

Notice of Meeting

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Councillor Angell (Chair), Councillor Virgo (Vice-Chair),
Councillors Mrs Birch, Brossard, Gbadebo, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle,
McLean, Mrs Mattick, Mossom, Porter, Temperton and Tullett
Tracey Wright, Parent Governor representative
Mark Glanville, Parent Governor representative



Also Invited:

Councillor Turrell, Executive Member for Planning and Transport
Councillor Dudley, Chair of Planning Committee

Wednesday 17 February 2021, 6.30 - 8.30 pm

Online only

Agenda

Item	Description	Page
1.	Apologies for Absence	
	To receive apologies for absence and to note the attendance of any substitute Members.	
2.	Minutes	5 - 8
	To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission held on 6 January 2021.	
3.	Declarations of Interest and Party Whip	
	<p>Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary or affected interests and the nature of that interest, including the existence and nature of the party whip, in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.</p> <p>Any Member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter should withdraw from the meeting when the matter is under consideration and should notify the Democratic Services Officer in attendance that they are withdrawing as they have such an interest. If the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is not entered on the register of Members interests the Monitoring Officer must be notified of the interest within 28 days.</p> <p>Any Member with an Affected Interest in a matter must disclose the interest to the meeting. There is no requirement to withdraw from the meeting when the interest is only an affected interest, but the Monitoring Officer should be notified of the interest, if not previously notified of it, within 28 days of the meeting.</p>	
4.	Urgent Items of Business	
	Any other items which, pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman decides are urgent.	

EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS

If you hear the alarm, leave the building immediately. Follow the green signs. Use the stairs not the lifts. Do not re-enter the building until told to do so.

5.	Public Participation	
	To receive submissions from members of the public which have been submitted in advance in accordance with the Council's Public Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny.	
6.	Scrutiny of Planning practices	9 - 20
	<p>The Commission has invited guests to address the meeting before considering the following question:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“Are our current planning practices robust enough to protect Bracknell Forest from developers manipulating viability study process?”</p> <p>and deciding whether to make any recommendations to the Executive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Hunter, Director: Place, Planning and Regeneration to speak to the Council's current planning practices followed by questions (25 minutes) • Andrew Jones from BPS Chartered Surveyors to answer questions relating to viability assessments (15 minutes) • Jim Bailey, representative from Pegasus Planning to provide a developer's perspective (15 minutes) • Councillor Turrell, Executive Member for Planning and Transport to answer questions on his portfolio in relation to planning practices (15 minutes) • Conclusions and recommendations <p>Evidence Pack to support this item</p> <p>Please note the Evidence Pack should be read in advance of the meeting but for those short of time the essential reading is the Development Viability presentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BPS Chartered Surveyors presentation on Development Viability: what is Involved and what has changed • National position on Plan viability and planning application decision making Viability - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) • Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (bracknell-forest.gov.uk) – this includes the Affordable housing policy and viability matters 	
7.	Education, Skills and Growth Panel Review Report: Apprentices	21 - 34
	<p>To consider the draft Apprentices review report prepared by the Education, Skills and Growth Overview and Scrutiny Panel for submission to the Executive on 16 March 2021.</p> <p>Reporting: Councillor Mrs Gill Birch</p>	

EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS

If you hear the alarm, leave the building immediately. Follow the green signs. Use the stairs not the lifts. Do not re-enter the building until told to do so.

8.	Work Programme Update	35 - 36
	<p>Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chairs to provide a verbal progress updates on the work programme.</p> <p>The Commission to consider any proposed changes to the Overview and Scrutiny work programme such as scope, scheduling or duration and its potential impact on the delivery of the overall programme.</p>	

Date of next meeting

The next Overview and Scrutiny Commission meeting is scheduled for 7 April 2021.

Sound recording, photographing, filming and use of social media is permitted. Please contact Kirsty Hunt, 01344 353108, kirsty.hunt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk, so that any special arrangements can be made.

Published: 9 February 2021

EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS

If you hear the alarm, leave the building immediately. Follow the green signs. Use the stairs not the lifts. Do not re-enter the building until told to do so.

This page is intentionally left blank

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION
6 JANUARY 2021
6.32 - 8.38 PM**



Present:

Councillors Angell (Chairman), Virgo (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Birch, Brossard, Gbadebo, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle, McLean, Mrs Mattick, Porter, Temperton and Tullett
Parent Governor representatives: Mark Glanville and Tracey Wright

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Mossom

Executive Members Present:

Councillor Hayes, Executive Member for the Environment
Councillor Heydon, Executive Member for Transformation and Finance

Also Present:

Councillors Brown, Mrs Gaw, Ingham, McKenzie and Leake

In attendance:

Timothy Wheadon, Chief Executive, Bracknell Forest Council
Kevin Gibbs, Executive Director: Delivery, Bracknell Forest Council
Ann Moore, Head of Democratic and Registration Services
Gareth Jones, Shared Services Manager

54. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 2 December 2020 be approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chair.

55. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

There were no declarations of interest made.

There were no indications that members would be participating while under the party whip.

56. Urgent Items of Business

There were no items of urgent business.

57. Public Participation

No submissions had been made by members of the public under the Council's Public Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny.

58. Council Plan Overview Report

The Chief Executive of Bracknell Forest Council, Timothy Wheadon, introduced the Council Plan Overview Report (CPOR) covering the second quarter of 2020/21.

The following questions were asked and answers given by the Chief Executive:

- Councillors queried the scheduling of Overview & Scrutiny meetings and stated they would like more up to date data. They were informed the sequence of Overview and Scrutiny meetings had been set according to the agreed sequence of data at meetings for approval. Councillors also received two weekly briefings currently due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- In relation to a query about which services had been impacted the most due to the second lockdown the Chief Executive informed Councillors most services had been impacted including libraries, which now offered appointments or click and collect service only; schools remaining closed except to those children listed in the Department of Education guidance including vulnerable children and children of key workers; and the closure of leisure centres. A number of major projects had also been postponed, such as the conversations approach in social care; the integration of health and social care project and any work which detracted from officers in social care and health prioritising residents' health and wellbeing at this current time. Councillors challenged delays to their work programme but agreed front-line staff should not be distracted from their work. This was discussed further during Item 8) Work Programme Update.
- Councillors queried if there was additional funding for the voluntary sector and were informed the budget had already been set for next year.
- Councillors asked why the draft Homelessness Strategy on page 22 of the CPOR was RAG rated amber and were informed work on the strategy had been delayed as those officers were focussed on ensuring rough sleepers were protected during the pandemic.
- Councillors asked how the Council reassured itself of customer satisfaction levels for smokers trying to quit and were informed a sample of residents were chosen to conduct customer satisfaction audits.
- Councillors offered their thanks to officers for working hard to ensure as much as possible remained on track during this difficult period.

59. **Climate Change follow up**

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission continued their climate change review activity, taking the role of a scrutiny panel for this review work, and reflected on their findings to date from their research and the meetings held on 10 March and 2 December 2020.

These were that:

- there was a need for a dedicated cross-party councillor team to progress climate change issues in the Borough;
- Parish and Town Councils were also working on this issue and would have ideas to contribute. Their involvement would lead to a more cohesive plan for how to tackle climate change across the Borough;
- O&S Commission members would like to be consulted upon about the membership of the steering group;
- there should be opportunities to expand the group, once established, to involve external partners and relevant experts.

Recommendations to the Executive:

- 1) That the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan be supported.**
- 2) That a climate change steering group be formed, to include non-Executive members and cross-party representation, and report regularly to the Commission.**

Councillors thanked those who had been involved in scrutiny work on climate change last year, officers and Kevin Gibbs, Executive Director: Delivery, particularly during the pandemic.

60. **Work Programme Update**

Panel Chairs provided an update on their Panel activity.

Chair of the Education, Skills and Growth Overview and Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Mrs Birch, requested the final Apprenticeships Review report be brought to the March Overview and Scrutiny Commission meeting due to a delay in analysing the survey results and timescales being affected by the Christmas period.

Chair of the Environment and Communities Panel, Councillor Porter, also requested his final report into Registered Social Landlords Review be delayed to the April Overview and Scrutiny Commission meeting rather than March as members of the Panel wanted to meet with another key witness before finalising their recommendations.

Chair of the Wellbeing and Finance Panel, Councillor Tullett, explained he had recently been informed that officers within Adult Social Care and Public Health were unable to take part in the Social Isolation and Loneliness review at this time due to the impact of the pandemic on these services. It was agreed the Panel would request Bobby Mulheir, Assistant Director: Customer Experience, Digital and ICT to give evidence instead to enable members the Panel to continue with this piece of work in the interim.

The Commission agreed that:

- i) the submission date for the Apprenticeship review be amended to March;
- ii) the submission date for the Registered Social Landlords review be amended to April;
- iii) and the continuation of the Social Isolation and Loneliness review be supported with revised witnesses.

Councillors were invited to suggest items for the Commission work plan for next year and suggestions included:

- Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on young people
- Mental Health
- Impact of the pandemic on Residential Care Homes

CHAIRMAN

This page is intentionally left blank

Development Viability What is Involved What has Changed

A Presentation by BPS Chartered Surveyors



The slide features a white background with a blue and black decorative wave at the bottom. The BPS Chartered Surveyors logo is positioned in the bottom right corner of the slide area.


1

National Planning Policy

New National Planning Policy Framework

57. Where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable.....

It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage.



