

EMPLOYMENT MATTERS COMMITTEE

6 FEBRUARY 2014

CHANGES TO APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME TO SUPPORT CARE LEAVERS

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Summary

This report sets out the proposed changes to the Council's apprenticeship scheme to further support young people who are leaving care in Medway.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 It is within the committee's terms of reference to make recommendations on matters relating to employment, and it is requested that Members review the information outlined within this report,

2. Background

2.1 The council has had an apprenticeship scheme in place since 2008 which has been extremely successful. We have supported over 140 completed apprenticeships since then. The scheme has been periodically updated in line with legislative changes since this date.

2.2 This proposed revision of the scheme formalises and supports the council's objective to support young people leaving care.

2.3 The Looked After Children (LAC) service has high aspirations for Medway's care leavers. The creation of an 18+ team has enabled more effective tracking and monitoring of the activity of every young person to ensure they are fully supported to access suitable employment, education or training.

2.4 A care leaver's steering group has been established to help review all the services the team provides including support into education, employment and training. A representative from the Human Resources team sits on this group.

2.5 The proposed changes to the Council's apprenticeship scheme ensure that we are considering this cohort of young people in the provision of apprenticeship placements.

3. Proposed Changes

- 3.1 When a requirement for an apprentice arises a specialist resourcing officer from the Human Resources team will meet with the recruiting manager to ascertain the need and discuss all elements of the role. This information will be collated and provided to the care leavers steering group.
- 3.2 The care leavers steering group will have an opportunity to look at all apprenticeship vacancies and the information collected by the Human Resources team.
- 3.3 The care leavers group will support care leavers in applications for any posts deemed suitable with activities such as application writing, interview skills and presentation skills.
- 3.4 If further support is required for the care leaver to undertake any role this will be discussed and sought from the care leavers steering group.
- 3.5 Progress reports from the recruiting manager and the HR team will be provided to the group for discussion on a monthly basis.
- 3.6 It is proposed to update the Managers' Guide to reflect these changes.

4. Risk management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
Number of care leavers not in education, training or employment increases.	Care leavers are not supported adequately to successfully complete their apprenticeships.	The care leavers steering group will be supporting any care leavers who go into the apprentice scheme.

5. Financial and legal implications

- 5.1 The report has no adverse financial implications for the council.
- 5.2 The report has no legal implications for the council as the offer of an apprentice place will be in line with our apprenticeship guidance.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 That the Committee notes the report and agrees to the amendment in the Managers' Guide to employing apprentices to provide additional support and opportunities to care leavers, as set out in paragraph 3 of the report.

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Background papers

None