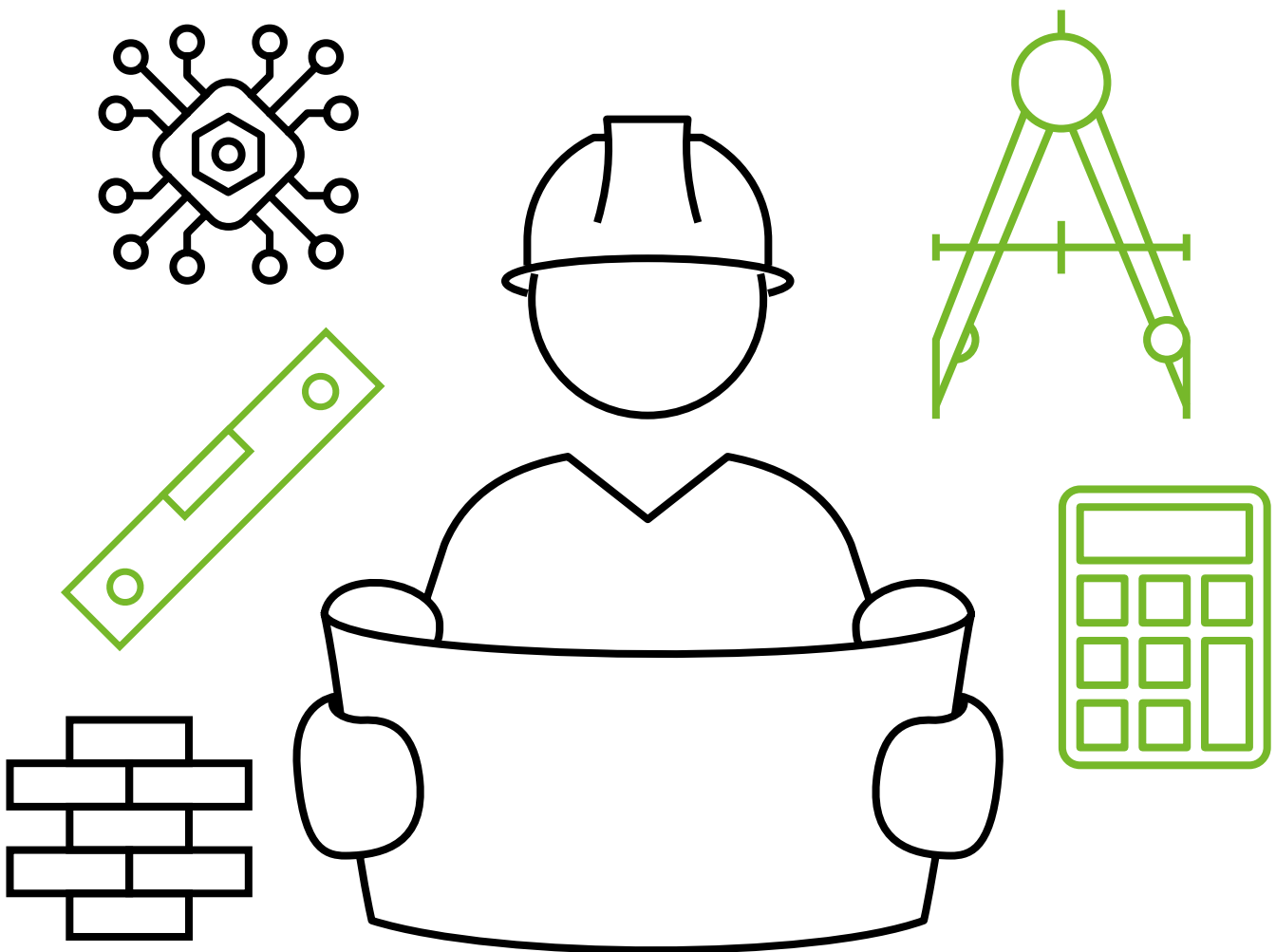


# Apprenticeship Pledge

# DEVELOPING OUR TALENT





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# Foreword



**Councillor Tristan Chatfield**

Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Birmingham City Council has a clear vision for Birmingham, which is to create a city of inclusive growth where every child, citizen and place matters.

To achieve this, the council needs a highly skilled workforce and that means having people with the right skills, delivering the right service, at the right time. Creating apprenticeship opportunities is a vital part in how we will do this. Apprenticeships give people from every background the opportunity to learn and grow, bringing fresh ideas and innovation into the organisation as well as supporting their own personal development.

