

# Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



**Nottingham**  
**City Council**

**Reference Number:**

4882

**Author:**

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**Department:**

Finance and Resources

**Contact:**

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**Subject:**

Apprenticeship Levy

**Total Value:**

£411,000 (Type: Revenue)

**Decision Being Taken:**

To approve the spend of £411,000.00 from the apprenticeship levy using a direct award to Multiverse in order to deliver the second Data Academy Apprenticeships

As part of our Transformation programme, the transformation office, led by Richard Grice, identified that there is a skills gap relating to data skills within existing members of staff. The solution to amend this skills gap was the creation of the data academy, in conjunction with the training provider, Multiverse. This data academy delivers 3 apprenticeship programmes over 3 levels of knowledge - Data Technician, Data Analyst and Digital and Technology Solutions Professional.

Multiverse was selected as they have already successfully delivered programmes with other businesses and authorities so are tried and tested. Their offering also included the opportunity to network with businesses outside of our own to share in best practice. They are on the YPO procurement framework to deliver the above mentioned apprenticeships.

The data academy was advertised to the workforce via all colleague emails and invited anyone interested to attend information sessions and apply. Applications were discussed with line managers and Heads of Service have approved the colleagues to become apprentices within their remit. Applications have been made from across the council with a selection from each division enrolling onto the programme. Colleagues undertaking the Data Academy Apprenticeship will remain in their post throughout.

The apprenticeship levy is a pot of money that can solely be used for the payment of approved apprenticeships. If it is not spent within 2 years of it reaching our account it is reclaimed by the Government. It is therefore in the best interest to spend the apprenticeship levy where possible. In allowing the ability to direct award to Multiverse the sum of £411,000.00 to deliver the following apprenticeships, we will be reducing the figure being sent back to the government each month.

This figure is broken down as follows:

3x Data Literacy undertaking the Data Technician Level 3 Apprenticeship at a cost of £12,000 per apprentice

11x Data Fellowship undertaking the Data Analyst Level 4 Apprenticeship at a cost of £15,000 per apprentice

**6x Advanced Data Fellowship undertaking the Digital and Technology Solutions Professional (Integrated Degree) Level 6 Apprenticeship at a cost of £35,000 per apprentice**

**20 apprenticeships in total**

**This request solely relates to a spend with Multiverse for the enrolment period of 2022-23. Plans for spend on further cohorts will be covered with a future request to spend the apprenticeship levy. NCC has previously worked with Multiverse in delivering the first cohort where colleagues are currently on programme. We meet with Multiverse regularly and are provided with updates on progress being made. Feedback has included how some apprentices have implemented their learning within their roles which has been very effective.**

**A discussion has taken place around the process of spending the entire apprenticeship levy, it has been recognised that this will be a Key Decision. The Director of HR and EDI will advise the team of the most appropriate option.**

**Other Options Considered:**

**We're trying to utilise the apprenticeship levy to meet the identified skills gap and develop colleagues at the same time. The government introduced a number of reforms around apprenticeships in 2017 as part of their commitment to 3 million apprenticeships by 2020.**

**These changes included developing new qualifications in conjunction with industry leaders and offers routes to more 'recognised' and chartered qualifications starting at GCSE level and going through to Masters degrees. Trailblazer groups are identifying skills gaps and are constantly working on new qualifications to be approved for delivery.**

**Apprenticeship funding, known as the apprenticeship levy, was introduced in May 2017.**

**Employers who have a pay bill of £3m or more pay 0.5% of their pay bill as a tax to the Government. This in turn is returned to our levy pot with a 10% top up. For the Council this equates to around £1m per year.**

**The levy can solely be drawn down to spend on government approved apprenticeship training. It cannot be spent on salaries or to pay for any other kind of training.**

**Any unspent funds 'expire' after two years in the levy pot. Currently we are only spending half of what is going into our levy pot each month and Nottingham City Council has been returning funds that have expired from our levy pot since August 2019. These funds go back to the government and are used to support small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), at least in part, to fund apprenticeship training for non-levy paying employers.**



**Background Papers:** **None**

**Published Works:** **None**

**Affected Wards:** **Citywide**

**Colleague / Councillor  
Interests:**

**Consultations:** **Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.**

**Crime and Disorder  
Implications:** **None arising from the decision to be taken.**

**Equality:** **EIA disproportionate due to the time taken and money involved, as Multiverse are the preferred provider of the apprenticeship. The opportunity for colleagues to undertake the Higher Apprenticeship was promoted through a range of marketing and comms across the Council given a fair opportunity to all. There are no impacts to any of the protected characteristics.**

**Decision Type:** **Portfolio Holder**

**Subject to Call In:** **Yes**

**Call In Expiry date:** **14/03/2023**

**Advice Sought:** **Legal, Finance, Procurement, Human Resources**

**Legal Advice:**

This report seeks approval for the spend of £411,00 from the Apprenticeship Levy to a provider sourced through the YPO Framework, Multiverse, to deliver the second Data Academy Apprenticeships.

There are standard contractual documents used when accessing services under the YPO Framework and the City Council must ensure that it complies with obligations imposed by such standard contractual documents and continues to act in accordance with the Council's Constitutional requirements.

Other than that, the report presents no significant legal issues.

Advice provided by Anthony Heath (Senior Solicitor) on 13/02/2023.

**Finance Advice:**

This DDM seeks the approval to spend £411k of the Apprenticeship Levy to address the skills gap that were identified in a previous workforce planning exercise. Apprenticeship Levy is paid as 0.5% of the total payroll costs, the amount being paid can be used to upskill staff through apprenticeship schemes. This will mean that there is nil cost of providing this scheme to the council. No Finance objections.

Advice provided by Nishil Rabheru (Strategic Finance Business Partner) on 24/01/2023.

**HR Advice:**

The proposals seek to address a workforce development gap around data skills that have been identified in previous workforce planning processes. The apprenticeship levy provides a route for the organisation to access training and in a way that enables skills to be developed whilst maintaining service delivery, with employees remaining in their existing jobs during the training programme. The proposals are supported.

Advice provided by Paul Slater (HR Business Lead) on 15/12/2022.

**Procurement Advice:**

Acquiring the services of Multiverse via the YPO Apprenticeships Framework is a compliant route to market and Multiverse is the only provider on the Framework who can deliver all of the courses required. Therefore, I am content that a direct award is acceptable. The only issue raised with the author of this report is the fees on the YPO website for one of the course is lower than detailed in this DDM and I have suggested this is reviewed.

Advice provided by Louise Dobson (Lead Procurement Officer) on 09/02/2023.

**Signatures**

David Mellen (Leader/ PH Strategic Regeneration Communications)

SIGNED and Dated: 07/03/2023

Ross Brown (Corporate Director of Finance & Resources)

SIGNED and Dated: 01/03/2023