



## Agenda for Personnel Committee Tuesday, 4th July, 2023, 10.00 am

### Members of Personnel Committee

Councillors: E Rylance (Chair), J Loudoun (Vice-Chair), P Arnott, K Blakey, V Bonetta, M Chapman, T Dumper, P Faithfull, D Haggerty, M Hartnell, P Hayward, N Hookway, M Martin, S Richards and E Wragg

**Venue:** Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton

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26 June 2023

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- 1 Public speaking
- 2 Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 3 - 6)  
To agree the minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 February 2023.
- 3 Apologies
- 4 Declarations of interest  
Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)
- 5 Matters of urgency  
Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online
- 6 Confidential/exempt item(s)  
To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the Press) have been excluded. There are no items which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.
- 7 **Working for East Devon District Council** (Pages 7 - 11)
- 8 **Grow our own project update** (Pages 12 - 15)
- 9 **Transgender Visibility** (Pages 16 - 21)
- 10 **Recruitment, Relocation and Overseas Employment policies** (Pages 22 - 37)

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[Decision making and equalities](#)

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**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL****Minutes of the meeting of Personnel Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 6 February 2023****Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.16 am

**58 Public speaking**

None.

**59 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 November 2022**

Cllr Arnott raised minute 55, HR Policies Review to reflect Chief Officer Conditions of Service Model Procedures. Whilst the paragraph on the EELGA Learning Review was an accurate reflection of the statement made in the meeting, he still felt that the Review document presented to Council was not accurate.

The Chair advised that he would take a vote on the minutes of the committee as a true record, and advised that the issue Cllr Arnott raised should be referred to Council under part B (confidential) session as the appropriate route.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 28 November 2022 were confirmed as a true record by the committee, with Cllr Arnott voting against and with one abstention.

**60 Declarations of interest**

None.

**61 Matters of urgency**

None.

**62 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

None.

**63 Director recruitment update**

The report of the Chief Executive outlined the recruitment process to date for the role of Director of Governance and Licensing (Monitoring Officer). Interim arrangements for the post had been agreed by the Committee at the previous meeting. The Interviewing (Chief Officers) Sub Committee would convene on the 7 February as part of the interviewing of candidates.

The report also set out a request for the Committee to confirm to convene the Interviewing (Chief Officers) Sub Committee as part of the recruitment and selection process for the Director of Housing, Health and Environment. The current post holder had advised of his planned retirement on August 2023.

The expected timeline for recruitment of this post was:

- February 2023 preparation and recruitment advertising commenced, with potential candidates approached by the agency;
- Mid March 2023 as the closing date for applications;
- Late March/early April Shortlisting and selection, including the Sub Committee interviews and full Council ratification;
- Employment commenced mid/late July 2023 subject to notice requirements.

Members comments included:

- Briefings in preparation for the interview process for the Director of Governance and Licensing were positive;
- Should the Director of Housing, Health and Environment post be reviewed prior to advertisement, because of the scale of the post covering such a wide service area – such as separating out the elements into different posts; in response, Members were informed that any post due to be advertised was reviewed to check that it still met the requirements. In the case of this Director post, the role of the Assistant Directors was key in managing the service areas, with the Director having a strategic role over the wider remit;
- Conflicting views across the committee in regard to the number of elected members involved in the recruitment process; on balance, the view was that the sub-committee level of seven members was the right level. Looking ahead to the recruitment of the Director of Housing, Health and Environment, the option of additional Member involvement prior to the work of the Sub Committee was offered as a possible process as part of the recruitment for that role.

## **RESOLVED**

1. That the update on the recruitment of the Director of Governance and Licensing (Monitoring Officer) be noted;
2. That the requirement to convene the Interviewing (Chief Officers) Sub Committee for purposes of interviewing the post of Director of Housing, Health and Environment be confirmed;
3. That the Committee records their thanks to the Director of Housing, Health and Environment for his thoughtfulness in giving a long notice period of his retirement, in order to facilitate a hand over with his replacement.

## **64 Pay Policy Statement annual review**

The report set out the annual review of the Council's Pay Policy Statement. The Committee were asked to consider the statement, which sets out the remuneration of Chief Officers and other employees, in order to recommend to Council.

The changes to the Statement reflected the new grading structure agreed through the Reward Review. It also took into account the learning Review which incorporated the JNC Chief Officer model procedures into local policy.

The pay multiple, which is the relationship between the lowest and highest paid employees, was now at 5.9:1, a reduction on the previous year and within the Council's agreed maximum ration of 10:1.

In response to a question on the JNC Chief Officer model, the model was explained as a national document. Reference to that would be circulated to the Committee after the meeting, for information.

**RECOMMENDED to Council** that the Pay Policy Statement 2023/24 be adopted.

## 65 **Apprentice Pay Policy revisions proposal**

The report from the HR Manager requested the Committee to support changes to the pay policy for newly recruited apprentices. The changes were in response to the Reward Review, to show distinction between apprenticeship and standard posts, and to keep such positions competitive in the employment market.

Member discussion included:

- Welcoming the positive step to provide apprentice schemes that are paid adequately and fairly;
- Where the majority of apprentice placements were within council services? In response, whilst the actual data was not at hand, many were in the placement of business administration and Streetscene operations. The Committee were also advised that such schemes were not just unique to new employees; existing employees could also undertake placements to further their career advancement;
- Positive enforcement of the message of the Council as a good employer.

**RECOMMENDED to Council** that new recruit apprentices are paid at 90% of the standard National Joint Council (NJC) rates as set out in the Council's pay and grading structure, with a minimum rate equivalent to the Real Living Wage.

## 66 **People data**

The report provided to the Committee set out key data on workforce for the Council.

Elements highlighted included:

- Headcount had a small increase to 526;
- Market supplements had reduced from 39 to 6 as at the end of 2022, with a further 2 agreed in January 2023 that will bring the total to 8. This was a direct impact of the Reward Review implementation;
- Vacancies stood at 47, compare to 58 in October 2022;
- Cumulative voluntary turnover had increased since October 2022 to 10.89%;
- A small decrease in FTE days lost due to sickness absence now standing at 0.96 days in December;
- A projected forecast of 11.61 FTE days lost to sickness absence for the year, although slightly reduced, but still above the target of 8.5 days.

The Committee were briefed on the continued issues of sickness, as reflected for many authorities and businesses nationally, due to continued Covid and flu infections; as well as mental health related issues. Training funded from the public health budget would be targeted at particular pinch points, with further updates being provided to the Committee on the success of that training, and if elements become part of the authority's Happy Healthy Here staff offer.

In response to questions, the HR service, working alongside managers and others, continue to provide support. In response to the changes to reception opening, the Committee were informed about the delivery of training relating to dealing with difficult customers. Such training was also being delivered where required across a number of services.

**RESOLVED** that the Committee endorsed the report.

## 67 **Personnel Forward Plan**

The Committee noted the Forward Plan of work for the Committee. No items were added.

The timing of the Management Review in light of the Director of Housing, Health and Environment post becoming vacant, was questioned. In response, the outline of work following the District elections determined that the review would naturally follow the completion of the new Council Plan – which in turn would inform how the management structure would best fit to deliver the Plan.

Advice from PWC on assessing the impact of the Reward Review set out that a period of six to twelve months was required for the changes to bed in, after which a management review could follow.

The Chair closed the meeting with expressing thanks to the Committee for their contributions, and thanks to the officers attending.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

I Thomas (Chair)  
P Arnott  
K Blakey  
B De Saram  
A Dent  
J Loudoun  
N Hookway  
E Wragg

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

J Bonetta

**Officers in attendance:**

Joanna Fellows, Corporate HR Manager  
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer  
Mark Williams, Chief Executive

**Councillor apologies:**

M Armstrong  
D Bickley  
I Hall

Chair .....

Date: .....



Report to: Personnel Committee

Date of Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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## Working for East Devon District Council

### Report summary:

This report summarises how the Council's pay and terms and conditions are determined, the current workforce priorities and some of the actions taken in recent years to support these.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

That Committee note the contents.

