

Apprenticeship Provision Framework change

Date: 30th October 2023

Report of: Chief HR Officer

Report to: Director of Strategy and Resources

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

To seek agreement to a change in the arrangements for the procurement of Apprenticeship Training Provision for Leeds City Council. This is in light of the current procurement contracts, with our existing Training Provider organisations coming to an end in October 2023, and the existing procurement arrangements no longer being supported which therefore requires a replacement process to enable us to continue to procure provision to deliver apprenticeship training.

Recommendations

- a) That the Council moves provision of engaging Apprenticeship Provision to the YPO framework under Apprenticeships and associated Training.
- b) That all providers on the current Council Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) are advised that this will come to an end and in order to continue providing for the Council they will need to have joined the YPO framework if they have not already done so.

What is this report about?

- 1 Since the start of the apprenticeship reforms in 2017, the Council has operated a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), in order to easily procure Apprenticeship Training provision, as and when it is required. Due to the availability of capacity and procurement expertise at the time, this DPS has been managed by the Employment & Skills service through 5-year £0 value contracts. The Dynamic Purchasing System has given us the flexibility to work with more training providers as our requirements have increased and new standards and training providers have come into the market. Some of the existing contracts with Apprenticeship Training Providers that the Council utilises came to an end in October 2023 and a replacement mechanism for procuring Apprenticeship Training Provision is required beyond this date.
- 2 The Employment & Skills team that currently manage the existing dynamic purchasing system have confirmed that they no longer have the capacity to manage this within their team going forward so an alternative solution has become necessary.

- 3 The money to fund apprenticeship training provision is already accounted for in the Apprenticeship Levy, for which we submit approx. £2.4m to the HMRC each year and receive an additional top up of 10%. This money is then spent as effectively as possible across internal employees, new employees and through the transfers of funds to support local SMEs to support skills development at the Council and across the region.
- 4 Alternative national frameworks for Apprenticeship Training Provision have been identified and explored. A report to HR leadership Team on 6th September 2023 agreed to move forward with the YPO framework which is used by many of our other regional partners.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 5 This move will have minimal to no impact on our apprentices, as their provision will continue.
- 6 The majority of the providers we are engaged/contracted with through the DPS, are already part of the YPO framework for provision with other organisations. For the handful who are not already signed up, we will work with the YPO where we can to get these providers onboard. There may be a small number who we would have to enter into waiver contracts with to be able to continue utilising their services.
- 7 In very few circumstances there may be a situation where we choose to move provision from one provider who is not on the framework, to a provider who is on the framework.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 8 Ensuring young people and those changing career later in life have the skills and job opportunities which enable them to realise their potential and thrive. Specifically, those coming into the Council and our workforce now and in the future.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 9 A report was taken to HR Leadership team on 6th September 2023 at which a move to the YPO framework was agreed. The change has not been mentioned to the Trade Unions as there should be minimal impact on its members.

What are the resource implications?

- 10 The Employment & Skills team that currently manage the existing dynamic purchasing system (DPS) have confirmed that they no longer have the capacity to manage this within their team going forward so an alternative solution has become necessary.
- 11 Our own Procurement team have also confirmed they do not and the capacity to run the current DPS and neither do our own HR team.
- 12 Moving to a reliable, well renowned framework utilised by other local authorities in the region, removes the need to manage onboarding and contract management of providers.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 13 There is a minimal risk that some of the providers who we currently work with, will decide not to join the YPO framework (there is only a handful who are not already signed up).

- 14 The Council will work with the YPO and providers to onboard as many as possible onto the framework.
- 15 For those who do not engage, we will need to make a decision whether to waiver contracts with these providers, or to utilise alternative provision.
- 16 No current apprentices will be affected, as provision for those who have already started their learning, will not have this interrupted.

What are the legal implications?

- 17 Our own Procurement legal team are engaged in considering the YPO terms and conditions and any addendums which the Council may wish to make. There is provision within the YPO framework to add to the terms and conditions each time you call off from the contract. This may be necessary for some of the Council's standard terms.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

Analysis of the alternative options available to us have identified that:

- 18 Procurement skills and capacity within the Resourcing & Talent Management team in HR to retain an in-house procurement process is not available. Capacity to support this within the LCC Procurement team is also not available.
- 19 Alternative national frameworks for Apprenticeship Training Provision have been identified and two potential options have been explored through in-depth discussion. These are: Crown Commercial Services (CCS) and Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO).

How will success be measured?

- 20 Success will be a seamless switch to the YPO framework, with the majority our current providers starting to be called off from this framework which many of them are already signed up to.
- 21 Legal agreement on Terms and Conditions will be sought before progressing

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

- 22 Some of our current training providers have contracts through the Leeds City Council DPS which expired at the end of October 2023. As such we would like to progress transfer to the new YPO framework as soon as possible. This will not affect current apprentices and is unlikely to hamper any new starts in the interim as the majority of our new apprenticeship starts are in September/October each year and we can make a direct award to any others required in the interim period until we have transferred across to the YPO framework.. Impact likely to be minimal as our key providers are already engaged with the YPO so we could look to call off their contract for these in the interim.

Appendices

None