

REPORT TO:	FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (SPECIAL)	AGENDA ITEM: 10
DATE OF MEETING:	21 JULY 2022	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	KEVIN STACKHOUSE - STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (CORPORATE RESOURCES)	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	JARED WAINWRIGHT, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICER jared.wainwright@southderbyshire.gov.uk	DOC:
SUBJECT:	ANNUAL TRAINING REPORT 2021-2022 AND PRIORITIES FOR 2022/23	
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	NONE	TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM05

1.0 Recommendations

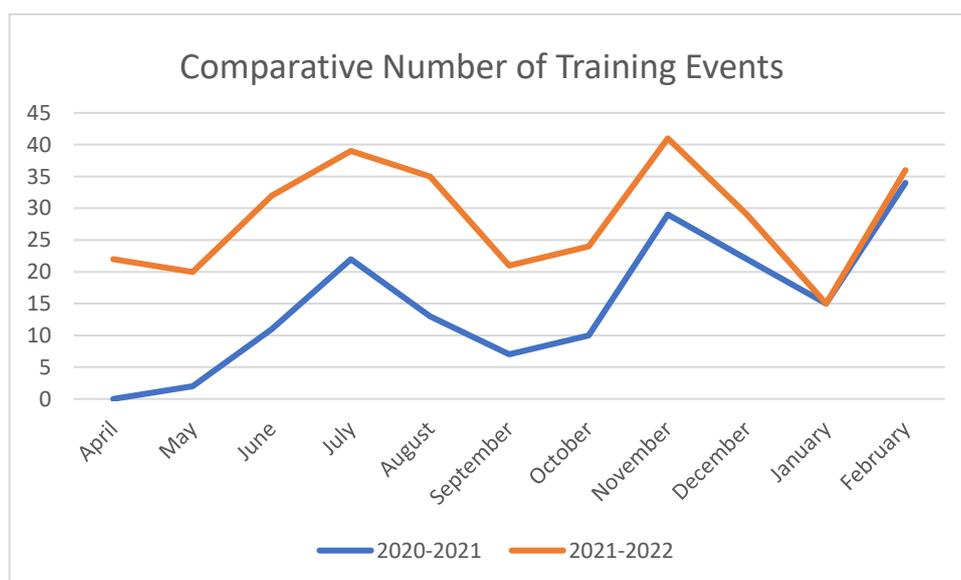
- 1.1 That Members note the investment and outcomes made in learning and development activities from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 which are linked to the delivery of the key priorities of the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 1.2 To approve priority areas for learning and development during 2022-2023.
- 1.3 That the Council continues to provide employment and work experience opportunities under the national Modern Apprenticeship Scheme and other vocational based learning initiatives working with local schools and other academic centres.

2.0 Purpose of the Report

- 2.1 To provide an overview of employee learning and development activities between 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, highlighting areas of success and development to take into the next financial year.
- 2.2 To propose the priority actions for corporate learning and development activities for April 2022 to March 2023 and the anticipated outcomes that includes supporting any national schemes as part of the national recovery plans for employment.

3.0 Executive Summary

- 3.1 Learning and development activities have had to radically change due to the impact of COVID-19 and the different models of service delivery being used across the Council.
- 3.2 This has provided the opportunity to consider and employ different delivery models for learning and development with the majority of training events being conducted online through Microsoft Teams to comply with the national requirement for employees to work from home where possible. Face-to-face training continued in compliance with Government and Public Health guidance where other training options were unavailable. This enabled a continuation of learning and development activities to ensure all employees were able to complete both mandatory and job related training. It will be important to continue a blended approach now that restrictions are lifted as the Council adapts to new flexible ways of working.
- 3.3 Overall, there has been a positive trend in training events and attendance as shown in the chart below.



- 3.4 Several initiatives have been used throughout the year to increase employee engagement with learning and development opportunities. These include the continued publication of a bi-monthly Learning and Development Newsletter, bi-yearly reports to Heads of Service on training records, enhanced recording of any continuous professional development (CPD) by employees to keep accurate training records and the development of online feedback forms.
- 3.5 To supplement the above, an e-Learning platform, Skillsbites, has been procured and available to all employees via their work devices. This provides learning opportunities in a range of managerial, occupational, IT and personal development courses. It is planned to increase the training on the platform with

additional Health and Safety, safeguarding and Customer Service modules making learning opportunities more widely available to suit employees' availability.

