

Local Government Association

NEWSLETTER

Date: May 2021

Reminder: If you've not yet joined us on the KHUB you can sign up to our apprenticeships group [here](#).

Got an urgent question on apprenticeships? Email us on our 24/7 query line on info@spark.org.uk

Hi everyone,

A bumper edition of the newsletter this time with items about the Queen's Speech, Pooled PAYE, consultations, schools, the local government apprentice of the year and our various support offers.

If there's anything you want to see in a future newsletter, don't hesitate to email Jamie on jamie.saddler@local.gov.uk.

Local Government Apprentice of the Year

We want to start this week by offering our congratulations to **Karla Overington, Business Administration Apprentice at West Sussex County Council** has been named as the **2021 Local Government Apprentice of the Year**.

Karla, who has been an apprentice since January 2021, won the award by competing in a virtual day of challenges set to encourage participants to showcase their skills, expertise, and initiative.

The event was designed and delivered by South West Councils and the East of England Local Government Association with support from the LGA. The virtual 'Apprentice of the Year' event was the first of its kind held in local government and involved more than 100 apprentices taking part from councils in eight different English regions in activities that encouraged them to experience the opportunities, risks, and challenges involved in delivering successful local government services. As well as Karla's individual success, awards were also presented to three runners up and to the winning team. Apprenticeships and Skills Minister Gillian Keegan was a guest speaker at the event, taking part in a Q&A with attendees and sharing her own experiences of starting her career as an apprentice.

You can find more information about the event and a full list of winners on the EELGA website [here](#).

Skills and Post-16 Education Bill

In the Queen's Speech, the Government announced new legislation creating a lifetime skills guarantee that will offer adults the opportunity to retrain in later life and put employers at the heart of the post-16 skills system through the Skills Accelerator.

Apprenticeships only got a brief mention, in the context of confirming the government's apprenticeship incentives and reiterating their commitment to creating more opportunities. You can find more information about the various announcements and the LGA response in our on-the-day briefing [here](#):

<https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/queens-speech-may-2021-day-briefing#skills-and-post-16-education-bil>.

Pooled PAYE

As regular readers of our newsletter will know, this has been an ongoing issue for the sector, which the LGA has been engaging on for some time. Following feedback from councils across the country, it is clear that the three options, including ending our Pooled PAYE schemes, put forward by ESFA as solutions to this issue are not going to work for the majority of councils.

We are continuing to engage with ESFA to explore whether other solutions are possible and have continued to suggest alternatives. One alternative we put forward was requesting whether there could be an exceptional extension of the non-levy procured provision just for the non-maintained schools affected by this issue to access with their providers. Unfortunately, there is a legal barrier to this potential solution as 31 March 2021 was the last date that new starts could be funded within the previous procurement rules. We have been advised that a new provider procurement would not get HMT approval and that government's position is that the apprenticeships reform programme has now moved away from a provider-led model.

We are still looking for alternative solutions but will need additional information from the sector to continue to make an effective case. If your council is affected by this issue, could you please contact me and provide as much of the following information as possible:

1. How much it would cost your council (and the schools in question) (i) to remove one school from your pooled PAYE scheme and (ii) to end your Pooled PAYE scheme completely and implement an alternative option; and
2. How many schools you have that are potentially affected by this and (if possible) how many apprenticeships are being potentially blocked by this problem.

I have a list of over 30 councils that have provided me with a variety of information on this problem over that past 12 months, including some of the above already, but having up to date figures would be helpful. It is important if we are to continue discussions and attempt to find an alternative that we can effectively demonstrate why ending our Pooled PAYE schemes are not affordable for the sector and demonstrate that to do so would also cost more than potential other solutions.

If you are affected by this issue and are able to provide any of this information, please contact Jamie directly on jamie.saddler@local.gov.uk.

Replacing Business Administration Level 2

Any of you who regularly read FE Week will no doubt have seen [this story](#) in the last few weeks about the work that is currently going on to try to develop a new level 2 qualification to fill the gap left by the discontinuation of the Business Administration Level 2 Framework. As some of you will be aware, I have been working closely with colleagues in the NHS and Local Government to try and develop an alternative standard and get a trailblazer up and running.

However, the piece in FE Week – which claimed that proposals were quite advanced and a replacement standard would be ready for delivery by September – are erroneous and wide of the mark. The article was developed without speaking to anyone currently involved in the

trailblazer and colleagues at the NHS politely declined to provide a quote when asked. Quotes attributed to Lucy Hunte from Health Education England were used without her permission from a face-to-face workshop and were taken out of context.

It is important to stress that we are still in the development stage and have not yet had a proposal accepted by IfATE. We have appointed two co-chairs of our group – Michelle Place (Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust) and Lisa Shepherdson (Kingston-Upon-Hull City Council) who are doing excellent work engaging with IfATE as we develop the proposal. Their meetings have been positive so far and we are pleased that IfATE is engaging with us in the way that they are as we try to get this proposal off the ground.

