

## BRIEFING PAPER

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**SUBJECT:** New Apprenticeship Campaign  
**DATE:** 11 March 2013  
**RECIPIENT:** Leader of the Council  
**REPORT OF:** Andy Tickner, Skills Manager  
**DIRECTOR:** Dawn Baxendale, Interim Chief Executive

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### THIS IS NOT A DECISION PAPER

#### SUMMARY:

The Council has strategic lead to generate Apprenticeship growth in the city, including the introduction of new initiatives to create additional Apprenticeship opportunities, and the provision of Information, Advice and Guidance to raise awareness of Apprenticeships to young people, parents, adults and local businesses.

In partnership with the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), the Council is planning to introduce a new Southampton '1 in 1000' Apprenticeship Campaign, to boost the number of local businesses recruiting apprentices. Particular focus will be in key sectors of construction (including ECO/Green Deal), Marine (including BEEMS), Advanced Manufacturing, Health and Social Care, Hospitality and Retail.

The proposed activities for the campaign were agreed at an initial planning meeting with NAS on 1 March. This paper outlines the proposed activities.

Approval is requested to develop and deliver the campaign, to inform businesses during events already scheduled for National Apprenticeship Week (11-15 March), with an official campaign launch April onwards.

#### BACKGROUND and BRIEFING DETAILS:

- 1 The National Apprenticeship Service Final Report for academic year 2011/12 was released in February 2013. The report confirms that across all age groups Southampton has seen an 8% increase in apprenticeship starts compared with the previous year. The regional increase is 15% and national increase 13%. Southampton apprenticeship starts for ages 16-18 and 19-24 have decreased by 7% and 3% respectively, comparing unfavourably with regional and national trends. Targeted programmes for 16-18 and 19-24 apprenticeships need to be re-introduced in the city.

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- 2 In partnership with the National Apprenticeship Service, the Council delivered a highly successful '100 in 100' campaign in 2011 which boosted the local economy with an additional 186 apprenticeship starts in 100 days. The focus of the campaign was to raise awareness of apprenticeship opportunities to local young people, parents and unemployed adults.
- 3 The new Southampton '1 in 1000' campaign will prioritise information, advice and guidance (IAG), raising awareness, offering practical support and incentives for local employers to recruit apprentices, particularly SMEs and employers in key sectors. The campaign target will be for 1000 local employers to have at least one apprentice in their workforce, including a sub-target for higher level apprenticeships. The existing number of employers who have recruited apprentices is being confirmed by NAS, so that the size of the task is clear, and a realistic campaign timescale will be set.

### **Proposed Campaign Activities**

- 4 **Employer Engagement** – Local business representative organisations will be campaign partners to provide IAG and promote apprenticeship recruitment to employers, including the Chamber of Commerce, FSB and Business Solent. NAS has committed £27,000 for the South Central area, through which the Chamber of Commerce and FSB will claim £200 for every 16-18 apprenticeship recruited as a direct result of their engagement activity. The proposal is for the Council to match this amount for Southampton, expanding the incentive to include Business Solent and offer to the 19-24 age group.
- 5 **Employer Incentives** – Nationally, through the Youth Contract, employers can claim a £1,500 AGE payment (Apprenticeship Grant for Employers) for taking on an apprentice aged 16-24. The £1,500 is in addition to the training costs of the apprenticeship framework which are met in full for 16-18 and 50% for 19-24. A pilot scheme at the Isle of Wight Council has match-funded the AGE payment, with grants of up to £3,000 used to encourage employers to take on new apprentices. Youth Contract data shows a positive impact with take-up on the Isle of Wight 70% higher than Southampton or Portsmouth. The proposal is for the Council to match the AGE grant for the duration of the campaign, offering 50% uplift for all apprenticeships and 100% uplift for 'green' apprenticeships, such as ECO/Green Deal, Marine (BEEMS) and environmental technologies.
- 6 **Employer Support** – Currently, local face-to-face support for an employer considering apprentice recruitment is only available for those with over 250 employees, with employers under 250 supported by a NAS national helpline. NAS has committed resource to support the new campaign, including a member of staff to work with networks of small businesses in Southampton, improving awareness and making the process of apprenticeship recruitment easier and more personalised.

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- 7 Marketing and Promotion – The previous Southampton ‘100 in 100’ campaign was sponsored by the Daily Echo, providing 16-page newspaper supplements and high coverage levels. An equivalent ‘Ladder for London’ apprenticeship programme is currently working in partnership with the London Evening Standard. The proposal is for the new campaign to be ‘adopted’ by the Daily Echo to maximise awareness and publicity opportunities.

### RESOURCE/POLICY/FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

#### Resource

- 8 New staffing resource will be allocated by the National Apprenticeship Service for the Southampton campaign. Resource implications for the Council are currently being identified.
- 9 The campaign will be partly funded by existing national incentives through the Skills Funding Agency. The proposal is to match-fund by introducing a Council budget (including existing European Social Fund grant secured by the Skills team). Payment arrangements will be agreed with Corporate Finance. Projected costs are given in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: New Apprenticeship Campaign Projected Costs**

Activity	Volume	Projected Cost (£)
Engagement Payments	100	20,000
Incentive Payments	100	75,000
Operational Costs	-	5,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>100,000</b>

#### Policy

- 10 The Southampton City Council Plan 2011-14, currently under review, sets priorities to create more jobs for local people, and more local people to be well educated and skilled. The Plan includes a specific target for more young people taking up apprenticeships and in employment.
- 11 The programme will support the Solent LEP and Partnership for Urban Southampton Hampshire (PUSH) sub-regional priorities for skills for growth. It will support a number of Southampton Connect priority projects, particularly:
- Gateway to employment and volunteering opportunities;
  - Gateway to a world of learning opportunities; and
  - Gateway to a better future

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- 12 The Raising of the Participation Age (RPA) requires that from summer 2013, young people are required to continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17, increasing to 18 in 2015. The Council has a duty to secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people as part of RPA, and the options must include apprenticeships.

### **OPTIONS and TIMESCALES:**

1) Option 1: Delivery of the campaign:

- March 2013 – Promotion during National Apprenticeship Week
- April-May 2013 – Campaign launch and first apprentices start
- May-December 2013 – Campaign activity, achievement and evaluation

2) Option 2: Do not deliver the programme

### **Appendices/Supporting Information:**

None

### **Further Information Available From:**

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