

## Agenda item 5

For decision – to fund and co-host a Young People’s Health and Wellbeing Apprentice in 2026/2027

Authors: Melody Hunter Evans, Children and Young People’s Project Officer, Hannah Stopford, Community Partnerships and Development Manager

### Summary (incl. recommendations)

This paper sets out an opportunity to work in collaboration with one of our key partner organisations, Frome Medical Practice, to co-host an exciting new apprenticeship role with a focus on Children and Young People’s Health and Wellbeing. This is an area of work that FTC is committed to focusing on and reflected in national government and NHS strategy. Co-hosting an apprentice will boost our capacity in this area of work, bring in new skills and align with future ways of working across community health.

The recommendations suggest a breakdown of the £9k funding required to enable this work:

- £4.5k in next year’s budget
- £4.5k from the Connect Somerset project budget

## Background

The Health and Wellbeing workers apprenticeship is a new offer from Somerset Skills and Learning. This is in response to a growing need for community-based Health and Wellbeing roles in both the Health and VCFSE sectors. There is research that shows that specific children and young people’s Social prescribing is part of the [NHS 10-year plan](#). In response to this there has already been conversation between FTC and Frome Medical Practice (FMP) looking at what options would suit our town best. The focus on CYP (Children and Young People) aligns with both FMP and FTC priorities and makes the collaboration on hosting a natural fit, and a chance to strengthen future co-working on Neighbourhood health and prevention opportunities.

## Frome Context

There are key areas of the CYP work program that this role would support:

Melody has been partnering with the Health Connections Mendip team to develop a Young Person’s Community Connector training package. Schools are ready to sign students up. This would use FIND and the Health Connectors Directory to mirror the adult Community Connectors program and is a starting point for more ideas around Young People’s Social prescribing and community connectedness.

The other area of focus for this apprentice would be to support the Post 16 education and career opportunities and research that is a big focus in this year’s work programme. Having a younger staff member support the design and delivery of this research, data collection and

analysis is also part of the apprenticeship training so they may have some good practice examples they can share as part of the process.

## Requirements

The apprenticeship would be managed by Somerset Skills and Learning and training covers:

- Providing informed signposting and advice about local services and projects that support health and wellbeing.
- Managing referrals from a range of agencies, professionals and through self-referral.
- Applying behavioural science to help people find practical solutions for better health and wellbeing.
- Implementing actions set out in strategies and policies that promote health and wellbeing at community level.
- Communicating public health messages and information to promote health and wellbeing at an individual, group and community level.
- Managing data and information and contribute to the evaluation of projects and services.
- Operating within legal and ethical frameworks that relate to the promotion and protection of the public's health and wellbeing.
- Taking responsibility for the personal and professional development in line with the organisational protocol.

Frome Medical Practice have offered to be the lead employer for the role and take responsibility for HR and contractual agreements. The apprentice would be working with the FTC Community Development team specifically in the CYP area for 2 days a week for a 12-month period (with 2 days at FMP and a day for course learning). We would dedicate around 2 hours of staff time dedicated to mentoring. Melody as the Children and Young People's Project Officer would be the key contact for the apprentice and she would work closely with Julie Carey-Downs, the FMP counterpart. These time commitments would fluctuate depending on project demands.

Recruitment would be held between FMP and FTC and would aim to start in October to align with the SS&L apprenticeship schedule and also to be able to advertise to the A Level students finishing their education at the end of the summer term. We would hope to recruit a candidate from the 18-24 demographic. This is a fixed term role of 12 months to allow time to complete the apprenticeship training. There is no obligation to employ the apprentice on completion of the programme, although we would want to support the person into their next steps where possible with advice and references.

## Benefits

- Significant capacity added for existing CYP projects especially the Young People's Community Connectors training and development and the Post 16 education and career research and learning.
- The intention is to recruit, if possible, an 18-24 year old. As well as creating a much-needed post-16 employment opportunity, we would also gain meaningful insight and input into design and development of future projects in our CYP work.

- It strengthens the partnership with FMP and offers opportunities for more joint working in this area.
- It will enhance our own learning about apprenticeship models and showcase our desire to support Post 16's in Frome into education and employment as well as training up the future of our workforce.
- The apprenticeship programme will provide an opportunity to boost skills within our existing team and learn from good practice across training providers.

### Funding

To employ a young apprentice full time for 12 months estimated costs would be around £18,000. This is based on the 16-24 apprentice rate including oncosts.

SS&L and or Somerset Council would support with the Apprenticeship Levy.

The suggestion is that each organisation contributes just under £9k based on the apprenticeship typically taking 12 months and then an end point assessment.

If start date is October 2026, £4.5k could be budgeted as part of next year's budget.

The remaining £4.5k could be covered by using an underspend from the Somerset Connect Champion contract.

Other options considered	N/A
Key considerations for the Council	Extra staff time required for mentoring but extra staff capacity gained with apprentice time
Consultation and feedback	Children and young people's wellbeing came up as one of the top concerns in the data from a Picture of Frome. It is also a recurring theme in the Frome CYP Mental Health Forum meetings. This is also highlighted in the GOV Youth Matters: National Youth Strategy and NHS 10 year plan. <a href="#">Youth Matters: Your National Youth Strategy - GOV.UK</a> <a href="#">10 Year Health Plan for England - GOV.UK</a> Current report on increasing numbers of NEETs in UK: <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/money/2026/may/27/neets-could-hit-125m-by-early-2030s-milburn-review-young-people-employment-uk">https://www.theguardian.com/money/2026/may/27/neets-could-hit-125m-by-early-2030s-milburn-review-young-people-employment-uk</a>
Links to Council Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan	<b>Grow Community Wellbeing</b> Ensure children and young people are meaningfully involved in local decision making, including through a participatory grant-making project. Shape a strategic approach to supporting local projects that fill identified gaps in provision and attract grant funding. <b>Support a Thriving Town</b> Explore post-16 education opportunities, working with the Frome Chamber of Commerce, Somerset Council, University

	Centre Somerset College Group, and (subject to Planning Inquiry) LVA.
Financial and Risk Implications	9k
Legal / HR Implications	FMP lead employer
Equalities Implications	Will follow EDI policy on recruitment
Community Safety Implications	Apprentice work under FMP policies and follow lone working procedures
Climate Change and Sustainability Implications	N/A
Health and Safety Implications	N/A
Constitutional Requirements	N/A
Background Papers	<a href="https://www.sslcourses.co.uk/community-health-wellbeing-worker-apprenticeship-level-3/">https://www.sslcourses.co.uk/community-health-wellbeing-worker-apprenticeship-level-3/</a>
Report Sign-Off	Peter Wheelhouse, Town Clerk 28/05/26

#### Recommendations

1. To cohost with Frome Medical Practice a Community Health and Wellbeing Apprentice and delegate to the Children and Young People's Project Officer to work in partnership, recruit and mentor the Apprentice.
2. To agree to the funding proposal: £4.5k in next year's budget and £4.5k from the Connect Somerset project budget