

## **Minutes of a Meeting of the Shared Services Joint Committee**

At 2:00pm on Wednesday 25 October 2023

Held in the Council Chamber, Corby Cube, George Street, Corby

### **Present:**

#### Members

Councillor Jason Smithers (Co-Chair, North)      Councillor Adam Brown (West)  
Councillor Lloyd Bunday (North)                      Councillor Phil Larratt (West)  
Councillor Helen Harrison (North)

#### Officers

Janice Gotts – Executive Director of Finance and Performance (NNC)  
Adele Wylie – Executive Director of Customer and Governance (NNC)  
David Watts – Executive Director of Adults, Health Partnerships & Housing and  
Children’s Services (NNC)  
Alison Golding – Assistant Director of Human Resources (WNC)  
Vicky Wheatley – Apprenticeship & Qualifications Manager (NNC)  
Louise Tyers – Senior Democratic Services Officer (NNC)

### **24 Apologies for non-attendance**

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Councillors Mike Hallam and Jonathan Nunn. Councillor Phil Larratt attended as a substitute member.

### **25 Members' Declarations of Interests**

The Chair invited those who wished to do so to declare any interests in respect of items on the agenda.

No declarations were made.

### **26 Notifications of requests to address the meeting**

There were no requests to address the meeting.

### **27 Minutes of the meeting of the Shared Services Joint Committee held on 20 September 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **28 Chair's Announcements**

There were no Chair’s announcements.

## 29 Learning and Development Apprenticeship Disaggregation

The Joint Committee received a report which sought approval on the disaggregation and next steps regarding the North hosted Apprenticeship Service.

The North hosted the apprenticeship function which was due to be disaggregated by 31 March 2024. As well as delivering a hosted service to WNC through the Inter Authority Agreement, the function also delivered apprenticeship services to Northamptonshire Children's Trust and Milton Keynes Council (MKC), through separate service level agreements; and maintained schools across NNC, WNC and MKC.

The NNC Apprenticeship service comprised of two key operational areas:

- An in-house Apprenticeship Training Provider team, who delivered a limited number of apprenticeships internally; and
- An Apprenticeship DAS team, who managed the levy accounts, procured, and sourced external apprenticeship courses, and quality assessed learner experience and providers.

To deliver apprenticeships 'in-house', it was a legal requirement that all apprenticeship providers be officially recognised by the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP). NNC's Apprenticeship RoATP status was renewed in April 2022 which meant it was able to continue delivering in-house apprenticeships until the academic period 2026-2027. However, there was currently no option available for WNC to become an apprenticeship training provider due to the register remaining closed indefinitely for new providers. However, it was possible to disaggregate the Apprenticeship DAS team (including Quality) between North and West as this service did not require registration.

Following a financial appraisal of the whole apprenticeship service (In-house Training Provider function and the DAS function), the Apprenticeship Training Provider function, in its current form, was deemed to be non-viable and unsustainable as it was not currently delivering value for money.

A number of options had been considered for the way forward:

- Option 1 – Do Nothing and remain as a Hosted Service.
- Option 2 - Disaggregate both Apprenticeship functions with a 50/50% split.
- Option 3 – Disaggregate the hosted DAS Apprenticeship Service and withdraw the delivery of in-house apprenticeships within the HR service. Consideration would need to be given to the delivery of existing SLA commitments as part of the disaggregation process.

***For NNC only, this option would be accompanied by a recommendation to transfer the Apprenticeship RoATP number and the ability to deliver apprenticeships to an internal and external market, to NNC Adult Learning Services (ALS).***

- Option 4 - Cease the Apprenticeship Training Provider function and disaggregate the DAS Apprenticeship function.

Officers were recommending that Option 3 be taken forward.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) To approve the disaggregation of the L&D Apprenticeship DAS team by 31 March 2024.
- (ii) To approve the withdrawal of the Apprenticeship Provider Service within the HR Service\*  
(\*WNC are not legally able to continue this provision; For NNC, refer to resolution iii)
- (iii) For NNC only, to approve the transfer of the management of the NNC Apprenticeship ROAPT status to Adult Learning Services by 31 March 2024.
- (iv) For NNC only, to note the Council's commitment to continue to deliver Service Level Agreements to Milton Keynes Council and Northamptonshire Children's Trust.
- (v) To grant delegated authority to the Monitoring Officers for North and West Northamptonshire Councils to put into place a deed of variation to the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) for the service to exit the IAA.
- (vi) To approve that both WNC and NNC will act in accordance with Service Plans and Exit Plans agreed by both WNC and NNC service leads and approved by Monitoring Officers until such time as a formal Deed of Variation has been completed.

Reason for decision

- To ensure the safe and legal disaggregation of Learning and Development functions, in line with the Local Government Reform Blueprint.
- To enable each authority to tailor their apprenticeship provision to their organisational/corporate priorities and service delivery model.
- For NNC only, to enable the NNC Apprenticeship Training Provider function to be financially self-sustaining.
- To ensure that any changes to the Inter Authority Agreement arising from disaggregation are correctly enacted with proper authority.

Alternative Options Considered

- Option 1 – Do Nothing, Remain as a Hosted service.
- Option 2 – Disaggregate both Apprenticeship functions with a c50/50% split.
- Option 4 – Cease the Apprenticeship Training Provider function and disaggregate the DAS function (including Quality)

**30 Close of Meeting**

The Chair thanked members and officers for their attendance and closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 2.07pm.

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Chair

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Date