So, while the progress has so far been positive, we have not yet made enough progress to be able to confirm to you that a proposal has been accepted or to have a clear idea on how long it would take to get the standard approved for delivery. As soon as we have any news to report, we will let people know. In the meantime, our co-chairs, well supported by our core-group of employers, will continue to work hard with IfATE to try to get a positive outcome.

Schools – Request for Case Studies and Roundtable

One of the things we are currently hard at work on is doing a refresh of our Schools Toolkit. First published in 2019, the toolkit provides advice, guidance and practical tools for use by councils working with their maintained schools and by the schools themselves. We are aiming to update all of these tools and documents as well as creating some new ones, like advice notes for schools governors. But to make the toolkit as effective as possible, we need your help.

While we have developed a number of case studies already, we are looking for some more to really bring the documents to life and ensure we're sharing as much good practice as possible. We don't necessarily need full case studies – we're predominantly looking more for information that we can turn into vignettes we can pepper throughout the documents. We're looking for two main things from councils to help us with this:

1. **Any case studies you already have** that you can share around apprenticeships in schools – we're looking for successes, examples of persuading schools to take on apprentices, examples of using things like the incentive payments, examples of atypical apprenticeships schools have created; and
2. We want to hear directly from some schools that have really embraced apprenticeships. What we want to do is arrange a **roundtable with up to 10 school leaders from maintained schools** across your local authorities who have really embraced apprenticeships. We want to share with them some info on the national picture, hear from them direct about their experiences that we can turn into case studies and hopefully enable them to share best practice with each other in the group. We are hoping to hold this roundtable in early June.

If you have any case studies you are willing to share, please could you email Jamie on jamie.saddler@local.gov.uk by close of play on 31 May 2021.

If you have a school leader who might be willing to take part in the roundtable, please let Jamie know ASAP so we can get something in the diary in the next few weeks.

Apprenticeships Mapping Tool Updated

The latest update to our Apprenticeships Mapping Tool is now live on the KHUB, complete with the latest apprenticeship standards, guide to how to use it, and the latest “Mapping Tool Newsletter”, which will bring you right up to date on what updates have been made to the tool, what the key standards are for the sector that have been approved since the last update and other useful updates. You can find all the documents related to the Mapping Tool in [this folder](#) in the KHUB.

If this link doesn't work, follow these steps to find the folder: LGA Apprenticeships Group > Library > 01. LGA Support Offer, Mapping Tool and Webinars > Apprenticeships Mapping Tool

LGA Apprenticeship Surgeries

Since they were introduced in January, our apprenticeship surgeries have proven popular with councils to raise topics and highlight issues. While councils are welcome to contact us about any issue whenever it comes up, if you do want a dedicated slot to speak to Apprenticeships Adviser Jamie Saddler, you can book a half-hour slot on any of the dates listed in the table below. Email Jamie direct on jamie.saddler@local.gov.uk to book your slot.

Date	Slots Available					
24-May	1pm - 1.30pm	1.30pm - 2pm	2pm - 2.30pm	2.30pm - 3pm	3pm - 3.30pm	3.30pm - 4pm
11-Jun	10am - 10.30am	10.30am - 11am	11am - 11.30am	11.30am - 12pm	12pm - 12.30pm	12.30pm - 1pm
24-Jun	2pm - 2.30pm	2.30pm - 3pm	3pm - 3.30pm	3.30pm - 4pm	4pm - 4.30pm	
6-Jul	10am - 10.30am	10.30am - 11am	11am - 11.30am	11.30am - 12pm	12pm - 12.30pm	12.30pm - 1pm
29-Jul	1pm - 1.30pm	1.30pm - 2pm	2pm - 2.30pm	2.30pm - 3pm	3pm - 3.30pm	3.30pm - 4pm

Flexi-Apprenticeship Consultation

Government has published a consultation on their proposals for a new flexi-apprenticeship. The consultation asks employers to consider how flexi-job apprenticeship schemes can support the growth of apprenticeships in sectors where short-term and project-based contracts are the norm. Closing date for responses is 31 May. Find out more here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/flexi-job-apprenticeships-reshaping-the-role-of-apprenticeship-training-agencies>

MENCAP Accessible Apprenticeships Survey

The learning disability charity Mencap has compiled a short survey (5-10 mins) to establish views from employers, training providers, and other apprenticeship stakeholders about flexibilities or exemptions to the minimum levels of English and maths qualifications for people with a learning disability or learning difficulty.

They are looking to establish whether there are recognised barriers to apprenticeships and an appetite for making apprenticeships more accessible.

Closing date for the survey is Friday 21 May 2021. You can respond to the survey here:

<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=UNBN7Z7jDk6pmUCX-a-xZWtMh3KjsZJCpH1IboZALypUOUIBRzdSNFU2RFIWS05DUUIUSzZBUVJNVy4u>

IDR Survey of Graduate and Apprentice Pay 2021

Incomes Data Research is carrying out an online survey of Graduate and Apprentice Pay. Findings from their research about pay during the pandemic indicated that three-quarters of employers increased starting pay for graduate trainees in 2020/21 and around two-thirds did so for apprentices. At this important time for the labour market, they wish to explore this area in more detail to understand pay and conditions for these trainee roles.

