

**REPORT OF THE EDUCATION, CHILDREN & FAMILIES SELECT
COMMITTEE
2018/19**

**POST-16 NON-UNIVERSITY TECHNICAL
EDUCATION AND APPRENTICESHIP
OPPORTUNITIES IN BROMLEY**

Meeting Date: Wednesday 4 JULY 2018

The Committee gives its sincere thanks to the witnesses for their contribution to the Education Select Committee.

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Forward

When I left school in the 1960s only a small percentage of my generation went to university, some went straight into work, others, like me continued our education in further education colleges. Some of my contemporaries drifted from job to job but many others, encouraged often by parents already in the industry, went into apprenticeships. In some industries these could be as long as seven years and within a couple of decades they found that technological change had rendered their training obsolete. In the construction industry most professional qualifications were obtained through a mixture of on the job practical experience combined with college based day or part-time release.

Successive governments have tried to address Britain's failure to compete with the best industries in the world. An education system which has left many young people without the education and skills they need, a failure of management to adapt swiftly to technological change, and to invest in training and new machinery. As a consequence Britain has been dogged by low productivity.

A young person leaving school today is faced with a technological revolution as dramatic as the industrial revolution of the 18th and 19th Centuries. Change will be counted in years rather than decades. Artificial intelligence will transform virtually every occupation.

Brexit will provide new trading opportunities but only if we have a skilled workforce able to harness the changing technology. For some a university education will be the right career path but for many others a modern apprenticeship will be much more suitable.

The proposed 'T' level qualifications recognise that the world of work will change dramatically and that modern apprenticeships will require their participants to constantly up date and adapt their skills over their working lives.

For our Nation's future we need to ensure we rise to the challenge.

Cllr Nicholas Bennett JP
Chairman
Education, Children and Families Select Committee

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Education Children and Families Select Committee met on 4th July 2018 to undertake a review on Non-University Technical Education and Apprenticeships.
- 1.2 In addition to this, the Committee received an update from the Education, Children and Families Portfolio Holder including the preparations being made for the Ofsted Inspection which would take place before the end of the year. Details can be found in the minutes¹ from the meeting.

2. Executive Summary of Recommendations

- 2.1 **We request that the Portfolio Holder seeks further information on London Council's request that apprenticeships created in their supply chains be included as part of the apprenticeship target, particularly given the large percentage of Bromley services which are provided by commissioned providers and if necessary makes similar representations to the Government.**
- 2.2 **That all Council departments review their staffing structure to ensure that where appropriate, posts are open to apprentices and that these as well as those in commissioned services are advertised to prospective applicants.**
- 2.3 **That any contract let by the Council in relation to commissioned services include a clause requiring that the contractor offer apprenticeship opportunities to suitable candidates.**
- 2.4 **That the work to open the available apprenticeship opportunities to a wider pool of the Local Authority's Children Looked After continue and expand.**
- 2.5 **That Bromley staff who are supporting apprentices in their work based placements continue to be offered the necessary training to enable apprentices to be provided with the required level of support and training.**
- 2.6 **That the Bromley Education Business Partnership work with Metrobus and Stagecoach to identify potential training and employment opportunities for young people in the Borough.**
- 2.7 **That the Council should give every support and encouragement for the proposed London Aerospace and Technology College at Biggin Hill Airport.**

¹ Minutes can be found on the London Borough of Bromley Website at:
<https://cde.bromley.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=584&MId=6319>

- 2.8 That steps are taken to ensure that Officers responsible for delivering the Bromley Apprenticeship Scheme closely monitor and evaluate the impact of T-levels following their introduction.**
- 2.9 That the Bromley Education Business Partnership continue to work with London South East Colleges to address issues surrounding the provision of funding for work experience for the T-level qualification.**
- 2.10 That the Bromley Education Business Partnership directly and in co-operation with our local secondary schools and the LSEC, promote to parents and young people the advantages of apprenticeships as a path to many worthwhile and well paid careers**

