



# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

<b>MEETING</b>	Fire Authority
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	13 June 2018
<b>OFFICER</b>	Lynne Swift, Director of People & Organisational Development
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Councillor Steven Lambert
<b>SUBJECT OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>Update on Buckinghamshire &amp; Milton Keynes Fire Authority Apprenticeship Programme</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>This report is presented to members of Buckinghamshire &amp; Milton Keynes Fire Authority (the Authority) as an update on the Authority's apprenticeship programme.</p> <p>The Authority introduced its apprenticeship programme in 2016, with its key areas of focus being: how apprentices can be utilised most effectively; highlighting the importance of improving the diversity of our workforce; offering career development opportunities to our existing employees, and increasing the resilience of our workforce.</p> <p><b>2017/18:</b></p> <p>At the end of 2017/18, apprentices made up 6.6 percent of the Authority's total workforce, working to a number of different apprenticeship standards (summarised in Annex A). This exceeds (the Government's target of 2.3 percent which equates to the equivalent of 12 full time equivalent (FTE) per year. 2017/18 was the first full year of the Government's apprenticeship reform agenda, and for which all providers have to submit reports to the National Apprenticeship Service by the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Whilst targets and the apprenticeship levy were introduced for 2017/18, the aim of the Authority's programme continues to be the strategically targeted and sustainable refreshment of the workforce, rather than designed to meet Government targets.</p> <p><b>2018/19</b></p> <p>Fourteen new apprentice firefighters started their initial acquisition training, known as the Firefighter Development Programme, in April 2018. This 12 week blended training course is accredited by Skills For Justice and delivered under the Training Partnership with The Fire Service College. Once completed, the apprentice firefighters will be placed on station from</p>

	<p>23July 2018.</p> <p>In August 2018, the first cohort of apprentices (18 firefighters and two business administrators) who started in 2016 will be finishing their apprenticeships.</p> <p>Two of the existing workforce are currently enrolled on apprenticeships in Management &amp; Leadership and, following the appointment of a Management Apprenticeship training provider, a further 20+ of the workforce will be enrolled on these apprenticeships in 2018/19.</p> <p>Again, based on these figures, the Authority has exceeded both the Government’s target for apprenticeships, and its own as outlined in the Pledge submitted to the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network. The total number of apprentices (including support services) compared to total headcount is currently 11 percent. Annex A provides a more detailed update on the Authority’s apprenticeship programme. Appendix 1 provides information on the national position – where the Authority makes a significant contribution through its representation on, and participation in, national work groups.</p>
<b>ACTION</b>	Noting
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	That the content of the update be noted.
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>	<p>The following risks have been identified and mitigated as an outcome of the Authority’s apprenticeship programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reputation – due to the Authority’s pro-active approach to implementing apprenticeships, it is well established with regards to utilising the levy payment and meeting the public sector targets</li> <li>• Resourcing – by recruiting apprentice firefighters in 2017 and increasing the number of firefighter apprentices recruited in 2018, pressure on the establishment has been relieved, helping to maintain minimum crewing levels</li> <li>• Resourcing – the workforce will be continue to be refreshed using a blended approach to balance the recruitment of apprentices with experienced transferees. In addition the Authority is piloting career pathways for On Call members of staff to whole time via the Flexi FF programme.</li> <li>• End Point Assessment (EPA) provision for the new firefighter trailblazer standard is currently limited by the provider accreditation process.</li> </ul>

	<p>This is being mitigated by a national procurement exercise which will be completed before the EPA is required in 2020.</p>
<p><b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b></p>	<p>The apprenticeship levy costs the Authority c. £60k per annum (this cost has included in the budget since 2017/18).</p> <p>The Authority is seeking to maximise the return on this investment by introducing Management Apprenticeships at various levels throughout the organisation.</p>
<p><b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b></p>	<p>None arising from the recommendation.</p>
<p><b>CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE</b></p>	<p>The Authority continues to work with its Thames Valley Fire Service partners, through regular resourcing meetings, to determine a collaborative approach to firefighter and apprenticeship recruitment. This has led to the establishment of links with Thames Valley Police on recruitment activity, in particular in looking at improving diversity.</p> <p>The Service has worked with other fire and emergency service partners on workforce reform, by supporting national and regional events, and through sharing best practice.</p> <p>Royal Berkshire are named on this Service's contract with the Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA). As such, if they wished to recruit apprentices using the ATA model, they could do so with our provider and without having to go out to tender.</p> <p>The Service has collaborated on multiple apprenticeship trailblazer standards at a national level, including the recently approved Emergency Call Handler standard.</p> <p>Following the TV Collaboration Steering Group Meeting on 19 March 2018, an action is underway to contact South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) with regard to the apprenticeship project, and a meeting is to be arranged late Spring/early Summer with the apprenticeship lead from Thames Valley Police (TVP) to explore further possibilities.</p>
<p><b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b></p>	<p>No Health and Safety implications have been identified.</p>
<p><b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</b></p>	<p>Integrated impact assessments have, and will be, completed for any change programme which relates to the Authority's apprenticeship programme.</p> <p>The apprenticeship programme provides an excellent opportunity to improve the diversity make-up of the Authority. Targeted "have a go" days were organised for female and ethnic minority applicants, and there has been a significant increase in females being</p>

