay Joint Consultative Committee.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Details of Change</b>	<b>Agreed by:</b>