National programmes and campaigns

- 3.6 To increase employee engagement with learning and development initiatives, there was a specific programme of events put in place for Mental Health Awareness Week 2021 and National Apprenticeship Week 2022. This has given employees more awareness of the initiatives and increased participation and understanding, especially in mental health and wellbeing. This has been particularly important for those employees working at home or from different locations without direct access to and/or contact with colleagues.

Modern Apprenticeship and Kickstart

- 3.7 Four new apprenticeships started in 2021-2022 with a further two potentially starting later this year. As part of the Government's employment recovery plans, additional incentives were made available and the Council responded positively to access this funding and make better use of the apprenticeship levy. This incentive funding is no longer available as it ended on 31 January 2022 however other funding remains available to further the Council's support of encouraging high employment within the District.
- 3.8 The Council also signed up to a regional consortium organised by East Midlands Councils to support the national Kickstart scheme. The aim of this scheme was to assist people at risk of long-term unemployment into the workplace. This has been successful for the Council with the employment of three additional people that otherwise may not have had the opportunity.
- 3.9 Work is also progressing with the introduction of a different academic route for people using the T-Levels initiative. This will enable the Council to work with academic centres to help people gain valuable qualifications, equivalent to A-levels, while building working experience.

Mandatory Training

- 3.10 Resource has been invested in providing mandatory training to managers and employees. This has resulted in a significant upturn in the levels of attendance across the workforce with further courses scheduled during 2022/ 23 to maintain the momentum gained. This promotes high levels of compliance with the Council's key priorities for training and development. This has included the provision of training in two courses to support the approved Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021-25.

Elected Member Training

- 3.11 During the year, Elected Members have been provided training in a range of different courses ranging from Equality, Diversity and Inclusion awareness

through to Safeguarding and Media Training. These are delivered at different times to suit the needs of Elected Members and their own learning needs.

3.12 Compulsory training was also provided for members of the Planning Committee and Overview and Scrutiny along with a number of other events that are relevant to the responsibilities and role of Elected Members

External training

3.12 The Council was successful with the submission of a tender to provide Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training for the Trustees, employees and volunteers of Derby Museums. This has brought in extra income and enhanced the reputation of the Council as a service provider.

4 Detail

4.1 Overview of training events from April 2021 to March 2022:

- 149 training events provided to employees; of these, 137 were provided by internal facilitators and 12 were provided by external facilitators.
- Continuation of the Mental Health Awareness Week programme and National Apprenticeship Week to support managers and employees.
- The Council was engaged to deliver equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) training for Derby Museums. A total of 15 sessions were delivered over 5 weeks with 89 attendees.
- 1864 individual attendances were recorded in total across internal training events.
- This equated to an average of 12.5 attendees per session and 3.58 training days per employee for this period.
- Overall, training completions in all areas of mandatory compliance continued as shown below – please note that the majority of the training is completed on a three yearly cycle so higher completions rates from the previous will limit the number of attendees in the previous year.



- 4.2 COVID-19 and the continued requirement for the majority of employees to work from home has driven the provision of learning and development activities to new technologies and solutions to ensure the continuation of support for employees. This had to progressed in an agile and safe way to meet the different needs of the workforce and ensure that courses and the content was adapted to better reflect the ‘virtual’ classroom that has had to be used as the primary tool for training.
- 4.3 For front line workers training was provided on a face to face basis observing the national and public health guidelines that were in place. With the relaxation of the national guidelines, training provision is now being made available on a face to face basis where appropriate and safe for the workforce.
- 4.4 Training data compiled for this report was accurate as of 1 April 2022 – any data received thereafter, such as CPD courses attended by employees, may not have been included which may lead to an understatement of training figures. The Council has enhanced the recording of training data throughout the period to ensure training records are accurate and up to date, both to support employees with their professional development and managers with ensuring the compliance of their teams.
- 4.5 Initiatives to accurately record and to encourage uptake in training have continued and includes:
- A bi-monthly Learning and Development Newsletter sent to all employees and made available for those colleagues without work emails.
 - A quarterly training form sent to Heads of Service to record their team’s CPD and other associated training events.
 - Monthly targeted reminders to encourage attendance on training courses.

