



**BOROUGH APPRENTICESHIP
SCHEME SPECIALIST
SCRUTINY PANEL**

2006/2007

FINAL REPORT
May 2007

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors:

Councillor Edmond Yeo (Chairman)
Councillor Param Sandhu (Vice Chairman)
Councillor Peter Allott
Councillor Colm Costello
Councillor Maninder Keith
Councillor Seema Kumar
Councillor Marie Randall
Councillor Brian Reeves
Councillor Patricia Walker

Co-optees:

Ms Catherine Beaujean
(Ealing Connexions Service)

Mr Wayne Bridges
(Quantica Training Apprentice)

Ms Anne Thompson
(Ealing Connexions Service)

Committee Administrator:

Owen Rees

Scrutiny Review Officer:

Harjeet Bains

CHAIRMAN'S OPENING COMMENT:

**Councillor Edmond Yeo
Chairman
Borough Apprenticeship Scheme
Specialist Scrutiny Panel**



As a new councillor and chairing a scrutiny panel for the first time, I found the work of the Borough Apprenticeship Scheme Specialist Scrutiny Panel very interesting and challenging.

It is important to work with local partners to come up with a sound scheme for the young people in the borough in order to help them to start their chosen career.

In common with many employers, local government has an ageing workforce, and there is a need to attract young talent to Ealing. An apprenticeship scheme is a unique opportunity to bring young people into the Council and the industry in a productive and cost-effective way.

An apprenticeship with Ealing Council would give a young person looking for the chance to develop themselves the opportunity to receive a valuable work-based experience with high quality training while earning good money.

At the end of the training we get enthusiastic and committed young people thinking about working in local organisations and in local government.

I would like to thank the Panel members and officers for all their hard work and particularly to our invited experts, organisations during our visits and the co-opted members for their support and assistance.

INTRODUCTION

1. The new Conservative administration has pledged to introduce a borough apprenticeship scheme that will take the form of the traditional apprenticeships and which will cover as many skill areas as possible - not just Council areas. The aim is to provide for 100 young people between the ages of 16 and 24 to join the scheme in the first year and then expand it from there.
2. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting of 24 May 2006, proposed the establishment of a new Borough Apprenticeship Scheme Specialist Panel. This was agreed at the Council meeting of 20 June 2006 and the Panel commenced with effect from July 2006. At its first meeting on 3 July 2006, the Panel agreed its Terms of Reference and Annual Work Programme for 2006/2007. These and the agendas, minutes and reports considered at the Panel meetings are available at www.ealing.gov.uk/services/council/scrutiny
3. The Panel comprises of nine councillors and three non-voting advisory members (one Quantica Training apprentice and two from Ealing Connexions Service). There are five Conservative and four Labour councillors on the Panel and this ratio reflects Ealing Council's political set-up.
4. The Panel had five scheduled meetings and made seven additional visits to various organisations in order to find out more information about apprenticeships from key stakeholder groups.
5. An apprenticeship scheme would assist the Council in meeting the commitments set out in the Community Strategy i.e. **success through partnerships** but more specifically it would help to **ensure that there are opportunities for all people and businesses to prosper**. It will achieve this aim by providing additional opportunities to young people living in the borough to access quality employment related training and give them a better chance of obtaining sustained employment at the start of their adult life.
6. The scheme would also help the Council to **create a great place for every child and young person to grow up**. Apprenticeship programmes are aimed at young people between the ages of 16 and 24. By providing young people with choice and employment opportunities when they are either not in a position to enter further or higher education, or not interested in further or higher education, reduces the risk of young people entering long-term unemployment and the associated risk of involvement in crime and disorder.
7. It would assist with the Council's objective to **raise economic activity and skills levels**. The Council wants to foster a flourishing local economy that benefits local businesses and local residents. It wants Ealing's people to be able to fulfil their employment and earning potential through accessing education, training and jobs.
8. The Panel acted as a consultative body in the development of the proposals for a new apprenticeship programme within the borough. Subsequently, the Director of Regeneration and Community Development produced an initial

report outlining proposals for a new boroughwide apprenticeship scheme for the Cabinet to consider at its meeting on 30 January 2007. The Cabinet agreed a number of recommendations which were originally identified by the Panel. The agreed recommendations are highlighted in the relevant sections of the report.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

9. The main **purpose** of the Panel was to make recommendations on the introduction of a borough apprenticeship scheme including in the first instance an in-house scheme followed by a wider roll out.
10. The **scope** of the Panel was to:
 - identify the current provision of training in vocational opportunities;
 - assess the business case and proposed programme implementation;
 - assess recommendations from previous executive decisions and scrutiny reviews;
 - examine the scheme and implementation proposals to establish whether the objectives of the scheme will be met;
 - ensure the views of all the major stakeholders are incorporated in the Borough Apprenticeship Scheme; and
 - assess whether the proposed performance management arrangements will allow appropriate review and monitoring of standards and targets set for the scheme.

KEY OUTCOMES

11. The Panel sought the following **key outcomes**:
 - recommendations and proposals to Cabinet for a Borough Apprenticeship Scheme;
 - enable the new borough apprenticeship scheme to meet its objectives of covering as many areas as possible, with 100 school leavers in the scheme in the first year;
 - proposals about success and performance measures for the scheme.
 - proposals on who should run the scheme (e.g. whether in-house, in partnership with another existing scheme, etc.); and
 - an evaluation of the impact on other schemes currently operating in the Borough.

METHODOLOGY

12. The Panel took a strategic approach in undertaking this policy review and development work by adopting a deliberative, investigative and evidence-based methodology. The Panel was proactive, responsive, flexible and willing to shape its own agendas and workloads. This involved working in an open, transparent, accountable and inclusive manner through an outward looking focus involving partners and the public. The specific methods applied were agreed at the Panel meetings.

