

5. Since its introduction in 2017, 1780 Apprenticeship starts have been generated by the County Council, all funded by the Levy. Of this number, 1173 starts have been in corporate departments, 607 in maintained schools.
6. As of 9th November 2022, there had been 196 starts total since the start of the FY. A further 70 are due to start their programme before the end of the calendar year, and the full FY forecast is for 375 starts. The current total of Apprentices on programme across the organisation is 661.
7. As part of the scheme, government allows Levy paying employers to transfer up to 25% of their annual contribution to other employers to fund Apprenticeship starts. Hampshire County Council has committed to transfer up to £3.5m between January 2020 and March 2023. After this, a rolling £1m p.a. will be made available.

Finance

8. Hampshire County Council's annual Levy payment is c. £3.7m, of which approx. two-thirds relates to maintained schools (As of Sep 2022 total headcount is 37,805, of which 25,051 in maintained schools).
9. As of the end September 2022, the Hampshire County Council levy balance was £8.2m. This is inclusive of the 10% top-up contribution from the government.
10. Total spend of Levy as of 9th November 2022 is estimated at £10.7m (since 2017). Total commitment to spend as of this date is £13.2m.
11. A total of £3.5m of Levy funds have been approved for transfer to March 2023, £3.3m of which has been committed as of September 2022. Since the scheme opened in January 2020, we have received 647 applications. This has resulted in 617 starts to date across 200 Hampshire employers. Further transfers have been temporarily paused whilst commitments to date are confirmed as still being required. Actual funds transferred as of 9th November totals £1.6m.
12. In 2020, and as part of its wider Plan for Jobs programme, the government offered incentives to employers recruiting Apprentices. At the end of September 2022, the County Council (inc. maintained schools) generated £75k from this scheme, all funds being passed to the hiring department/school. The scheme closed in April 2022.
13. In 2016, the government abolished employer's NI contributions for hiring young Apprentices up to age 25. This has been estimated to have saved the County Council £385k since 2017.

14. Levy funds that are uncommitted are recovered (retained) by HM Treasury. For the 2021/22 FY, this totalled £930k p.a. For the current FY, 2022/23, the current forecast is that this figure will reduce significantly, and likely to c. £500k. Nationally, HM Treasury is estimated to have retained more than £3.3bn total from employers uncommitted Levy funds

Programme profile and performance

15. The Hampshire Apprenticeship Levy Programme performs well. The 2021/22 data shows the Council's retention rate is 87% and achievement rate is 66%. The most recent government Apprenticeship figures for the 2020/21 year shows the national average for all Apprenticeships (old Frameworks and new Standards) is 59% retention and 58% achievement. In the same period the figure for new Apprenticeship Standards is even lower at 53% retention and 52% achievement. A pandemic factor has affected the national programme's performance.
16. The recent – and ongoing – development of new Apprenticeship Standards (employer-led) is supporting both the growth and reach of the programme. Of particular note is the development of a Social Worker Degree Apprenticeship, which is used to support workforce demands across both Children's and Adult Services. In partnership with the University of Winchester, the first cohort of 15 graduates successfully completed this programme in Summer 2022. A further 56 starts are being onboarded this Autumn. Also, a recognition of prior learning model initiated by the County Council's Apprenticeship Levy Team means that some individuals can qualify in 18-months (as opposed to 36 months). This is recognised as a sector-leading model.
17. There continues to be growing demand for higher level (Level 4+, post A-level equivalent) in technical areas such as Digital, Engineering, and Surveying. Increasingly, these are viewed as credible 'routes to practice' and viable alternative to a university-based programme.
18. As of September 2022, the five most popular Apprenticeship Standards since the start of the programme in 2017, were.
- Teaching Assistant (Level 3) – 205 starts
 - Project Management (Level 4) – 132 starts
 - Business Administrator (Level 3) – 113 starts
 - Senior Leader (Level 7) – 95 starts
 - Team Leader (Level 3) – 66 starts
19. The Level profile of the programme is changing, with an increased demand for Higher and Degree level programmes at Level 4 and above.

Transfers

20. From April 2019, government introduced the facility for employers to transfer up to 25% of the annual Apprenticeship Levy (12-month rolling total) to other employers. In response, the County Council has made available up to £3.5m (to March 2023) of uncommitted funds to support Apprenticeships in Hampshire.
21. The aim of the Hampshire Levy Transfer Policy is to support the County Council's Serving Hampshire Strategic Objectives, and specifically to expand the volume of Apprenticeship opportunities in Hampshire, supporting businesses, individuals, and communities alike. The Policy represents a significant investment by the County Council in local skills development.
22. The Transfer Policy operates to agreed eligibility criteria (primarily that the employer and/or employee is located within the Hampshire County area) and aims to prioritise young people (to 25) and individuals from cohorts for whom the County Council has a responsibility, e.g., care leavers, SEND, adults with LDD. It also seeks to support sectors important to the County Council and the delivery of its services, e.g., health, social care, education, as well as sectors important to the Hampshire economy.
23. Levy funds transferred also constitute the County Council's match-funding contribution to two ESF Apprenticeship & Skills Hub projects operating in the County, one led by the County Council with Surrey County Council partnering, the other led by Southampton City Council with Hampshire County, Portsmouth City, and the IOW council's partnering. Co-terminus with the LEP geographies, the Hubs provide information, advice, and funding (Levy) to employers seeking to establish their own Apprenticeship programme.
24. Our overarching aim is to use 100% of the County Council's Levy contribution to support workforce development and business need. Further work is being undertaken now to more accurately forecast utilisation. For the current FY 2022/23, a provisional forecast is that we will use c. 60% of our contribution on programme delivery and assessment, and a further c. 20% on Transfers, totalling c. 80% utilisation (exc. government top-up). To improve this further, and to achieve the stated aim, the following initiatives are planned.
 - Launch of the **Hampshire Apprenticeship Academy** in 2023, an overarching initiative to increase volumes by develop and deliver professional pathways to practice for key workforce sectors, e.g., Social Workers, Nurses, Teachers, Engineers.
 - In collaboration Corporate HR, Learning and Development, a new **Higher and Degree Apprenticeship** programme, targeting new talent to key roles within the organisation.

- Embed Apprenticeships at the core of the HLN **Leadership & Management** offer, including future Firefly cohorts.
- In collaboration with Corporate HR, review the **Apprentice First** policy, its application, compliance, and opportunity to support the corporate equality, diversity, and inclusions programme
- Development of a **Supported Apprenticeships** programme for individuals with SEND/LDD, supporting the development of a more inclusive and diverse workforce.
- Continuation and development of the **Hampshire Transfer Levy Scheme** to support further Apprenticeship growth in the Hampshire economy. This would include target sector programmes in support of the new **Hampshire Economic Strategy**.

Conclusion

25. Hampshire County Council continues to operate a strong Apprenticeship Levy programme which is having a tangible impact on the business. Over 1780 colleagues have started an Apprenticeship programme since May 2017 and our success rates are above benchmark. A further 375 new starts are forecast for the 2022/23 FY, and we expect to use up to 80% of our in-year Levy contribution.
26. The Hampshire Levy Transfer Programme remains one of the largest single transfer schemes in the country (LGA reference). It represents a significant investment by the County Council in the Hampshire economy and the skills needs of employer. Aligned to the new Economic Strategy, the scheme has already supported over 600 Apprenticeship starts across 200 Hampshire employers.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

27. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience impacts of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

See guidance at <https://hants.sharepoint.com/sites/ID/SitePages/Equality-Impact-Assessments.aspx?web=1>

Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:

(a) *why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or*

will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions