



Employer Guide (updated July 2026)

Levy-funded pathways for public sector management, AI, data and transformation capability

Practical pathways that build accredited capability through real public service work.

All pathways include:

- **a nationally recognised apprenticeship qualification**
- **Microsoft-recognised AI certification**
- **Institute of Leadership accreditation**

Why councils need a different approach

Local government reorganisation, financial pressure, rising resident expectations and accelerating AI adoption mean councils need colleagues who can work across services, improve productivity, use data well and help change land in practice.

Many councils are looking for practical ways to:

- **build** future-ready management capability
- **support** colleagues through change and restructuring
- **develop** AI, data and improvement skills
- **improve** how services and work get done
- **help** colleagues compete strongly for future roles
- **create** clear progression routes for existing staff

FTL provides levy-funded pathways that help build this capability through real public service work.

Why this matters for LGR readiness

Local government reorganisation and wider public sector change will require many councils to work differently.

Colleagues will need to be ready for changing structures, new teams, different roles, service redesign and more cross-service working.

These pathways help councils strengthen the capability colleagues will need before, during and after change:

- management confidence
- collaboration across services
- AI and digital confidence
- data-informed decision-making
- service improvement and productivity
- communication, judgement and stakeholder skills

The aim is to build capability now — while helping colleagues stay confident, credible and future-ready as new opportunities emerge.

Public sector customisation built in

FTL's public sector pathways are already tailored to council and local government contexts.

Public sector customisations across all programmes include:

- public sector examples, missions and study groups
- scenarios linked to service improvement, resident impact and cross-service working
- local government reorganisation and transformation priorities
- practical use of workplace tools such as Microsoft Copilot, Power BI, Excel, Teams and Power Automate where relevant
- tailored learner communications and launch materials

FTL's public sector variants are also shaped around themes reflected in the University of Birmingham's 21st Century Public Servant research, including the skills, attributes and values effective public servants need for the future.

The result: recognised qualifications that feel practical, relevant and highly contextualised to council and public sector work.

A connected suite, not one-off courses

FTL provides a connected set of pathways covering the capabilities councils increasingly rely on.



Management, service transformation and improvement

For colleagues organising work, improving services and helping change land.

AI-enabled working and digital capability

For colleagues using AI, automation and digital tools to improve workflows, services and ways of working.

Data and insight

For colleagues using information and evidence to support better decisions, performance and service improvement.

This makes it easier to build capability consistently across teams, services and directorates.

Future-ready management pathways for councils

As traditional Level 3 and Level 5 management apprenticeship routes change, councils need credible ways to keep building management capability through levy-funded development.

FTL's pathways build management capability through the work colleagues already do every day.

PS Transformational Manager Programme

For colleagues building core management capability through organised delivery, project work, stakeholder communication and problem-solving.

PS Service Transformation Manager Programme

For colleagues supporting service redesign, resident journeys, stakeholder engagement and better ways of working.

PS Improvement Manager Programme

For colleagues building Lean, project management, productivity and service improvement capability.

The public sector capability menu

MANAGEMENT, SERVICE TRANSFORMATION & IMPROVEMENT

- **PS Transformational Manager**
Mapped to Junior Management Consultant L4
- **PS Service Transformation Manager**
Mapped to Business Analyst L4
- **PS Improvement Manager**
Mapped to Improvement Specialist L5

AI-ENABLED WORK & DIGITAL

- **PS AI for Smarter Work**
Mapped to Digital Support Technician L3
- **PS AI & Automation Management**
Mapped to AI & Automation Practitioner L4
- **PS AI & Digital Product**
Mapped to Digital Product Manager L4

DATA & INSIGHT

- **PS Data for Smarter Work**
Mapped to Data Technician L3
- **PS Data & Insight Management**
Mapped to Data Analyst L4

Which pathway fits the need?



If colleagues need to build management confidence, organise work, support projects and communicate with stakeholders

→ **PS Transformational Manager Programme**

If colleagues need to support service redesign, resident journeys or stakeholder-heavy change

→ **PS Service Transformation Manager Programme**

If colleagues need to lead service improvement, productivity or performance change

→ **PS Improvement Manager Programme**

If a wide range of colleagues need to use AI and digital tools more confidently

→ **PS AI for Smarter Work Programme**

If colleagues need to identify AI and automation opportunities in workflows or services

→ **PS AI & Automation Management Programme**

If colleagues need to shape digital services, products or user journeys

→ **PS AI & Digital Product Management Programme**

If colleagues need stronger everyday data confidence

→ **PS Data for Smarter Work Programme**

If colleagues need to turn data into insight for decisions

→ **PS Data & Insight Management Programme**

Human and practical capability embedded throughout

Alongside programme-specific learning, colleagues **build the human and practical capability** needed to use new skills effectively with residents, colleagues, partners, services and stakeholders.

This includes practical learning to develop:

- communication and active listening
- collaboration and stakeholder engagement
- working across boundaries
- feedback and coaching conversations
- influence and managing upwards
- prioritisation and decision-making
- resilience and building trust
- problem-solving and leading change
- facilitation, storytelling and presenting with impact
- using AI responsibly at work

These are not cosmetic add-ons. They are part of how FTL helps colleagues turn AI, data, management, improvement and transformation capability into **better performance in real public service work.**

Future Talent
Learning



The learning events from FTL are a real highlight. Short, sharp and directly useful. It was a real privilege to learn from such a diverse group of experts.

Programme participant

Apple



Professional qualifications & accreditation included

All programmes are fully funded through the apprenticeship levy and include recognised qualifications, accreditations and certifications that support colleagues in current roles and future progression.

- a nationally recognised apprenticeship qualification
- Microsoft-recognised AI certification
- Institute of Leadership accreditation

FTL's award-winning programmes have strong learner outcomes, including a 100% pass rate and 85% distinction rate.



**Microsoft Azure AI
Fundamentals
included**



**Institute of Leadership –
Most Innovative Training
Provider 2024**



**FTL provides top-tier,
highly engaging,
effective and
innovative methods
of teaching and
learning leading to
high success rates.**



Public sector management, service transformation and improvement programmes

Practical new routes for building management capability as traditional management apprenticeship routes change — tailored to the work councils need most.



Public Sector Transformational Manager Programme

Delivered through the Level 4 Junior Management Consultant Apprenticeship

Core management confidence and first-line management development for public sector roles (a replacement for the L3 Team Leader & L5 Operations Manager)

Application & fit

For colleagues building core management capability through organised delivery, project work, stakeholder communication and problem-solving in council or wider public sector roles. No direct line management requirement is an advantage over L5 Operations Manager)

What colleagues build

- organisation, delivery, prioritisation and planning skills
- communication and stakeholder confidence
- project support and problem-solving capability
- confidence contributing to service improvement and change activity

Management capability developed

The human skills needed for effective management in public services: judgement, communication, collaboration, accountability, professionalism, relationship-building and confidence working with others.

Qualifications and credentials

- Level 4 Junior Management Consultant Apprenticeship
- Microsoft-recognised AI certification
- Institute of Leadership accreditation

Duration: 12 months + Assessment

Levy funding band: £9,000

Public Sector Service Transformation Manager Programme

Delivered through the Level 4 Business Analyst Apprenticeship

Management through service redesign, transformation and stakeholder-heavy improvement (a replacement option for the Level 5 Operations Manager)

Application & fit

For colleagues supporting service redesign, resident journeys, operational improvement, stakeholder engagement, cross-service change or evidence-based recommendations. To be eligible must have a clear change/transformation project to apply learning to.

What colleagues build

- service redesign and transformation delivery
- resident journey and process improvement
- stakeholder engagement, requirements gathering and prioritisation
- evidence-led recommendations and change delivery

Human and management capability developed:

The human skills needed to lead change effectively in public service settings – judgement, confidence, communication, collaboration, facilitation and constructive challenge.

Qualifications and credentials

- Level 4 Business Analyst Apprenticeship
- Microsoft-recognised AI certification
- Institute of Leadership accreditation

Duration: 14 months + Assessment

Levy funding band: £18,000

Public Sector Improvement Manager Programme

Delivered through the Level 5 Improvement Specialist Apprenticeship

**Management through Lean, productivity, project discipline
and service improvement**

Application & fit:

For colleagues improving processes, reducing friction, strengthening productivity, managing improvement activity or improving consistency across teams and services.