3. Non-University Technical Education and Apprenticeships

- 3.1. The Select Committee's main inquiry for this meeting focused on non-University technical education and apprenticeship opportunities available to Bromley residents. The purpose of the review was to identify the opportunities available to Bromley residents, assess the impact of this provision and consider what further support could be provided by the Local Authority.
- 3.2. A range of written evidence was provided to Members in advance of the meeting. This included a report providing an overview of the Apprenticeship Levy and Bromley Council's Apprenticeship Scheme, a submission from London and South East Colleges and an article from *The Times* (18 May 2018). The Committee also received written testimony from two residents with personal experience of apprenticeship opportunities in the Borough. Feedback from some of the current participants in Bromley's Apprenticeship Scheme was tabled at the meeting.
- 3.3 The Committee heard evidence from two main witnesses at the meeting:
- Angela Huggett, Head of HR Strategy and Education (LBB)
 - Linda King, Youth Support Programme Manager (LBB)
- 3.4 The Committee notes with disappointment and regret that the NHS, the largest employer in the Borough, was not able to send a representative to the meeting in support of the Committee's review.
- 3.5 Background
- 3.5.1 The Enterprise Act 2016 permits the Secretary of State to set targets for prescribed public bodies in England in relation to the number of apprentices working for them.
- 3.5.2 The new duty applies to public bodies in England with 250 or more employees and requires that apprenticeship numbers equivalent to 2.3% of employee headcount be delivered each year. London Councils has lobbied the

Government to allow local authorities to include apprenticeships created in their supply chains as part of their contribution to meeting the target; for Full Time Equivalent figures to be used in calculating the target, rather than a straight headcount; and for schools to be grouped separately and be made responsible for meeting their own target. However no further information has been received from the Government on these issues.

Recommendation 1: We request that the Portfolio Holder seeks further information on London Council's request that apprenticeships created in their supply chains be included as part of the apprenticeship target, particularly given the large percentage of Bromley services which are provided by commissioned providers and if necessary makes similar representations to the Government.

3.6 Apprenticeship Levy

- 3.6.1 The Apprenticeship Levy is a charge introduced from 1 April 2017 by the Government to help fund plans to deliver a step change in apprenticeship numbers and their quality. The levy is designed to put apprenticeship funding in the hands of employers by encouraging them to invest in and create apprenticeships. Employers in England who pay the levy and demonstrate their commitment to apprenticeship training by meeting Government requirements benefit from top-up funding which increases the funding in their digital apprenticeship accounts by 10%. This means that for every £1 that an employer pays into their digital account, £1.10 is available to the employer to invest in apprenticeships.
- 3.6.2 The Levy applies to all employers across all sectors in the UK, including local authorities and is set at 0.5% of an employers' pay bill. The levy is collected monthly via Pay As You Earn (PAYE) alongside income tax and national insurance contributions. All employers have an allowance of £15,000, which means that for the London Borough of Bromley, the Levy is applicable on pay bills over the first £3 million. The Levy payment is ring-fenced in the form of an electronic voucher that can be used to purchase training from recognised providers from the Digital Apprenticeship Service.
- 3.6.3 Based on the current pay bill the Local Authority's levy is approximately £350,000 per annum with a target to create approximately 34 new Apprenticeships. As the Council continues its commissioning journey, the levy and corresponding target for Apprenticeships is likely to reduce in line with Council staffing levels.
- 3.6.4 Employers choose the training they would like their apprentice to receive throughout their apprenticeship. There are currently two different types of apprenticeship scheme: Frameworks and Standards and both are funded in the same way:
- Apprenticeship Standards - each standard covers a specific job role and sets out the core skills, knowledge and behaviours an apprentice

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will need to be fully competent in their job role and meet the needs of employers, standards are developed by employer groups known as 'trailblazers'.

- Apprenticeship Frameworks – a series of work-related vocational and professional qualifications, with workplace and classroom based training.

3.6.5 It is the Government's intention to phase out Frameworks by 2020, as there is transition to the employer-led Apprenticeship Standards.

3.6.6 The Government has been very specific about what apprenticeship levy funds can and cannot be spent on. Funds can be used for apprenticeship training and assessment (with an approved training provider and assessment organisation up to its funding band maximum).