### Reason for recommendation:

To provide new members of the Personnel Committee with background, to support future work.

Officer: Jo Fellows, HR Manager [jfellows@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:jfellows@eastdevon.gov.uk)

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### Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk;.

**Links to background information** Initial meeting of the Personnel Committee and agreement of workforce priorities - [Agenda for Personnel Committee on Thursday, 2nd September, 2021, 10.00 am - East Devon](#)

## [Link to Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
  - A greener East Devon
  - A resilient economy
- 

## Report in full

1. This report summarises how the Council's pay and terms and conditions are determined, the current workforce priorities and some of the actions taken in recent years to support these.

## 2. Terms and Conditions in Local Government

2.1. The Council's pay and terms and conditions are determined through three routes:

- **Statutory requirements** - for example the National Minimum Wage/National Living Wage (currently £10.42 per hour for those aged 23 and over), which set minimum requirements for pay rates.
- **National Agreements** – the pay spine (salary points that the Council uses in its grading structure) and annual Pay Awards are determined nationally, through negotiation with the National Employers and UNISON, UNITE and GMB trade unions. There are various Negotiating Bodies, with the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services being the largest, covering most local government employees. The Council also uses the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Officers for Director roles and the JNC for Chief Executives. The NJC/JNC agreements also set out minimum requirements in areas such as annual leave, continuous service, working time and family leave.
- **Local arrangements** – Within the context of the above, the Council then determines its own local terms and conditions in consultation with UNISON who it recognises for collective bargaining purposes. This includes a locally determined grading structure (within which the nationally determined pay points sit) and the agreement of HR policy, which reflects statute and the National Agreements. The Council, as part of its Poverty Reduction Strategy, decided to reflect the Real Living Wage (currently £10.90 per hour) in its pay arrangements, subject to affordability, and this was agreed as part of the Reward Review in 2022 (see below).

2.2. National Pay Award arrangements have been particularly problematic in recent years. As shown in Figure 1 overleaf, Pay Awards since 2009 have been between 1 and 2.75%, with three years of no pay offer. This has meant that the local government sector has lagged behind wider pay rates and there has been an ongoing pressure to ensure compliance with the National Minimum/Living Wage, leading to some of the lower pay points in the NJC pay scale being removed. The 2022 Pay Award aimed to partly mitigate against this, with agreement of £1925 on all pay points (equivalent to a 10.50% increase on the lowest point and a 4.04% on the highest) and a similar offer has been made for 2023, but this has yet to be agreed, with all three trade unions currently balloting for industrial action. There continues to be a challenge for the National Employers in agreeing pay rates that reflect market conditions whilst also ensuring affordability.



1 April 2009	1.00%
1 April 2010	no offer
1 April 2011	no offer
1 April 2012	no offer
1 April 2013	1.00%
1 January 2015	2.20%
1 April 2016	1.00%
1 April 2017	1.00%
1 April 2018	2.00%
1 April 2019	2.00%
1 April 2020	2.75%
1 April 2021	1.75%

Figure 1: NJC Pay Awards 2009 – 2021 (South West Councils)

### 3. Workforce Priorities

3.1. In September 2022, the newly formed Personnel Committee agreed the following as the Council's key workforce priorities:

- Ensuring that workforce capacity meets service demand, within budgetary constraints.
- Overcoming significant recruitment challenges, due to shortages in a range of roles, which exacerbates workforce capacity issues.
- Establishing more robust succession planning arrangements in light of the Council's age profile and recruitment challenges, particularly with regard to senior management and other key roles.
- Learning from the 'Worksmart' introduction following the 2019 office relocation and new ways of working through the pandemic to clarify and embed longer term working arrangements which support service delivery, high performance, recruitment and retention.
- Continuing to support managers and staff to deal with service demands and new ways of working, including effective communication of the Council Plan and links to service, team and individual performance and contribution and ensuring that we continue to support staff health, safety and wellbeing (through the 'Happy Healthy Here' programme) and reduce absence rates.
- Ensuring that we maintain and build upon the generally positive employee and trade union relations environment to support high performance, recruitment and retention, including Investors in People (IIP) reaccreditation.

3.2. Recruitment and retention has been a particularly challenging issue. As with the wider economy, the Council has experienced high levels of vacancies and turnover. Certain roles in local government, such as planners and solicitors, had traditionally been challenging to recruit to, but during this period it became increasingly difficult to recruit to all posts, from entry level through to senior management. To support this, the Council utilised its Market Supplement Policy, which allows the payment of a market supplement to reflect market pay rates, in addition to the usual pay determined for a role through job evaluation. By March 2022 the Council had 45 market supplements in place. However, market supplements can have equal pay risks if not kept under regular review and are not as effective at mitigating against recruitment and retention issues as standard pay, because they are a short-term addition.

3.3. Alongside this, the Council was experiencing high sickness absence levels, including high incidences of Covid-19, with peaks in Covid-19 absence reflecting the national picture. Mental health issues also became more prevalent as people were impacted personally as a result of the pandemic and capacity and demand pressures impacted on the levels of work-related stress. Staff were also seeking clarity on the Council's post pandemic working arrangements, following a period where many staff had worked from home in light of the Government's messaging during the pandemic, whilst others worked in front line roles within Covid-safe measures.

#### 4. Actions taken to date

4.1. In response to the workforce priorities, several actions have been implemented, including:

- **Reward Review** – in late 2021 the Council sought external expertise to support a pay benchmarking exercise which highlighted that pay rates were lower in many cases than the market, which was contributing to recruitment and retention issues. A revised pay and grading structure was designed and consulted upon, with the new arrangements implemented in December 2022, backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. Anecdotally, this has had a positive impact, with an increased number of applicants for roles. The latest people data reports are also showing a reduction in vacancies. However, the external consultants have advised that it may take 12 months to see the full impact of the changes. Meanwhile, pay rates within the wider economy continue to grow, with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) stating that growth in regular pay (excluding bonuses) was 6.7% in January to March 2023 and for the public sector 5.6%, compared to 7.0% in the private sector. It is therefore necessary to continue to monitor wider market pay rates through regular pay benchmarking and the Council continues to use its Market Supplement Policy where necessary.
- **Worksmart** – a Working Group has been established to determine and implement the Council's post pandemic working arrangements. Worksmart+ was introduced in May 2022, with the new policy enabling flexible working within the parameters of Worksmart Principles which focus primarily on service needs, but also consider the needs of the environment and employees. Each team within the Council has agreed their Worksmart arrangements in line with the Principles and these are kept under regular review. The Working Group are also considering the health and safety, ICT, accommodation and business travel implications and the approach continues to evolve as we learn more about what works. The recent liP survey highlighted the positive impact of Worksmart on staff morale and anecdotally we are seeing a similar impact on recruitment, with it being a key part of the employer brand. This is also reflected in the wider economy with a recent Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) survey highlighting that employees state that flexible working and remote working are key when considering a new job, only overtaken in importance by pay and benefits. A growing number of organisations (66% versus 56% in a similar CIPD survey in 2022) believe that it is important to provide flexible working as an option when advertising jobs, with it being a key way of attracting staff and addressing skill or labour shortages.
- **Employer brand and recruitment process review** – the Council has implemented new branding to support the attraction of candidates. This includes a [recruitment video](#) and new imagery used in advertisements and on social media. However, employer brand is also impacted by the wider Council's external reputation and the views of employees and we need to therefore continually keep the branding under review. Alongside this we have started to explore new sources of talent, for example advertising our roles with the armed forces, and we are reviewing our recruitment process to determine whether the candidate journey supports our brand and enables easy, yet robust, recruitment.
- **Grow our Own** – a longer term action to support recruitment and retention, as well as succession planning, is 'growing our own'. We are implementing various actions as set out in the accompanying report.

