

Committee(s): Corporate Services Committee	Dated: 10/04/2024
Subject: Graduate scheme	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	8: We have access to the skills and talent we need.
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	Yes
If so, how much?	£380K year 1 £710K year 2
What is the source of funding?	City Estate
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	Yes
Report of: Alison Littlewood, Executive Director of HR & Chief People Officer, People & HR	For decision
Report author: Kaye Saxton-Lea, People & Human Resources	

Summary

This report provides details to the committee concerning the proposed re-implementation of the National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP) starting September 2024, seeking final approval after its initial presentation to the Executive Leadership Board in 2023. The reintroduction of the programme is aimed at bolstering the City Corporation's social mobility agenda while also addressing recruitment challenges in specific areas by fostering internal talent development within the organisation.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed for consideration by the committee:

1. Approve funding for a minimum two-year period for the National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP) and associated costs.
2. Endorse the recruitment of up to 9 National Management Graduates per year for a minimum of two years as part of the NGDP.
3. Acknowledge that the Finance Committee has endorsed, and the Court of Common Council has approved in principle the allocation of £380k in 24/25 and £710k from 25/26 from the City's Estate Budget for this purpose.

Main Report

Background

1. The City Corporation has historically administered the National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP) with the aim of nurturing young talent and fostering professional growth with the organisation. However, in 2019, the programme was suspended to conduct a review of its effectiveness and alignment with our organisational goals. The funding was removed as part of the 12% savings put in place during the fundamental review.
2. The NGDP at the City Corporation previously engaged with two graduates annually, offering them a structured pathway into various roles within the City Corporation. Despite its initial intentions, concerns arose regarding the programme's efficacy, particularly regarding retention rates and diversity of participants. Graduates were observed to

frequently depart the programme prematurely, typically towards the end of their first year. Furthermore, there were apprehensions regarding the programmes ability to attract a diverse pool of candidates and support our commitment to social mobility initiatives.

3. In 2020, the work was then paused due to the covid 19 lockdown, and the work being undertaken on the target operating model. In 2023, The YEN network proposed a paper to the Executive Leadership Board (ELB) that a generalist graduate scheme should be reintroduced to the City Corporation. (appendix 1) This proposal recommended the following:
 - a. Register the City Corporation with the NGDP managed by the Local Government Association for the 2024/2025 cohort.
 - b. Seek agreement this should be funded centrally, with departments and Institutions bidding to host a National Management Trainee (NMT) for a six-month placement.
 - c. Approve the appointment of a fulltime Graduate and Work Experience Coordinator to sit within the Learning & Organisational Development Team to manage the scheme.
 - d. The City Corporation to recruit up to 9 Graduates/NMT per year, Graduates would be paid Spinal point 1018 (Top of grade B) in year 1 and spinal point 1022 (bottom of grade C in year 2).

Table below taken from original report prior to 2023/24 pay award.

	Cost of one Graduate		Cost of 9 Graduates	
	2024/25	2025/26**	2024/25	2025/26**
Local Government Association fee	£3,500	£7,000	£31,500.00	£31,500.00
Pay	£33,120	£66,860	£298,080.00	£619,740.00
Travel and additional costs	£200.00	£400.00	£1,800.00	£3,600.00
Graduate and work experience coordinator *	£41,360	£42,220	£41,360.00	£42,220.00
Cost	£77,880	£116,480	£372,740.00	£697,360.00

*Spinal point 1030 grade D and excludes on-costs

** based on current pay structure 2023/2024 excluding on-costs

Next Steps

4. Collaborating with the Local Government Association (LGA), our objective is that 75% of incoming graduates to the City Corporation hail from Non-Russell Group Universities. This strategic partnership underscores our commitment to embracing diversity and inclusivity by widening the pool of prospective candidates.
5. Collaborate with departmental managers to secure 6-month placements across the City Corporation, enabling graduates to work on critical projects in line with the NGDP programmes aims and objectives. We aim to offer robust support systems and tailored resources to facilitate graduates' growth within the Organisation. This approach not only enriches our talent pipeline but also fosters an environment conducive to continuous learning and innovation.
6. A 2-year programme will be designed to support the graduates to develop and achieve the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) Level 7 qualification in Leadership and Management. This will equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to be effective leaders in the public sector.

7. Conduct a comprehensive evaluation throughout the duration of the programme to assess its effectiveness and measure its success against predetermined benchmarks within the People Strategy. Based on the finds of the evaluation, make informed recommendations for the continuation of the programme beyond the initial two-year period. This includes seeking funding approval for the 26/27 fiscal year to sustain and potentially expand the National Graduate Development Programme

Corporate and Strategic Implications

8. Strategic implications – The National Graduate Development programme will be an integral part of the People Strategy and provide a structured pathway within the My Talent and development, enabling the cultivation of a skilled workforce, which in turn will enhance employee retention and facilitate succession planning by nurturing talent. Help bridge the skills gaps by providing hands-on-training and practical experience, demonstrating the organisations commitment to workforce development and corporate social responsibility.
9. Financial and Resource implications –
 - Costs 1 per year graduate £77,880, 9 graduates £372,740.00 (inclusive of graduate and work experience role and excluding on-costs year in the first year)
 - Costs 1 per year graduates year 2, £116,480, 9 graduates year 2, £697,360.00
10. Legal implications – None arising from the report.
11. Risk implications – The funding allocation currently does not go beyond 25/26. It will be important to assess any risk implications associated with the Ambition 25 project, particularly concerning where the graduates will sit within its framework. Additionally, consideration pertains to the potential hurdles in securing suitable placements across diverse departments.
12. Equalities implications – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are critical to the success of Graduate programme. Offering opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds to enter and thrive in the workforce, will ensure that the organisation meets their socioeconomic and social mobility agenda.
13. Climate implications – There are no specific climate implications arising from this report.
14. Security implications – There are no direct security implications.

Conclusion – In conclusion, the reintroduction of graduates into the City Corporation offers a promising avenue for leveraging fresh perspectives and skills while infusing our workforce with renewed energy and enthusiasm. This initiative not only cultivates a vital career pathway for individuals embarking on their professional journeys but also reinforces our dedication to nurture talent and foster excellence and greater innovation.

Appendices

1. Generalist Graduate Scheme – proposal to the Executive Leadership Board

Background Papers

None

Kaye Saxton-Lea, People and Human Resources

T: 07710705610 E: kaye.saxton-lea@cityoflondon.gov.uk