

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	PC/22/13
MEETING	PEOPLE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	31 OCTOBER 2022
SUBJECT OF REPORT	APPRENTICESHIPS
LEAD OFFICER	AM DAMIEN BORLASE – HEAD OF LEARNING DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	At the previous meeting held on 26 July 2022, the Committee was advised that an update in respect of the Service’s position regarding Apprenticeships would be submitted for information. This report therefore provides the update requested.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	As set out within this paper.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	As may be indicated within this report.
APPENDICES	None.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	None.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. At the previous meeting held on 26 July 2022, the Committee was advised that an update in respect of the Service’s position regarding Apprenticeships would be submitted for information. This report therefore provides the update requested.

2. APPRENTICESHIPS

2.1. The Apprenticeship Levy was announced by Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, in the July 2015 budget to create long-term sustainable funding for Apprenticeships. All employers can access the apprenticeship levy funds, however, only those with a pay bill of £3 million are required to pay into it, paying 0.5% of their total annual pay bill.

2.2. The Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (“the Service”) pays over £22,000 into its levy pot each month. During 2021, unspent funds grew to a total of more than £480,000 with £160,000 due to expire within a 12-month period.

2.3. The Levy pot expiry was raised as a corporate risk and as a result, the apprenticeship management was transitioned from HR to the People Development team. An Apprenticeship lead role was established to improve access and utilisation of the Service’s levy funds to assist in the training and development of employees.

3. APPRENTICESHIP LEVY UTILISATION

3.1. In March 2022, the Service mitigated this corporate risk with full utilisation of levy funds, including a diverse mix of uniformed and non-uniformed staff enrolled on Apprenticeship programmes (see figure 1.1 below).

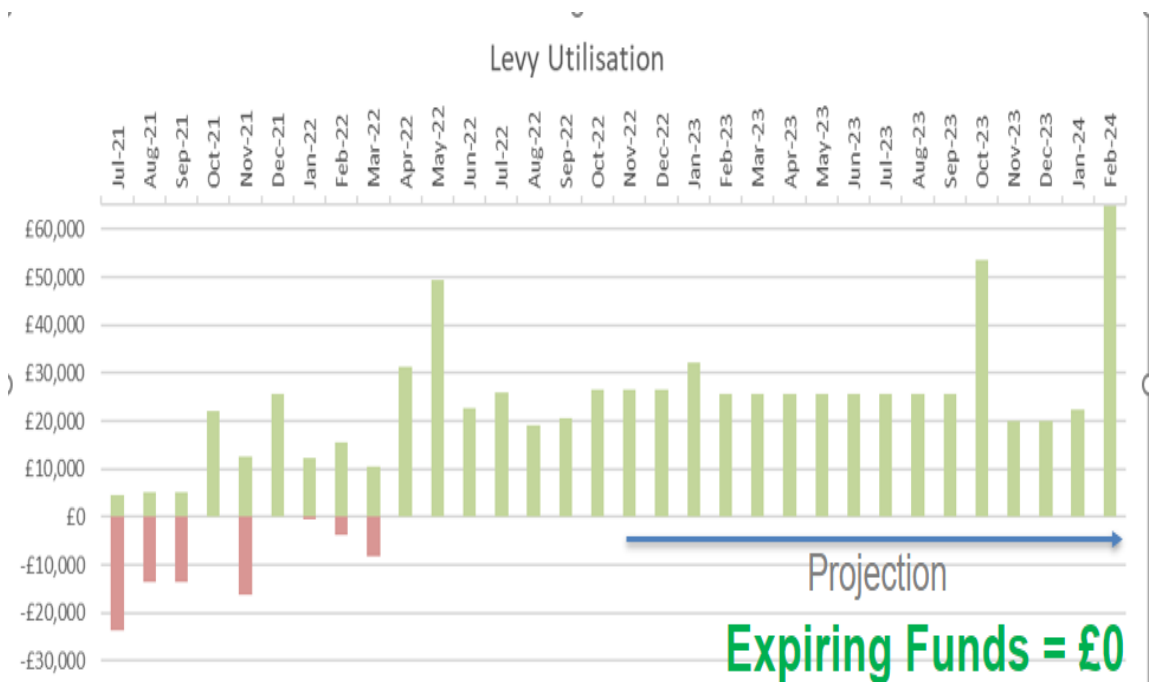


figure 1.1

Levy Balance Projection

3.2. Based on the number of staff currently enrolled on apprenticeship programmes across the Service, levy utilisation of £369,547 will be realised over the next 12 months. Figure 1.2 below illustrates the levy fund is being utilised and the Service is more efficient in managing Apprenticeships. Note, if the Service exceeds the levy pot sum the government funds 90% of the training cost thus leaving the Service to pay the remaining 10%.