The slide has a white background with a blue and black decorative wave at the bottom. The text is centered on the page.

2

NPPF Minimum Position?

- ▶ 64. Major development involving the provision of housing should expect at least 10% of the homes to be as affordable housing

- ▶ Exceptions
 - Build to Rent homes;
 - Specialist accommodation for elderly or students
 - Self build
 - Affordable housing or exception site.

3

NPPG/NPPF Approach

Where up to date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable.

It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage

4

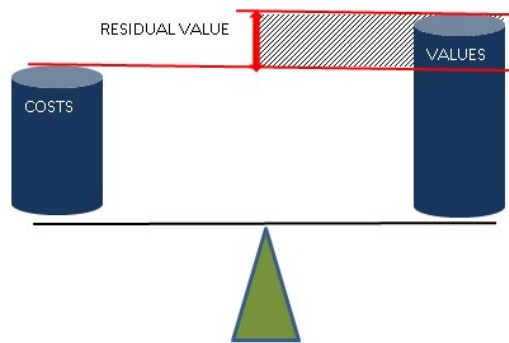
Development Economics



5

Residual Value - Ignores Land Cost

► Step 1



6

Viability Process

Planning Guidance Limits

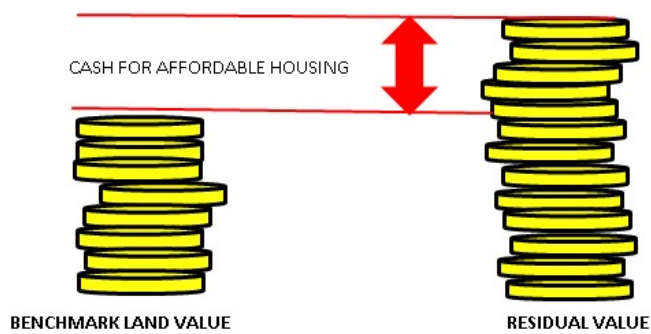
- ▶ Developer profit
- ▶ Land value

Any “surplus” created funds planning obligations

7

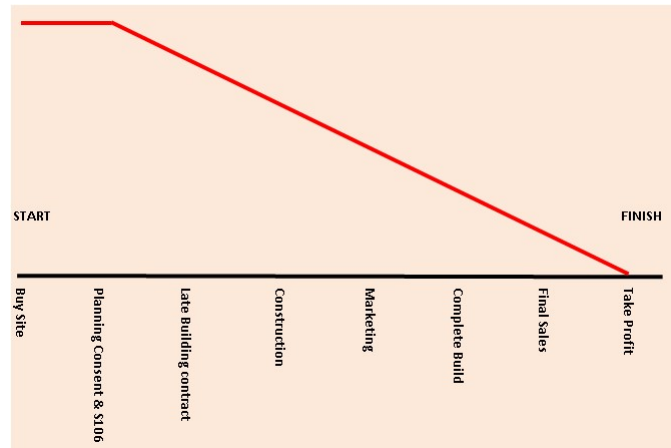
Compares Residual Value to NPPG defined Land Cost

- ▶ Step 2



8

Development Risk Profile



9

Developer Profit

- ▶ Current norms 15 –20% GDV private
6% Affordable
- ▶ Alternatives 20–25% on costs
- ▶ PRS 12% (above 50 units)

No real tests for adjusting to reflect risk

10

Current Market

- ▶ High sales rates
- ▶ Instability – Covid – Stamp Duty Holiday
- ▶ Brexit – impact on foreign investment
- ▶ Access to foreign labour
- ▶ Constant Changes to the Planning System
- ▶ Investors need certainty

11

Land value

- ▶ Benchmark land value should be established on the basis of **the existing use value (EUUV)** of the land, plus a premium for the landowner.
- ▶ The premium for the landowner should reflect the minimum return at which it is considered a reasonable landowner would be willing to sell their land. Reflecting site circumstances and other options available to the land owner

12

Alternative Use Value

- ▶ AUV not a default to EUV- Exceptional Route
 - ▶ Limited to Use permitted under LP Policies
 - ▶ Must be policy compliant
- ▶ Option for Plan Maker to impose tests
 - ▶ AUV capable of implementation
 - ▶ Demonstrate market demand
 - ▶ Explain why the use is not being implemented

13

Assessing Scheme Values

- ▶ Use of comparable sales & marketing evidence
- ▶ Use of relevant deals Databases
 - ▶ e.g. Land Registry
- ▶ Compare
 - ▶ Outlook, aspect, location
 - ▶ Size
 - ▶ specification
 - ▶ Facilities, gyms, parking etc.