What colleagues build:

- Lean improvement, structured problem-solving and project delivery
- service performance, productivity and operational improvement capability
- stakeholder communication and sustainable improvement practice
- confidence helping better ways of working stick

Human and management capability developed:

The management and human skills needed to lead improvement confidently – prioritisation, judgement, collaboration, accountability, influencing and delivery discipline.

Qualifications and credentials

- Level 5 Improvement Specialist Apprenticeship
- Microsoft-recognised AI certification
- Institute of Leadership accreditation

Duration: 12 months + Assessment

Levy funding band: £9,000

AI-enabled management and digital programmes customised for councils

Enabling capability that helps colleagues and managers use AI, automation and digital tools confidently, responsibly and productively in real public service settings.

Colleagues build practical AI and digital confidence alongside the human skills needed to apply it well: communication, collaboration, stakeholder engagement, user support, judgement and responsible adoption.



Public Sector AI for Smarter Work Programme

Delivered through the Level 3 Digital Support Technician Apprenticeship

For colleagues using AI and digital tools to improve everyday productivity, support services and strengthen smarter ways of working across public services.

Application & fit:

For staff who use digital systems or tools and want greater confidence using AI and technology to save time, improve workflows and support colleagues or service users.

What colleagues build:

- practical AI confidence using approved workplace tools
- stronger use of Microsoft tools such as Copilot, Power BI, Excel, Teams and Power Automate
- smarter, more efficient ways of working and problem-solving
- confidence supporting users, services, colleagues and operational teams

Human and practical capability developed:

Staff develop the judgement, communication and confidence needed to use AI responsibly, support others and make technology useful in real public service work.

Qualifications and credentials

- Level 3 Digital Support Technician Apprenticeship
- Microsoft-recognised AI certification
- Institute of Leadership accreditation

Duration: 12 months + Assessment

Levy funding band: £13,000

Public Sector AI & Automation Management Programme

Delivered through the Level 4 AI & Automation Practitioner Apprenticeship
For colleagues leading workflow improvement, AI adoption and automation to improve service delivery and operational performance.

Application & fit:

A strong fit for colleagues improving resident, operational, reporting or internal service workflows through AI and automation.

What colleagues build:

- AI and automation capability applied to real workflows and services
- workflow redesign, productivity and operational improvement
- use-case selection, adoption support and stakeholder communication
- confident decision-making around responsible AI use

Human and practical capability developed:

The human skills needed to lead adoption successfully – judgement, facilitation, communication across technical and non-technical audiences and confidence helping new tools land in practice.

Qualifications and credentials

- Level 4 AI & Automation Practitioner Apprenticeship
- Microsoft-recognised AI certification
- Institute of Leadership accreditation

Duration: 12 months + Assessment

Levy funding band: £18,000

Public Sector AI & Digital Product Management Programme

Delivered through the Level 4 Digital Product Manager Apprenticeship
For colleagues shaping better digital services, products, service journeys or user experiences.

Application & fit:

For staff in digital, product, service design, delivery, transformation or operational roles who help shape, improve or manage digital services, resident journeys or colleague-facing tools.

What colleagues build:

- product thinking and user-centred service improvement
- stakeholder engagement, prioritisation and digital delivery
- confidence improving digital services that colleagues, residents or partners rely on

Human and practical capability developed:

The human skills needed to make product and service decisions well – communication, user empathy, prioritisation, collaboration, judgement and stakeholder confidence.

Qualifications and credentials

- Level 4 Digital Product Manager Apprenticeship
- Microsoft-recognised AI certification
- Institute of Leadership accreditation

Duration: 14 months + Assessment

Levy funding band: £18,000

Applied learning scenarios: AI and digital capability

Learners apply the programmes to real opportunities to improve how work gets done. Examples could include:

Everyday productivity and Microsoft tools

Using Copilot, Power BI, Excel, Teams and Power Automate more effectively to support reporting, analysis, communication, collaboration and workflow improvement.

Resident and service workflows

Resident enquiries, service requests, case routing, onboarding journeys, internal communications, complaints, knowledge support and service updates.

Operational workflows

Reporting, approvals, internal service requests, quality checks, risk controls, workflow hand-offs and productivity bottlenecks.

Typical benefits

Reduced manual effort, faster turnaround, better consistency, clearer reporting, stronger adoption and more time for higher-value work.

All projects are grounded in responsible AI use, human oversight and sound judgement.

