

Apprenticeship Growth Strategy



SURREY

Wider Context

Since 2017, along with other large public sector organisations, SCC is required each financial year to:

- Pay 0.5% of staff establishment budget into the Apprenticeship Levy.
- Enrol 2.3% of staff on apprenticeship programmes per financial year. These can be either new recruits or existing staff, based on staff headcount as opposed to FTE.

Current Status (as at 01.01.2020)

Levy funds unspent	Levy spend in past 12m	Apprenticeship Target	Progress against target
£2.3m	£680k	192 (2.3%)	132 (1.58%)

Levy Expiration

Underspent levy funding, not utilised within 24 months after deposit, is returned to central government.

Levy funding can be transferred for other organisations to utilise, thus avoiding pay back.

Feb 2020 projections indicate levy expiration of £14k.

Recent Achievements

- ✔ Adult Social Worker and Occupational Therapist apprenticeship framework ready to launch September 2020, aiming for 15 learners (0.17% target) and levy spend between £345,000 and £360,000
- ✔ Firefighter apprenticeship launched with SFRS and Surrey Adult Learning; 8 learners on programme with a further 12 planned for May start
- ✔ Designed and launched levy transfer process to share up to 25% of our funds to businesses and the voluntary sector within Surrey
- ✔ Schools levy being offered to our partners through Childrens Academy via transfers
- ✔ Designed a new approach to support LAC, care leavers, NEETs and young offenders into work through targeted apprenticeship recruitment
- ✔ Apprentice pay reviewed and brought in line with market rates
- ✔ Partnership events to celebrate National Apprenticeship Week (3-7 February) including Districts, Boroughs and Surrey Heartlands

Priorities and challenges

Organisational Priorities

- **Tackling inequality** – widening and targeting apprenticeship opportunities and participation (e.g. transferring our levy to support others outside of SCC).
- **Embracing diversity** – providing more opportunities for young people (under 25), in particular care leavers (through the Care Leavers Covenant).
- **Partnership working** – exploring levy transfers and rotational apprenticeship opportunities, e.g. to support the voluntary and private sector.
- **More joined up health and social care** – working closely with partners across Surrey Heartlands to develop a flexible workforce for Surrey through rotational and other apprenticeships.
- **Supporting the local economy** – bridging the future skills gap within Surrey’s economy by maximising the potential of levy transfers to local business and voluntary sector organisations through a targeted approach whilst building the reputation of the council.
- **Digital revolution** – using apprenticeship opportunities to develop the digital skills of new and existing staff.

Organisational Challenges

- Upcoming expiration of levy funds.
- Current underspend of the schools apprenticeship levy (note these challenges exist in many other councils due to the part time nature of school roles and the lack of suitable apprenticeship programmes that have been available to date).
- Availability of opportunities across the council, partly due to service reorganisation.
- Variable awareness and understanding of apprenticeship opportunities.

Development of a growth strategy to underpin organisational priorities and challenges, to include:

- Work with the Care Leaver Covenant and Childrens Academy in supporting LAC and care leavers into employment
- Proactively work with schools/colleges to offer career insight days, where young people are able to come and experience the opportunities and careers available at Surrey County Council and are inspired to join us
- Work with service leads to build talent pipelines through apprenticeships
- Identify opportunities for apprenticeships to support the digital revolution
- Continue collaboration with Surrey Heartlands partners to explore rotational apprenticeships and levy transfer opportunities
- Develop a recovery plan to support schools to maximise apprenticeships and identify opportunities to transfer levy funding
- Encourage local SMEs and the voluntary sector to take advantage of levy transfers, thus contributing to the wider Surrey economy
- Formulate proposals to outline opportunities in adopting an 'Apprenticeship First' approach to recruitment
- Identify Apprentice Advocates within the organisation at a senior level to support the growth strategy within their respective areas

This page is intentionally left blank