

Meeting of:	CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS
Date of Meeting:	2 SEPTEMBER 2026
Report Title:	LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT
Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member	CHIEF EXECUTIVE CABINET MEMBER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES
Responsible Officer:	PAUL MILES, GROUP MANAGER – HUMAN RESOURCES & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no impact on the policy framework or procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	To provide an annual report on apprentice/graduate schemes, organisational development and staff training.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information of the Council's grow your own schemes and staff training during 2025/2026.

2. Background

- 2.1 The development of the workforce is essential to enhance the skills and knowledge of our employees. The use of grow your own schemes has supported the opportunity to develop staff in areas of recruitment challenges.

3 Current situation / proposal

- 3.1 Prioritising learning and development, including continuous professional development, demonstrates a commitment to professional growth and retention, while addressing skills gaps and fostering innovation across the Council.

3.2 Apprenticeships & Graduates

- 3.2.1 Apprenticeships combine practical training in a job with study, working alongside experienced staff and gaining job specific skills. The opportunity to gain a qualification whilst earning a salary has proved an attractive recruitment tool, noting that the rate of

pay is determined through the job evaluation scheme and not the lower national apprenticeship rates. These apprenticeships are supported by training providers such as Bridgend College, University of South Wales, TSW Training, etc.

3.2.2 Apprenticeships are open to anyone aged 16 or over (no upper age limit), with four different types or levels available:

- Foundation Apprenticeships (Level 2)
- Apprenticeships (Level 3)
- Higher Apprenticeships (Level 4 and 5)
- Degree Apprenticeships (Level 6 and 7)

3.2.3 Since 2013 the Council has appointed 186 apprentices, with 167 completing their qualification and an overall retention rate of 64% of these remaining employed.

3.2.4 During April 2025 to March 2026 there were 35 apprenticeships in place.

3.2.5 The introduction of an in-house graduate scheme began in 2021. There have been 8 graduate posts.

3.2.6 During April 2025 to March 2026 the L&D Team have attended our secondary schools to deliver a number of presentations on apprenticeships and interviewing skills as well as participating in their options evenings and careers fairs.

3.2.7 In addition to this we have worked with DFN Project Search and Bridgend College throughout 2025/2026 on preparatory work to support young adults with a learning disability, who are autistic, or both, have equal opportunities to transition from education into work through the Supported Internship Programme which will start September 2026 across the Council.

3.3 **Workshops**

3.3.1 Training is crucial for fostering a skilled and adaptable workforce, ensuring high-quality public service delivery. Regular training is vital in addressing the constant changes in legislation, finances and staffing within the Council, equipping employees with up-to-date knowledge and skills to meet the demands of their roles and the needs of the community.

3.3.2 Organised by the Corporate Learning & Development Team, between April 2025 to March 2026 there were 8 workshops with a total of 42 delegates attending across a range of topics:

- Menopause and Menstrual Health
- Ask and Act
- Cwrs Mynediad Year 1 and 2
- Sylfaen (Foundation)

3.4 **E-Learning**

- 3.4.1 E-Learning has become an essential tool for ensuring that our employees are equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge, and understanding to carry out their duties effectively and in compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
- 3.4.2 With the increasing complexity of public services, all local authorities face the challenge of keeping staff up to date with the latest policies, procedures, and technological advancements. E-Learning offers a flexible, scalable, and cost-effective solution to allow employees to access training materials remotely and at their own pace.
- 3.4.3 Below is a breakdown of mandatory completions as of 31st March 2026:

BCBC	Completed	
Climate Change	2,459	41.55%
Display Screen Equipment (DSE)	4,221	71.32%
Fire Safety	5,165	87.28%
GDPR and Data Protection	4,900	82.80%
Introduction to Equality and Diversity	4,132	69.82%
Introduction to Health and Safety	3,027	51.15%
ICT Code of Conduct	4,736	80.03%
Safeguarding Children and Adults	5,185	87.61%
Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)	4,422	74.72%
Welsh Language Awareness	4,045	68.35%

- 3.4.4 The updated mandatory E-Learning Modules are set out in **Appendix 1**.

3.5 HR Briefings

- 3.5.1 HR Briefings are delivered by Senior HR Professionals from the Human Resources and Organisational Development Service to employees and managers on a range of topics to give assist improve knowledge and performance. The topics covered include:
- Recruitment
 - Health and Wellbeing
 - Absence Management Welfare Meetings
 - Local Government Pension Scheme
 - People Manager
 - Appraisal Systems
- 3.5.2 Managers are encouraged to view these briefings as a professional discussion where they can contribute, ask questions, take tips and advice away from other managers and can network with other managers from across the authority.
- 3.5.3 During the period April 2025 to March 2026 the HR Briefings were attended by 339 delegates. Feedback is positive with 98% rating the briefings as Excellent and 98% saying the briefings were relevant to them now.

3.6 Funded Qualifications (Levy)

- 3.6.1 The Council utilises the Apprenticeship Levy, a UK-wide tax on large employers, to fund apprenticeship training for new recruits, including apprenticeships, and to upskill our existing workforce.
- 3.6.2 The Welsh Government's apprenticeship program allocates funds, breaking the direct link between levy contributions and funds accessed by individual Councils. The Welsh Government focuses on aligning training with the needs of the Welsh economy, including addressing skills shortages in growth sectors like Construction, Engineering, and Financial Services, and developing higher-level skills at and above level 2.
- 3.6.3 The Learning and Development team collaborate with approved training providers to deliver programs tailored to our specific needs.
- 3.6.4 During 2025-2026 a total of 32 Post Entry Training applications were made of which all were approved.

4 Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact assessment in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5 Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

- 5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of the well-being goals as a result of this report.

6 Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 6.1 There are no climate change or nature implications arising from this report.

7 Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 There are no safeguarding and corporate parent implications arising from this report.

8 Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report as it is an information report.

9 Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet Committee Equalities and Employee Relations note the information contained in this report and within Appendix 1.

Background documents

None

Mandatory E-Learning Modules 2025/2026

The mandatory E-Learning Modules are:

1. Corporate Induction
2. Display Screen Equipment - DSE
3. Fire Safety Awareness
4. GDPR and Data Protection
5. ICT Code of Conduct
6. Introduction to Equality and Diversity
7. Safeguarding Children and Adults
8. Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)
9. Welsh Language Awareness
10. Climate Change
11. Introduction to Health & Safety

Please note that the following 3 modules have refreshers so will need to be completed annually or every 3 years as set out below:

- Fire Safety – annually.
- Safeguarding Children and Adults – every 3 years
- Introduction to Health and Safety – every 3 years
- Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) – every 3 years