- **Happy Healthy Here, Learning and Development and Staff Benefits** – we have a strong and embedded staff wellbeing (known as Happy Healthy Here) and learning and development offer. This is kept under regular review, for example additional support was provided to staff during the pandemic and more recently we have included interventions to support with the cost of living and mental health. The Council has a successful Mental Health First Aider programme and is a Mindful Employer. During 2022 we further improved staff benefits with the introduction of a new online portal and we have plans for further developments later this year, all of which add to our employer brand.
- **Workforce Planning** – in 2022 we implemented a more detailed workforce planning approach, as part of service planning, to help service areas to ensure that they have the right people in the right place at the right time to support current and future service needs. Workforce planning also helps with succession planning and the identification of key skills. This was the first iteration which we will build on in 2023. The service Workforce Plans also provide useful intelligence to inform corporate workforce actions.
- **People Data** – to measure impact and provide improved oversight of workforce matters, new and improved people data reports were implemented, with these now being a standing item on Personnel Committee.
- **liP** – the Council has recently undergone the reaccreditation process, with a move from the Platinum to Gold standard. A detailed action plan, considering the reaccreditation report findings, is being developed and will inform our workforce priorities and employer brand.

5. The summary above provides context to the work that we will progress within the Council, in liaison with Personnel Committee, in the coming years.

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### **Financial implications:**

The recommendation is to note the report, there is no financial implication identified.

### **Legal implications:**

As this is a summary report only, there are no legal issues directly arising.



Report to: Personnel Committee

Date of Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## 'Grow Our Own' Project Update

### Report summary:

This report provides the Committee with an update on the 'grow our own' project which aims to support recruitment, retention and succession planning.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

That the Committee notes the work to date and planned future work.

### Reason for recommendation:

To allow the Committee to retain an overview of the work being undertaken to implement the 'grow our own' arrangements to support recruitment, retention and succession planning.

Officer: Jo Fellows, HR Manager. Email: [jfellows@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:jfellows@eastdevon.gov.uk).

### Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

### Equalities impact Medium Impact

See below.

### Climate change Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk; The equality impacts of this approach are being identified and mitigated against, as part of this work.

**Links to background information** Workforce Priorities report presented to Personnel Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 ([Agenda for Personnel Committee on Thursday, 2nd September, 2021, 10.00 am - East Devon](#)).

## [Link to Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
  - A greener East Devon
  - A resilient economy
- 

### Report in full

1. Part of the planned activity to support recruitment and retention is to 'grow our own' staff through the development of more structured mechanisms for new recruits, including those in the early stages of their career, to have a pathway to join the Council and for staff to then progress within the Council. This also supports staff development, career progression and succession planning.
2. With the focus on the Reward Review during 2022 this work has not progressed as far as originally hoped, but the aim is, during 2023, to pursue the following:
  - Obtain recent apprentice and intern feedback to inform the project
  - Recruit to a HR Apprentice role to support the work
  - Work with Environmental Health on a career pathway/apprenticeship programme pilot
  - Explore Arboriculture apprenticeship options
  - Further pilot work experience and develop stronger links with East Devon secondary schools.
3. In 2024 and beyond we will then build on this, working with other service areas to develop career pathways and apprenticeship programmes, offer T Level placements, develop an apprentice peer support network and explore opportunities to provide work experience and apprenticeships to underrepresented groups, for example young people with learning disabilities.
4. The work undertaken to date on our employer brand will assist with attracting people to join the Council. It includes some new apprenticeship templates for use on social media and at career events, including the Exeter College Apprenticeship Expo which took place in February 2023 during National Apprenticeship Week. We have also joined the South West Apprenticeship Ambassador Network which provides peer support and opportunities to promote our apprenticeships.
5. During the same week in February we provided a work experience placement for a Year 12 student from Colyton Grammar School. The feedback from the student and staff involved in the placement was really positive and will help inform our wider work experience offer. Particular thanks go to Cllr Jake Bonetta for suggesting the placement, along with Cllr Ian Thomas and Cllr John Loudoun who joined us to hear the student's presentation, which was a project he undertook during the week, where he developed a young person's guide to working for the council. More recently some of the HR Team have attended careers events at Sidmouth College, promoting the Council to students. A Year 10 work experience placement will be taking place later this month which we will also use to inform our future offer.

6. Some of the images from our recent activities, along with quotes from the Year 12 student and some staff about the work experience placement, are at Appendix 1.
7. I look forward to sharing further progress on the 'grow our own' activity in due course.

**Financial implications:**

No financial implication at this stage identified.

**Legal implications:**

There are no substantive legal issues to be added to this report.

Appendix 1 – examples of recent ‘grow our own’ activity



page 15  
 "It was a pleasure meeting D, finding out about his studies and discussing the diverse work that Economic Development cover. I hope he found it as rewarding as we did!" *Manager*



"I like the way he was given the opportunity to see services across the Council and he said how much he had enjoyed the week so far." *Staff member*

"I have been shadowing and working with various different teams across numerous departments...providing me with a great insight into its operations and what career options are available. The opportunity has completely altered my perception of the organisation and I feel that many people are unaware of the actual day-to-day services that the Council manages which ultimately ensures that East Devon is a great place to live for all. I'm very grateful to have had this experience and I believe that it would be really beneficial for more young people to get involved in opportunities in the Council to help work with the brilliant teams here to have their say on how to shape this region for the future...I was assigned a project of creating a presentation on why young people should choose to work in the Council and the feedback I received from talking to many officers really helped me to get a great sense of the benefits of choosing a career in this line of work. The project helped me to develop my organisational skills, in addition to the employability skills I learned from attending a mock interview...I'd like to say a particular thank you to Cllr Jake Bonetta and Jo Fellows in HR for managing and organising this work experience week, as well as the other councillors and many officers who dedicated their time to explain what their jobs involve which helped me gain as much from this week as I could". *Student*



Report to: Personnel Committee

Date of Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## Transgender Visibility

### Report summary:

To provide an update on the actions required to implement the HR implications of the Council Motion on Transgender Visibility which was agreed at Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

That Committee agree:

- That the Council will not implement the Stonewall Diversity Champions programme due to concerns raised.
- That staff views on the introduction of a staff network to support non-binary and transgender employees is explored as part of the planned staff survey later this year.
- That the Council will continue to ensure the completion of mandatory equality, diversity and inclusion training for staff and explore specific training once available.
- That the Member Development Panel review equality, diversity and inclusion training for members.
- To the introduction of a new Trans Equality Policy, as shown at Appendix 1.

### Reason for recommendation:

To implement the HR actions agreed as part of the Council Motion, taking into account the findings of the recent research.

Officer: Jo Fellows, HR Manager ([jfellows@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:jfellows@eastdevon.gov.uk))

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country, and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure, and Culture



## **Equalities impact** High Impact

These actions would have a high equality impact. The completion of a detailed impact assessment forms part of this work, particularly relating to policy development/implementation and the provision of training.

## **Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Medium Risk; To be considered as part of planned impact assessment.

**Links to background information** [Agenda for Council on Wednesday, 22nd February, 2023, 6.00 pm - East Devon](#)

**Link to [Council Plan](#)**

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
  - A greener East Devon
  - A resilient economy
- 

## **Report in full**

1. At Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 a Motion was agreed regarding transgender visibility, with the following HR-related actions agreed:
  - 1.1. Agree in principle to sign up to Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme for employers, and delegate authority to the Human Resources Manager to bring a report to Personnel Committee on the implications of this.
  - 1.2. Ensure all Council equalities and safeguarding policies include provisions for transgender employees who are transitioning, including information on confidentiality, dress codes and using facilities such as toilets, with related guidance for line managers.
  - 1.3. Ensure all equality, diversity and inclusion training provided to Council members and officers includes adequate reference to the equalities issues faced by transgender and non-binary people, for example on the use of correct pronouns, privacy and confidentiality, and the needs and experiences of trans and non-binary people.
2. This report summarises the work undertaken to date on these actions and highlights where further work and/or decisions are required.
3. The Council's HR system has a facility to enable staff to self-record their gender. Currently the percentage of employees who identify as female is 50.77% whilst employees who identify as men is 49.24%. There is an option on the application form to voluntarily state whether this was the employee's sex at birth but as yet our HR System provider has not adapted the system to allow reporting on this element although this has been requested by a number of customers and a further update is awaited.
4. The Equality Act, which the Council adheres to, protects people from discrimination on the basis of the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion & belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