	<p>appointed across the 3 recruitment campaigns.</p> <p>Work on apprenticeships is scheduled for Summer 2018, linked to the On-Call operational resourcing programme, now that the part-time rules are clarified.</p> <p>In order to improve the diversity of the workforce through apprenticeship recruitment, the Authority endorsed the submission of a pledge to, and were the first from the Fire sector to be accepted by, the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network (ADCN).</p> <p>Recent apprenticeships networking meetings in Milton Keynes, have enabled engagement with local community groups to help increase applications from BME communities.</p>
<p><b>USE OF RESOURCES</b></p>	<p><b>The arrangements for setting, reviewing and implementing strategic and operational objectives; Performance monitoring, including budget monitoring; achievement of strategic objectives and best value performance indicators;</b></p> <p>The Authority’s apprenticeship programme contributes to achieving it’s people strategic enabler set out in the Corporate Plan 2015 to 2020:-</p> <p>‘To optimise the contribution and well-being of our people’</p> <p>by using the opportunity provided by apprenticeship programmes to ‘adapt and refresh the workforce to improve service delivery and resilience’. This is especially relevant when considered in relation to the steadily increasing age of the operational workforce and the need to develop new skills in the Authority. As a result of the apprenticeship programme, the average age of whole-time firefighters has reduced from 41 to 39 years.</p> <p><b>Communication with stakeholders;</b></p> <p>A range of methods are used to communicate on workforce reform across the Service. Communication is delivered via the People &amp; Organisational Development Director’s blog, the leadership group and the I:drive. The success of the Authority’s apprenticeship programme is showcased internally and externally at visits from other services and national events.</p> <p><b>The system of internal control;</b></p> <p>All significant changes impacting on the Authority will follow an agreed process, including governance and approval. The apprenticeship programme is continually monitored through regular updates to the Authority and internal governance meetings.</p> <p>The programme is accredited by Pearson’s and yearly audits are undertaken by their representatives to</p>

	<p>ensure the required standards are being met.</p> <p>The Apprenticeship Training Provider – Encompass - is audited by Ofsted to ensure compliance with funding regulations.</p>
<p><b>PROVENANCE SECTION &amp; BACKGROUND PAPERS</b></p>	<p><b>Background:</b></p> <p>Report to the Fire Authority held 14 February 2018: Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network  <a href="http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/5415/1782/9457/ITEM_1_2_Apprenticeship_Diversity_Champions_Network_ADC_N_Fire_Authority_and_Annex_A.pdf">http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/5415/1782/9457/ITEM_1_2_Apprenticeship_Diversity_Champions_Network_ADC_N_Fire_Authority_and_Annex_A.pdf</a></p> <p>Report to the Fire Authority held 18 October 2017; Update on Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority Apprenticeship Programme  <a href="http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/8715/0719/9540/ITEM_1_1_Apprenticeships_Update_Report_JPMAppentices.pdf">http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/8715/0719/9540/ITEM_1_1_Apprenticeships_Update_Report_JPMAppentices.pdf</a></p> <p>Report to the Executive Committee held 29 July 2015: Apprenticeship Scheme  <a href="http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/7114/5527/6772/EXECUTIVE_COMMITTEE_PACK_290715.compressed.pdf">http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/7114/5527/6772/EXECUTIVE_COMMITTEE_PACK_290715.compressed.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>APPENDICES</b></p>	<p>Annex A: The Authority’s Apprenticeship Programme</p> <p>Appendix 1: Fire and Rescue Service Apprenticeships – update 10 April 2018 (NFCC Chiefs’ Briefing)</p> <p>Appendix 2: Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network – Quarterly Return – April 2018</p> <p>Appendix 3: Director’s Blog – National Apprenticeships Week 5 to 9 March 2018</p>
<p><b>TIME REQUIRED</b></p>	<p>10 Minutes</p>
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