14

Assessing Scheme Costs

- ▶ Applicant's Cost Plan, specification and supporting plans
- ▶ Elemental Cost benchmarking Quantity Surveyor
- ▶ BCIS national index
 - Adjusted by date e.g. last 5 years or 15 years
 - Adjusted by relevant location factor
 - Adjusted by relevant projects
- ▶ Detailed examination of:
 - Abnormal costs, prelims, contractor profit etc.
- ▶ General finance costs

15

Sensitivity Testing

Appraisal are very sensitive to marginal changes –

Key variables tested

- ▶ Sales values
- ▶ Build costs
- ▶ Land value benchmark

Important to stand back and ask

Is this reasonable?

Use of review mechanisms to achieve certainty

16

Examples

Change to Appraisal Input		Impact on Residual Value
10%	Sales Values	50%
10%	Build Costs	40%
10%	Land Value	15%
5%	Profit Margin	30%
10%	Grant Funding	2%

Accepted Margin of Error 10%

17

Recent changes

- ▶ New use classes order effective September 20
- ▶ New PD Rights effective 31 August 20
- ▶ Consultation on changes to PD rights in response to Covid 19
- ▶ Planning White Paper

18

Proposed changes to PD

- ▶ Increase threshold exemption to 40–50 units
- ▶ Impose national threshold of 25% first homes
 - Would replace minimum discount AH but could impact other tenures
 - Reflects 30% discount to market value
 - Discount held in perpetuity
- ▶ Extension of permission in principle to major development up to 150 units
- ▶ Class E to enable change to C3
- ▶ Schools, universities prisons & defence
- ▶ Reduction of 13 week timescale to 10 weeks

19

Planning White Paper

- ▶ Land zoned for either
 - Growth, Renewal or Protection
- ▶ Growth Zone
 - Consent for residential, hospitals, shops schools and offices given automatic consent
- ▶ Renewal Areas
 - Streamlined approval in principle – subject to appropriate checks
- ▶ Protection
 - Greenbelt etc will remain protected

20

National Infrastructure Levy

- ▶ To include all planning obligations including CIL, Affordable housing and S106 contributions.
- ▶ Levy set centrally

This page is intentionally left blank

To: **Overview and Scrutiny Commission**
17 February 2020

Apprenticeships Overview and Scrutiny Review Report **Cllr Mrs Birch, Chair Education, Skills and Growth Panel**

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission the findings of the Education, Skills and Growth Overview & Scrutiny Panel's review into Apprenticeships and ask them to endorse their recommendations.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the findings of the panel and the recommendations as set out in the report and paragraph 5.2 are endorsed.**

3 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission directed The Education, Skills and Growth panel to conduct a review into Apprenticeships following national reports of over £96m in unused Apprenticeship Levy funding expiring in 2019. Local reports also highlighted that only 6% of businesses in Berkshire had an apprentice. It was felt that if Apprenticeship Levy funding continued to expire, then young people would miss opportunities to develop their career.
- 3.2 The review aimed to examine how young people could be encouraged to undertake apprenticeships and what challenges they faced in doing so. Businesses were missing a key opportunity to develop their workforce and it was important to understand what barriers were being faced and how they could be alleviated. The more recent pandemic developments would also influence these barriers so were specifically examined as part of the review.
- 3.3 The Education, Skills and Growth Overview & Scrutiny Panel concluded their findings based on the evidence considered and speaking to several witnesses as part of the review.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 The Education, Skills and Growth Overview & Scrutiny Panel's assessed several options as part of the review.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 The Education, Skills and Growth Overview & Scrutiny Panel was commissioned to undertake a review into Apprenticeships as part of the Overview and Scrutiny work programme. This review activity was undertaken from November 2020 until January 2021 and witnesses were consulted during this time. A survey was also sent to local business, apprentices, and schools to gain wider feedback. The methodology undertaken, findings and recommendations are set out in the attached report.

5.2 The recommendations are listed below:

- That the Executive works with Apprenticeship pathway providers to ensure our young people aged between 16-21 have the best opportunities and outcomes.
- That the Executive adopts an Apprenticeship policy which sets out expectations around pay, terms and conditions and that the Education, Skills and Growth Panel is consulted on the draft policy and for this to be completed by December 2021 to coronavirus capacity limitations.
- That the Executive promotes Apprenticeships externally and internally by producing a promotional video which highlights the benefit of becoming an apprentice, growing businesses, and supporting the economy by March 2022 to coronavirus capacity limitations.
- That the Executive reviews the current Apprenticeship webpages and updates the content to include more information, links to job vacancy websites and information about what to expect from an apprenticeship by December 2021 to coronavirus capacity limitations.
- That the Executive investigates whether it would be possible to facilitate a mentoring scheme between large businesses and small/medium businesses to encourage more apprenticeship opportunities by March 2022 to coronavirus capacity limitations.
- That the Executive develops ongoing partnerships across Berkshire to provide a united gateway of support and guidance to businesses enabling them to take better advantage of the apprenticeship levy.

