

National Graduate Development Programme

Summary

This report provides the Employment Committee with information about the Local Government Association's (LGA) 'National Graduate Development Programme' (NGDP), and recommends that the Council seeks to join this scheme and create a new post of 'Graduate Trainee'.

Recommendation

The Employment Committee is advised to RECOMMEND to Council that the Council creates a new post of 'Graduate Trainee' and that it seeks to recruit to this role via the Local Government Association's National Graduate Development Programme, subject to the necessary budget increase.

1. Key Issues

- 1.1 The LGA's National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP) has run since 2002. Councils employ graduates for a two-year contract, where they undertake at least three different service placements. The LGA provide a complimentary training and development offer which includes working towards an ILM (Institute of Leadership and Management) Level 7 qualification.
- 1.2 The LGA carries out a central multi-stage recruitment exercise, (which last year attracted over 5,000 applicants) and refer successful applicants to Councils who carry a local interview process.
- 1.3 Officers have experience of the programme from previous authorities and consider that the scheme can bring considerable benefits and very high-calibre candidates seeking a career in local government.
- 1.4 SHBC has run a very successful summer student internship programme since 2017. In 2020, eight interns were employed July – September working in Economic Development, Planning Policy, Human Resources, Housing, Community Services, Revenues & Benefits and Transformation. Despite the need for remote working this programme brought great benefits to the Council and the interns and [the LGA published a blog written by the Council about the programme in November 2020](#). This year's programme is currently being advertised and has attracted a large number of applications already.
- 1.5 It is clear from the Council's experiences with the intern programme that there would be a number of areas of work across the authority that could be greatly benefited by the Council having access to a flexible graduate trainee resource.

- 1.6 There is also the potential to link closer together our intern, apprenticeship (the Council normally has four or five apprentices in post across different services) and graduate programmes focusing on raising the profile of local government careers and 'growing our own' talent within the sector. To support last year's intern programme several staff undertook mentoring training, so these programmes can also offer development benefits for existing staff.
- 1.7 If the Council signed up to this year's NGDP programme local interviews would take place in June and a start date of Autumn 2021 for the trainee.
- 1.8 If the recruitment exercise did not result in a successful appointment then the proposal would be to use the agreed funding to extend the current internship programme to employ graduates.

2. Resource Implications

- 2.1 The creation of this post would require a budget increase.
- 2.2 The salary requirement for the NGDP Management Trainees is NJC (National Joint Council) spinal column point (scp) 20 (currently £25,921). This is virtually equivalent to the Council's local payscale SH4.16, which (including on-costs) equates to £33,956 per annum.
- 2.3 The national pay negotiations for 2021/22 are still underway and are unlikely to be concluded until after the deadline for signing up to the programme.
- 2.4 In addition a one-off fee covering recruitment, learning & development and the ILM qualification of £2,800 is payable.
- 2.5 At **current NJC SPC levels** the estimated costs in the coming years to employ one Management Trainee (including on-costs) would be:

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- 2021/22 - £22,700 (assuming a start date of 1 September)
 - 2022/23 - £34,000
 - 2023/24 - £36,800 (assuming a further trainee was employed starting September 2023) or £14,200 if the post was not re-recruited to.
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- 2.6 The Graduate Trainee's salary would need to reflect any national increases in pay to continue to reflect NJC SPC 20.

3. Options

- 3.1 Option 1 – take no action – focus instead on the Council's summer intern programme.
- 3.2 Option 2 (recommended) – Create a Management Trainee post and join the NGDP for 2021/22, noting the resource requirements above.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 The Employment Committee is advised to RECOMMEND to Council that the Council create a new post of 'Graduate Trainee' and that we seek to recruit to this role via the Local Government Association's National Graduate Development Programme, subject to the necessary budget increase.

5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 LGA's NGDP Council Information Pack 2021/22.

6. Corporate Objectives And Key Priorities

- 6.1 The new role would deliver a new flexible resource to support the Council in the achievement of the objectives in its Annual Plan. This links to objective TRA7 – a new Workforce Plan.

7. Equalities Impact

- 7.1 The LGA website states that *"The NGDP aims to provide a diverse pipeline of talented future leaders for local government and is committed to continuous improvement with respect to equality, diversity and inclusion"*. A Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Review was carried out in 2019 which resulted in a number of changes to their processes. There is currently an NGDP BAME network and an NGDP Women's network.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 The Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team were initially consulted on the proposal, and fully support it.
- 8.2 This report was also considered and supported by the Joint Staff Consultative Committee at its meeting on 11 March 2021.

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| Annexes | None |
| Background Papers | LGA's NGDP Council Information Pack 2021/22. LGA Workforce Blog November 2020 |
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