The results of this study will provide key pay and progression benchmarking information for employers and all those who participate will receive a free summary report of the results, as well as a 10% discount on any purchase of the full report (priced at £388) when it is ready in the summer.

The deadline for completing the survey is 5pm Tuesday 25th May 2021.

You can take part by following this link:

https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Graduate_and_Apprentice_Pay_2021/

Strategic Development Network Webinars: Government initiatives and your workforce planning

The government has launched a host of skills and jobs initiatives to give people a route into work and provide talent for employers to draw on. But how can these initiatives contribute to your immediate and long-term workforce needs?

From 9 June, Strategic Development Network (SDN) is hosting a free 4-part webinar series to help you explore which opportunities might best support your workforce, what this means in a virtual environment and the practicalities of hosting young people in the workplace.

The series is open to all employers and you can register for a place here:

www.strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk/webinars-emerging-stronger

LGA Webinar Round-up

We're currently in the process of developing our webinar programme for over the summer (more details in the next newsletter), but if you missed any of our webinars over the last twelve months and want to listen back to any of them, you can do so at the links below:

- **LGA 2020 Apprenticeships in Local Government Survey Results** (with Jamie Saddler, LGA Apprenticeships Adviser) – [Listen again here](#)
- **Becoming an Employer-Provider** (with Rebecca Rhodes, Director, Spark Consulting; and a case study from Northamptonshire County Council) – [Listen again here](#)
- **Replacing Business Administration Level 2** (with Jamie Saddler, LGA Apprenticeships Adviser; Lucy Hunte, Health Education England; and case studies from Somerset, Liverpool and Shropshire Councils) – [Listen again here](#)
- **Looking towards COVID-19 Recovery Q&A** (with ESFA Account Managers) – [Listen again here](#)
- **Influencing Apprenticeship Take up and Preparing a Persuasive Case** (with Rebecca Rhodes, Director, Spark Consulting; and case studies from Coventry City Council, Suffolk County Council and the London Borough of Bexley) - [Listen again here](#)

- **Identifying and Securing Quality Delivery in Provision & Providers** (with Rebecca Rhodes, Director, Spark Consulting; and case studies from Dudley MBC and Shropshire Council) - [Listen again here](#)
- **Maintaining Momentum During Covid** (with Rebecca Rhodes, Director, Spark Consulting; Richard Daulton, Account Manager ESFA; and case studies from Somerset, Wiltshire and Kirklees Councils) - [Listen again here](#)
- **Budget Day Apprenticeships Update** (with Jamie Saddler, LGA Apprenticeships Adviser and ESFA Account Managers) – [Listen again here](#)
- **Reaching Local People - Supporting the Hard to Reach** (with Rebecca Rhodes, Director, Spark Consulting; and case studies from North Tyneside, Somerset and Wiltshire Councils) – [Listen again here](#)
- **Reaching Local Employers - Successful Apprenticeship Impact Using Levy Transfers** (with Jamie Saddler, LGA Apprenticeships Adviser; John Myers, Head of Apprenticeship Funding Policy, ESFA; case studies from Hampshire and Shropshire Councils) – [Listen again here](#)
- **Rebuilding the Workforce Plan** (with Rebecca Rhodes, Director, Spark Consulting; Jamie Saddler, LGA Apprenticeships Adviser; Nigel Carruthers, Senior Adviser, LGA; and a case study from Bristol City Council) – [Listen again here](#)

Apprenticeships in the News

Minister orders investigation into ‘astonishing’ apprenticeship drop-out rate

Billy Camden, FE Week, Mon 26 April 2021

[Read more here](#)

Apprenticeship starts plummet by a fifth in a year, government figures show

Jessica Brown, People Management, Tues 4 May 2021

[Read more here](#)

Digital degree apprenticeship review outcome kicked into long grass

Billy Camden, FE Week, Thurs 6 May 2021

[Read more here](#)

Ofsted slams safeguarding failings at apprenticeship giant

Billy Camden, FE Week, Fri 7 May 2021

[Read more here](#)

UK employers lose £2bn in unspent apprenticeship levy funds

Delphine Strauss, Financial Times, Tues 11 May 2021

[Read more here](#)

Boost apprenticeships and we can boost jobs, says Euan Blair

Rachael Burford, Evening Standard, Weds 12 May 2021

[Read more here](#)

Previous Newsletters

Missed one of our [previous newsletters](#)? They are now archived on the KHUB. You can find copies at the links below:

Your suggestions/ideas

If you have any suggestions for what you'd like to see in future newsletters, have items you want to add yourselves, want to sign a colleague up to our mailing list or want to **unsubscribe** yourself from the mailing list, please contact Sadique.miah@local.gov.uk

Best wishes

Jamie, Sadique and Nigel

Jamie Saddler

Apprenticeships Adviser
Local Government Association

t: 07780 226 832 | e: jamie.saddler@local.gov.uk