4.6 To provide further flexibility and support in training provisions, eLearning solutions have continued to support a blended learning approach.

Evaluation of training

4.7 Feedback from training intervention has been digitised using Microsoft Forms, although an optional print version of feedback forms is available for those who cannot access this. There have been positive trends across all areas measured as summarised in the table below

Summary of all training feedback:				
Relevance of training to role:	Standard of content:	Training delivery methods:	Reported increase in skills (average):	Would you recommend this training?
89% stated as highly relevant to role	90% judged training content as excellent	90% judged the training delivery as excellent	18% increase in skills, behaviour and knowledge	89% would recommend training to others

Health and Wellbeing

4.8 Training has supported health and wellbeing throughout the pandemic to ensure those employees working from home or without regular direct access to managers or colleagues have access to resources and information. This included:

- Running a programme for Mental Health Awareness Week which provided training and information on topics such as anxiety, depression and stress.
- Continued support with the training of Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) that includes five front line workers who can support employees within their service areas. MHFA refresher training to maintain and increase this group's skillsets in will be provided.
- A total of 23 'Health and Wellbeing' training sessions delivered, including Stress Awareness, Managing Employee Wellbeing and Building Resilience

Modern Apprenticeships

4.9 Despite COVID-19 directly impacting the ability to hire new starters into apprenticeship roles due to the Government's advice to work from home for a large part of the year, The Council has still been successfully able to support new starters into apprenticeship roles.

4.10 Comparatively, in 2021-2022 the Council spent 25% of its levy funds, compared to a spend of 16% of the levy funds paid in 2020-2021. The 2021-2022 spend did have the added advantage of gaining £3000 from the Government's incentive scheme and hires in this period gained a total of £4500 in incentive payments, up to 31 January 2022 when the scheme was ended.

- 4.11 In total, 2% of the workforce were in an apprenticeship role, up from the previous year which stood at 1.4%.
- 4.12 Actions to improve the uptake of apprenticeships within the Council include celebrating National Apprenticeship Week, using the bi-monthly Learning and Development Newsletter to advertise benefits to using apprenticeships for existing colleagues, and using the PDR process to contact managers about potential opportunities. This will support the Council to achieve the public sector target of 2.3% of the workforce being in an apprenticeship post.

Kickstart Programme

- 4.13 The Government's Kickstart programme was introduced as an initiative to help young people aged 16-25 at risk of long-term unemployment to secure a six-month fully funded work placement. This initiative came to an end on the 31 March 2022.
- 4.14 The Council were successful in securing three placements. These have enabled three young to receive further training and development and all have since been able to secure further employment at the Council.

Management Training

- 4.15 The development and delivery of training specific to managers has increased across four areas namely; Attendance Management, Equality Impact Assessments, Managing Employee Wellbeing and Recruitment and Selection.
- 4.16 E-Learning has further supplemented management training by providing 11 additional modules relevant to common management issue such as managing return to work, coaching, motivating, leadership, conflict resolution, effective interviewing and performance development reviews.
- 4.17 73.8% of managers have completed all their mandatory training in 2021-2022
- 4.18 In addition, the session 'PDRs: A Manager's Guide' and associated resources was created for managers to support the PDR process, which 99% of managers attended. This training provider managers with the knowledge and insight to set employees targets for the year, linked to the delivery of the Corporate Plan, and identify the training and development activities that are need for the employee.

Post entry training

- 4.19 In addition to internal training, nine employees have/are undertaking post-entry training programmes throughout this period. This is an increase on the eight employees undertaking post-entry training in the previous year. This demonstrates the Council's investment in the development of the skills and knowledge of employees and supports effective workforce planning.