Funds **cannot** be used for:

- Wages
- Statutory licenses to practice
- Travel and subsidiary costs
- Managerial costs
- Traineeships
- Work placement programmes
- The costs of setting up an apprenticeship programme.

3.6.7 Apprenticeships are open to all age groups however additional payments (£1,000 for employers and £1,000 for the training provider) from the Government are available to help with the extra costs associated with supporting younger apprentices, care leavers and young adults with additional learning needs.

3.6.8 Employers are able to use funds to allow an individual to undertake a qualification at a higher level than they already hold or at the same or lower level if the apprenticeship will allow the individual to acquire substantive new skills and the content of the training is materially different from any prior training or previous apprenticeship.

3.6.9 All training providers that want to deliver apprenticeships to any employer have to join the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP).

3.6.10 Since the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy, the Council has worked to develop a range of specialist apprenticeship opportunities within growth areas including Housing, Legal and Social Work.

3.7 The Bromley Apprenticeship Scheme

3.7.1 The Bromley Apprenticeship Scheme benefits both the Council by utilising funding made available through the digital portal, and the local community as the Scheme is only available to Bromley residents and offers real

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opportunities for skills development and future employment. This has been enabled by the generous support of Members who agreed additional funding of £200,000 to support the scheme.

3.7.2 The Council's hybrid model scheme provides for:

- A number of permanent dedicated apprenticeship roles within Departments utilising existing vacancies
- A pool of apprentices trained in basic administration and business skills who would then be available to be utilised across the Council for relevant posts graded at circa £18,000 per annum as an alternative to using agency staff where this need was identified.
- Upskilling of existing staff

3.7.3 The Scheme is open to all ages although the Committee notes that the Council's current cohort is between the ages of 18 to 25 years. At present the Council has engaged 16 Apprentices across various departments who are studying a range of qualifications including Business Administration Level 2 and more specialist qualifications for example in Housing and Legal Services. Opportunities are open to all regardless of whether applicants have special educational or support needs.

3.7.4 All participants in the Scheme are required to pass a functional skills test. Once applicants are accepted onto the scheme specific learning needs are accommodated through a programme developed around individual need. Each apprentice has their own learning plan tailored to meet their learning and development needs both at college and within the work-based placement.

3.7.5 HR continues to work with managers and services with recruitment and retention challenges including Children's and Adult's Social Care, Environmental Health and Planning Services to develop a 'Grow your Own Scheme' using the apprenticeship route. The Committee notes that there are diverse career opportunities available throughout local government with a wealth of opportunities in more technical areas such as Planning, Property Services, and Facilities Management. The Council is able to choose a more specialist training provider if necessary; however, any training provider has to be accredited and appear on the Government's Register of Training Providers.

Recommendation 2: That all Council departments review their staffing structure to ensure that where appropriate, posts are open to apprentices and that these and those in commissioned services are advertised to prospective applicants.

3.7.6 The Committee notes that as a result of the commissioning of services the Local Authority works with a number of contractors such as Veolia, Amey, and Id Verde. These organisations have the ability to offer exciting and interesting

apprenticeship opportunities to potential apprentices across the Borough. Work should be undertaken to encourage the Local Authority's partners as well as local businesses to provide apprenticeship opportunities for residents.

Recommendation 3: That any contract let by the Council in relation to commissioned services include a clause requiring that the contractor offer apprenticeship opportunities to suitable candidates.

3.7.7 The Council, through a procurement process, has engaged London and South East Colleges to provide its apprentices with their qualification studies. Periods of apprenticeships range from 12 to 18 months dependent on the qualification being studied.

3.7.8 One of the key priorities is to work closely with colleagues within Children's Social Care to help maximise the opportunities for our Looked After Children and to look at ways to best target recruitment. The Committee notes that the take up in apprenticeship opportunities from the Local Authority's children looked after has been low. Work is being undertaken with the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Service to develop the skills of the young people and open the available opportunities to a wider pool by ensuring that they are supported through the recruitment process. Officers will be liaising with the training provider (LSEC) to see if they can assist with some support in this respect. The Committee would like to see this work continue and expand.

