

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 14 April 2014
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PART I **NON-KEY DECISION**

REFERENCES FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet of recommendations from the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel.

2. Recommendations

The Cabinet is requested to resolve that a piece of work be commissioned to investigate the options for increasing the number of apprentices employed by the council and/or its sub-contractors and report back to the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel on proposals in six months.

3. Slough Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

Economy and Skills – Supporting local school leavers to access qualifications and work skills with employers.

4. Other Implications

(a) Financial

There are no immediate financial implications to the recommendation; however, increasing the number apprenticeships employed by the council or its sub-contractors would require the identification of additional funding, which would need to be assessed as part of the development of proposals.

(b) Risk Management

There are no risks associated with this report.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act or Other Legal Implications associated with this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

The Apprentice scheme is specifically aimed at 16-18 year old Slough residents and recognises the difficulties some of our young people have in accessing vocational training and work experience. The scheme has a positive impact on improving equality of opportunity for young people. The application process encourages young people from a wide range of backgrounds and different religious, ethnic and socio economic groups are represented in previous apprentice cohorts. There is also a good balance between boys and girls; reasonable adjustments are made for applicants with disabilities both in the assessment process and during their work experience. The extension of the scheme would continue to promote this amongst SBC and other partner organisations.

5. Background

- 5.1 The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel considered a report the council's Community Learning and Skills Service at its meeting on the 12 March 2014.
- 5.2 During the discussion, the Panel raised a question around the number of apprenticeships available at the council, and was informed that, through working with AVARTO the number of business administration apprenticeships currently at the council totalled 23, with five additional placements due to begin in August 2014.
- 5.3 Members felt there was a need to increase the number of apprentices employed by Slough Borough Council or through its sub-contractors to set the right example to other employers in the borough. These apprenticeships should not just be in business administration but provide broader opportunities for trade skills and other key growing sectors such as health and social care.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Having specified the need to increase the number of apprenticeships offered by the council, or through its sub-contracted services, the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel would recommend the Cabinet review how this could be done and allow the Panel the opportunity to scrutinise proposals to implement such an increase.

7. Background Papers

- 1 - Community Learning and Skills – Review of 2012/13 – Performance and Development (Report to Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel, 12 March 2014)