

## **LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM**

**Date of meeting: 6 July 2021**

### **Item No 11**

**Title: Apprenticeship Levy**

#### **Executive Summary**

This report provides information arising from the Forum seminar on Apprenticeship Levy Pooled Payroll issues.

#### **Recommendations**

The Forum is asked to:

- a) Note the report.
- b) Express any views on the issues raised.

## **Background**

On 11 May 2021, briefing session was arranged for Schools Forum members on the issue of Accessing Apprenticeship Levy Funding for Non-Maintained Schools in the LCC Pooled Payroll.

As members are aware, LCC's payroll provision for its schools has been via a 'pooled' payroll, whereby LCC staff and all school staff irrespective of school category have all been paid on a single PAYE reference number for all statutory reporting to HMRC. This has resulted in a number of Aided or Foundation schools or Academy in Lancashire being unable to set up a digital apprenticeship account, preventing them accessing funding for the training and assessment of new apprentices after 31 March 2021 and preventing them being able to claim the incentive payment for hiring a new apprentice.

The Apprenticeship Levy team have been in discussions with the ESFA around this issue over a number of years but we have recently been advised that it has not been possible to identify an alternative registration route for employers without their own PAYE reference number, that provides an acceptable level of assurance.

However, we appreciate that for the none controlled schools, this is a barrier to those who would like access to the benefits of accessing apprenticeships.

The county council has provided information to schools via the portal and issued a link where any school or academy that is affected by this issue can register their details, to enable us to report how many schools this is effecting and keep them up to date. [CLICK HERE](#) to access the form.

We are currently weighing up a number of options put forward by the ESFA, although we appreciate it is not ideal we can assure those effected that we will be working closely with the agencies involved and we will respond in due course should there be any resolution.

Forum members and schools were also asked to share this information with your groups and clusters and any affected schools were encouraged to make representations nationally, using the contact information provided:

- Helpdesk [National Apprenticeship Service](#) or
- Telephone 0800 150600.

Officers are also connecting with other councils and the Local Government Association that are affected to establish the size of the problem nationally, and any solution they may have found.

Any further update that is available will be shared with the Forum on 6 July.