6 Commentary from Education, Skills and Growth Overview & Scrutiny Panel Chair, Councillor Mrs Birch

- 6.1 This review follows directly on from the Care Leavers Review, as Post 16 apprenticeship opportunities for our Care leavers and young people in the Borough are extremely important, especially with the current challenges of the Coronavirus pandemic. In January 2020, Government data showed the number of people starting an apprenticeship in England fell to 125,800 between August and October, down 4.7%. Bracknell Forest Council employs apprentices in several departments and promotes apprenticeships but participation in Berkshire is lower than the national average. This review looks at the new government incentives, barriers to undertaking an apprenticeship, employing apprentices and the range of apprenticeship opportunities.
- 6.2 Coronavirus did not have an adverse impact on the review because witnesses made themselves available for the review and were keen to contribute their expertise and experiences. The Panel was delighted with their help and input which allowed for good recommendations to be made. Although the review could continue, Apprenticeships have been affected by the coronavirus pandemic as has been shown in the reduction of opportunities by 25%.
- 6.3 The panel acknowledges the good practise and excellent work currently being undertaken by the department with apprentices. This was particularly shown in the apprentice's survey and it is hoped the recommendations will build on this good work.

7 Response from Assistant Director: Education and Learning.

- 7.1 I am happy to support the findings and endorse the recommendations of the Apprenticeships Review.

8 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 8.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Financial Advice

- 8.2 There are no significant financial implications arising from the recommendations in the report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 8.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment initial screening has been completed and is attached at Appendix B.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 8.4 Apprenticeships are an opportunity to develop technical knowledge, practical experience, and wider skills. In relation to workforce management there is a strategic risk of not effectively utilising opportunities such as the Apprenticeship Levy to develop the Council's future and existing workforce.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

Emma Young, Governance & Scrutiny Officer - 01344 352269
Emma.young@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Overview and Scrutiny Panel Recommendations Report

REVIEW TITLE	O&S PANEL	DATE
Apprenticeships Review	Education, Skills and Growth	17 February 2021

“This review follows directly on from the Care Leavers Review, as Post 16 apprenticeship opportunities for our Care leavers and young people in the Borough are extremely important, especially with the current challenges of the Coronavirus pandemic. In January 2020, Government data showed the number of people starting an apprenticeship in England fell to 125,800 between August and October, down 4.7%. Bracknell Forest Council employs apprentices in several departments and promotes apprenticeships but participation in Berkshire is lower than the national average. This review looks at the new government incentives, barriers to undertaking an apprenticeship, employing apprentices and the range of apprenticeship opportunities.”



**Councillor Mrs Birch, Chair:
Education, Skills and Growth Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

Recommendations

1. That the Executive works with Apprenticeship pathway providers to ensure our young people aged between 16-21 have the best opportunities and outcomes.
2. That the Executive adopts an Apprenticeship policy which sets out expectations around pay, terms and conditions and that the Education, Skills and Growth Panel is consulted on the draft policy and for this to be completed by December 2021 to coronavirus capacity limitations.
3. That the Executive promotes Apprenticeships externally and internally by producing a promotional video which highlights the benefit of becoming an apprentice, growing businesses, and supporting the economy by March 2022 to coronavirus capacity limitations.
4. That the Executive reviews the current Apprenticeship webpages and updates the content to include more information, links to job vacancy websites and information about what to expect from an apprenticeship by December 2021 to coronavirus capacity limitations.
5. That the Executive investigates whether it would be possible to facilitate a mentoring scheme between large businesses and small/medium businesses to encourage more apprenticeship opportunities by March 2022 to coronavirus capacity limitations.
6. That the Executive develops ongoing partnerships across Berkshire to provide a united gateway of support and guidance to businesses enabling them to take better advantage of the apprenticeship levy.

Good Practice

The Panel recognised the existing good work promoting apprenticeships externally and the support given to internal apprentices working at the Council. The apprenticeships event held annually was a useful resource and a positive way to facilitate bringing together businesses and prospective apprentices. It is hoped that once pandemic restrictions are lifted, that this event would continue. The promotion of apprenticeships to existing Council staff was also considered good practice in developing skills and aiding staff retention and the panel were pleased that there were 55 employees currently undertaking them.

FOUR LEVELS OF APPRENTICESHIPS



INTERMEDIATE

Equivalent to GCSEs



ADVANCED

Equivalent to A levels



HIGHER

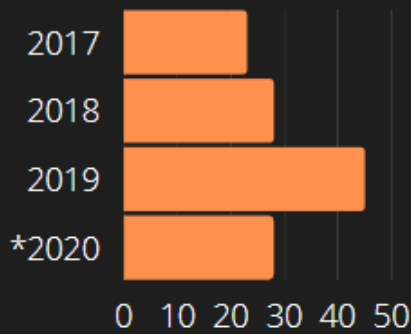
Equivalent to a foundation year or degree year 1.