13. The Panel actively sought the views of young people by visiting a local high school, a local training provider and a local technical college. The Panel also visited relevant organisations such as the Connexions Service, Ealing Education Business Partnership, Hackney and Hounslow Councils in order to learn more about roles in apprenticeships schemes. Other organisations such as the Learning and Skills Council, local businesses and training providers were invited to Panel meetings to make presentations and give their opinions on specific matters e.g. funding, training, employing apprentices, etc.
14. The Panel also reviewed reports, information and examples of best practice from the Director of Regeneration and Community Development and other external organisations.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

15. The traditional apprenticeship was in the form of a contract between a young person and an employer for a set period of time. In return for 'signing up' the young person was entitled to learning and work experience from their employer in a craft or trade.
16. The modern form of apprenticeship is a programme where the training element is based around achievement of National Vocational Qualifications that are competence based. This training is normally funded by the government through the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) who contract with colleges and other training organisations to provide teaching and assessment. The typical cost to the government for each apprentice is £4,000 although this figure varies based on the age of the learner, the nature of the apprenticeship and the level of qualification.
17. Young people undertaking apprenticeships also get 'on the job' training. They build up knowledge and skills, gain qualifications and earn money at the same time. To complete the apprenticeship young people must achieve the following elements (of the framework):
 - *National Vocational Qualification (NVQ)* at Level 2 or Level 3. An NVQ is a qualification based on accreditation of competence. A young person will accumulate evidence of competence in the workplace that is assessed by a training provider. The apprentice will usually attend college or a training provider for one day per month of assessment;
 - *A Technical Certificate*, which provides underpinning knowledge and is usually delivered in a classroom environment by a training provider; and
 - *Key Skills* in literacy, numeracy, communication and information technology. These skills are normally incorporated into the Technical Certificate.
18. For a Level 2 NVQ apprenticeship the usual entry requirements are 5 GCSEs at grades D-G. This can be negotiable with the employer and the training provider depending on the individual being assessed for the placement. Their level of motivation, for instance, may be a factor in awarding a place on a scheme. For Level 3 NVQ apprenticeships, 5 GCSEs at grades A-C is a definite requirement.

19. The introduction of an apprenticeship scheme can provide significant benefits for the employer such as:
- by taking on an apprentice businesses can train for specialist skills that allow them to keep abreast of new technologies;
 - training and skills can be tailored to the needs of the employer and may help in avoiding future skills shortages within the business;
 - apprentices tend to be loyal and motivated and want to payback the employer for their early investment;
 - apprentices who progress within the organisation become role models for those that follow;
 - apprentices typically experience a range of disciplines within the host employer, which in turn leads to a better fit of person to future career opportunities; and
 - image as a good employer looking to support career opportunity for school leavers.
20. There are also significant benefits for young people who enter into an apprenticeship arrangement such as:
- paid employment;
 - an opportunity to gain 'on the job' training and experience;
 - sponsorship to complete a recognised qualification; and
 - potential future employment with the host employer.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF APPRENTICESHIPS

21. There are now apprenticeship frameworks available in 90 different sectors in the following formats:
- *Young Apprenticeships* - Aimed at 14-16 year olds in schools. These could be developed as part of the Council's scheme as a way of improving selection.
 - *Foundation Apprenticeships* - At NVQ Level 2 (equivalent to 5 GCSEs at grades A*-C).
 - *Advanced Apprenticeships* - At NVQ Level 3 (equivalent to 2 A Levels), Level 4 (equivalent to Degree Level) and Level 5 (equivalent to a Postgraduate Level).

OPTIONS FOR A BOROUGH APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

22. The Panel considered the following four methods of delivery proposed by the Director of Regeneration and Community Development that were not mutually exclusive:

Option 1

23. The Council takes responsibility for all aspects of the scheme by setting up a training company. In this scenario the Council would be responsible for the delivery of all aspects of training under contract to the LSC. The Council would also have to comply with the Adult Learning Inspectorate's performance and quality guidance.

Option 2

24. The Council employs an external agency to manage the entire programme.

Option 3

25. The Council becomes an *employer* of up to 20 apprentices, teaming up with a local training provider, and supporting existing staff to supervise and manage the apprentices. The LSC would meet the costs associated with apprentice training.
26. By becoming an Apprentice Employer the Council would be required to undertake the following activities:
- carry out checks on safety and liability insurance procedures (i.e. fire and risk assessment);
 - identify apprenticeship frameworks that are suitable for implementation within Council departments;
 - assess whether these departments support the apprenticeship scheme and, if so, ensure that they have an understanding and realistic expectations of what is involved;
 - prepare appropriate job descriptions;
 - develop entry criteria for apprentices;
 - provide adequate support and supervision to apprentices;
 - provide opportunities for apprentices to gather enough evidence for their NVQ portfolio;
 - provide supervisory staff with training in the aims of the programme, supervision techniques, mentoring and working with vulnerable individuals, skills for life, needs and progression;
 - supervisors may wish to become NVQ assessors. This would mean that the apprentice would be receiving NVQ support at all times on their placement, rather than just when the assessor visits the apprentice. Supervisors would be able to offer appropriate support for the qualifications if they were familiar with the NVQ process themselves;
 - establish an Apprentice Network for apprentices and supervisors to meet and discuss issues. This could be a formal or informal arrangement, and could be over lunchtime with guest speakers, for example;
 - implement a mentoring or buddying system to support apprentices. This should be outside of the formal supervision/NVQ context and will have further implications for staff time; and
 - pay the salaries and national insurance contributions of the apprentices in the same way as for regular employees. The LSC guidance suggests a minimum of £80 per week but it is generally encouraged that apprentices are paid the going rate for the job, or the national minimum wage. The costing model provided assumed that the minimum wage would be applied.