Recommendation 4: That the work to open the available apprenticeship opportunities to a wider pool of the Local Authority's Children Looked After continue and expand.

3.7.9 Bromley also networks very closely with other Boroughs as well as being part of a London Apprenticeship network for Local Government which enables the Council to share and benefit from any best practice.

3.7.10 Terms and conditions of employment for apprenticeships are well established and there is a national statutory minimum wage set for apprentices which is currently £3.70 per hour. Traditionally however Bromley has always paid apprentices at the National Statutory age-related minimum wage rate which is in excess of the statutory pay rate for Apprentices. The current rate for all Apprentices in Bromley is £7.83.

3.7.11 The Committee is pleased that overall there has been a good response to the launch of the Council's Apprenticeship Scheme and that interest in the Bromley Apprenticeship Scheme is growing. The Committee recognises the importance of ensuring that Bromley staff who are supporting apprentices in their work-based placements are sufficiently trained to provide the required level of support and training to ensure apprentices reach their potential.

Recommendation 5: that Bromley staff who are supporting apprentices in their work based placements continue to be offered the necessary training to

enable apprentices to be provided with the required level of support and training.

3.8 Bromley's Youth Employment Scheme (YES)

3.8.1 With the support of Members, the Council has been delivering the Youth Employment Scheme (YES) through the Bromley Education Business Partnership since August 2014. The project aims to support the generation of employment opportunities and help tackle local youth unemployment, facilitating employability support for our vulnerable young people.

3.8.2 By the end of December 2017, a total of £527,000 funding had been provided to support the delivery of the apprenticeship project. The project has supported 142 young people into employment to date, 62 of whom benefitted from apprenticeship opportunities mainly within the Borough.

3.8.3 Through the YES project, a series of Next Step Conferences are held each year for sixth form students from local schools who do not intend to move on to Higher Education when they finish their studies. Each year 350 young people from over 10 Bromley secondary schools benefit from these events which are supported by local and national employers. The aim of the event is to give young people an insight into the employment opportunities and apprenticeships that are available and how to prepare themselves and access the opportunities.

3.8.4 As part of the YES project the Council works with Community Links Bromley. Young people are encouraged to develop their own networks and work experience opportunities. Community Links Bromley supports this work by providing a network for young people to access.

3.8.5 The Committee notes that the Bromley Education Business Partnership engages with employers across the Borough and encourages them to support the work of the Partnership. A number of work-based learning opportunities are available and the Bromley Education Business Partnership engages with local employers in order to identify further opportunities. The Committee notes that the Council has not yet developed a relationship with two major employers in the Borough; Metrobus and Stagecoach. The Committee feel that these businesses would be able to offer a number of different, more practical opportunities to potential apprentices and as such their support should be actively sought.

Recommendation 6: That the Bromley Education Business Partnership work with Metrobus and Stagecoach to identify potential training and employment opportunities for young in the Borough.

3.9 London and South East Colleges

3.9.1 London South East Colleges (LSEC) offers a wide range of courses across a number of vocational areas. The curriculum is mapped across the LEAP

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priority areas, and high volume, high growth areas including amongst others: Construction; Creative Arts Design and Media; Digital; Childcare and Education; Business and Administration; Hospitality and; Engineering and Manufacturing.

- 3.9.2 The curriculum will also be mapped in the future to the T-level course areas including amongst others: Digital; Construction; Childcare and Education; Engineering and Manufacturing and Health and Science.
- 3.9.3 LSEC works with over 500 employers to ensure the education and training that is delivered meets industry requirements, ensuring that students gain real, transferable skills and achieve their full potential.
- 3.9.4 The London South East Apprenticeship Company offers apprenticeship and traineeship programmes across 25 different areas including Accounting, Bricklaying, Carpentry, Customer Services and Health and Social Care. There are currently over 1500 Apprenticeships or Traineeships offered and it is planned that this is increased by 100% by 2020.
- 3.9.5 LSEC is proposing, in co-operation with London Biggin Hill Airport, to open a London Aerospace and Technology College on the airport. We believe that this is an exciting venture which will not only provide a large number of apprenticeships and teaching posts but will add to the attraction of the airport as a place for related companies to locate and provide additional employment for local people and it deserves the Council's full support and encouragement

Recommendation 7: That the Council should give every support and encouragement for the proposed London Aerospace and Technology College at Biggin Hill Airport.