## 5. Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme

- 5.1. Stonewall Equality Limited is a lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender rights charity. In 2001 it launched its Diversity Champions programme. Employers sign up to the programme at a cost of circa £3000. Employers then work with the charity to ensure that their policy and practices assist the transgender and non-binary community to be comfortable in the workplace by addressing outright discrimination. Employers who pay to join the scheme receive a logo to use on promotional materials, are listed on a "proud employers" careers site, have access to resources, can get their policies reviewed for transgender and non-binary inclusivity and are advice on gender neutral language. Employers are also entered into the charity's Workplace Equality Index and Global Workplace Equality Index where they are benchmarked against other companies, which is published as an annual rundown of the top 100 employers for transgender and non-binary inclusion.
- 5.2. Research has shown that the charity has led on a lot of successes for the transgender and non-binary community. Of particular note is the campaign to repeal the law banning homosexuality in the armed forces, amendments to the 2002 Adoption and Children Bill which treated lesbian and gay couples the same as heterosexuals, equalisation of the age of consent to 16 years old, recognition of anti-gay hate crimes through the Criminal Justice Act 2003 and introduction of the Civil Partnership Act.
- 5.3. However, in recent years from 2021 onwards, the charity has received heavy criticism and controversy which has been widely reported and has resulted in many high-profile organisations not renewing their Diversity Champions subscription. Much of the controversy is described as relating to their 'controversial advice' and 'trans-extremism', with concerns that their programme is incompatible with upholding the Equality Act. Organisations that have ceased their membership include the Cabinet Office, ACAS, BBC, The Equality and Human Rights Commission, DVLA, OFCOM, Dorset Police and the Department of Education.
- 5.4. Considering the concerns raised, we have sought information from other councils on whether they have or plan to use the Stonewall Programme. The survey, via South West Councils, yielded the following results from seven authorities (2 district, 2 unitary, 2 county and 1 fire and rescue service):
- 3 had joined the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme but 2 have since left, with them citing cost and "no added value" as reasons for discontinuing. Of the organisations that have never joined, cost, lack of HR resource and member decision were cited as the reasons.
  - 6 offer a staff network to provide support to non-binary and transgender employees.
  - 4 provide generic equality rather than specific trans awareness training.
  - 2 include unacceptable behaviour in relation to gender identity in their behaviour policy.
  - 5 have a separate transgender policy or guidance for line managers to support employees transitioning.
- 5.5. On the basis of the above information it is recommended that the Stonewall Diversity Champions programme is not implemented within the Council. If a decision is made to implement, funds would need to be agreed, as this is outside existing budget.

## 6. Other actions

6.1. Taking into account the research undertaken, the following actions are planned:

- Seek staff views, via the planned reintroduction of an annual staff survey, on whether there would be interest in establishing a staff network to provide support to non-binary and transgender employees (alongside consideration of staff networks for other protected characteristics).
- All staff complete mandatory equality, diversity and inclusion training upon joining the Council and every three years thereafter and we will continue to promote this and monitor completion. A specialist transgender visibility eLearning module is being developed by our eLearning provider, but this will not be available until later in 2023. When it is available, we will review it as part of this work. Additionally, we will also review recruitment and selection training.
- It is suggested that the Member Development Panel may also wish to review training for members.
- A HR policies review has identified that our equality and diversity and acceptable behaviour policies address protected characteristics, but we need to incorporate good practice in relation to supporting a colleague who is transitioning and we also need to review our recruitment policies and employment check process to be sensitive to applicants who are undergoing or have completed gender reassignment. A draft Trans Equality Policy is at appendix 1 and will be supported by management guidance.

7. UNISON views on these proposals is being sought at Joint Staff Forum on 29<sup>th</sup> June, with the outcome shared with Committee. The HR Team will continue to liaise with South West Councils and local councils to share good practice and learning. Personnel Committee will be kept informed of progress.

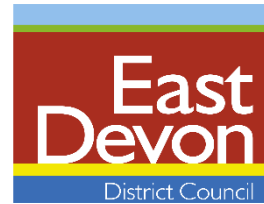
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### **Financial implications:**

No direct financial implications are identified at this stage.

### **Legal implications:**

The proposals in this report not only implement the HR implications of the Motion on Transgender Visibility agreed by Full Council earlier this year but also help to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.



## **Trans Equality Policy**

1. The Council is committed to creating a safe environment for all employees and does not discriminate in any way on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. The following actions will be taken in support of this policy.
2. All employees have the right to request to be addressed by the name and pronoun that they prefer.
3. All employees can change their name on internal records to what they would prefer to be known as. This includes names and photos on ID badges. Email addresses and usernames can be changed by emailing the STRATA Service Desk.
4. The HR and Payroll System links to HMRC. Therefore, it has to meet the requirements of the HMRC with regards to gender as gender is linked to the National Insurance number and other personal details, and entitlement to benefits such as pension etc. The HMRC operates under the rules of the Gender Recognition Act 2004 which only defines gender as male or female and the Council is bound to work within this, until the HMRC rules change, when the system will be updated. Therefore any changes to gender can only be actioned on receipt of a Gender Recognition Certificate. The system also only recognises pronouns of Mr, Mrs, Miss, Rev or Dr, which has been flagged with our system provider and will be updated when the system allows.
5. Employees are able to access any toilet that corresponds to the gender they identify as or that they feel most appropriate using, regardless of sex assigned at birth. Toilets will be identified by symbols rather than words. Employees will not be expected to use the disabled toilets, unless they wish to do so.
6. The Council will not restrict clothing choices, including those who wear uniform, based on gender, unless there is a specific health and safety requirement, for example Personal Protective Equipment.

### **7. Arrangements for Transitioning at work**

- 7.1. Transitioning is the process people may go through to align their physical identity to their chosen gender identity. The Council aims to create an environment where an employee would feel comfortable speaking to their manager should they wish to transition at work. However it is understood that this is a personal process and if employees do not feel comfortable talking to their manager they should speak to a senior member of staff within their service or a HR Business Partner.
- 7.2. We recognise that the process of transitioning is very personal and different for every individual. Therefore, at the beginning of the process, the manager (or other alternative agreed person) will meet with the employee to develop and agree an action plan. During the process, the employee will have the opportunity to regularly meet with the manager (or other alternative agreed person) to discuss progress. An action plan may include aspects such as whether or not the employee wishes others to know about the process and what information is given to people and when, arrangements for using a different

name or dressing differently at work, if applicable, and any other aspects that the employee wishes to be considered.

- 7.3. Absence for transition related medical procedures will be managed in accordance with the Absence Policy, including the usual arrangements for occupational sick pay.
8. The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is an independent advisory service which employees can contact for support. The Council's Mental Health First Aiders are also available for support and signposting to organisations which can offer advice and support. Further information is available on the intranet.
9. The Council will not tolerate any unacceptable behaviour in the workplace. If you experience discrimination, bullying or harassment please refer to our Unacceptable Behaviour Policy, available on the intranet.

### **Policy administration**

- **Equality impact** – High. Human Resources will monitor implementation of this policy.
- **Who authorised the policy/strategy and date of authorisation** - This policy was agreed with SMT+ on xxxx, UNISON on xxxx and Personnel Committee on xxxx and takes effect from xxxx.
- **Policy date for review and responsible officer** - Corporate HR Manager 2026.



Report to: Personnel Committee

Date of Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## HR Policy Proposed Changes

### Report summary:

To seek Personnel Committee approval to changes to the Council's Recruitment and Relocation policies and to a new policy regarding Overseas Employment.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

To approve the proposed changes to the Recruitment and Relocation policies.

To approve that the Council's policy will be to not employ people who reside overseas due to the legal, cost and other issues associated with such an arrangement.

### Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the Council's HR policies are up to date and fit for purpose.

Officer: Jo Fellows, HR Manager [jfellows@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:jfellows@eastdevon.gov.uk)

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

### Equalities impact Medium Impact

An equalities impact assessment is being finalised.

### Climate change Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk; The policies for consideration are not widely used but providing clarity in the Council's approach ensures that when the need arises there is an agreed policy position.

## Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
  - A greener East Devon
  - A resilient economy
- 

## Report in full

1. The Personnel Committee's remit includes approving the devising and development of overall employment policies and as such Committee are asked to approve changes to the Recruitment and Relocation policies and agreement of a new policy on the employment of people who reside overseas.

## 2. Recruitment Policy

- 2.1. HR have undertaken a review of the existing policy to refresh and streamline it and to ensure that it is user friendly and supports a positive candidate journey. The general intent of the policy remains the same, with some of the detail now included in the accompanying management guidance which is currently being developed.
- 2.2. The key proposed changes to the policy, as shown at Appendix 1, are:
  - 2.2.1. Further clarification around who is responsible and at what stage
  - 2.2.2. Further clarification of the probationary review process including how it applies differently to employees transferring in from within the local government sector, compared to new employees (this links to the NJC continuous service provisions) and the review requirements that managers must adhere to during the probationary period
  - 2.2.3. Inclusion of the Council's policy on the employment of people who reside overseas (see paragraph 4 below)
  - 2.2.4. Included links to various updated guidance, flow chart, forms and process templates, which will be available to managers on the intranet.

## 3. Relocation Policy

- 3.1. The Council has a longstanding Relocation Policy which has not been reviewed for some time. The following changes are proposed, as shown at Appendix 2:
  - 3.1.1. Clarification that the policy will only apply to permanent employees where there is a clear need due to the nature of the post and/or significant recruitment challenges (the policy continues to only apply with the prior approval of the Chief Executive and is only used in a very small number of cases).
  - 3.1.2. Inclusion of broadband connection as a cost that can be claimed, alongside telephone installation.
  - 3.1.3. Greater flexibility with regard to the Lodging Allowance element of the payment, taking into account variations in rental costs.
  - 3.1.4. Removal of the provision to allocate temporary Council housing as part of the policy, given the pressure on the housing stock.

## 4. Employment of people who reside overseas

- 4.1. The Worksmart Working Group have explored the implications of the Council employing people who reside overseas. There are no immediate queries regarding this, but determining our approach now will help us to deal with any future requests. It should be noted that this relates to where people reside and not the recruitment of people from overseas, which is covered by separate arrangements.
- 4.2. The proposed policy is that the Council will not employ people who live overseas because of the various HR, tax, resource, cost and other implications, with the costs and resource requirement to facilitate this being disproportionate to the staff who would benefit. Wording has been included in the draft Recruitment Policy to reflect this (Appendix 1, paragraph 2).
- 4.3. In particular, the following were considered by the Working Group:
  - 4.3.1. Employment law for employees living overseas must account for both UK law and the law of the country in which they are resident. This could apply to bank holidays, statutory minimum annual leave entitlement, minimum wage and rights on termination of employment. This would require research for each country an employee was to work from. Immigration and sponsorship requirements have changed following Brexit and would need to also be considered for staff working from overseas. HR would require specialist legal support to advise on matters relating to overseas employment law which would incur additional costs.
  - 4.3.2. Tax and National Insurance would be impacted. If an employee is working outside of the UK for less than 183 days in a tax year this would not normally affect their tax residency status, but consideration needs to be given to the country's tax rules that the employee is working from. If an employee was working overseas for more than 183 days in a year, or moved permanently, the Council would need to provide the employee with a letter and instruction to complete a form to notify their new status to HMRC. This may result in them being exempt from paying tax in the UK as they would pay it in their country of residence instead if a "double taxation agreement" exists between the UK and the country being worked from. An employee can apply to HMRC for a National Insurance exception certificate which would be an instruction to the Council to cease deducting NI contributions. If the employee lives/moves permanently to another country they would likely need to pay Social Security in their country of residence. The tax rules for working overseas, especially if more than the 183 days, are therefore complex and employees would need to seek independent advice before making any decisions as there are also implications on long term pension and social security benefits already accrued whilst in the UK. These arrangements would also be an additional burden on the Payroll Team.
  - 4.3.3. Data protection laws allow for staff working abroad so this would not present a significant risk to information security. However, the Council would need to ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place when exchanging personal data or providing access from outside of the UK, ensuring compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations, where this applies. If data transfer is likely to be outside the EU, this would need to be specifically referenced in relevant privacy notices(s) and, again, appropriate safeguards put in place. All of this would require additional resourcing.
  - 4.3.4. There are practical considerations as to the ease of sending ICT and other equipment overseas and delays or uncertainty in having equipment returned at the end of employment or during a disciplinary process. Items sent would likely be subject to Customs with associated costs. Any support for overseas users could be carried out on a reasonable efforts basis, and would be of a remote nature. Should Strata not be able to rectify an issue remotely, the device (i.e. laptop) would need to be returned to a Strata office location in the UK for



investigation/fault resolution, incurring further cost. If a request is made for a user to access systems from a non UK location it would need to be logged via the Strata portal and the request assessed to ensure that the location does not give rise to a potential security risk. The Strata security team would need to give written approval for a new country to be added to the permitted list.

4.3.5. The UK's health and safety laws are currently EU laws (this has not yet changed with Brexit) so they would very likely cover staff working in the EU, although this would need to be checked. There would need to be a full assessment of laws in other countries outside of the EU. All of this would require resourcing and potentially incur additional costs, if external advice was required.

4.3.6. Different locations will have their own local legal requirements in respect of insurance liability cover. Advice would need to be sought on a case-by-case basis, dependent upon which country the employee was residing in. This would incur additional work and costs as each circumstance is investigated.

5. UNISON are aware of these policy proposals which will be considered at Joint Staff Forum on 29<sup>th</sup> June, with the outcome shared with Committee to inform the decision.

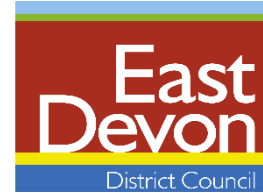
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### **Financial implications:**

No financial implications have been identified.

### **Legal implications:**

It is important that our HR policies are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are in compliance with employment legislation and best practice.



## Recruitment Policy and Procedure

1. ~~Effective recruitment and selection is fundamental to the achievement of the Council Plan. The Council is committed to delivering a timely and effective recruitment approach that ensures that it has~~ The aim of this policy is to make sure that we have the right people with the necessary skills, expertise and qualifications to deliver the Council's ambition and priorities. This policy also sets out the Council's aim to make sure recruitment decisions are **safe**, legal, **fair** and reflect good practice. **This policy takes into account the Council's policy and objectives on equality to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010, and safer recruitment practices where applicable.**
2. The following principles apply in support of this policy:
  - We will ensure that we use our financial resources wisely and before recruiting check that the recruitment is necessary, whether changes can be made and/or new approaches can be used, that the work still needs to be done or the work can be done differently and whether this is business as usual or new activity.
  - We will ensure that all recruitment is approved by the Chief Executive supported by the relevant Authority to Recruit (ATR). ~~As a council it is imperative that we keep a close eye on our headcount and review carefully the need to recruit. For this reason, recruitment will not be able to take place without explicit authorisation from the Chief Executive. The authority to recruit form can be found here. A manager who wishes to recruit will need to complete an authority to recruit (ATR) and submit this to Human Resources for approval at SMT+. This applies to any type of recruitment process including both temporary and permanent recruitment.~~
  - We will ensure that all Recruiting Managers receive training in **good and safe recruitment and selection practices, including the need to comply with the Equality Act and safer recruitment procedures.**
  - We will ensure that all jobs have been fairly evaluated and fit within the correct grade and salary level in line with our [Pay and Reward](#) and [Job Evaluation](#) policies.
  - We will ensure that vacancies are advertised internally to encourage employee development and career progression and when necessary will also use the most appropriate external recruitment methods to attract good quality candidates with the experience, skills and attributes suitable for the job.
  - **Due to additional tax, legal and resource implications, the Council will not employ people who reside overseas.**

### 3. Recruitment Procedure

3.1. The Recruitment Procedure is outlined in the Flow Chart. Particular note should be made of the following elements of the Procedure. Guidance is also available for Recruiting Managers.