Option 4

27. The Council become a *'broker'* of apprenticeships with other employers, providing a marketing or "championing" role, organising promotional events by engaging with employers and working with schools and other referral agencies to maximise the number of apprentice places being taken by Ealing residents.

28. By becoming an Apprentice Broker the Council would be taking on responsibility for:
- promoting apprenticeship opportunities to both employers and young people with the objective of increasing the number of apprenticeship openings with other employers by a further 80 places in the first year of the scheme;
 - organising high profile marketing events and promotional campaigns;
 - working with current apprenticeship providers to identify what the limitations or barriers are to Ealing residents taking up apprenticeship opportunities and plan how to increase numbers;
 - working with new employers to increase the number of apprenticeship placements available within the Borough, or placements available to residents of the Borough;
 - improving links between Entry 2 Employment provision for Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) groups and entry of these young people on to apprenticeship schemes;
 - negotiating with the LSC to commit to an increase in apprenticeships on offer to young people resident in the Borough;
 - encouraging progression routes from vocational apprenticeships into higher education in partnership with the Lifelong Learning Network, led by Thames Valley University;
 - promotion of joint working, networking and information sharing between providers, referral agencies, the Education Department and the LSC;
 - developing entry requirements in line with similar apprenticeship schemes elsewhere in London and the region;
 - using the Council's procurement procedures to secure placements with contractors; and
 - identifying additional funding opportunities for existing apprenticeship providers and supporting them to access funding.

Conclusion

29. From the information provided at the meetings and the knowledge acquired from discussions with the key stakeholders the Panel concluded that it would be meaningless to try and create new systems when there were already well-established local networks providing apprenticeships within the borough. The Panel felt that it would be more sensible to access existing arrangements to provide a cost effective and efficient scheme. Consequently,
30. **Option 1** - was discounted on the basis that it would take considerable time to become registered and further resource implications outweighed the benefits of being in control of the entire delivery. Using an existing quality assured training provider(s) would give better value for money and this approach was also recommended by the LSC.
31. **Option 2** - was discounted on the basis of cost. It was more cost effective to employ a member of staff within the Council to manage the process and this would give the Council some control over the implementation of the scheme.

32. **Option 3** - was a preferred option with Ealing Council employing 20 apprentices and a further 80 places being offered to young people with other Ealing employers. It was important for the Council to lead by example and employing 20 apprentices in the first instance would be affordable.
33. **Option 4** - was also a preferred option with the Council co-ordinating and championing the new scheme and working closely with its local partners to run a successful apprenticeship scheme.

Proposed Recommendations

The Council:

R1 *takes forward the two options identified for the Council to act as an Employer (by employing 20 apprentices) as well as a Broker (co-ordinating, championing and working closely with its local partners to run a successful apprenticeship scheme) on the basis of it being the most cost and outcome effective way of achieving the Manifesto commitment.*

(The Cabinet agreed this recommendation on 30 January 2007 – See Cabinet Minutes 7(i) and 7(ii).)

R2 *develops a robust business case not only for the costs but also to identify the benefits (tangible and intangible) and the risks to achieving the objectives arising from the scheme based on this option.*

R3 *identifies the longer term funding and resourcing needs to ensure the continuing viability of operating the new apprenticeship scheme.*

DETAILED EVIDENCE

34. The Panel reached the above conclusions and recommendations based on the evidence received from the various partner groups, practitioners and similar operating schemes. A summary of the evidence is included in the following paragraphs.

Support Providers

Ealing Connexions Service

35. Connexions is the Government's support service for all young people aged 13-19 years in England, and up to 25 years for young people who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Ealing Connexions is part of the London West Connexions that includes Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow. Through multi-agency working, Connexions provides information, advice, guidance and access to personal development opportunities for young people.
36. The Ealing Connexions Service receives funding from the Council and therefore their involvement in the Borough Apprenticeship Scheme would be at

no additional cost but be more focussed to the specific objectives of the Council.

37. It also operates an Apprentice Bank which is an additional tailor-made service managed centrally by the Opportunities Team at the Connexions Centre. Connexions Advisers based in schools identify young people at school who are intent on progressing into a suitable apprenticeship programme. Those registered on the Apprentice Bank are invited to an Apprenticeship Event where they have the chance to meet employers and providers who are offering apprenticeships. An apprenticeship event is planned for 2007 but the date for this is yet to be confirmed.
38. Ealing Connexions have stated that they would provide a service at no additional cost for the new Borough Apprenticeship Scheme and would:
- work with service heads and potential employers;
 - consider which areas the young people would be working in;
 - give guidance and personal advice to employers and young people;
 - work with the training providers or advise impartially on what providers are available in the area;
 - link employer and potential employers with the service provider;
 - write the job advertisements that are user-friendly to young people;
 - circulate the advertisements for display on notice boards in schools, youth centres, London Opportunity and Information System (LOIS) website, etc.
 - monitor how many people have applied for the vacancy, who is being interviewed, etc.; and
 - provide support to young people in their applications.
39. Ealing Connexions have also agreed to sit on any potential steering group that the Council establishes for the new scheme.
40. The Panel identified that it was important to work closely with the Ealing Connexions Service in order to target the local schools, young people and local businesses already within their network. This could be considered as a means for an initial nomination of suitable candidates for the proposed apprenticeship positions.
- Ealing Education Business Partnership***
41. The Ealing Education Business Partnership (EEBP) is a member of the National Education Business Partnership Network and of the London Regional Education Business Links Network. These organisations work with young people, schools, business and the community to develop programmes and activities that prepare young people for the world of work.
42. Ealing Council recognises EEBP as the appointed agents for the delivery of work experience within the borough and contributes towards the running costs of EEBP for acting as its delivery agent for work experience.
43. EEBP is keen to work with the Council on the new Borough Apprenticeship Scheme and have proposed that they could:

