

REPORT FOR: CABINET

Date of Meeting:	19 July 2012
Subject:	Development of Apprenticeships and Work Experience Opportunities for Unemployed Graduates - Progress Report
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Andrew Trehern, Corporate Director Place Shaping
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Keith Ferry, Portfolio Holder Planning and Regeneration
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	No
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

The Cabinet Report on “Development of Apprentice Opportunities” in January 2012 required a progress report in July 2012. This report provides an update on the development of apprenticeship opportunities and the new provision for unemployed graduates which began in May 2012.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to note the report.

Reason: (For recommendation)

To keep Cabinet informed of the progress in line with the original decision of 19 January 2012 Cabinet meeting.

Section 2 – Report

The January 2012 Cabinet Report used October 2011 unemployment figures as a baseline. Unemployment is measured by the number of registered Jobseeker Allowance claimants. The table below compares the October position with March 2012 position.

	Harrow JSA Claimants %	Harrow Number JSA Claimants	London JSA Claimants %	% of JSA claimants aged 18-24
October 11	2.8	4,247	4.4	25.4
April 2012	2.7	4,200	4.3	22.5

Cabinet agreed on the 19th January that “The Corporate Director Place Shaping/Enterprise and Environment be nominated to act as Champion for Apprentices and s/he be supported by officers in Human Resources & Development and the Economic Development teams through the Recession Busting Group.

Following the January 2012 Cabinet report the council secured £48,000 from JobCentreplus to implement a project to provide unemployed graduates with work experience. The Gradplan project complements the Apprenticeship project. The apprenticeship programme offers support to unemployed young people with qualifications below NVQ 2 and 3. Graduates qualifications are NVQ 4 and above.

Apprenticeship opportunities

A small project group comprising Economic Development, HRD and Brent and Harrow Education Business has been established. It defined the process to identify, create, manage and monitor apprenticeships within the council.

Parallel to this the council is using its role as an enabler to create apprenticeships through procurement and the planning process. The Procurement service is working with the Economic Development unit to ensure apprenticeships are embedded into the procurement process. The Planning service is working with Economic Development to ensure apprenticeships are created through the development of key sites in Harrow. Progress on the development of apprenticeships is reported to the Recession Busting Group on a quarterly basis.

A tender process was completed to secure an Approved Training Agency to deliver apprenticeships. The tender was awarded to the London Apprenticeship Company.

The following summarises the June 2012 position

Activity	Number of Apprentices
Two apprenticeship opportunities created with ATO Economic Development Procurement	2
Caretaker Apprentices employed by Housing	2
Six apprenticeship opportunities created with Notting Hill Housing and Catalyst Housing on development sites in Harrow	6
Employment and Training Action Plan 2012/13 agreed May Gurney (Highways Contract) to create apprenticeships	3

On the current trajectory, there will be 13 apprentices by the end of 2012/13.

GradPlan

Harrow Council entered into a competitive bidding process to secure funding from Jobcentreplus' s Flexible Support Fund. The council's project titled "Gradplan" provides unemployed graduates with work experience in the council and the voluntary sector.

The Flexible Support Fund provides £48,000 to support 48 graduates in 2012/13. The work experiences lasts between 6 – 10 weeks and enables a graduate to work on a dedicated project.

The graduate is provided with work experience, work related training and dedicated job search support during their placement.

The graduate intake is split into 3 recruitment rounds over this financial year. The Economic Development Unit has implemented a novel way of matching graduates to placements.

Speed dating events have been organised, allowing managers an opportunity to outline the placement they offer and graduates an opportunity to state how

their skills will meet the needs of the placement. The process has proved popular with both parties.

The first speed dating event in May placed 15 graduates. Of those placements, 2 secured jobs within 5 weeks. The second cohort of 17 graduates began their placements on June 18th. The third recruitment round will take place in September 2012.

Progress on the Gradplan will be reported to the Portfolio Holder Planning and Regeneration and the Recession Busting Group.

Implications of the Recommendation

Staffing/Workforce Issues

Employment of Apprentices and Graduates supports young people who require experience of work in order to compete successfully for jobs with older candidates. It also ensures that the Council seeks to address the aging workforce and the requirement to employ younger people. HRD will continue to provide pastoral support to apprentices and promote and provide access to 'appropriate' learning and development opportunities (many of which are free of charge) as advertised in the Corporate Learning and Development Programme.

Financial Implications

The scheme is funded within existing budgets.

Legal Comments

This is a progress report and therefore there are no additional legal comments to those contained within the original report.

Performance Issues

Whilst the final make up of the programme will be developed by the working group, it is anticipated by Officers that 12 local residents will commence a one-year Level 2 intermediate apprenticeship program in both September 2012 and 2013; with 6 apprentices from each of these cohorts progressing to Level 3 apprenticeships in a second year. Thus a total of 12 Level 3 apprentices across the length of the pilot.

To increase performance within the existing workforce, the working group will also review the feasibility for introducing Advanced Level Apprenticeships in skills areas such as Business Improvement, Management and Team Leadership to form part of a programme of continued professional development for existing Council staff.

A full report will be made in March 2013. It is currently too soon to make any meaningful analysis of this programme.

Environmental Impact

This proposal has no Environmental Impacts.

Procurement

The Managing Agent (ATA) was secured following Harrow Council's procurement guidelines.

Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No

Separate risk register in place? Yes

A separate risk register has been completed and will be included within the Place Shaping Directorate risk register when approval is given for the pilot to be developed.

Equalities implications

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? Yes

The introduction of an apprenticeship program has the potential for positive equality impacts on the Council, particularly for young people and BAME. However, the position for other groups can only be ascertained through careful monitoring of the program during its pilot stage. At the present time, the one direct apprentice currently in post is a white male and of the 3 apprentices with the Notting Hill Housing Group 2 are white men and one is a BAME man. We will review the recruitment process during the next phase. The apprentices with Catalyst are all white men; however, this reflects the existing make up of that Social Housing development, which Catalyst are developing and where they solely targeted their recruitment.

Corporate Priorities

By targeting unemployed young people resident in the borough the proposal supports the following Corporate Priority:

- Supporting and protecting people who are most in need.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Kanta Hirani	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 15 June 2012		

Name: Linda Cohen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 15 June 2012		

Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: Liz Defries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Divisional Director Partnership, Development and Performance
Date: 11 June 2012		

Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name: Andrew Baker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Divisional Director (Environmental Services)
Date: 18 June 2012		

Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Colin Middleton, Construction Employment Advisor, Economic Development Unit. Tel: 020 8736 6080.

Background Papers: Cabinet report – January 2012

**Call-In Waived by the
Chairman of Overview
and Scrutiny
Committee**

NOT APPLICABLE

*[Call-in does not apply to
reports that are for Noting]*