Training budget

- 4.20 The Council allocates separate budgets for training within service areas and corporately. The corporate training budget is managed centrally by the Organisational Development and Performance Service Unit and is used to fund learning and development opportunities that are available for all employees.
- 4.21 The corporate training budget has been used to purchase an eLearning platform and additional modules and also to fund a course for officers across the Council to undertake formal employment related investigations. Over the next year, this budget will be used to support the delivery of a Leadership and Management Development programme that will be provided by an external partner following a procurement exercise.
- 4.22 Each Service Unit manages their own training budget to support personal and professional development of their employees. These are linked directly to the needs identified in their Service Plan and at individual performance development reviews.
- 4.23 Across all service areas, £146,724.95 was available and £75,923.64, 49% has been spent during the year. Based on a head count of 320 employees, there is £458.52 available for each employees training during the year with £237.26 being spent on each employee. The Local Government Association have established a benchmarking club that is available to all Councils and those who participated during 2021/22 reported an average spend per employee in English Authorities was £198.

5.0 Priorities for 2022-2023

- 5.1 The emerging landscape of the workplace post COVID-19 will demand that services are delivered that best and most safely meet the needs of customers, employees and the communities the Council serves. With the planned introduction flexible working as the preferred employment model of the Council, the priorities for learning and development priorities will support, enhance and develop the Council's approach and its workforce.
- 5.2 Council services will be delivered to meet the needs of customers and the learning and development will remain agile, flexible and focused on providing the workforce with the skills, knowledge and ability to deliver excellent customer focused services. In the planning of learning and development interventions, the requirement to ensure the health and safety of the workforce will remain a priority.

Supporting flexible working

- 5.3 In the upcoming year, learning and development initiatives will support and be aligned to the Flexible Working Policy. This will include supporting managers in managing remote teams, team building and performance management. For employees, there will be a continuation of wellbeing interventions and refresher training for the current Mental Health First Aiders.

Leadership and Management

- 5.4 A leadership and management programme will be provided to suit more agile working methods, and to support managers with changing ways of working. This will include providing internal and external facilitation in core subject areas, and the provision of blended learning opportunities to support delegates on-going personal and professional development.
- 5.5 An external partner has been appointed to deliver this programme with the first cohort of attendees to commence in September 2022. This will enable 12 employees to work through the programme and provide feedback to assess and develop the content of the programme before the second cohort of delegates start in January 2023. This will be a rolling programme with two separate cohorts then being run each year. This will support the Council to build resilience and knowledge in key posts across the council and enable succession planning to retain and recruit employees.
- 5.6 There will also be the opportunity to use funding through the apprenticeship levy to support qualifications such as the ILM Level three in management, as well as other funding prospects provided through local education providers to provide accredited qualifications in different occupations.

Coaching programme

- 5.7 As part of the leadership and management programme, a coaching programme will be implemented, with the potential to join East Midlands Councils and their existing coaching network to support this. It is proposed that this will support managers to develop their teams using coaching interventions alongside other management techniques. Going forward, if it planned to develop an internal resource of work based coaches, suitably qualified, to provide this support internally.

Modern apprenticeships

- 5.8 Work will continue to provide apprenticeship opportunities across all services of the Council. In addition to the framework currently in place, additional support and guidance will be provided to managers on how to recruit in to apprenticeship posts as well as providing access to the apprenticeship levy for existing employees who may wish to upskill.
- 5.9 This will support the Council in achieving the public sector apprenticeship target of 2.3% of the workforce being enrolled on an apprenticeship programme.

Customer services

- 5.10 Working with the Head of Customer Services, a blended approach to providing customer services training for all staff will be provided. This will enhance and support the embedding of the Flexible Working Policy and ensure that customers remain the priority in all the services provided by the Council.

Induction

- 5.11 In order to ensure the Council can support both face-to-face and virtual onboarding of new starters, the induction process will be reviewed to ensure all new employees are able to benefit from gaining the same knowledge and information during their induction process. Primarily, this will be supported through the eLearning system SkillBites, where an online introductory video and module will be hosted, as well as key online policies and procedures for new employees to familiarise themselves with before commencing employment with the Council. This will support managers when inducting new employees and enable their effective integration in to the Council and their new teams.

eLearning

- 5.12 To widen the learning options available to employees using the eLearning platform. This will support a blended learning approach, as well as providing increased choice in when and where to complete modules to suit employees' roles and responsibilities. This will also support the Learning and Development Officer in facilitating other interventions and move some mandatory training on to an eLearning format.