- broker partnerships with employers on behalf of the Council;
 - secure placements with employers and carry out health and safety visits prior to apprentices going out on placements;
 - ensure that placements are rechecked for health and safety purposes, when apprentices' roles/duties change;
 - organise and plan apprentices' objectives and outcomes with the employers;
 - enable apprentices to have access to careers fairs and other business initiatives that are made available; and
 - monitor apprentices' attendance and progress if required.
44. EEBP has also agreed to sit on any potential steering group that the Council establishes for the new scheme.
45. The Panel identified that it was important to work closely with EEBP in order to target the local schools, young people and local businesses already within their network. This could be considered as a means for an initial nomination of suitable candidates for the proposed apprenticeship positions.

Proposed Recommendations

The Council:

- R4 ensures that procedures are put in place to enhance partnership working between the Council, Ealing Connexions Service and the Ealing Education Business Partnership in order to target the local schools, young people and local businesses already within their networks.***
- R5 supports the Apprenticeship Events organised to promote apprenticeship opportunities.***
- R6 accepts the offer of the identified services at no additional cost offered by the Ealing Connexions Service and the offer of Ealing Education Business Partnership to work with the Council particularly in the areas identified.***
- R7 encourages the Ealing Connexions Service and the Ealing Education Business Partnership to provide, through the Apprentice Bank and other promotional events, one of the sources to identify and nominate suitable candidates for the proposed apprenticeship positions.***
- R8 monitors to ensure that equality and diversity is applied consistently to the scheme.***

Training Providers

46. Representatives of Quantica Training and the Director of Acton & West London College made presentations on apprenticeship schemes and their roles in these to the Panel.

47. The Panel also visited the Acton & West London College and the Quantica Training Centre to review and identify the college facilities, the courses offered and seek the views of young people and college staff.
48. The Panel was encouraged by the enthusiasm shown for the Council's new scheme both by the training providers and the trainees present. Both the training providers are keen to work in partnership with the Council on the scheme.



Cllr Maninder Keith (centre) and Cllr Ian Gibb - Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Children's Service (left) speaking to an apprentice at the Acton & West London College

49. Quantica Training, which has recently been acquired by Carter and Carter – a larger national provider, were currently undertaking research on behalf of LSC on the barriers to apprenticeships, routes in and out of apprenticeship programmes and education and would be undertaking a tour of schools doing road shows on vocational routes.
50. Quantica Training has offered to:
- design and deliver programmes;
 - source funding;
 - manage brokerage and partnership working;
 - provide quality assurance; and
 - provide information, advice and guidance.

Proposed Recommendations

The Council:

- R9** *takes advantage of the offer of Quantica Training and the Acton & West London College to work in partnership with the Council to ensure that a comprehensive and complementary approach to schemes already operating in the local area is applied.*
- R10** *works with the training providers to develop and deliver programmes and provide quality assurance to the course content of the new apprenticeship scheme.*

Local Businesses

51. Panel members attended an Employer Forum held at the Acton & West London College as an opportunity to meet with the local employers to seek their views, approach and involvement in apprenticeship schemes. This resulted in two employers, Hounslow Homes and Bovis Lend Lease Ltd (BLLL), agreeing to attend a Panel meeting to give their views on their apprenticeship scheme and on-site training provision.
52. The Panel received presentations from some local employers e.g. Plasser, Ealing Homes, BLLL and Hounslow Homes about how they ran their apprenticeship schemes or in the case of BLLL, how they work with the National Skills Academy for Construction and the contractors that employ apprentices in providing on-site training.



Cllr Colm Costello (centre) and Ms Catherine Beaujean (Connexions Co-optee) having a discussion with John Devonshire, Apprentice Manager, of Hounslow Homes

53. The Panel is keen that the Council works in partnership with the local Ealing employers so that they are able to take on the 80 apprenticeship places in order to meet the set target.

Proposed Recommendations

The Council:

R11 works closely with local Ealing employers to encourage them to take up the further 80 apprenticeship places in order to run a successful scheme and meet the set target.

(The Cabinet agreed this recommendation on 30 January 2007 – See Cabinet Minutes 7(i).)

Other Schemes

Hackney Council

54. In November 2006, the Panel attended the Constructing Hackney – Employment and Business Information Fayre held at the Hackney Town Hall in order to learn how the fayre was being administered and how Hackney Council and its various partners operate their apprenticeship schemes. It is anticipated that Ealing would hold a similar event in early 2007.
55. The Panel was impressed with the way that the event was organised as it provided a platform for local residents, training providers and the construction industry to inform and learn about the jobs and training opportunities available.
56. The Panel was able to talk to key council staff, the exhibitors and some visiting young people during the walkabout. They also acquired some very useful information about how the Hackney Homes apprenticeship and the Hoxton Apprentice schemes operate.