DEGREE

Apprentices receive a university degree

BRACKNELL APPRENTICESHIP DATA



*Data until October 2020

The number of apprenticeships being undertaken in Bracknell Forest has steadily increased from 23 in 2017 to 45 in 2019. This is expected to drop in 2020 as Coronavirus impacts businesses and recruitment.



Study Time

Apprentices spend one day per week or 20% of their time on studying.



Priority Sectors

Apprenticeship priority sectors for recruitment in Berkshire are in Business and Finance, digital technology, health and care and life sciences.



Did you know?

Apprenticeship vacancies have gone down by 25% during the pandemic

Review findings

“I was delighted to find out that the borough employs 55 apprentices. So many of them took part in our survey showing how much they valued the opportunity and I thank them for their honest replies.”

Cllr Mrs Birch

Introduction

In conducting the review, the panel were keen to speak to witnesses from across the sector who were involved in the employment of apprentices; education providers, employers, Secondary schools, and the apprentices themselves. This was achieved by conducting a survey and speaking to a number of key stakeholders including: a Bracknell Forest Council Apprentice, The Royal Berkshire Fire Service, Activate Learning, a senior apprenticeship lecturer and Thames Valley Business Hub as well as the Head of Children’s Support Services and the assistant Director of Adult Social Care.

Throughout the review it became apparent that for Berkshire to increase numbers taking apprenticeships to the national average¹, apprenticeship opportunities need to be promoted to existing staff and those looking for a career change. Apprenticeships are a valuable tool to develop skills in all age groups and should be a way to encourage lifelong learning. The apprenticeships

are available at varying levels and to suit a range of occupations.

What are the barriers which need to be overcome to employ more apprentices and what impact has coronavirus had?

It was acknowledged by several witnesses that there was a knowledge gap around apprenticeships as the subjects had broadened from the traditional trade occupations. Activate Learning and Lydia Selby from Northampton University detailed the broad range of courses they had available from beauty to business management.

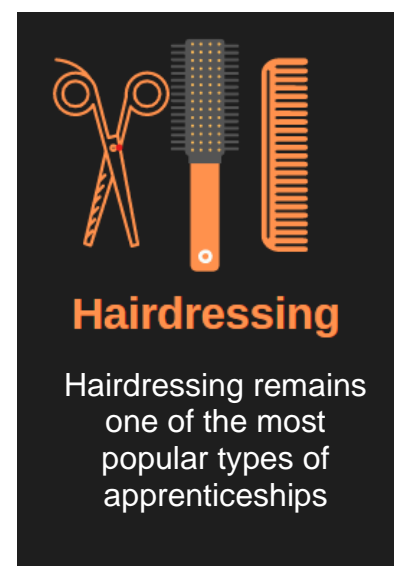
Survey results from local secondary schools acknowledged that a perception gap existed for parents and carers who did not always know about what apprenticeship opportunities were available and that school culture had historically encouraged young people towards university.

Schools and Activate Learning both acknowledged that another barrier was that the prospective apprentices had to find their own employer and although support was given by educational institutions, it could be a challenge finding one with a suitable vacancy and which was either close to their home or had access to public transport. Coronavirus had really increased this challenge as it was explained by the Head of Children’s Support Services, that the annual apprenticeship event had not been able to go ahead due to social distancing restrictions and this was a key

way for prospective apprentices to get access to businesses and further information.

Thames Valley Business Partnership recognised that some businesses were under the misconception that the process and paperwork were complicated. It was clarified that small to medium sized enterprises were able to access Apprenticeship Levy funding from larger companies, although it was acknowledged that this was not widely known. Time pressures were a particular challenge for small to medium sized businesses who may need additional support and guidance to employ their first apprentice.

It was also acknowledged that there was a cost to businesses and organisations in terms of staff time as 20% of their time was spent studying. The Royal Berkshire Fire Service particularly highlighted the benefits to business of having apprenticeships which far outweighed the additional administration work.



¹ Only 6% of workplaces in Berkshire have an apprentice,
Page 3

compared to 12% nationally
[October 2017]

“I was surprised at the age diversity of apprentices, from Post 16 to late 50’s.”

Cllr Mrs Birch

For Internal staff working for the Council who may be interested in taking an apprenticeship, internal promotion of opportunities was positive and had secured a lot of interest. The Assistant Director for Adult Social Care, advised there had been a lot of applicants to the social care apprenticeships scheme and that the council would look to continue the scheme as it also helped fill a skills gap.

Feedback from Apprentices was that information about apprenticeships were scattered and that information was not readily available in one place which could make applications confusing.