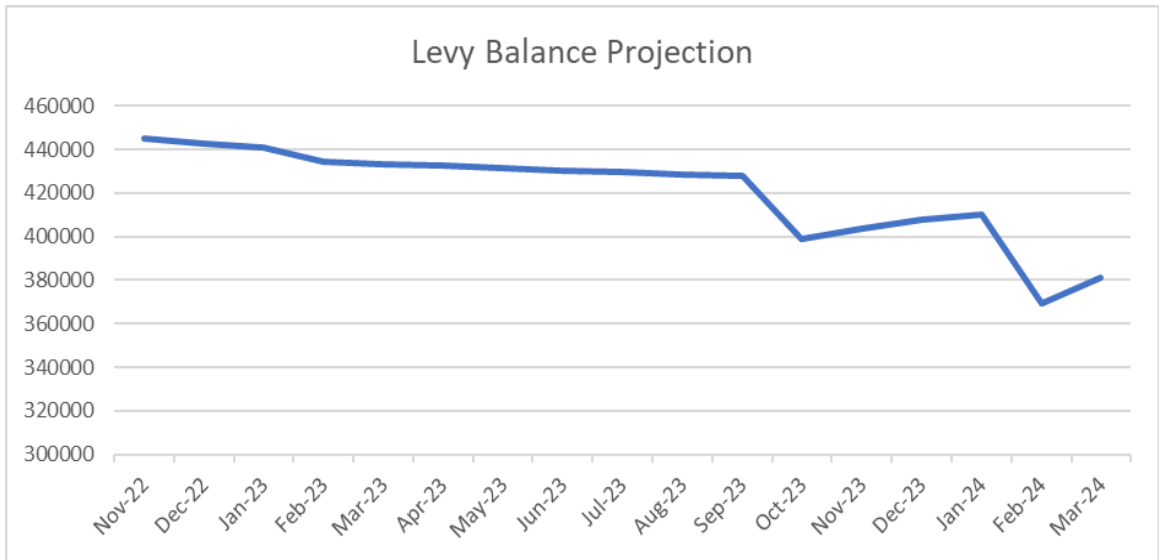


Figure 1.2

3.3. Figure 1.3 below illustrates the income line received by the Service for Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship via payment of c.£9,000 from the apprenticeship provider i.e. college. The total income + Saving line (green) illustrates the savings made from using an apprenticeship to deliver a qualification rather than a standalone route.

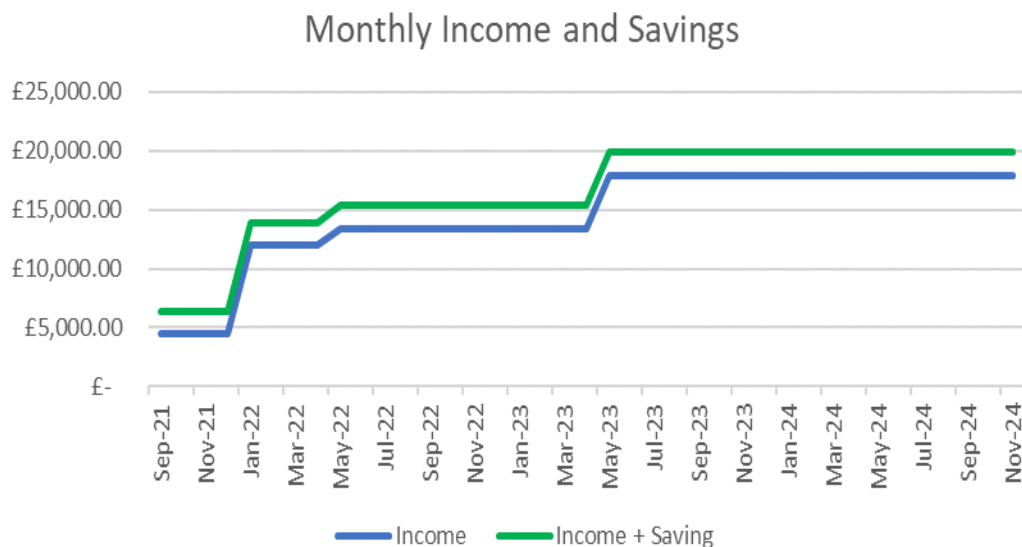


Figure 1.3

4. OPPORTUNITIES AND SUCCESS

- 4.1. The Service is exploring an opportunity to seek 'employer provider' status to realise full funding return.
- 4.2. The Service approach has reinforced inclusive learning for those with Neurodiverse needs such as Dyslexia. Furthermore, learners without the required GCSEs can gain functional skills during an Apprenticeship programme.
- 4.3. 70% of our current non-operational apprentices are women.
- 4.4. Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service was the first in the country to achieve the Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship. 40% of those individuals were On Call women.

AM DAMIEN BORLASE

Area Manager – Head of Learning Development and Training