Cllr Patricia Walker (left) talking to some youngsters at the Hackney Fayre

Hounslow Council

57. In December 2006, the Panel visited Hounslow Council to find out more about their new Learn and Earn Programme that currently has ten 16-18 year olds in the first year with a view to developing the scheme to include 19-24 year olds thereafter.
58. The scheme was advertised in the local newspaper, Inside Hounslow magazine, schools, Connexions and the Council website. There were between 30,000-40,000 hits on the Council's website. Following 300 enquiries, 106 applications and about 80 interviews (two-thirds of these were appointable), 11 apprentices were chosen to take part in the scheme. The appointments were a good gender and ethnic mix.
59. Some of the lessons learnt highlighted by Hounslow Council in setting up their new scheme included:
- funding from the LSC was not guaranteed;
 - there are other costs involved e.g. the recruitment process;
 - lots of hidden costs e.g. away day for the apprentices, staff costs (HR staff absorbing the additional work involved, 10 mentors who do not get paid to do this, etc.) which need to be quantified;
 - would require at least another £1,000 per apprentice;
 - need to separate the interviewing from the assessment in the future; and
 - so far only one apprenticeship had dropped out. This was considered to be quite good as generally the majority of drop outs tended to occur in the first six months.
60. The Panel identified that for a scheme to be successful Ealing has to ensure that:
- all associated costs are incorporated;
 - the potential mentoring staff (responsible for managing apprentices) in the Council departments must be properly trained and supported; and
 - the scheme is reviewed after the first year before further expansion.

Proposed Recommendations

The Council:

- R12 maximises promotional activities, including learning from the success of the Hackney Fayre, to highlight the potential of apprenticeship as a career path and opportunity.***
- R13 ensures that the business case takes into account the total cost of delivering the scheme.***
- R14 engages and motivates apprentices to ensure high retention rates.***
- R15 ensures mentoring staff are properly trained, supported and encouraged.***
- R16 builds in a robust monitoring and review process.***

Potential Apprentices

61. The Panel visited Featherstone High School in Southall and met with a group of twelve Year 11 students. From the discussions it was evident that the majority of these students wanted to go on to higher education. However, they were not familiar with how they could become apprentices, the length of an apprenticeship, the entry criteria and the qualifications that could be achieved or that it could still be a route to higher education. They recognised that apprenticeship was not very fashionable at present.



Panel Members conferring with the trainees at the Quantica Training Centre

62. It was clear that the students in schools should be educated about the option of an apprenticeship so that they can make informed decisions at an early stage. It was, therefore, important for organisations such as the Connexions Service and the Ealing Education Business Partnerships to take a more focussed approach on the new Borough Apprenticeship Scheme particularly when working with schools.

Proposed Recommendations

The Council:

R17 works with key partners in the development of a promotional programme, including road shows, to deliver advice on and promotion of the apprenticeship and other vocational options for school leavers to assist in career choices.

R18 takes a leading role in co-ordinating the promotion of apprenticeships, as this should provide added value generally to this form of vocational training.

Expert Witnesses

63. Representatives of the Learning and Skills Council attended several Panel meetings and actively participated in the Panel discussions. The LSC exists to

make England better skilled and more competitive. They are responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational education and training for everyone. Their single goal is to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Therefore, the LSC delivers the government's agenda for the 16-19 year olds' training and education and has a statutory responsibility to provide apprenticeship schemes. They have an annual budget that is used to contract apprentice providers to offer training and guidance to all apprentices working with employers in the various sectors.

64. The costs associated with apprentice training will most likely be met by LSC. The LSC have stated that they are keen to work with organisations and fund apprenticeship programmes that were thought to have a good chance of success, basing this judgment on past performance and experience. They considered that the best starting point was to work with local authorities and their supply chains in establishing individual programmes.
65. LSC highlighted that the Council should take into account the 360 apprentices currently working within the borough and raised concerns that measures were needed to drive up supply e.g. of assessors and business demand. LSC also advised that the Council ought to make a modest start with the scheme in order to ensure that it is manageable and successful before expanding it further.
66. LSC has a role in addressing social problems amongst young people through apprenticeship schemes and matched provision to need. Young Apprenticeships and opportunities to study for Level 1 diplomas provision was made available where necessary.
67. It was important to ensure that any programme that the Council lends its name to be of a high quality. LSC believed that the promotion of apprenticeships was the main area in which the Council could provide additional value.

Proposed Recommendations

The Council:

R19 *must ensure that its apprenticeship scheme is of sufficient high quality to:*

- *delivery a positive image of the Council as an employer;*
- *complement rather than be in competition with the schemes already operating in the borough;*
- *have realistic and achievable targets; and*
- *not set too high expectations until it is proven and can demonstrate successful outcomes.*

(The Cabinet authorised a review of year one of the apprenticeship scheme to consider and recommend options for expansion of the scheme in future years to deliver the manifesto commitment – See Cabinet Minutes 7(v) of 30 January 2007.)

R20 *should consider Young Apprenticeships to ensure that the scheme is inclusive of harder to reach groups.*

Contractors and Sub-contractors

68. The Panel endorsed the recommendation from the previous year's Safer Communities Scrutiny Panel that the Council's major projects and contracts should include the employment of apprentices to provide a first opportunity for training and employment of young people.
69. The Panel, therefore, recommended that the Council should use the Local Labour Clauses within the procurement procedures to encourage the contractors and sub-contractors to take on apprentices.
70. It is also important that the contractors and sub-contractors taking on apprentices ensure that they honour the completion of apprentice training even if their business contract ends before the training is completed.

Proposed Recommendations

The Council:

R21 includes a criterion within the procurement procedures for securing apprenticeship placements with its major contractors and sub contractors.

Apprentice Selection

71. In accordance with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy, vision of Success through Diversity and the Corporate Parent role, the Panel was keen that the scheme does not exclude suitable candidates from any particular backgrounds. For example, those who had not succeeded in attaining 5 GCSEs, vulnerable groups such as looked after children, etc. It was important that the candidate was motivated, committed and eager to learn. In view of this, a small number of placements should be reserved for people with particular needs and in future years the scheme should be actively promoted to these groups. However, the Panel agreed that it was important to initially ensure that the scheme was manageable, well established and successful before expanding it further.
72. For the scheme to be successful it is essential to carry out an assessment of business needs and establish the areas of skills shortages within the local business environment. This will enable the apprenticeships to be targeted to reduce the identified local skills shortages and help to deliver the regeneration and development of the local economy.

