

Bolton Council

Report to:	Executive Cabinet Member – Highways & Transport		
Date of meeting:	18 th April 2023		
Report of:	Director of Place	Report Number:	42988
Reporting Officer:	Dwayne Lowe – Assistant Director for Highways and Engineering	Telephone Number:	6419
Contact Officer:	Dwayne Lowe – Assistant Director for Highways and Engineering	Telephone Number:	6419
Report title:	Highways and Engineering – Apprentice recruitment proposals		
<p style="text-align: center;">Not confidential</p> <p>This report does not contain information which means it should be considered without the press or members of the public being present.</p>			
Purpose:	To set out the challenges of succession planning within the division and to seek approval from the Executive Cabinet Member to implement the final proposals.		
Recommendations:	<p>The Executive Cabinet Member is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the final proposals to disestablish vacant posts and create new posts to implement an apprentice recruitment model 		
Decision:			
Background documents:			
Appendices:	Please note that relevant Job Descriptions and Person Specifications are available on request.		
Signed:	Executive Cabinet Member	Monitoring Officer	
Date:			

Consultation with other officers				
Finance	Yes	4/4/2023	Joanne Glover	
Legal	No	N/A	N/A	
HR	Yes	5/4/2023	Kelly Fallows-Hale	
Climate Change	No	N/A		
Corporate Programme Manager	No	N/A		
Equality Impact Assessment	No	N/A		
(a) Pre-consultation reports Is there a need to consult on the proposals?			No	
Vision outcomes Please identify the appropriate Vision outcome(s) that this report relates or contributes to by putting a cross in the relevant box.			1. Start Well	
			2. Live Well	
			3. Age Well	
			4. Prosperous	
			5. Clean and Green	X
			6. Strong and Distinctive	X

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The highways network is by far the most valuable asset in the control of the local authority. In Bolton, the replacement cost of all of highway assets is estimated to be £1.81 billion and consists of carriageways, footways, cycleways, Public Rights of Ways, bridges, structures, street furniture, streetlights, signs, bollards, and road gullies.
- 1.2 Reductions in both revenue and capital budgets over recent years, have resulted in the need to delay recruitment to vacant posts.
- 1.3 In addition, the Highways and Engineering division has an aging workforce and recruitment to vacant technical positions over recent years has been challenging due to skills shortages. This has resulted in several posts remaining vacant with additional work/activity and responsibility being placed onto the current staffing cohort.

2.0 **PROPOSALS**

- 2.1 To resolve and reverse this situation, it is proposed that current vacancies are disestablished, and the Highways and Engineering division adopts an apprentice recruitment model which seeks to utilise the skills and knowledge of the existing staffing cohort to train the next generation of engineers and to create a more cohesive succession plan.
- 2.2 The proposal, set out in Table 1, has been designed to kickstart the process after which the intention will be to consider all future vacant positions for apprentice recruitment, prior to any replacement.

2.3 **Table 1: New post requirements**

Job Role	No.	Grade	Comments	Annual Cost per post up to 2025 (£)	Budget required (£)
Highway maintenance operative	2	D	1 no. to be recruited to 2023 and 1 no. 2024	20,252 to 22,369	24,054 x 2
Sign Shop Technician	1	Career grade D to E	To be recruited to 2023	20,252 to 22,369	27,344
Electrician	1	Career grade E to F	To be recruited to 2023	20,252 to 24,496	30,151
Engineer / Technician	2	Career grade F to G	1 no. to be recruited 2024 and 1 no. 2025	20,252 to 27,344	33,820 x 2
			Total budget required (£)		173,243

Table 2: Vacant posts/Budget Provision

Post Title & Number	Grade	Top SCP	Actual FTE	Budget - Gross Pay (£)
School Crossing Patroller	Grade.B..	4	0.27	5,201
School Crossing Patroller	Grade.B..	4	0.23	5,201
School Crossing Patroller	Grade.B..	4	0.23	5,201
Career Grade Engineer / Technician	Grade.G..	27	1.00	31,894
Incorporated Engineer	Grade.H..	31	1.00	35,336
Incorporated Engineer	Grade.H..	31	1.00	37,261
Service Manager (Asset Management)	Grade.I..	31	1.00	35,336
Stores Supervisor	Grade.E..	17	1.00	24,920
Available budget for apprentice positions			5.8	180,350

3.0 **PROPOSED RECRUITMENT**

- 3.1 To best manage the Highways and Engineering division budget position and transition process (so as to not place too much pressure on staffs to support and train new apprentice postholders) it is intended to recruit on a phased basis over the next 3 financial years.
- 3.2 Recruitment to the operational posts in Highways Operations teams listed (Highway Maintenance Operative, Sign Shop Technician and Electrician) will commence as soon as approval is received and then recruitment for future apprentices will be undertaken in March - April each year, with new postholders commencing employment in September each year.
- 3.3 Working closely with Bolton College it will be possible for current Engineering T Level students to undertake placements annually within the Highways and Engineering division, both providing essential work experience and to encourage them to apply for apprentice opportunities when they arise. It is anticipated that this will assist in the recruitment of technician / engineers and technical roles.
- 3.4 It is intended that all future vacancies will be firstly considered for apprentice recruitment prior to advert.