Mandatory Training

- 5.13 Mandatory training will be continued with an annual review of all modules to ensure they are fit-for-purpose. Work will be progressed with Heads of Services to ensure all mandatory training is kept up-to-date and progressed throughout the year

Frontline Workers

- 5.14 Face-to-face training will continue for frontline workers in mandatory modules and include core Health and Safety interventions and toolbox talks to support safe working practices, driving safely and banks person training.
- 5.15 Opportunities using the apprenticeship levy and funding from academic centres will continue to be advertised to frontline workers through their Heads of Service to ensure workforce development opportunities are available to all.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 5.16 The approved Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy will ensure the provision of training for the workforce. This will continue to focus on mandatory training for all employees as well as additional training for managers in equality impact assessments. Further training will be provided in conjunction with training partners as appropriate, with feedback and outcomes reported to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group.

Elected Members

5.17 Work has commenced on progressing training for Elected Members. This will include Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Safeguarding, Environmental Awareness, Health and Safety Awareness and will incorporate other relevant training as deemed appropriate. This will be organised by Legal and Democratic Services with support provided by the Learning and Development Officer through internal and external facilitators.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 The corporate training budget, along with resources within the Organisational Development and Performance team and other internal training provides, will be allocated to support the priorities identified in the report.

6.2 External consideration may include, but are not limited to, the potential to join the East Midlands Coaching network and utilising external facilitators where necessary to acquire subject matter experts. All costs to be met through existing budgets.

6.3 The apprenticeship levy funds that the Council pay into are still underutilised. However, the apprenticeship spend across the Council increased from £5,154.25 in 2020-2021 to £16,783. The removal of Covid-19 restrictions played a significant role in this, as recruiting and supporting an apprentice was not as affected by barriers as working from home. Utilising National Apprenticeship Week, regular communications about apprenticeships and using the PDR process have help to elevate this spend and increase apprenticeship numbers in the period 2021-2022.

7.0 Corporate Implications

Employment Implications

7.1 The Council's most valuable resource is its people, and training helps to nurture and develop that resource to improve efficiency and effectiveness in service provision. In providing clear development opportunities, employee retention will be positively impacted, and the Council will gain a reputation as a supportive employer which will assist during recruitment processes.

7.2 With a formalized apprenticeship procedure it is hoped that employment will be positively affected in both bringing in new starters and in upskilling existing members of staff, consolidating the implications on the Council's reputation mentioned above.

Legal Implications

7.3 None arising from this report.

Corporate Plan Implications

- 7.4 Training relates to all priorities of the Corporate Plan. Primarily, training supports Our People by ensuring our employees have the right skills, knowledge and behaviors to provide services to our internal and external customers.

Risk Impact

- 7.5 Investing in the learning and development of employees is imperative to ensure the safe and timely delivery of services. This will support the health and wellbeing of the workforce and ensure staff are suitably trained to work in different models of service delivery.

8.0 Community Impact

Consultation

- 8.1 None arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity Impact

- 8.2 Training will continue to provide to raise awareness and educate the workforce in actions being taken to deliver on the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and action plan. All training, whether provided face to face or electronically, is open to all employees with adjustments put in place to ensure attendance and access for employees when requested. Positive action may be progressed to address any areas of underrepresentation in the workforce to encourage and promote personal and professional development.

Social Value Impact

- 8.3 None arising from this report

Environmental Sustainability

- 8.4 Training will continue to provide to raise awareness and educate the workforce in actions being taken to deliver on the Council's environmental commitments.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 The working environment and expectations of employees, customers and residents have changed. The provision of learning and development opportunities will also have to change, whilst recognising the different needs of learners and their access to technology. The key priorities identify for 2022/23 will ensure that the Council continues to make a timely and effective investment in the workforce that will support the Council's vision to make South Derbyshire a great place to live, visit and invest.