Proposed Recommendations

The Council:

R22 ensures that apprentices are selected within the Council's equal opportunities framework and reflect the diversity of the Borough.

R23 ensures that a small number of placements are reserved for people with particular needs and in future years the scheme should be actively promoted to these groups.

R24 ensures that the selection and areas of apprenticeship offered should take account of local skills shortages and assessment of needs.

Funding

73. The Panel supported the use of £376,600 Section 106 monies relating to educational activities available for funding the first year of the new scheme. However, the Panel stressed that the Section 106 monies should be utilised consistently and fairly across the whole borough. It should be identified as 'pump priming' for the apprenticeship scheme rather than an ongoing funding stream to cover salary costs.
74. Consideration needs to be given to how the apprenticeship scheme would be funded from 2008/2009 onwards. The Panel proposed that services would need to contain this expenditure within their base revenue budgets in 2008/09. This would be dependent upon the budgetary capacity of the services.
75. Funding for the continuation of the scheme beyond March 2008 would therefore need to be identified and reviewed as part of the 2008/2009 budget process. Departments will have to make provision from existing budgets or submit growth bids to fund the future of the scheme. The Council needs to decide how the cost of the scheme would be recharged to services.
76. The Panel suggested that the Council consider ongoing funding in departments that take on apprentices through the annual budget process and should also continue to explore all other possible opportunities including Learning and Skills Council, European Social Funding, New Opportunities Fund, Construction Industry Training Board, etc. for the future funding of the scheme.
77. Once their apprenticeships have been completed then trainees would be expected to apply for available posts in the normal way. Savings may be achieved by reducing the reliance on agency or temporary staff when apprentices could fill roles.

Proposed Recommendations

The Council:

R25 ensures that the funding for 2007/2008 be contained in the sums available from the Section 106 funding and any contributions from other external sources.

(The Cabinet agreed the use of Section 106 Funding – See Cabinet Minutes 7(iii) of 30 January 2007.)

R26 explores all possible opportunities including Learning and Skills Council, European Social Funding, New Opportunities Fund, Construction Industry Training Board, etc. for the future funding of the scheme.

R27 ensures that as the continuance of the scheme will be dependant on the budget strategy in 2008/2009 the Council makes a decision

on whether the scheme is charged to employing departments or across the whole Council as part of its Corporate Responsibility Programme.

(The Cabinet agreed that future year salary costs will be met by the employing departments and that funding be reviewed as part of the 2008/2009 process – See Cabinet Minutes 7 (iii) and (iv) of 30 January 2007.)

ONGOING MONITORING

78. The Panel suggested that the scrutiny panel reviewing education matters, currently the Education, Leisure and Children’s Social Services Scrutiny Panel, should undertake the monitoring of the implementation and ongoing monitoring of the new Borough Apprenticeship Scheme.

Proposed Recommendations

The Council:

R28 nominates the Education, Leisure and Children’s Social Services Scrutiny Panel to undertake the monitoring of the implementation and the ongoing monitoring of the new Borough Apprenticeship Scheme.

ATTENDANCE

79. The Table below shows the attendance of Panel Members at the meetings during the year.

Attendance at Panel Meetings

<i>Name</i>	<i>Total Possible</i>	<i>Actual Attendance</i>	<i>Apologies Received</i>
<i>Councillors</i>			
Councillor Edmond Yeo (Chairman)	5	5	-
Councillor Param Sandhu (Vice Chairman)	5	5	-
Councillor Peter Allott	5	5	-
Councillor Colm Costello	5	5	-
Councillor Maninder Keith	5	3	2
Councillor Seema Kumar	5	4	1
Councillor Marie Randall	5	4	1
Councillor Brian Reeves	5	4	1
Councillor Patricia Walker	5	4	1
<i>Co-optees</i>			
Ms Catherine Beaujean	4	3	1
Mr Wayne Bridges	4	3	1
Ms Anne Thompson	4	3	1
<i>Substitutes</i>			
Councillors Julian Bell, Jarnail Jandu and Dawn Larmouth substituted for other Councillors at some meetings.			

80. As well as the scheduled meetings, various members of the Panel attended the seven additional visits arranged.
81. The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (also Deputy Leader of the Council), Councillor Ian Gibb, attended four Panel meetings and two visits.
82. The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development, Councillor Brian Castle, and the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Anthony Young, attended the first meeting of the Panel.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

83. Some of the key learning points for the Panel were:
 - Engaging with the community – seeking the views of young people and their trainers in the school, training college and training centre were a very valuable source of gathering information directly from these community representatives;
 - Site visits were the appropriate means to take scrutiny out to the key stakeholder groups;
 - Established good contacts with the various agencies; and
 - Recognised the difficulty in engaging employers.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

84. London Borough of Ealing Constitution
Borough Apprenticeship Scheme Specialist Scrutiny Panel:
 - Terms of Reference;
 - Work Programme 2006/2007;
 - Agenda Papers and Minutes of Meetings; and
 - Other information about Scrutiny at Ealing are all available at www.ealing.gov.uk/services/council/scrutiny

USEFUL WEBSITES

85. www.ealing.gov.uk
www.apprenticeships.org.uk
www.lsc.gov.uk
www.quantica.co.uk
www.connexions-direct.com
www.lois.uk.net

TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

<i>Subject/Source of Recommendation</i>	<i>Rec No.</i>	<i>Panel Recommendation</i>	<i>Service Response (including any Financial, Legal and Other Key Implications)</i>	<i>Cabinet Response (1st May 2007)</i>
Final Report Paras 25-28 and 32-33.	R1	The Council takes forward the two options identified for the Council to act as an <u>Employer</u> (by employing 20 apprentices) as well as a <u>Broker</u> (co-ordinating, championing and working closely with its local partners to run a successful apprenticeship scheme) on the basis of it being the most cost and outcome effective way of achieving the Manifesto commitment.		Accepted The Cabinet agreed this recommendation on 30 January 2007 – See Cabinet Minutes 7(i) and 7(ii).
Final Report Paras 25-28, 32-33, 36-38, 40, 42-43, 45, 49-50, 53, 59-60 and 72-78.	R2	The Council develops a robust business case not only for the costs but also to identify the benefits (tangible and intangible) and the risks to achieving the objectives arising from the scheme based on this option.	TBC	
Final Report Paras 59-60 and 73-77.	R3	The Council identifies the longer term funding and resourcing needs to ensure the continuing viability of operating the new apprenticeship scheme.	Pump-priming funding from S106 for Yr1 approved by Cabinet on 30 January 2007. S106 funding available up to a maximum total sum of £376,600. Services to contain expenditure on it in 2008/09 within their base revenue budgets, dependent upon services' budgetary capacity for this. Funding for the continuation of scheme beyond March 2008 will need to be identified and reviewed as part of the 2008/09 budget process.	Accepted

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Final Report Paras 35-45.	R4	The Council ensures that procedures are put in place to enhance partnership working between the Council, Ealing Connexions Service and the Ealing Education Business Partnership in order to target the local schools, young people and local businesses already within their networks.	It is proposed that a provider event is held in April targeting current training providers contracted by the LSC to deliver apprenticeships, Connexions and the EBP. The event will be aimed at: introducing the Council's commitment to the scheme; discussing how the Council and the providers and key strategic and delivery partners - LSC and Connexions - can work together to engage employers, create good referral mechanisms and share good practice, and inform and engage providers and secure their involvement in the subsequent events.	Accepted
Final Report Para 37.	R5	The Council supports the Apprenticeship Events organised to promote apprenticeship opportunities.	A detailed report on marketing and promoting the scheme is to be considered by the Borough Apprenticeship Scheme Specialist Scrutiny Panel on 28 February 2007	Accepted
Final Report Para 38.	R6	The Council accepts the offer of the identified services at no additional cost offered by the Ealing Connexions Service and the offer of Ealing Education Business Partnership to work with the Council particularly in the areas identified.	The Council is keen to work with all partners to deliver the best possible programme for apprentices. It is proposed that an apprenticeship working group is established which will include Connexions, the Ealing Education Business Partnership, the LSC, training providers and LBE. Partnership working of this nature is encouraged across the public sector and therefore would not incur costs to the Council.	Accepted

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Final Report Paras 37 and 40.	R7	The Council encourages the Ealing Connexions Service and the Ealing Education Business Partnership to provide, through the Apprentice Bank and other promotional events, one of the sources to identify and nominate suitable candidates for the proposed apprenticeship positions.	Connexions have already offered, at the November 2006 Scrutiny Panel meeting, access to their apprenticeship bank. The joint working which will come about as a result of R6 above, and the providers event mentioned in R4 will increase the amount of joint promotional events and will improve relationships, referral mechanisms and ultimately outcomes.	Accepted
Final Report Paras 38 and 43.	R8	The Council monitors to ensure that equality and diversity is applied consistently to the scheme.	<p>An Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken when the recruitment process has been finalised. This scheme will operate within the Council's existing Equal Opportunities framework. All apprentices will be chosen on a set of agreed criteria developed with the Council's Human Resources department and individual Departmental Heads.</p> <p>The Council will strive to ensure that apprentices are selected within the Council's equal opportunities framework and reflect, where possible, the diversity of the Borough. The Council has expressed a wish to reserve a small number of placements for people with special needs and in future years the emphasis of the scheme may focus on this group.</p>	Accepted

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Subject/Source of Recommendation	Rec No.	Panel Recommendation	Service Response (including any Financial, Legal and Other Key Implications)	Cabinet Response (1st May 2007)
Final Report Paras 46-50.	R9	The Council takes advantage of the offer of Quantica Training and the Acton & West London College to work in partnership with the Council to ensure that a comprehensive and complementary approach to schemes already operating in the local area is applied.	These Services will be subject to contractual arrangements and are not offered free of charge. The Council needs to ensure that any contracting arrangements with Quantica or any other training provider follows agreed procurement procedures. The appointment of training providers to work with the Council is likely to occur via the LSC. Similarly, any contracting by the LSC with a training provider to work with the Council would be subject to the LSC's procurement processes.	Accepted
Final Report Para 50.	R10	The Council works with the training providers to develop and deliver programmes and provide quality assurance to the course content of the new apprenticeship scheme.	The Council is committed to providing the best quality scheme to its apprentices. It is recommended that the Council develops its own quality standards for the apprentices employed at the Council. Quantica Training have stated that they are able to work with the Council to develop its quality standards. Costs for this have been built into the 2007/08 budget, and will be subject to contractual arrangements with Quantica.	Accepted