Public sector data and insight programmes

Practical pathways that help colleagues use data confidently to support decisions, performance and improvement across public services.



Public Sector Data for Smarter Work Programme

Delivered through the Level 3 Data Technician Apprenticeship

For colleagues who work with data, reports or service information and want greater confidence using data to support everyday decisions.

Application & fit:

For staff who regularly use reports, service data, operational information or resident insight and want to improve data quality, reporting and everyday decision-support.

What colleagues build:

- everyday data handling, reporting and data quality capability
- confidence using data to support routine decisions and coordination
- communication skills to explain information clearly to others

Human and practical capability developed:

The judgement, communication and responsibility needed to use data well in practice – including attention to detail, confidence explaining information and collaboration with colleagues who use evidence to make decisions.

Qualifications and credentials

- Level 3 Data Technician Apprenticeship
- Microsoft-recognised AI certification
- Institute of Leadership accreditation

Duration: 14 months + Assessment

Levy funding band: £13,000

Public Sector Data & Insight Management Programme

Delivered through the Level 4 Data Analyst Apprenticeship
For colleagues responsible for analysis, insight and evidence that supports decisions, performance and service improvement.

Application & fit:

A strong fit for colleagues who work with datasets, reporting or analytical activity and need to turn data into insight that informs decisions and service improvement.

What colleagues build:

- data analysis, insight generation and dashboard creation
- data storytelling that influences decisions and priorities
- confidence communicating insight to stakeholders
- evidence-led recommendations for service improvement and performance

Human and practical capability developed:

The human skills needed to turn insight into action – judgement, influencing, problem-solving, confident communication and the ability to support others to act on evidence.

Qualifications and credentials

- Level 4 Data Analyst Apprenticeship
- Microsoft-recognised AI certification
- Institute of Leadership accreditation

Duration: 14 months + Assessment

Levy funding band: £15,000

Mentarri: AI learning support when colleagues need it

Mentarri is FTL's AI learning platform.

It helps colleagues:

- find relevant learning resources quickly
- practise workplace scenarios and conversations
- reflect between coaching sessions
- prepare for workshops, study groups and assessment
- apply learning to real work

For councils, Mentarri helps make development more personal, accessible and scalable – without replacing human coaching.

It gives colleagues support at the point they need it – helping them apply learning to real service, team and transformation challenges.

Progression routes for LGR and future roles

Colleagues can start where their role fits now, then build deeper capability as responsibilities grow and council structures change.

PS Transformational Manager can lead to:

- PS Service Transformation Manager
- PS Improvement Manager
- PS AI for Smarter Work
- PS AI & Automation Management
- PS Data for Smarter Work

PS Service Transformation Manager can lead to:

- PS AI & Automation Management
- PS AI & Digital Product Management
- PS Data & Insight Management

PS Improvement Manager can lead to:

- PS AI & Automation Management
- PS Data & Insight Management

PS AI and data progression routes include:

- PS AI for Smarter Work → PS AI & Automation Management
- PS AI for Smarter Work → PS AI & Digital Product Management
- PS Data for Smarter Work → PS Data & Insight Management

How councils can use the pathways

These pathways can be used flexibly across a council.

Councils can use them to:

- **build** future-ready management capability
- **prepare** colleagues for LGR, restructuring and future roles
- **strengthen** AI, data and digital confidence
- **improve** productivity and ways of working
- **support** service redesign and transformation
- **develop** cohorts aligned to services, directorates or priority groups

FTL can help councils map roles to the right pathways and shape cohorts around workforce and service priorities.

Support colleagues can rely on

Applied learning missions

Real work challenges drive learning.

Extensive 1:1 coaching

Frequent support builds confidence and momentum.

Personalised AI learning support

FTL's AI learning platform helps colleagues practise scenarios and build confidence.

Peer learning and workshops

Shared learning helps ideas land in practice.

Neuro-inclusive design

Flexible formats and structured support help more learners engage, progress and succeed.



**Neurodiversity Smart
Accreditation**



**They are joining structured,
supported development that
helps improve how services
and work get done now —
while preparing for future
opportunities.**

Peer study groups and public sector learning

Monthly coach-facilitated study groups give colleagues space to test ideas, discuss real challenges and learn with peers.