How can these barriers, including the barriers presented by the Coronavirus pandemic, be reduced?

The Council already runs a successful annual apprenticeships fair which advertises opportunities to prospective apprentices and allows them to speak directly to businesses about what is involved and was currently postponed. Young people are

therefore missing a key opportunity to gather information and understand the opportunities and benefits. Making young people aware of the options was considered particularly important in the current job climate as the Head of Children’s support services detailed, young people faced competition from experienced professionals looking to retrain.

In response to this, the panel thought updated information on the Council website along with an information video detailing the benefits and what to expect would be beneficial. Thames Valley Business Hub agreed that a central location for information would be useful as well as signposting to other organisations. It was acknowledged

Vacancies for apprenticeship opportunities had reduced by around 25%² in 2020 and The Royal Berkshire Fire Service acknowledged that changes in ways of working brought about by the pandemic meant it was not appropriate to bring new apprentices into the organisation at that time. However, their current apprentices had adapted, and they would be employing more apprentices in the future.

The panel heard consistently from witnesses that an increase in joined up working and communication was key to success. Feedback from

Activate Learning was that there was a high level of engagement from employers as apprenticeships fitted into their staff development models and had government funding. Their ‘Business Engagement Specialists’ would speak to any businesses interested and it was thought that more opportunities to speak to businesses directly would be beneficial.

Thames Valley Business partnership echoed this view and suggested hosting an apprenticeship talk or a working group to bring together all parties, education providers, businesses and local authorities from the Berkshire area. The response from one business who completed our survey also suggested they would be happy to speak to other businesses and provide a mentor to help them get started.

“The level of enthusiasm demonstrated to us by the apprentices showed a genuine commitment to advance their careers and they have a bright future ahead.”

Cllr Brossard



Did you know?

Apprenticeship vacancies can be found on the Berkshire Opportunities webpage:

[Berkshireopportunities.co.uk](https://www.berkshireopportunities.co.uk)

I would like to thank the Vice Chair of the Education, Skills and Growth O&S Panel, Cllr Brossard, for all his support during this review and also thank all the councillors who contributed their thoughts and ideas. I particularly appreciated all the businesses, partners, apprentices, Post 16 providers and officers who contributed to this review. Without their knowledge and help, we would not have been able to produce such an excellent recommendation. My specific thanks to Emma Young who so ably organised all the virtual meetings and kept us on track to produce this informative document.

Councillor Mrs Birch, Chair: Education, Skills and Growth Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Contributors to this review

Councillor Mrs Gill Birch	Councillor Sandra Ingham
Councillor Michael Brossard	Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle
Councillor Colin Dudley	Councillor Pauline McKenzie
Councillor Moira Gaw	Councillor Mary Temperton
Councillor Michael Gbadebo	Councillor Tony Virgo
Councillor Gareth Barnard	Executive Member for Children, Young people and Learning
Councillor Dale Birch	Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health
Councillor Marc Brunel-Walker	Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration
John Cambridge	Activate Learning
Kashif Nawaz	Head of Children's Support Services
Melanie O'Rourke	Assistant Director: Adult Social Care
Nicki Richards	Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service
Natasha Sedgewick and Peter Fleming	Thames Valley Business Hub
Lydia Selby	Senior lecturer, University of Northampton
Emma Young	Governance & Scrutiny Officer
Bracknell Forest Council Apprentices	
Bracknell Forest Schools	
Bracknell Forest Businesses	

This page is intentionally left blank

Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening: 5 October 2020	Directorate: Delivery	Section: Democracy and Governance	
1. Activity to be assessed	Overview and Scrutiny Panel for Education, Growth and Skills Apprenticeships Review		
2. What is the activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change		
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New		
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Emma Young, Governance & Scrutiny Co-ordinator		
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Emma Young and Kirsty Hunt, Cllr Mrs Gill Birch		
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	To encourage the uptake of apprenticeships within the borough and remove barriers to businesses offering apprentices and to those undertaking them.		
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	Prospective Apprentices and local businesses and organisations		
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no	Is there an impact?	What evidence do you have to support this?
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.	Y N	Positive impact identified.	Increased access to apprenticeships will have a positive impact on those with additional needs as there will be a wider variety of career and development opportunities available. Throughout the review we have seen that apprenticeships particularly suit those who prefer using practical skills to learn and therefore will be beneficial to people with dyslexia. The recommendations will also have regard to accessibility. For example, the promotional video will include subtitles and the Council website is fully accessible.
9. Racial equality	Y N	Positive impact identified.	Members of the community who are from Black or minority ethnic heritage are underrepresented as apprentices. The recommendations will increase opportunities for employment which should increase access.