3.10 T-Levels

- 3.10.1 T-Levels are new technical study programmes, announced by the Department for Education, set to be implemented in 2020/21, focusing on practical and technical education. The introduction of T-levels aims to streamline technical education and focus on developing skills that sit within 15 industry routes. The first T-levels will be introduced in September 2020 with full roll-out intended from September 2023. They will sit alongside apprenticeships and A Levels within a reformed skills training system. T-levels have been designed to create the skills needed to meet the needs of our economy going forward and are being developed in partnership with Government, business, and education. The Prime Minister has stated that these qualifications are aimed at transforming technical education in the UK, ensuring that thousands of people across the country have the necessary skills to enable the UK to compete in the global market.
- 3.10.2 Many parents and young people assume that going to university is the only path to a worthwhile career and a well-paid employment. This is not the case and for many careers and an apprenticeship is a better route. We believe that

far more needs to be done to publicise and explain the advantages for many young people of pursuing an apprenticeship rather than a university degree.

3.10.3 There is currently a nationwide concern that only limited information on the new T-level qualifications has been published. Research published by City & Guilds and the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) in May 2018² found that only 17% of UK employers feel that they have a good understanding of T-levels and 49% rated their understanding as poor. It is clear to the Committee that the impact of T-levels will need to be closely monitored and evaluated. Outstanding issues that need to be resolved include those surrounding the level of work experience that is required to go alongside the qualification and whether the expected level of work experience is, in reality, available. In addition to this, issues surrounding the provision of funding for the required work experience will also need to be further considered.

Recommendation 8: That steps are taken to ensure that Officers responsible for delivering the Bromley Apprenticeship Scheme closely monitor and evaluate the impact of T-levels following their introduction.

Recommendation 9: That the Bromley Education Business Partnership continue to work with London South East Colleges to address issues surrounding the provision of funding for work experience for the T-level qualification.

Recommendation 10: That the Bromley Education Business Partnership directly and in co-operation with our local secondary schools and the LSEC, promote to parents and young people the advantages of apprenticeships as a path to many worthwhile and well paid careers

3.10.3 The Committee notes that LSEC has successfully been awarded a grant from the DfE Work Placement Capacity and Diversity Fund to develop the College's work in preparing for the implementation of T-levels. The College is piloting a new staffing structure which works more closely with employers, software development, student incentives and barrier removal. To increase understanding across the organisation, the College has developed a series of marketing communications to explain how the new qualifications work and the progression pathways for students.

3.11 Conclusion

3.11.1 Britain needs to ensure that we have a skilled workforce able to adapt in a world with a rapidly changing technology and to produce goods and services able to compete both in the home and export markets. For some that will require a university degree but for many others there are better and more appropriate routes to vocational and technical education and training through

² https://www.cityandguilds.com/~/_media/cityandguilds-site/documents/t-levels/tlevel_research%20pdf.ashx

apprenticeships. A young person starting their career in the 21st Century will need to frequently update their knowledge and skills and it will be the responsibility of education and training bodies to ensure that lifelong learning is available.

3.11.2 There is much good work being undertaken across the Borough to offer high quality apprenticeships across a number of sectors, with further opportunities still to be explored and this good practice needs to be promoted and expanded. We are concerned that the Government's target for the number of apprenticeships is unlikely to be reached and that 'T' levels may not be fully developed for their introduction in 2020.

3.11.3 The systems in place must be sufficiently flexible and evolve to meet current and future demand. The introduction of T-levels will necessitate a change in the future delivery model of training and any impact of these changes will need to be closely monitored and evaluated.

3.11.4 Education and training is a lifelong journey. It is likely that apprentices will seek further education or training opportunities in the same or different sectors during the course of their career and that this need will have to be met.

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