

LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM
Date of meeting 5 July 2022

Item No 10

Title: Recommendations of the Apprenticeship Levy Steering Group

Executive Summary

On 16 June 2022, the Apprenticeship Levy Steering Group considered a number of reports, including:

- School Apprenticeship Levy Update

A summary of the information presented, and the Working Group's recommendations are provided in this report.

Recommendations

The Forum is asked to:

- a) **Note the report from the Apprenticeship Levy Steering Group held on 16 June 2022;**
- b) **Ratify the Steering Group's recommendations.**

Background

On 16 June 2022, the Apprenticeship Levy Steering Group considered a number of reports. A summary of the information presented, and the Working Group's recommendations are provided below:

1. School Apprenticeship Levy Update

General Update

105 new Requests for Funding had been received and approved since October 2021. Currently there are 269 on-going apprentices, 55 awaiting enrolment, and 274 have completed their apprenticeship.

The total value of apprenticeship requests for this window of opportunity are at approx. £1,200,000 over the duration of the apprenticeships.

Transfer requests, totalling £334,000, have been agreed to date, with 1 enrolment outstanding.

It was highlighted that the Pooled Payroll issue was still unresolved. A LGA round table meeting with ESFA took place September 2021, but issues remain with a focus on finding a solution still needed. Details will be updated via the portal as soon as there is anything to report.

The team is working on a New School Apprenticeship Guide, which is due to be released for September 2022 and will be circulated to all schools. A new work based planning form for schools to complete from September for any requests will also be launched, which will help the service plan our team resource. The Apprenticeship Ambassadors are also to be relaunched to coincide with the new offer.

Procurement update

Procurement of contracts was the main focus of activity for the service through spring and summer 2021. Most of this process has now been completed for the schools side and the following contracts have been awarded:

- Ripley St Thomas SCITT will deliver Teacher L6 instead of Star Academies
- Nelson & Colne will continue the delivery of TA ,EY and SBP L4 and Facilities L3
- NLTG will now deliver Business Admin and the Leadership and Management (L5 Ops Manager) & Project Management portfolio
- UCLan will now deliver Senior Leader L7 and CMDA L6 degree apprenticeships
- Blackburn College will deliver all finance/accounting related apprenticeships
- Kendal College will continue with L3 Outdoor Activity Leader and Outdoor Activity leader L5

The team are in discussions with Play Therapy UK to deliver Play Therapist L7 in September subject to numbers. In addition, the service is engaging with the Lancashire FA to deliver an initial pilot programme for 6 L4 Sports Coach Apprenticeships, to start in September 2022. Apprentices must be supervised at all times by a qualified teacher and cannot deliver PE curriculum independently or breakfast or after school Sports sessions without a teachers supervision.

Kickstart Success In Schools

The Kickstart Scheme was a new programme launched by the government in September 2020 to December 2021 to deliver funding for employers offering new job roles for 16-24 years olds who are currently in receipt of Universal Credit. The programme was aimed at preventing young people who are currently unemployed facing long term unemployment. For each job placement created, the employer received £1,500 in funding. In Lancashire schools -there have 27 successful Kickstart placements to date.

7 of these have converted into apprenticeships funded by the LCC levy with one more in the pipeline for later this summer. One of the placements was nominated as finalist for the Kick Start/Apprenticeship of the year.

School Engagement

Engagement with school was still proving a challenge for the team, especially post covid, with schools not spending their share of apprentice levy income.

The working group offered some suggestions to assist with this, which included may of the channels that the team were already utilising.

Apprentice Incentive Payment

A payment of £1,000 is available to an employer for taking on an apprentice who is either:

- aged 16 to 18 years old
- under 25 and has an education, health and care plan or has been in the care of their local authority

This £1000 payment will be paid via your training provider. The payment is different to apprenticeship levy funds, so can be spend on anything to support your organisation's costs. For example, on uniforms, your apprentice's travel or their salary.

Recruitment

The team are making a big push of school vacancies, which can be uploaded to the LCC website, schools recruitment site and Indeed and where resource allows uploaded to the National Apprenticeship Service website (NAS).

The New Hire Employer Incentive Payment ended in January 2022 – to date 84 claims with a value of £210,000 submitted for apprentices that have been recruited into LCC schools and a total of £114,000 having already been paid to them.

Team members are in regular contact with the schools helping them with the recruitment and vacancy documentation and process. All new documents have been uploaded to the schools portal A-Z for schools to download including our new schools training menu for 2021/22.

Job support packs have been developed to aid schools in completing their adverts.

Financial position

An update was provided on the school financial position, including:

- Annual Schools Levy fund approx. £1.3m (down due to academisation, as was approx. £1.4 m)
- Spend across Levy schools in 2017/2018 £28,098

• Spend across Levy schools in 2018/2019	£314,414
• Spend across Levy schools in 2019/2020	£566,115
• Spend across Levy schools in 2020/2021	£619,564
• Spend across Levy schools in 2021/2022	£871,005
• Spend to date 2022/2023	£148,359
• Forecast spend this year 2022/2023 approx.	£1,118,606
• Total spend to date	£2,547,555

The Group:

- a) **Noted the information;**
- b) **Expressed frustration at the continued difficulties caused by school pooled payroll issues;**
- c) **Thanked the Apprenticeship Levy Team for their continued hard work and dedication during difficult circumstances.**