

COMMITTEE REPORT

Subject:	<i>Apprenticeships in SCC Update</i>
Committee:	<i>Governance, Policy & Personnel Committee</i>
Item Number:	<i>15</i>
Date:	<i>5 October 2026</i>
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Report status:	<i>Noting</i>
Confidential / Exempt:	<i>No</i>

1. Report Summary

- 1.1 This report updates the Committee on current apprenticeship activity at Salisbury City Council, including learner feedback, progress, future pipeline activity and funding considerations.
- 1.2 Apprenticeships are being used to develop employees, support career progression and build skills in areas that are important to Council services.
- 1.3 Feedback from current apprentices is positive. Learners report strong manager support, helpful training providers and learning that is relevant to their current roles and future development.
- 1.4 The next stage of review will look beyond learner experience and consider the impact apprenticeships are having for the organisation, including service benefit, skills gained and value for money.
- 1.5 HR will work with managers to understand how apprenticeship learning is being applied in the workplace and whether each programme is meeting the needs of the service as well as the learner.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 2.1 Notes the current position on apprenticeships, the positive learner feedback received and the planned next steps to review organisational impact with managers.

3. Background

- 3.1 Salisbury City Council currently supports apprenticeships across a range of service areas and professional disciplines. Apprenticeships are used both to develop existing employees and to support future workforce planning.
- 3.2 The Council works with approved training providers. Progress is monitored through regular engagement between the apprentice, their manager, the training provider and HR.
- 3.3 Recent learner feedback shows apprenticeships are generally working well from the apprentice perspective. The next stage is to test this against manager feedback and organisational outcomes.

4. Proposal

- 4.1 Current or planned apprenticeship activity includes HR, management, finance, communities and grounds-related programmes at different stages of delivery or review.
- 4.2 The Council will continue to support apprenticeships where they meet service needs, offer meaningful development for employees and represent a good use of apprenticeship funding.
- 4.3 Learner feedback highlights three clear strengths: supportive managers, positive provider relationships and course content that can be applied in the workplace.
- 4.4 The main improvement area is consistency of protected learning time, particularly where apprentices are balancing study with busy operational workloads.
- 4.5 HR will therefore include manager feedback as part of the ongoing review, so the Council can assess whether apprenticeships are improving skills, supporting service delivery and providing a good return on the time and funding invested.

5. Current Apprenticeship Position

- 5.1 HR: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Level 3. A foundation HR qualification for people starting or developing in HR, covering the employee lifecycle, employment law, recruitment, reward, learning and development, and inclusive people practice. Currently on track with expected completion in November 2026.
- 5.2 Management/Business Operations: Leadership and Management Level 5. A higher-level management apprenticeship focused on leading teams and projects, delivering operational plans, managing change, budgets and resources, and supporting organisational goals. Currently on track with expected completion in October 2026.
- 5.3 Management: Leadership and Management Level 3. A first-line management apprenticeship for those supervising individuals, teams or projects, covering workload planning, team development, problem-solving, communication and relationship building. Currently on track with expected completion in December 2026.
- 5.4 Finance: Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) Level 2. A recognised professional accounting qualification which develops core practical finance skills. Commenced May 2026.
- 5.5 Communities: Business Administration apprenticeship. A Level 3 apprenticeship covering general administrative skills, organisational, communication and problem-solving skills to support services. Currently paused.

- 5.6 Grounds: Grounds Maintenance apprenticeship. A practical apprenticeship focused on creating and maintaining parks, gardens and green spaces, including planting, maintenance, tools, machinery and environmental practice. Under consideration by management.

6. Financial Position

- 6.1 The Council has now become an apprenticeship levy payer. This means levy funds can be used to pay for eligible apprenticeship training and assessment costs.
- 6.2 The Council is only just within the levy threshold. If there are insufficient levy funds available, the Council may need to use employer co-investment arrangements for relevant apprenticeship costs.
- 6.3 Government guidance for apprenticeships starting from 1 August 2026 confirms that, where a levy payer has insufficient funds, the employer co-investment rate is 25%, this increased in August from 5% previously.
- 6.4 The financial position will need to be monitored so that apprenticeships continue to offer value for money and remain affordable within available staff development budget.

7. Legal and Governance Considerations

- 7.1 Apprenticeships must continue to comply with government apprenticeship funding rules, provider requirements and the Council's internal governance arrangements.
- 7.2 There is no decision required from Committee at this stage. The report is provided for noting and oversight.

8. Consultation and Engagement

- 8.1 Feedback has been gathered from apprentices undertaking three different apprenticeship programmes.
- 8.2 Feedback was consistently positive, with most responses scoring either 4 or 5 out of 5. Apprentices particularly valued manager support, accessible tutors and learning that was relevant to their roles.

9. Implementation and Next Steps

- 9.1 HR will continue to monitor apprenticeship progress, learner feedback and manager feedback.
- 9.2 The next areas of focus are:
- 9.2.1 strengthen consistency around protected learning time;
 - 9.2.2 review workloads earlier where apprentices may be at risk of falling behind;
 - 9.2.3 consider learner needs, delivery style and online platform usability when selecting or reviewing providers;
 - 9.2.4 work with managers to understand the practical impact of apprenticeships on service delivery, workforce capability and value for money.

10. Implications

Implication Area	Impact	Comments / Mitigation
Financial	Low / Medium	The Council is now a levy payer. Levy funds will be used where available; co-investment is likely to apply if funds are insufficient within the existing staff development budget.
Legal	Low	Apprenticeships must comply with funding rules and provider requirements.
Risk	Medium	Main risk is apprentices falling behind if learning time is not protected. HR will monitor progress with managers and providers.
Personnel	Medium	Positive workforce development impact, with some workload planning needed to protect learning time.
Environmental Impact	None	No direct environmental impact identified.
Equalities Impact Statement	Low	Apprenticeships can support access to development opportunities. Individual learner needs should continue to be considered.
Community / Public Impact	Low	No direct public impact, but improved employee skills can support service delivery.
Procurement / Contractual	Low	Provider arrangements should continue to be reviewed for quality, delivery fit and value for money.
Property / Asset	None	No property or asset implications identified.
Data Protection	Low	Apprenticeship records involve employee data and should continue to be handled in line with data protection requirements.