#### 3.2. Preparing for Recruitment

- 3.2.1. **A review of the job description, person specification and risk assessment profile will be carried out by the Recruiting Manager. Where significant changes are made to a job description, the Recruiting Manager will arrange for a job evaluation review to be carried out. Consideration should also be given to whether the job is**

~~suitable as an apprenticeship role. Prior to getting this authorisation, managers need to consider whether the work can be done without the need to recruit. It is important to consider also whether the job content has materially changed. If so the post will need to be job evaluated. Managers are encouraged to discuss their needs with the HR Business Partner prior to submitting the ATR. If a new post requires an evaluation before advertising, a new Job Evaluation Questionnaire should be completed. Alternatively, if the post is not evaluated before it is advertised it will be marked as 'subject to Job Evaluation'. The new postholder will be required to submit a Job Evaluation Questionnaire within three months of occupying the post. Any salary increase will be backdated to the employee's start date in the post. If the grade/salary is reduced, the normal protection arrangements will apply. Please refer to the Job Evaluation Policy which is on the intranet or can be found here. The recruiting manager is responsible for making sure that the job description, person specification and risk assessment profile are updated prior to advertising. Recruiting managers must take care to ensure that the criteria outlined in the job and person specification is measurable and is non-discriminatory. This is vital as this will be used to shortlist applicants and select the successful candidate. The recruiting manager should also consider whether the role could be offered on the basis of an apprenticeship. The council is committed to recruiting apprentices and 'growing our own' talent.~~

- ~~3.2.2. The Recruiting Manager must complete the [Authority to recruit form](#) and submit this for approval to the Chief Executive. At this stage consideration should be given to whether it is appropriate to offer relocation expenses, for example if it is anticipated that recruitment will be from outside the South West and as an attraction strategy to bring suitable interest in the job. In such cases a clear rationale must be given and this must be approved by the Chief Executive. The recruiting manager must carefully consider whether the post should be advertised offering relocation expenses. This is generally offered for roles which are considered hard to recruit to. Authorisation needs to be granted by the Chief Executive as part of the ATR process.~~
- ~~3.2.3. In some circumstances, interview expenses can be offered and this will have been previously agreed and authorised as part of the ATR.~~

### 3.3. Recruitment Advertising

- ~~3.3.1. Once approved, the Recruiting Manager will agree the most appropriate recruitment advertising channels with the HR Business Partner. This may be internal only, external and internal and/or via an agency. The Recruiting Manager will draft a suitable recruitment advert and the HR Business Partner will obtain advertising quotes.~~
- ~~3.3.2. Once agreed the HR Business Partner and Recruiting Manager will agree the timeline, including go live date, close date and interview date and the HR Business Partner will arrange for the advert to be placed. The timeline will be communicated to the Recruitment Co-ordinator and the HR Support team, with the latter arranging for the advert to be placed on the Council's website, in social media and in the Council's staff newsletter.~~

~~The council is committed to facilitating career advancement and to providing permanent employment opportunities for fixed-term employees. To this end it is generally our practice to advertise vacancies on the council's intranet and via email to all employees. However, in circumstances where legislation places an obligation to on us to offer suitable redeployment (to avoid a redundancy or other dismissal for example), the recruitment process may exclude an advert — Human Resources must be consulted. Line managers are responsible for ensuring that advertised vacancies are posted on local notice boards where employees who do not have access to email or the intranet can see them. Vacancies advertised externally will generally be advertised using appropriate digital media. Printed~~

~~media may be utilised for professional positions. We will also make use of advertising media that will help attract a diverse workforce such as Jobs Board Media. Adverts must be drafted and formatted according to corporate guidelines through our advertising agency unless there is an agreed exception. Vacancies which are restricted to internal candidates only will be clearly indicated on the advertisement. All internal candidates will be selected for interview on the same criteria as external candidates. Managers are responsible for ensuring that the advert is accurate, appropriate and non-discriminatory. Human Resources will also monitor all advertisements before they are released for publication. Sometimes it may be more effective to go to a recruitment agency to help with a recruitment campaign where there has been little interest in a previously advertised post or where a specific skill is needed. We use Temp Solutions as our preferred supplier for agency recruitment and if they are unable to help they will help source another agency. Please contact Human Resources if Temp Solutions are unable to help. An existing employee can be 'seconded' to cover a specific vacancy. The Council's secondment policy must be referred to and Human Resources consulted. It is important that equal opportunity is given to employees with appropriate skills and experience to be considered for secondment opportunities. The council's secondment policy can be found here. Employees who have been 'acting up' or 'seconded' to a position that subsequently becomes vacant / subject to permanent appointment do not have an automatic right to the post. The post should still be advertised and they will be required to apply for the post. It may be appropriate to advertise the vacancy internally only but this should be discussed with Human Resources. Employees on maternity leave will receive all advertisements for posts advertised in the council during the period of their maternity leave. Employees are responsible for ensuring the Human Resources have an up to date email address to facilitate this process. Feedback from our successful candidates outlines that it is helpful to put the interview dates in the advertisement so that people can make arrangements in advance to attend interviews.~~

### 3.4. Applications and Shortlisting

- 3.4.1. EDDC is a "Disability Confident" employer and as part of this commitment, applicants who indicate they have a disability on their application form and who meet the minimum essential criteria on the person specification, will be guaranteed an interview. Details of disability are not available to Recruiting Managers until after the shortlisting process has been completed. Shortlisted candidates with a disability will be asked if any reasonable adjustments are needed to attend interview so that they are not disadvantaged during the selection process.
- 3.4.2. Applicants will be asked to disclose any unspent convictions as part of the application process in line with the obligations under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and will be asked to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check at the appropriate level for the job. Prior to submitting the ATR, the Recruiting Manager will have completed an assessment to ensure that disclosure is applied at the appropriate level for the job. Any disclosures that are made must be brought to the attention of the HR Business Partner.
- 3.4.3. To ensure a safe and fair process, any Recruiting Manager that has a personal or familial relationship with an applicant must declare it and will not be part of the selection process and will inform HR. In principle, EDDC does not allow individuals to be directly or indirectly in positions of authority over a relative or those with whom they have a personal relationship or close personal ties. Any such relationship will be identified to HR.
- 3.4.4. Recruitment Co-ordinators will support the Recruiting Manager in managing the administrative steps in the recruitment process to ensure that applicants are

communicated with at the various stages in the application process, from sending applications to Recruiting Managers for shortlisting once the recruitment close date has been reached, to regretting those not successful and inviting those shortlisted for interview.

- 3.4.5. The Recruiting Manager and interview panel will shortlist applications using the shortlisting form and pass to the Recruitment Co-ordinator who will arrange interviews. The shortlisting form should be retained and passed to HR who will hold for a period of 6 months for audit purposes. Applicants who do not meet the essential criteria will not be shortlisted for the job.
- 3.4.6. If there are no suitable candidates it will be necessary to review with the HR Business Partner and decide on next steps; which may include either re-advertise, review other options such as job design review, or approach an agency for specialist help.
- 3.4.7. All applicants will receive communication on the outcome of their application within 10 working days of the vacancy close date.