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<i>Subject/Source of Recommendation</i>	<i>Rec No.</i>	<i>Panel Recommendation</i>	<i>Service Response (including any Financial, Legal and Other Key Implications)</i>	<i>Cabinet Response (1st May 2007)</i>
Final Report Paras 51-53.	R11	The Council works closely with local Ealing employers to encourage them to take up the further 80 apprenticeship places in order to run a successful scheme and meet the set target.	An employer event is being proposed during May 2007 following on from the provider event mentioned above in R4. The event will focus on business benefits of Apprenticeships and showcase best practice and secure employer engagement in follow up activities where vacancies could be created. It is envisaged that high profile speakers will be invited from national organisations that run successful apprenticeship programmes.	Accepted The Cabinet agreed this recommendation on 30 January 2007 – See Cabinet Minutes 7(i).
Final Report Paras 54-56.	R12	The Council maximises promotional activities, including learning from the success of the Hackney Fayre, to highlight the potential of apprenticeship as a career path and opportunity.	A detailed report on marketing and promoting the scheme is to be considered by the Borough Apprenticeship Scheme Specialist Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 28 February 2007.	Accepted
Final Report Paras 25-28, 32-33, 36-38, 40, 42-43, 45, 49-50, 53, 59-60 and 72-78.	R13	The Council ensures that the business case takes into account the total cost of delivering the scheme.	Annual costs to end FY 2008/09 have been identified. Officers will continue to monitor costs as part of the ongoing management of the programme	Accepted
Final Report Paras 59 and 60.	R14	The Council engages and motivates apprentices to ensure high retention rates.	All apprentices will be issued with an apprenticeship contract, renewable after nine months. Placements offered to apprentices with special needs, supervision and management implications will be carefully considered. There will be additional duties placed on supervisory staff, such as a requirement to provide mentoring support. All supervisory staff managing apprentices will need to undergo training and skills development in managing apprentices.	Accepted

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Final Report Paras 59 and 60.	R15	The Council ensures mentoring staff are properly trained, supported and encouraged.	As an apprentice employer, the Council will be required to provide staff trained in the aims of the programme, supervision techniques, mentoring and working with vulnerable individuals, skills for life, needs and progression.	Accepted
Final Report Para 60.	R16	The Council builds in a robust monitoring and review process.	A performance management framework will need to be developed to measure progress and success based on outcomes, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of apprentices retained at 3/6/12 months • Number of days absent from work • Progress against individual learning plans • Achievement of units towards NVQ • Achievement of NVQ • Achievement of basic skill qualifications (when appropriate) • Progression into sustainable employment • Progression into Higher Education. 	Accepted
Final Report Paras 35-50 and 62.	R17	The Council works with key partners in the development of a promotional programme, including road shows, to deliver advice on and promotion of the apprenticeship and other vocational options for school leavers to assist in career choices.	A detailed report on marketing and promoting the scheme is to be considered by the Borough Apprenticeship Scheme Specialist Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 28 February 2007.	Accepted

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Final Report Paras 62 and 67.	R18	The Council takes a leading role in co-ordinating the promotion of apprenticeships, as this should provide added value generally to this form of vocational training.	A detailed report on marketing and promoting the scheme is to be considered by the Borough Apprenticeship Scheme Specialist Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 28 February 2007.	Accepted
Final Report Paras 35-67.	R19	The Council must ensure that its apprenticeship scheme is of sufficient high quality to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - delivery a positive image of the Council as an employer; - complement rather than be in competition with the schemes already operating in the borough; - have realistic and achievable targets; and - not set too high expectations until it is proven and can demonstrate successful outcomes. 		Accepted The Cabinet authorised a review of year one of the apprenticeship scheme to consider and recommend options for expansion of the scheme in future years to deliver the manifesto commitment – See Cabinet Minutes 7(v) of 30 January 2007.
Final Report Paras 66 and 71.	R20	The Council should consider Young Apprenticeships to ensure that the scheme is inclusive of harder to reach groups.	All apprenticeships will be offered to people 16 to 25; the majority of apprentices will be aged 16 to 19	Accepted

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Final Report Paras 68-70.	R21	The Council includes a criterion within the procurement procedures for securing apprenticeship placements with its major contractors and sub contractors.	TBC	
Final Report Paras 66 and 71.	R22	The Council ensures that apprentices are selected within the Council's equal opportunities framework and reflect the diversity of the Borough.	See recommendation R8.	Accepted
Final Report Para 71.	R23	The Council ensures that a small number of placements are reserved for people with particular needs and in future years the scheme should be actively promoted to these groups.	This recommendation was included in the cabinet report of 30 January 2007.	Accepted
Final Report Para 72.	R24	The Council ensures that the selection and areas of apprenticeship offered should take account of local skills shortages and assessment of needs.	The Council has commissioned a labour market review and audit of training provision in the borough. The results of this research will be ensued to identify skills and needs priorities for the Scheme.	Accepted
Final Report Paras 73 and 76.	R25	The Council ensures that the funding for 2007/2008 be contained in the sums available from the Section106 funding and any contributions from other external sources.		Accepted The Cabinet agreed the use of Section 106 Funding – See Cabinet Minutes 7(iii) of 30 January 2007.

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Final Report Para 76.	R26	The Council explores all possible opportunities including Learning and Skills Council, European Social Funding, New Opportunities Fund, Construction Industry Training Board, etc. for the future funding of the scheme.	The Council's External Funding Team will continue to monitor funding opportunities both through existing contacts and via the council's web-based funding search engine, J4B.	Accepted
Final Report Para 73-77.	R27	The Council ensures that as the continuance of the scheme will be dependant on the budget strategy in 2008/2009 the Council makes a decision on whether the scheme is charged to employing departments or across the whole Council as part of its Corporate Responsibility Programme.		Accepted The Cabinet agreed that future year salary costs will be met by the employing departments and that funding be reviewed as part of the 2008/2009 process – See Cabinet Minutes 7 (iii) and (iv) of 30 January 2007.
Final Report Para 78.	R28	The Council nominates the Education, Leisure and Children's Social Services Scrutiny Panel to undertake the monitoring of the implementation and the ongoing monitoring of the new Borough Apprenticeship Scheme.		Accepted