The city continues to grow, with an exciting and wide range of businesses serving the local and national economy. It is important, that Birmingham City Council leads the way in prioritising job and training opportunities for local people. So we are making a pledge. Being a strategic leader in the city, we want to improve the number of apprenticeship opportunities being made available year on year for the residents of Birmingham. In this document, we formally pledge to use our own Apprenticeship Levy to ring fence all of our apprenticeship posts for Birmingham residents only. This will help local people to develop new skills and share in the city's economic growth making Birmingham an entrepreneurial city in which to learn, work and invest.

Apprenticeships also play a pivotal role in enabling our existing workforce to develop new or existing skills. We must keep pace with the challenges posed by budget cuts, increased demand and technological advancements. Apprenticeship training for existing staff will help us ensure we have a workforce equipped to best meet the needs of our citizens. We are committed to being a learning organisation and apprenticeships are central to that commitment.



# Introduction

The UK Government introduced the Apprenticeship Levy on 6 April 2017. The Levy is a mandatory payment paid each month by employers with a pay bill of over £3 million (including local authorities) to make an investment in apprenticeships. The current rate is 0.5% contribution of the employer's total salary bill.

The aim of the Levy is to put employers at the centre of identifying the skills, knowledge and behaviours that are required for the current and future workforce to ensure apprentices receive high quality training to meet the chosen professional standards.

The Government has also set public sector organisations, with over 250 employees, a requirement that 2.3% of the workforce undertake an apprenticeship annually by 31 March 2021. As of September 2019, the current headcount of Birmingham City Council is 10,536. Based on this figure, the Council will have a target of 242 employees to undertake an apprenticeship annually.

The document establishes the core set of principles that will apply to the council-wide use of its Levy. This will ensure there is a harmonised approach, the benefits of apprenticeships are maximised to its full potential and enable the council to meet its commitment to increasing apprenticeship numbers in Birmingham as identified in the Workforce Strategy 2018 – 2022.

## **Apprentice:**

An individual specifically employed as an apprentice and who completes an apprenticeship standard (qualification) as part of their post. Traditionally associated with school leavers but can be created at any level.

## **Apprenticeship:**

A levy funded standard (qualification) that is available to anyone within the organisation and across a range of levels. The person undertaking the qualification does not require any change to their employment terms and conditions during the duration of their study.



# Vision

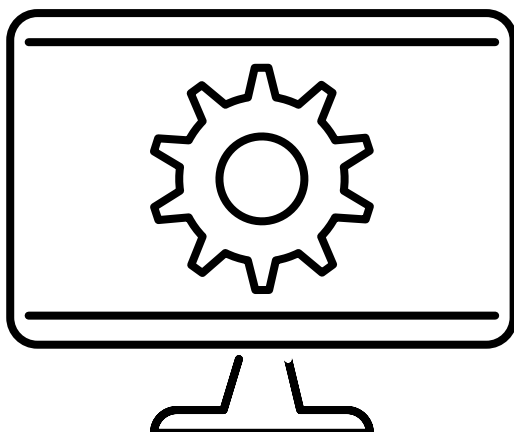
Apprenticeships provide an opportunity for new and existing employees to train and develop into highly performing individuals so that the council can fulfil its current and future skills needs and ensure that the citizens of Birmingham receive an exceptional service.

The council can only face future challenges by having the right people with the right skills at the right time and in the right place. Therefore, apprenticeships are an integral part of the Workforce Strategy 2018 – 2022 providing the Council with a talent pipeline for the future.

## **Supporting Birmingham City Council's strategic ambitions**

Being one of the largest employers in the region, the council will support an increase in the number of apprentices and routes into apprenticeships by leading by example. An increase in the number of apprenticeships is an integral part of achieving the Council Plan 2018 – 2022 outcome – Birmingham is an entrepreneurial city to learn, invest and work in. The challenges faced are particularly acute for young people aged 16 – 25, as well as care leavers, long term unemployed people, returners to the labour market and people with disabilities, as they try to compete within the labour market.

In line with the Council's Workforce Strategy 2018 – 2022, providing opportunities for staff to undertake apprenticeships will raise the skills levels and aspirations within the workforce to meet current and future needs. It will also develop an apprenticeship culture which will improve recruitment and retentions, aid succession planning and talent management and change the demographics of the workforce to represent the communities we serve from entry level to the council's senior leadership team.





# Principles of using the Levy

## **Apprenticeship first when recruiting to all posts**

When a new vacancy is created, the business should seek to include an apprenticeship offer as part of the role as part of their considerations before advertising. This is at all levels from entry grade to the council's senior leadership team.

Every role need not always be a specific apprentice 'learning' post but the option to do an apprenticeship should be viewed as an incentive for joining the organisation as it forms part of the council's offer as an 'Employer of Choice'.