~~Candidates for all posts will be asked to complete the council's online application form which is accessed through the East Devon District Council recruitment web pages. Paper versions will be available on request. CV's are not acceptable except in circumstances of recruitment through an agency, in which case the successful applicant will still be required to complete an application form prior to commencing employment. All candidates will be provided with a Job Pack which will include a copy of the job description and person specification and risk assessment. This will include any details regarding any work-based interview assessments. The council has been awarded the 'Disability Confident' positive about disability symbol. As part of our commitment to this standard, applicants who indicate that they have a disability on the application form and who meet the minimum criteria as detailed on the person specification are guaranteed an interview. Details of a disability will not be available for recruiting managers until after the shortlisting process has been completed. Shortlisted applicants with a disability must be asked if any reasonable adjustments are required prior to attending an interview so that they are not disadvantaged during the selection process. Please discuss with HR if further advice is needed. In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct for Employees, any member of staff that has a personal or familial relationship with a candidate, except for a line management relationship, should not be part of the selection process and should bring this to the attention of Human Resources. In principle the council will not allow individuals to be directly or indirectly in authority over a relative or an individual with whom they have close personal ties. Applicants should bring any such relationships to the attention of the recruiting manager so that this can be taken into account during any recruitment and selection process. Applicants will be asked to declare any UNSPENT convictions as part of the application process. Only posts identified as EXEMPT from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act will be eligible for a standard or enhanced DBS Disclosure seeking information about spent convictions. Recruiting managers are responsible for undertaking an assessment of the role's eligibility for a disclosure in conjunction with their HR Business Partner and prior to submitting the ATR. If an applicant makes any convictions/warnings declaration on the application form the recruiting manager should seek advice from Human Resources before making a shortlisting decision. The short listing decisions should be recorded independently by panel members on the short listing record form which will need to be retained and passed to Human Resources. This will be kept for a period of 6 months. You can find the short listing form here If there are no suitable candidates who meet the short listing criteria it will be necessary to re-advertise the post and a review should be undertaken of the person specification, advertisement and publication used as well as the salary to ensure that it is appropriate for the post. Applicants who do~~

~~not meet all of the essential criteria should not be shortlisted for interview. All external applicants will receive an electronic notification of the decision made regarding their application within 4 weeks of the closing date. Recruiting managers are responsible for notifying internal candidates verbally within the same timeframe.~~

### 3.5. Selection Process

- 3.5.1. Interview panels will usually comprise of a minimum of 2 people, ideally gender balanced. In those areas such as Housing, where EDDC work directly with tenants, tenant participation is encouraged as much as possible on interview panels.
- 3.5.2. The selection process will be agreed between the Recruiting Manager and HR Business Partner in advance so that applicants invited for interview can be fully informed and prepared. This will include an interview with a combination of competency based, behavioural and attitudinal questions and relevant work based assessment(s) and/or psychometric tests as necessary.
- 3.5.3. Each applicant will be scored for the answers given to each question and summary notes should be kept as a useful prompt to enable accurate decision making at the end of the interview process. Interview notes should be retained and passed to HR within 10 days of completion of the interview process.
- 3.5.4. There should generally be a consensus on the interview panel for the preferred candidate, however where there is disagreement, the majority view will carry the decision.
- 3.5.5. At the end of each interview, the applicant should receive an indication of when they might expect to hear about the outcome of the recruitment process. All interviewed applicants should receive a telephone call from the Recruiting Manager to let them know the outcome of the interview within the agreed period and the offer of feedback if wanted; this should also be followed up in writing by the Recruitment Co-ordinator within 3 working days.

~~Interviews will be held by a panel comprising of ideally 3 people but a minimum of 2 people, gender balanced where possible. Interview questions should be agreed in advance by the selection panel and should be developed using the job description and person specification for the post. The panel will seek to develop questions which require the candidate to give examples of their previous relevant experience. Competency/behavioural based questions have been developed in line with the Council's behaviours framework and should be used consistently to gather evidence around the behaviours specifically required in the role. These are available from Human Resources. The panel will each have a set of questions and will score the candidate response independently of each other during the interview. Accurate, factual notes should be made by the panel and it should be noted that candidates can request access to all information written about them. All notes should be passed to Human Resources who will ensure the proper storage and destruction within the specified time scale of 6 months. The recruitment scoring should be applied to decide the successful applicant and where the panel disagree the majority view should prevail. Under no circumstances should the scoring be creatively fixed in order to favour a preferred candidate in securing the post. If unsure, the panel should not recruit. In addition to interviews, a range of other selection methods should be used which are work based and reflect the requirements of the job. Appropriate methods could include tests which simulate job activities as these are considered good practice and good predictors of performance. Other methods may include a presentation on a given subject or psychometric tests which assess verbal and numerical reasoning for instance and are administered by a qualified practitioner from Human Resources. Posts which have a people management responsibility must include a personality~~

questionnaire (Occupational Personality Questionnaire OPQ). Recruiting managers should liaise with Human Resources to arrange OPQ testing, which must be completed by the candidate so that results can be probed during the interview, and 30 minutes of feedback on the results of their personality questionnaire to candidates at some stage during the interview process. Managers may decide to vet an applicant's social media profile before offering a position. Sites such as LinkedIn are professional networking sites that can be used explicitly for recruitment purposes. There are risks associated with basing recruitment decisions on information gained solely from an individual's Facebook or other social forum profile. The main risk is the potential for indirect discrimination particularly if there is an over-emphasis on matters which relate to a protected characteristic. Managers should also be mindful that an applicant's activity on a social media forum may not be representative of their potential behaviour within the workplace and more emphasis should be placed on use of questions and workplace testing to assess their overall suitability for the post. All applicants should be advised in writing of the outcome of their interview within 2 days of the final interview; if this is not possible, candidates must be informed of when a decision will be made. Candidates attending an interview will be reimbursed any reasonable expenses incurred. Where an overnight stay is necessary, this must be agreed in advance by the Recruiting Manager. If the council has not arranged and paid for the accommodation, we will reimburse reasonable single occupancy bed and breakfast hotel accommodation up to £70.00 for one night. Expenses will need to be claimed using the interview expenses form which can be found here and will only be reimbursed as per the rates quoted and with receipts attached.

### 3.6. Job Offers and Relevant Checks

- 3.6.1. Following interview evaluation and decision making, the Recruiting Manager will make an offer of employment, usually verbally in the first instance, to the preferred applicant. In addition to the verbal offer an email offer should be sent as immediate follow-up so that the offer being made is clear.
- 3.6.2. As soon as an offer has been accepted, the Recruiting Manager will complete the Starters Form so that contract paperwork can be prepared and the necessary employment checks can be started.
- 3.6.3. The Recruiting Manager could liaise with the new starter to arrange appropriate onboarding and induction planning, including being available to respond to any queries from either the new starter or HR.

All employees requiring access to the Public Security Network (PSN) (usually through the allocation of a Government Connect Secure Extranet (GCSx) facility) must be able to pass the Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) check which seeks to ensure that the council has trustworthy employees accessing and processing PSN information. This check comprises of a check of the individual's identity, their nationality and immigration status (including entitlement to work in the UK), evidenced verification of employment or academic history for the past 3 years (if there are noticeable gaps in employment advice needs to be sought from HR), and a check of all unspent convictions through a Basic Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service. More information on this can be found in the Employment Screening policy here. All employees will be subject to a Basic Disclosure unless the post warrants a higher level of criminal record check; and the Council will use best endeavours to verify the last three years of employment/academic history of all other successful candidates / workers with access to the Council's computer network. In compliance with the Immigration, Asylum & Nationality Act 2006 ALL successful applicants will be required to provide documentary evidence of their right to work in the UK either prior to or on their first day of employment. In line with good practice, ALL offers of employment

