

**Halton Borough Council:**  
**Public Sector Apprenticeship Report 2018: (April 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 – March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018)**

**Section A:**

- Number of employees the organisation has:  
At March 31<sup>st</sup> 2017 : 3,962  
At March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018 : 3,776
- Number of new employees starting employment during the reporting period:  
338
- Number of individuals currently undertaking apprenticeships:  
At March 31<sup>st</sup> 2017 : 17  
At March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018 : 15
- Number of individuals starting an apprenticeship during the reporting period:  
2

**Section B:**

**Actions the organisation has taken to meet its target:**

- A Council Apprenticeship Policy reviewed, updated and launched across the organisation.
- Political Senior Management support given with key actions identified.
- A Corporate budget identified specifically to resource new apprentices' wages.
- A series of promotional apprenticeship roadshows undertaken across the organisation.
- A comprehensive workforce skills and gap analysis undertaken to identify potential future skills shortages and to encourage thinking about succession planning within the context of an ageing workforce.
- Engaged with approved training providers to widen access to apprenticeships throughout the Borough.
- Engaged with schools to promote the availability of the school portion of the Apprenticeship Levy.
- An Apprenticeship Levy Project Group formed to oversee correct use of the Levy account.

**Factors that have impacted its ability to meet the target:**

- Limited availability of revenue funding to pay apprentice wages in the light of continued reduction in funding.
- Limited resources to promote and manage apprenticeships within organisation as a result of reduction in grant funding.
- An agreed desire to provide 'meaningful' apprenticeship opportunities which potentially could lead to employment within the organisation upon completion.
- The requirement to take the time to undertake a comprehensive workforce skills analysis prior to promoting apprenticeship opportunities.

- Lack of specialist school apprenticeships and training providers.
- Internal employment market contains restrictions due to the Council having a relatively static and professionally qualified workforce.
- When vacancies arise certain posts do require a high level of experience, knowledge and qualifications, therefore not lending themselves as an apprenticeship opportunity

**What actions are planned to help the organisation to meet its target in future:**

- Continue to provide high quality 'new' apprenticeship opportunities.
- Targeting existing workforce in respect of continued career development.
- Utilise the organisation's Learning & Development budget more effectively by exploring apprenticeship qualification opportunities.
- Collaborate within the Liverpool City Region and with the Combined Authority to develop and promote apprenticeship opportunities and skills development within the regional Local Government sector.
- Working specifically with the Local Government Association (and its commissioned providers) to help to develop and improve our apprenticeship programmes and increase starts.
- Enhance the Council's current career framework, potentially increasing apprenticeship opportunities, both at lower and higher levels.
- Develop a positive marketing campaign.
- Continue to develop and share good practice across the Liverpool City Region.

**Any other information:**

- If organisations were permitted to use a proportion of the Apprenticeship Levy to pay wages to apprentices, a higher level of starts could be achieved.
- The Public Sector Apprenticeship Targets Regulations 2017 introduced a target for all public sector bodies with 250 or more staff in England to employ an average of 2.3% of their staff as new apprentice starts over the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2021. As one such organisation Halton Borough Council we wholeheartedly believe in the value of apprenticeships and the opportunities for skills development, employment progression and social mobility they provide, and as such we are fully committed to delivering our cumulative target by March 2021. We are working collaboratively with the 5 other Local Authorities in the Liverpool City Region, Merseytravel and Local Community Schools to develop and deliver effective apprentice strategies for the benefit of our employees the wider community and local businesses.