Those leaving care have been identified as a particular group who find it hard to enter and sustain work.

**As a Corporate Parent, extra consideration and support should be given to the city's care leavers when a new vacancy is created. The council will work in partnership with Birmingham Children's Trust to ensure the city's care leavers are able to thrive and grow into adulthood and abide by the Government's Care Leavers Charter which both the council and trust have signed up to.**

<b>Permanent learning apprentice posts</b>	Where an apprenticeship is being used to train an individual (like a conventional apprentice), these posts should be appointed to a learning job description that has been appropriately job evaluated and remunerated at 100% of the pay grade identified.
<b>Sustainable skill development</b>	Posts should be appointed on a permanent basis and a business case should be made where the post is being appointed on a fixed-term basis. This will support the retention of those skills within the organisation to drive it forward and create the workforce of tomorrow.
<b>Business need driven – now and future</b>	All apprenticeships undertaken should be based on the business needs of the organisation as well as the skills needs of the individual. The appraisal process and/or supervision meetings should be utilised as a mechanism to discuss apprenticeship opportunities, planning for future needs as well as existing skills required.

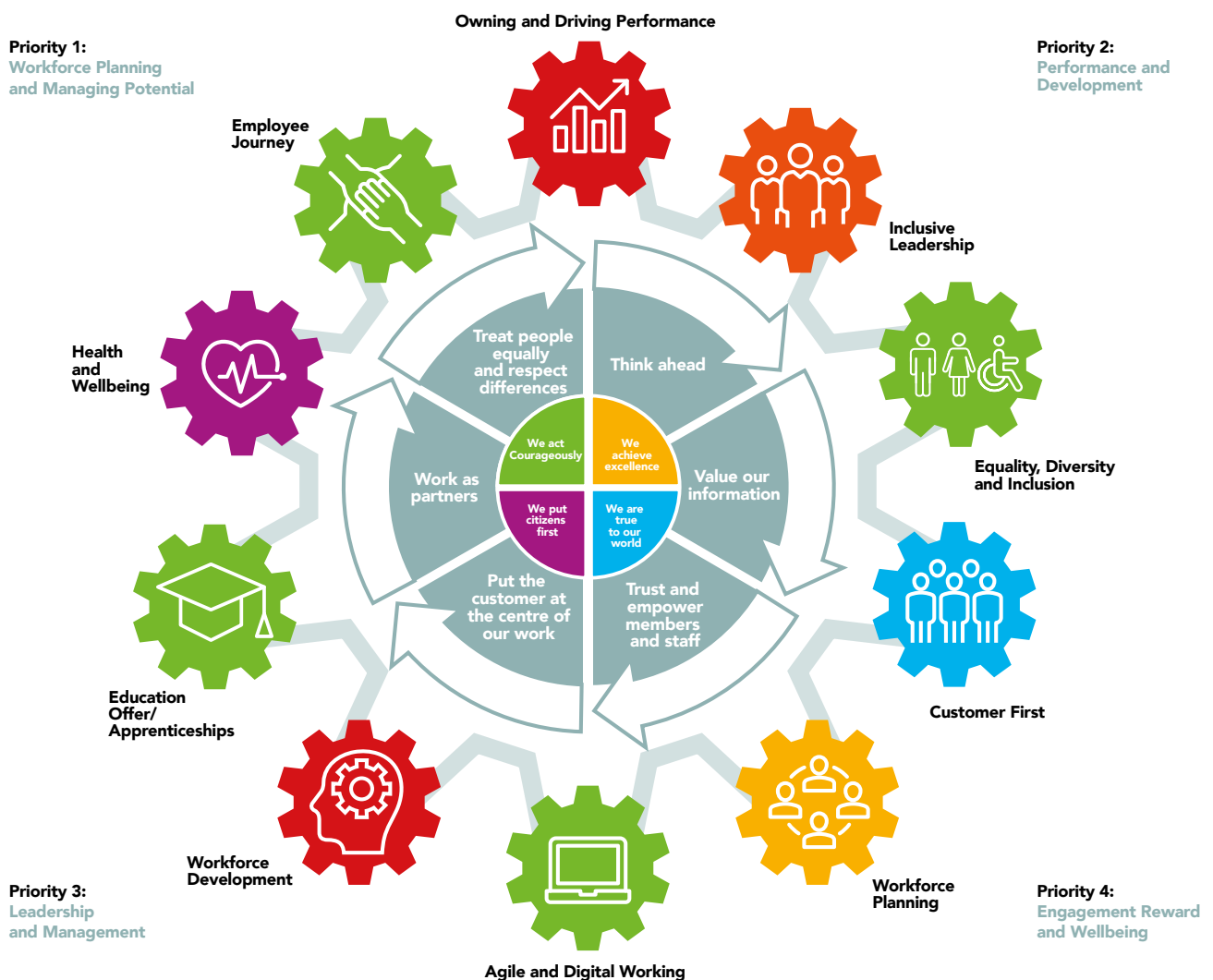


<p><b>Apprenticeships open to all new and existing staff</b></p>	<p>Apprenticeships are not limited to new staff appointments. Existing staff can be supported to undertake an apprenticeship within their current role. This might be to consolidate the skills in their substantive position or develop the skills for their own career progression. Consideration should be given to ensuring that this is applied consistently across the organisations.</p>
<p><b>Supporting local talent and under-represented groups</b></p>	<p>To support the development of home-grown Birmingham talent, the recruitment of individuals to apprenticeship posts should be ring-fenced to applicants living in the boundaries of the Birmingham, with priority given to those living in the most deprived Wards or from under-represented groups</p>
<p><b>Equality, diversity and inclusion</b></p>	<p>Outside London, Birmingham is the UK's most diverse city. Promoting equality and tackling inequalities is at the heart the council's goals and is fundamental to building a strong local economy and a fair society. Equality, diversity and inclusion to reflect the city's demographics should be considered when new apprentices are appointed.</p>
<p><b>Strategic approach</b></p>	<p>A strategic approach to using the Levy for workforce design, succession planning and talent management is key to ensuring that the Levy use is optimised for the long-term benefit of any individual team and organisation. This will also contribute to the council becoming an 'Employer of Choice'. The Organisational Development team will work collaboratively with the business to support this approach.</p>
<p><b>Gift of the Levy</b></p>	<p>The council also has an opportunity to transfer or 'gift' (up to 25% of our annual fund) some of its Levy externally to organisations who have not got access to a Levy fund. This may include supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs) within the city who don't qualify to have a Levy and organisations and that are part of the city council supply chain (like care providers). This includes those businesses working in partnership to deliver delivering the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. This will ensure that there is an opportunity to upskill the wider employment economy across the city to the benefit of the citizens of Birmingham. The detail of how the council will 'gift' the Levy will be addressed through the wider city skills and employment work being led by its Education and Skills directorate.</p>

