

Title of Report: Education & Skills Update on the Phase 2 Apprenticeship Marketing Campaign	Officer Presenting: Head of Business Author: Skills Manager
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1 Purpose of Report/Recommendations

- 1.1 To update members on the phase 2 Apprenticeship Marketing Campaign hosted by Council's Skills Team and to note the progress made on delivering one of the key outcomes of the Strategic Growth Plan:- 'promote the importance of educational pathways and promote the apprenticeship framework'

2 Background

- 2.1 The need for a focus on apprenticeships and an apprenticeship hub in the Derry City and Strabane District Council area is supported by three key strategies: Council's Inclusive Strategic Growth Plan (SGP), the proposed City Deal (CD) and the draft Programme for Government (PfG).
- 2.2 The SGP highlights, as a key action, to 'promote the importance of educational pathways and promote the apprenticeship framework'. The proposed City Deal cites, amongst its catalyst initiatives, a need to work towards an 'improvement of skills amongst our young and those in employment' including 'increased access to economic opportunities for all through investment in skills and employability'. Several draft PfG outcomes align with the need for an apprenticeship focus and hub including 1: we prosper through a strong, competitive regionally balanced economy, 5: we are an innovative, creative society, where people can fulfil their potential, 6: we have more people working in better jobs and 12: we have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest.

2.3 In line with these strategies and the specific key action in the Strategic Growth Plan to promote apprenticeships as a viable career pathway, two working groups have been established, one with NWRC and one with the private training organisations who are contracted under the Apprenticeships NI framework. In addition, the Careers Service have pledged their full support for the campaign.

2.4 The objectives for the campaign remain as agreed in phase 1:

- Increase awareness of apprenticeships available to residents.
- Increase the number of apprenticeships available to residents.
- Increase the numbers of people taking up and completing apprenticeships.
- Improve the quality of apprenticeships available to residents.
- Promote apprenticeships as a viable alternative to traditional academic

routes

2.5 Aligning with all five objectives the target audience is three fold; students, parents/influencers and businesses. The campaign is led by Derry City and Strabane District Council's Skills Team with all leads generated filter through two trained Officers who will impart impartial, realistic guidance and support to all client groups, inhibiting silo working and optimising results. Referrals are made to those organisations who have been procured via the DfE Apprenticeship Framework.

3 Key Issues

3.1 The initial marketing campaign was rolled out at the start of July 2018 and launched by the Mayor on 31st July 2018. The current 2019 campaign was launched by the Mayor on 13th June 2019.

3.2 The bespoke website www.getapprenticeships.me hosts potential career pathways for apprentices, video case studies of both apprentice and business experiences; accurate, independent information for potential apprentices, parents and employers; links to additional sources of information/advice and a call back feature linked to 2 dedicated Council staff members. A live vacancy portal was added for phase 2 and launched within the website in May 2019 to advertise and accept applications for current apprenticeship vacancies. Since the July 2018 launch there has been 2614 user hits from 2046 unique users and 69 direct enquiries to Council.

- 3.2 To compliment the website a branded toolkit has been developed, print media commissioned, adshel, banner and bus liner promotions ran across the city, digital marketing, blogging and social media representation engaged, and a PR campaign put firmly in place. See appendix 1.
- 3.3 In line with the Strategic Growth Plan, further marketing activity and engagement with the target markets and influencers will continue to be worked up into a five year apprenticeship plan. Collaboration between Council's Skills Team, the Careers Service, NWRC and private training organisations will continue to be an integral part of the plan.
- 3.4 From August 2013 to October 2018, Derry and Strabane had 995 Level 2/3 apprentices and throughout a wide variety of sectors. A target of a 10% increase has been set.
- 3.5 The HLAs only available from 2016 in the NWRC has grown from 22 to 76 . A target has been set to increase this to 91 for 2018/19.
- 3.6 The campaign also seeks to introduce 10 new employers to apprenticeships in the Council area over this same time period.
- 3.7 In general the Apprenticeship NI Framework which began in 2013 has year on year show a marked increase in outcomes in terms of leavers achieving their full qualifications.

4 Financial, Equality, Legal, HR, Improvement, Rural Needs and other Implications

- 4.1 The development, implementation and delivery costs of all activities associated with the apprenticeship marketing campaign is expected to be £20,000 in 2019/20. This has been accounted for in the current Skills Team budget.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 To note the progress made by the Skills team on delivering one of the key outcomes of the Strategic Growth Plan: - 'promote the importance of educational pathways and promote the apprenticeship framework'

Background Papers

Appendix 2: Apprenticeships