FTL has worked with councils to shape facilitation notes and study group prompts so they feel accessible, relatable and specific to public sector and local government contexts.

They are designed to help colleagues:

- apply learning to real public service situations
- explore trade-offs around residents, services, resources and accountability
- learn from different perspectives across local government and public services
- build networks with peers beyond their immediate team
- collaborate on practical, real-world challenges

Example questions:

- How do we improve services without losing trust?
- Where could AI or automation improve service delivery – and where could it create risk?
- How do we support colleagues through change when workloads are already high?

Weekly delivery model

Approx. 4 hours of protected learning time per week — one of the most time-efficient delivery models in the sector.



50% structured learning

Self-paced learning, interactive workshops, guided exploration using AI learning tools, peer study groups and coaching support. These sessions introduce practical frameworks, tools and approaches that can be applied immediately at work.

50% applied learning

Colleagues apply learning directly to real service, team or workplace challenges through monthly missions and work-based tasks. This keeps development immediately relevant and can create visible value while colleagues build capability.

Learning is designed to strengthen performance and service delivery, not compete with it.

Mon	Resources 1 - 2 hrs
Tues	Coach Meeting 1 hr
Wed	Applied Learning 2 hrs
Thu	Applied Learning 2 hrs
Fri	Study Group 1 hr

Start with role mapping and LGR readiness priorities

A practical next step is to identify:

- which roles need stronger management, AI, data or improvement capability
- where levy-funded pathways can support workforce and LGR readiness
- which colleagues or teams would benefit most
- how pathways could support progression into future roles
- where a first cohort could create visible value

FTL can then support pathway selection, cohort planning, learner engagement and launch communications.

Build capability colleagues can use immediately

FTL pathways help councils develop practical, future-ready capability through recognised qualifications, AI-enabled learning support and real public service application.

To explore the right pathway mix for your council, speak with the Future Talent Learning team.

www.futuretalentlearning.com



**Future Talent
Learning**

Appendix: How employers can see value from applied learning

FTL does not ask learners to complete abstract assignments.

Learning is applied to real work, so projects can create visible value while colleagues develop capability.

Value may show up as:

- time saved in routine workflows
- fewer hand-offs between teams and services
- better process consistency
- clearer reporting and dashboards
- stronger resident or service responsiveness
- improved use of AI and digital tools
- better adoption of new ways of working
- reduced duplication or rework
- more confident decisions
- stronger risk-aware use of AI and data

FTL helps learners shape applied projects that are practical, responsible and relevant to the council.

Appendix: Example applied projects across the portfolio

PS Transformational Manager - Workload visibility, hand-offs, meeting rhythms, project tracking, stakeholder coordination and team communication.

PS Service Transformation Manager - Resident journey improvement, process mapping, stakeholder insight, requirements gathering, change planning and service redesign.

PS Improvement Manager - Operational bottlenecks, quality checks, risk controls, service requests, reporting and process consistency.

PS AI for Smarter Work - Copilot use cases, prompt libraries, Power BI dashboards, Excel workflow improvements, Teams collaboration, Power Automate flows and responsible AI guidance.

PS AI & Automation Management - Resident triage, workflow automation, operational alerts, case routing, reporting, approvals and service updates.

PS AI & Digital Product Management - Resident portals, colleague-facing tools, self-service journeys, digital services and adoption roadmaps.

PS Data for Smarter Work - Data quality, reporting dashboards, status tracking, resident reporting and repeatable data processes.

PS Data & Insight Management - Demand trends, service performance, risk indicators, productivity, operational data and insight-led recommendations.

Appendix FAQ: How apprenticeship funding works

Can apprenticeships be used for existing staff?

Yes. They can develop existing colleagues where the programme builds new knowledge, skills and behaviours relevant to their role.

Can managers, specialists and service colleagues take part?

Yes. The programmes are designed for existing staff across management, operations, transformation, digital, data, resident-facing, support and service roles.

How does levy funding work?

Large employers with an annual pay bill over £3m pay the apprenticeship levy at 0.5% of their pay bill. Levy funds can be used to pay for eligible apprenticeship training and assessment.

What time commitment is required?

Colleagues need protected learning time. FTL's model is designed around approx. 4 hours per week, with learning applied through real work.

For councils, this creates a practical way to build AI, data, management and transformation capability across existing teams without taking colleagues away from work for long periods.