# Benefits of using the Levy

The strategic use and co-ordination of the Levy is an important change lever within the council's culture change programme. The range of benefits of taking this approach include:

- Upskilling of staff across a wide range of disciplines without additional (cashable) cost
- More strategic approach to succession planning and talent management
- Investment in staff, increasing staff motivation and attracting new talent to the organisation
- Increased exposure to other organisations, cultures and practices
- Increased investment for apprenticeships within our supply chain and within the wider city economy to increase opportunities for Birmingham's citizens
- Improved outcomes for our citizens through an improvement in the quality of our service provision



# Engaging with maintained schools to utilise the Levy

The council will actively engage with local authority-maintained schools to ensure they are aware of the apprenticeship opportunities available to them via the Levy.

Advice, information and guidance on apprenticeships and the Levy will be given to promote the benefits in helping schools meet skills gaps and future workforce needs. This will include raising awareness of the Apprenticeships standards for senior educational leaders, teachers, teaching assistant and school business managers, as well as a range of broader standards that could be used by the wider schools' workforces in helping create apprenticeship opportunities such as finance assistants, ICT technicians and administrators. The council will ensure schools are kept up to date with any new school focused standards that are developed.

## Measurable outcomes of a fully used Levy – what can it bring

Outcome	Measure
<b>Improved outcomes for citizens</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance of teams</li> <li>• Citizens want to work at BCC</li> </ul>
<b>Skilled workforce</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appraisals</li> <li>• Workforce planning and development</li> </ul>
<b>High performing workforce</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appraisal outcomes</li> <li>• Service outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>New ways of working introduced</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of proposals</li> <li>• Delivery of results</li> </ul>
<b>Increased staff motivation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff Survey</li> <li>• Reduction in sickness absence and employee relations cases</li> <li>• Retention of key staff</li> </ul>
<b>Financial savings achieved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NI reclaims</li> <li>• Money spent on non-levy training</li> </ul>

## Birmingham City Council's apprenticeship vision

Apprenticeships provide an opportunity for new and existing employees to train and develop into highly performing individuals so that the council can fulfil its current and future skills needs and ensure that the citizens of Birmingham receive an exceptional service.

[www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20102/jobs/1515/apprenticeships](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20102/jobs/1515/apprenticeships)

