

## ESBC Apprenticeship progress update 2018-19 report

Reporting Period: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019

Headcount on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 = 346

Headcount on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 = 270

Number of employees who started work in the reporting period = 26

Number of apprentices who were working on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 = 5

Number of apprentices who were working on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 = 7

Number of apprenticeship new starts in the reporting period = 4

Percentage of apprentice starts as a proportion of new employee starts = 15.4%

Percentage of total headcount that were apprentices on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 = 2.6%

Percentage of apprenticeship starts in the period as a proportion of total headcount on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 = 1.16%

Our approach to recruiting new apprentices has been to consider every vacancy as it arises. This has achieved success in achieving 4 brand new apprentice starts, which is an improvement on the previous year.

With the ongoing commitment to apprentices already in progress in year 2 of their apprenticeship, and the lack of suitable standards available, unfortunately, unlike last year, we have not been able to convert existing employees into further apprenticeships during this particular year, to meet the target.

The profile of our workforce contains a proportion of part time workers. At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 our headcount was 346, which is 295 FTE. If the target were to be based on FTE then our target would be more realistic. At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 headcount has reduced to 270 and our FTE is 244. Therefore we have challenges of a diminishing workforce and the availability of suitable apprentice recruitment opportunities. A significant proportion of our vacancies were not suitable for new apprenticeships due to them being part time, 38.46% of vacancies arising were posts of less than 30 hours per week. A further 3.85% of vacancies were temporary for less than 12 month duration. The remaining vacancies where an apprentice was not recruited were unsuitable for apprenticeships due to the nature of the job role either requiring: an already qualified professional (e.g. Environmental Health Officer), no apprenticeship standard in place; or manual work that does not require any qualification (e.g. Street Sweeper) or lengthy training (e.g. HGV drivers).

We have also struggled to recruit 2 apprentice opportunities recently with local market competition.

We will continue to review every vacancy as it arises, assuming that a number of new starts will arise from these during each year within our establishment, and the remaining new starts to be achieved via staff development as suitable standards arise. We have also made a commitment to further training and long term career development for some of our existing apprentices. These apprenticeships are of high quality, and for a duration of more than a year, unfortunately we are unable to count them except in year 1. At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, 2.59% of our workforce were apprentices, which is the highest number of apprentices we have had for many years.