

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Employment & Appeals Committee
DATE: 23rd October 2018
CONTACT OFFICER: Surjit Nagra, Service Lead, People
AUTHORS: Sarah Trahearn, Slough Academy Project Manager
WARD(S): All

PART 1 **FOR INFORMATION**

THE SLOUGH ACADEMY - UPDATE

1 Purpose of Report

This report is provided to the Committee in response to the request for an update at the last meeting. Since that meeting, the project has made progress in the areas listed in this report.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Committee is requested to note and provide any comments on the information outlined in this report.

3 Supporting Information

3.1 Closure of previous Apprenticeship Service

On the 16th September 2018, the Apprenticeship Service in Adults & Communities was decommissioned and the new model for Apprenticeships transferred to People Services. Five Apprentices from this year's Business Administration cohort of 14 have secured employment with SBC and one with Arvato. However, as no Apprentice has completed their frameworks People Services has agreed to support them to ensure they achieve their qualifications. Additionally, four Apprentices in Arvato will not complete their Apprenticeships until June 2019 which means that SBC must remain a Training Provider until our contractual responsibilities are discharged.

3.2 Academy Team Recruitment Update

To support the creation of the Slough Academy it was agreed to establish two posts; a Slough Academy Manager and an Apprentice Specialist. We are pleased to report that we have appointed internally to the post of Apprentice Specialist. Unfortunately we were not successful in the appointment of the Slough Academy Manager and this will now be advertised externally.

These two posts will embed the infrastructure to deliver the new model of Apprenticeships and start to establish the wider concept of the Slough Academy.

3.3 Apprentice Performance Framework

To ensure that Apprentices progress through their training programmes with the best possible results, a Performance Framework has been developed. Please see Appendix A. This will support Managers to work with under-performing Apprentices to achieve the standards.

3.4 Supporting Technology

To ensure that we have oversight of all the Apprenticeships being undertaken in SBC and in order for us to be able to report on progress, we have purchased an e-Portfolio system to support this. This will enable the electronic storage, tracking and reporting of Apprentices' coursework. Additionally, it will provide 'real-time' progress reporting to ensure managers understand when staff will be qualified with the relevant skills and competencies.

The current Learning pool system which distributes e-learning courses only, does not support the wider initiative of succession planning which is our ultimate goal. Therefore, a new talent management system is being purchased to improve learning management and support continuous professional development and succession planning.

Both the new systems will interface with Agresso please see Appendix B.

3.5 Apprenticeship Reporting

Under the Apprenticeship reforms, there is a requirement to submit an annual report to demonstrate our performance regarding the 2.3% Public Sector headcount target. SBC's first report on the numbers of Apprentices and associated commentary was submitted on 30th September. We have developed an 'Apprentice-Ometer' which shows progress against the target.

3.6 First Apprentice

The Academy has appointed its first Apprentice through the 'Breaking Boundaries' project sponsored by the English Cricket Club and Spirit 2012. For information, this project is aimed at improving social cohesion and improving Slough's activity levels.

The Apprenticeship being used to deliver this project is the Level 3 (A level equivalent) Community Sport and Health Officer. The successful candidate newly recruited into SBC is a graduate and a Slough resident. As a result of the recruitment process for the Apprentice post, 3 of the remaining candidates who are also Slough residents found employment with leisure related employers in Slough.

3.7 Adult Social Care Trailblazer

The response to our first Request For Quotation for the Adult Social Care Apprenticeship Training Providers was disappointing in terms of the quality of responses from the prospective Training Providers.

However, a Training Provider has just been appointed to deliver the Level 4 (diploma equivalent) Commercial Procurement and Supply Apprenticeship for four existing staff members in Adult Social Care who will be able to start their training programme.

Alternative Training Providers are being sought for the remaining Apprenticeships identified for Adult Social Care, 6 of which will require new Apprentices to be recruited into SBC with the remaining 21 Apprenticeships identified for the development of existing Adult Social Care staff.

3.8 Next tranche of Apprenticeships

Following the Adult Social Care Trailblazer we have developed our approach to implementing Apprenticeships and we are now ready to implement the next wave. This approach involves the service areas producing Business cases to evidence the need in their areas for specific Apprenticeships.

At the September Slough Academy Board meeting it was agreed that the services to start their programmes will include Early Years (6 new Apprentices to be recruited to undertake the Level 2 (GCSE equivalent) Children & Young People's Workforce Apprenticeship and to progress to Level 3 (A level equivalent). Once fully qualified, Apprentices will be able to apply for positions in the Children's Centres which will contribute to a reduction in Agency spend in this area.

3.9 Schools and Nurseries

A Forum has been created for the SBC maintained schools and nurseries who use our payroll for which we are responsible in terms of the Levy. The objective is to provide an opportunity for them to come together each term to discuss and share best practise regarding Apprenticeships.

Schools will be provided with an Information Pack which outlines the process for hiring Apprentices, as well as individual finance information to confirm their available Levy funds.

3.10 Academy Launch

We are formally planning to launch the Slough Academy to the organisation in November as follows:

- w/c 5th November – training for Champions
- w/c 12th November – Managers' Briefing sessions
- w/c 19th November – Talkabout – 20th November
- w/c 26th November – launch to the wider council and press release

Materials and further information will be available on the intranet and SBC's website.

3.11 Next steps

We have identified 3 key phases of this project as follows (please see Appendix C):

- Phase 1 – Apprenticeships - being implemented now as detailed in this report
- Phase 2 – Continuous Professional Development to be scoped after Launch
- Phase 3 – Succession Planning which is our ultimate goal so that managers recognise the importance of Workforce Planning

Phases 2 and 3 will be linked to the relevant functionality within the new talent management system which will determine the implementation plan.

4 Background Papers

None.

5 Appendices

Appendix A	Apprentice Performance Framework
Appendix B	Supporting Technology
Appendix C	Grand Plan