10. Gender equality	Y	N	Positive impact identified.	Women are underrepresented as apprentices. Creating further opportunities and advertising the benefits should increase access.
11. Sexual orientation equality	Y	N	No impact identified.	The recommendations will not impact sexual orientation equality but, should have an overall positive impact on all groups through widening opportunity.
12. Gender re-assignment	Y	N	No impact identified.	The recommendations will not impact gender reassignment equality but, should have an overall positive impact on all groups through widening opportunity.
13. Age equality	Y	N	Positive impact identified.	The recommendations will particularly benefit young people aged between 16-21 years old. However, apprenticeships can be completed at all ages and are particularly useful to people who would like a career change or increase their skill set and further their career.
14. Religion and belief equality	Y	N	No impact identified	The recommendations will not impact any religious beliefs.
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	Y	N	No impact identified.	Apprentices who fall pregnant during their apprenticeship can suspend their learning until they return to work.
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	Y	N	No impact identified	The recommendations will have no impact on marriage or civil partnerships.
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.	People not in education, employment or training (NEET) since leaving education will also benefit from these recommendations by providing opportunities for employment and skills. There will also be a positive impact on care leavers through widening opportunity.			
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	N/A			
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the	N/A			

difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?			
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?		N	Recommendations in the Apprenticeships Review report are aimed at increasing equality for all apprentices and ensuring they can undertake development opportunities.
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	We considered a wide range of data from local and national sources. This was collated in an evidence pack which is available on BFC website.		
22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?		N	This Equality Impact Assessment has been completed retrospectively.
23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
	Action	Timescale	Person Responsible
			Milestone/Success Criteria
	See recommendations contained in report.	March 2021	Cllr Mrs Birch
			Recommendations are endorsed by the O&S Commission and agreed by the Executive.
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	Overview & Scrutiny Commission work plan		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	Please see recommendations contained in the report.		
26. Assistant director's signature.	Signature:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> REVIEWED <i>By AnnMo at 4:56 pm, Feb 09, 2021</i> </div>	Date:

This page is intentionally left blank

Food Waste Implementation - Flats and houses in multiple occupation with bulk bins Communities and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Reason for review

According to the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), UK households produce approximately 7 million tonnes of food waste each year¹, with large quantities currently being sent to landfill. Collecting food waste benefits the environment; it diverts biodegradable waste from landfill, reduces carbon emissions and reduces the cost of disposing of household waste. It can also be repurposed as compost.

Nationally, the Government aims to reduce food waste by 20% from households by 2025² and more locally, the Council aims to increase recycling levels to over 50% by 2021 and over 65% by 2030. Household food waste collections will begin in March 2021 with flats and HMO's to potentially follow in Autumn / Winter of 2021/22. The timing of any future food waste collection launch is dependent on site visits and engagement with the management agents.

Objectives/scope

The review is looking to identify how to:

- Review differing approaches to food waste collection from HMO/Flats properties by other Councils
- Make recommendations for the type of scheme that would be most successful relating to HMO/Flats properties in Bracknell.
- Make recommendations for what can be done to drive adoption of the recommended scheme for HMO/Flats properties
- Make recommendations as to what the service should do to reduce the risk of "contamination" of this new waste stream for these property types.
- Identify which HMO/Flats would be suitable for a food waste collection.

The review will do this by:

- Consulting other local authorities to understand how their schemes are run and what lessons have been learnt since implementation.
- Desktop review other local authority schemes and information available for residents on local authority websites.
- Engaging with local HMO's, social landlords to establish their concerns and what support/equipment they may require within the Council's budgetary limitations.
- Engaging Food waste experts and our collection contractor to understand best practice.
- Visiting some of the Borough's relevant sites.
- Reviewing the potential cost of any scheme to ensure it would be viable

At the conclusion of this work the Panel will produce a report highlighting its findings and propose recommendations to the Executive about how the Council, its partners and private companies in the borough can implement food waste disposal for HMO's and Flats.

Delivery methods: Challenge sessions; interviewing other local authorities

¹ [Household Food waste collections guide, context, background | WRAP UK](#)

² [Over £1m to fund food waste fight - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Council theme: Protecting and enhancing our environment	Council team: Waste and Recycling
Review due: July 2021	Proposed by: Cllr John Porter, Chair Communities and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel.
<p>Equalities Impact Assessment The Council provides additional support for residents who need help putting disposing of their household waste. This Panel will ensure they consider whether any extra help is required for residents in HMO's or Flats with additional needs so they can recycle their food waste.</p>	
<p>Financial and legal implications There are potentially legal and financial implications of any recommendations arising from this review which will be fully addressed in the review report.</p>	
<p>Climate Change implications The purpose of the recommendations should feed into the Council's overall plan to reduce carbon emissions within the borough and reduce the impact of climate change.</p>	

[Recycling collections for flats - food waste collections | WRAP UK](#)