4.0 **IMPACTS AND IMPLICATIONS**

Financial

- 4.1 All costs associated with establishment of the new posts (through the disestablishment of vacant posts) are reflected within this proposal and summarised in Tables 1 and 2 above.
- 4.2 By disestablishing vacant posts, initial year on year cost savings will be realised. Subsequent years costs will also be contained within budget once the postholders have achieved grade maximum. In addition, this proposal will ensure that staff vacancies are better managed and the savings from delays in recruitment fully realised, with a succession plan for service delivery.

Legal

- 4.3 There are no legal implications.

HR

- 4.4 Implementation of the new service model will require several vacant posts to be disestablished and new posts to be created that are ring-fenced for apprentices. Tables 3 and 4 show these requirements:

Table 3: The following vacant posts would be disestablished

FTE	Post(s)	Existing Job Title	Grade
0.23	3	School Crossing Patroller	B
1.0	1	Career Grade Engineer / Technician	G
1.0	1	Incorporated Engineer	H
1.0	1	Incorporated Engineer	H
1.0	1	Service Manager (Asset Management)	I
1.0	1	Stores Supervisor	E

Table 4: The following posts will be newly created and ring-fenced for recruitment of apprentices

FTE	Post(s)	Proposed Job Title	Grade
1.0	2	Highway maintenance operative	D
1.0	1	Sign Shop Technician	Career grade - D to E
1.0	1	Electrician	Career grade – E to F
1.0	2	Engineer / Technician	Career grade – F to G

Climate Change

4.5 There are no climate change implications.

5.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

5.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the council has a general duty to have due regard to the need to:

- **eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- **advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- **foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

5.2 The EIA looks at the anticipated (positive and/or negative) impacts of the proposal on people from Bolton's diverse communities, and whether any group (or groups) is / are likely to be directly or indirectly differentially affected. This EIA builds on the exercise which was completed on the initial review options and summarises the consultation which has been completed as part of this review.

5.3 At this stage it is not anticipated that the proposals will have a disproportionate impact on any of Bolton's diversity groups.

5.4 The equality considerations are set out in more detail in the EIA at Appendix 5. Should the proposals be approved by the Executive Cabinet Member, they will be kept under review as part of the overall budget process.

6.0 VISION 2030

6.1 In order for Bolton Council to contribute to the Vision 2030 Strategy it will need to manage complex programmes of change across the organisation, making sure they are deliverable, accountable, and effective. Within the Vision 2030 Strategy, the council will strive to deliver services more efficiently, through service improvement, redesign, recommissioning, and decommissioning, based on evidence of impact. The proposals within this report contribute to this strategic Council aim.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The Executive Cabinet Member is recommended to:

- Approve the final proposals to disestablish vacant posts and create new posts to implement an apprentice recruitment model

Appendix 5 – Equality Impact Assessment



Title of report or proposal:
Highways and Engineering – Apprentice recruitment proposals

Directorate:	Place
Section:	Highways & Engineering
Date:	3 rd April 2023

Public sector bodies need to be able to evidence that they have given due regard to the impact and potential impact on all people with 'protected characteristics' in shaping policy, in delivering services, and in relation to their own employees.

Under the Equality Act 2010, the council has a general duty to have due regard to the need to:

1. **eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
2. **advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
3. **foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

By completing the following questions, the three parts of the equality duty will be consciously considered as part of the decision-making process.

Details of the outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment must also be included in the main body of the report.

1. **Describe in summary the aims, objectives and purpose of the proposal, including desired outcomes.**
2. **Is this a new policy / function / service or review of existing one?**
3. **Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the proposal?**
4. **In summary, what are the anticipated (positive or negative) impacts of the proposal?**
5. **What, if any, cumulative impact could the proposal have?**

6. With regard to the stakeholders identified above and the diversity groups set out below:

	List any adverse impacts identified from data or engagement	Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group, or for any other reason? Please state why	Please detail what actions you will take to remedy any identified adverse impact i.e., actions to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations
Race (this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality, and caste, and includes refugees and migrants; and gypsies and travellers)			
Religion or belief (this includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief. The Act also covers lack of religion or belief)			
Disability (a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)			
Sex / Gender			

Gender reassignment / Gender identity (a person who's deeply felt and individual experience of gender may not correspond to the sex assigned to them at birth, they may or may not propose to, start, or complete a process to change their gender. A person does not need to be under medical supervision to be protected)			
Age (people of all ages)			
Sexual orientation - people who are lesbian, gay, and bisexual.			
Marriage and civil partnership (Only in relation to due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination)			
Caring status (including pregnancy & maternity)			
Socio-economic			
Other comments or issues.			

Please provide a list of the evidence used to inform this EIA, such as the results of consultation or other engagement, service take-up, service monitoring, surveys, stakeholder comments and complaints where appropriate.

This EIA form and report has been checked and countersigned by the Directorate Equalities Officer before proceeding to Executive Cabinet Member(s)

Please confirm the outcome of this EIA:

No major impact identified, therefore no major changes required – proceed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adjustments to remove barriers / promote equality (mitigate impact) have been identified – proceed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Positive impact for one or more groups justified on the grounds of promoting equality - proceed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continue despite having identified potential for adverse impact/missed opportunities for promoting equality – this requires a strong justification	<input type="checkbox"/>
The EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination - stop and rethink	<input type="checkbox"/>

Contact Officer

Name: _____

Date: _____

Directorate Equalities Lead Officer

Name: _____

Date: _____