will be subject to receipt of a minimum of 2 references satisfactory to the Council. External references will be requested by Human Resources using an employment screening company, and will not be taken up without the prior approval of the applicant (given on the application form). Managers are responsible for obtaining internal references where the successful candidate is an existing employee / worker and must take care to ensure that they have cross referenced the reference with details provided in the application form to ensure there are no discrepancies. It is acknowledged that some employers do not provide references as quickly as we would like. If an individual commences employment without references in place, a considered effort must be made to ensure that we obtain references as soon as possible and within 2 months of the applicant starting employment. If despite efforts a reference has not been obtained, the line manager must clearly document for the HR file whether this condition of employment is to be waived or whether the employee should be dismissed as a result of not being able to satisfy this condition. Advice should be sought from Human Resources. An occupational health assessment for all new employees must be obtained prior to commencement of employment to assess fitness for the role and to establish whether any reasonable adjustments are needed. Where an applicant is deemed unfit and there is no opportunity for reasonable adjustments to be implemented the offer should be withdrawn. Advice should be sought from Human Resources prior to making this decision. Job applicants will be advised early in the recruitment process of our methods of verification. In cases where there is a discrepancy or the applicant is unable to produce original documents, the successful applicant will be asked to give their consent to verify their academic qualifications with the issuing institution. Human Resources will contact the issuing institution if qualifications are not produced within a week of starting employment with the council. If consent has not been given by the successful applicant and they have not produced original certificates then the relevant manager will meet with the applicant and give them a further opportunity to give their consent or to produce originals of qualifications subject to a deadline. Where Human Resources have been unable to verify the qualifications by a revised deadline, the relevant manager must decide whether they wish to waive this particular condition or end the employment for the failure to satisfy an express employment condition. Decisions must be explained and documented and placed on the employee's file. Posts which require the post holder to have a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service check should be undertaken as soon as practically possible and preferably before the applicant commences employment. If the applicant does start working for the council prior to receipt of a satisfactory check under no circumstances will a post holder be able to work unsupervised or alone where contact with a vulnerable group is likely. For further guidance please refer to the employment screening policy or [click here](#). When making an offer of employment the line manager must expressly advise the candidate that the offer is conditional upon satisfactory results of: an Occupational Health medical assessment, 2 satisfactory references, verification of the last 3 years of employment/academic history (if applicable and not already in receipt), confirmation of the right to work in the UK, satisfactory check of essential qualifications as stated in the person specification, valid driving licence check (if listed in the person specification as essential to the post), independent check of unspent convictions acquired through a basic check from the Disclosure and Barring Service, Disclosure and Barring Service standard or enhanced (if applicable to the post). Human Resources will ensure that a written contract of employment subject to the stated conditions is issued upon receipt of a starter's form which can be found [here](#). The line manager must ensure that once an offer has been accepted that the starter's form is completed with their HR Business Partner to ensure accurate details are provided for the issuing of the employment



~~contract and to progress the appointment as soon as possible. Candidates must be advised that they must verbally confirm their acceptance within 2 working days of the verbal offer so that if necessary the panel can move onto their second preferred candidate. On making the offer, candidates will be advised not to hand in their notice until they have received confirmation from Human Resources or the line manager that a satisfactory medical assessment has (and standard or enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check if applicable) have been received. The applicant will be advised that the offer of employment is still subject to conditions such as 2 satisfactory references, verification of 3 years of employment, Basic disclosure; and a check of original documentation confirming identity, right to work, driving licence and qualifications which must be provided either prior to or on their first day. It is really important that the recruiting manager should maintain contact with the successful candidate during the time it takes for them to work their notice and for a start date to be arranged. This communication is vital to the process and reduces the potential for issues to arise or the candidate to drop out prior to commencing employment.~~

### 3.7. Starting Employment

3.7.1. The Recruiting Manager will make arrangements and allow time for the corporate induction process as well as arranging a suitable local induction and familiarisation with the department and team. It is also recommended that the new employee be provided with a “buddy” within the team who can act as local support and help settle in the new recruit.

3.7.2. New recruits should be booked on the Corporate Welcome session. The corporate welcome training and other induction activities must be completed within the first month of the employee commencing employment with the Council.

~~New employees are expected to read our employment policies. Managers should ensure that employees have read and understood these policies during their first month of employment and have signed the welcome process record of completion form to signal that they have read and understood the policies. This is available here. All employees are required to attend the welcome session, regardless of whether the post is fixed term or permanent. Recruiting managers are responsible for putting in place a local induction to provide familiarisation with the department and team. Human Resources recommend allocating an employee as a ‘buddy’.~~

### 3.8. Probationary Period

3.8.1. All new employees to local government are subject to a probationary period of 6 months where their suitability for the post is assessed. The Recruiting Manager is responsible for ensuring that any learning needs or gaps in knowledge or experience that have been identified as part of the recruitment and selection process are reflected in the new employee’s induction plan and performance is regularly assessed, including the setting of clear SMART objectives.

3.8.2. The Manager will arrange to book informal reviews at 1, 3 and 5 months with their new employee, this could be as part of or in addition to one to ones.

3.8.3. If during the probationary period, concerns or issues arise, they should be discussed and actions agreed with the new employee to remedy them. Regular probation reviews/one to ones will help to tackle any issues early on and early guidance should be obtained from the HR Business Partner. If during the probationary period concerns in relation to behaviour, attitude or performance are raised and not resolved, the manager should address under the Managing Performance Policy.

3.8.4. Towards the end of the 6 month probationary period, the manager will arrange a meeting to discuss progress and review performance and objectives. If conduct

and performance are at the required standard, satisfactory completion of probation can be confirmed.

~~All appointments are made subject to a probationary period of 6 months. After 3 months a review meeting should take place between the employee and the line manager to discuss progress. At the end of the probationary period, and subject to a satisfactory report by the line manager, employees will be notified in writing that they have successfully completed their probation period. The probationary period can be extended by a further 3 months if this is considered to be appropriate. Guidance and advice should be sought from Human Resources early on in the probation period if there are performance problems which need to be resolved. Employees who have continuous service will still be required to pass a probationary period and will still be subject to an employee assessment. Performance issues during this period should be discussed with Human Resources and dealt with using the Managing unsatisfactory performance policy. Existing employees who are appointed to a higher grade through a selection process may be subject to a probationary period. If a probationary period is to be applied to an internal promotion this will be discussed, together with the specifics of a development plan and objectives, at the point the offer is made. Employees are not permitted to apply for other vacancies or make a flexible working request whilst still within their probationary period without the approval of Human Resources.~~

### 3.9. Grading and Salary

~~3.9.1. As stated in the [Pay and Reward](#) and [Job Evaluation](#) policies, managers will not approve a starting salary outside the grade advertised for the job. New starters will generally be placed on the first spinal column point for the job grade. Managers may not approve a starting salary outside of the grade advertised for the post as this may lead to an equal pay claim. It is vital that the correct starting salary is included on the Starters Form. Any recruitment problems due to salary issues should be first discussed with Human Resources who will assess whether there is justification to increase the salary or whether a market supplement recommendation should be made to SMT+.~~

#### Policy administration

- **Equality impact** – Medium provided that policy and procedures are followed. Human Resources will monitor implementation of this policy.
- **Who authorised the policy/strategy and date of authorisation** - This policy was agreed with SMT+ on xxx, UNISON on xxx and Personnel Committee on xxx and takes effect from xxx.
- **Policy date for review and responsible officer** - Corporate HR Manager 2026.

## Relocation Expenses Policy

1. East Devon District Council aims to ~~improve the quality of life of our customers now and for future generations by providing them with good quality services and support. For this reason it is vital that we~~ attract and retain the best employees to ensure the provision of high quality services and recognises that relocation can result in both financial and domestic pressures on new employees. Our policy is to provide financial assistance and support for the costs and disruption that can be associated with relocation, **when recruiting to certain permanent key roles where it would** ~~The objective of this policy is to~~ assist new employees to adapt to a new area and to their new role as quickly as possible.
2. The Policy aims to enable staff to maintain their overall standards of living but recognises that this will not always be possible, particularly for those moving from a low cost housing area to East Devon, a high cost housing area.
3. This Policy also ensures that costs claimed are reasonable and in line with HMRC requirements.
4. **What is the Council's policy?**
  - 4.1. An employee taking up employment within the Council must satisfy the following criteria to qualify for the reimbursement of relocation expenses, including any lodging ~~and commuter~~ allowances, up to a maximum of £8000 inclusive of VAT. This reflects the current HMRC limit applied to relocation expenses, which are exempt from being classed as a benefit in kind (**called qualifying expenses**). **Further information can be found on the GOV.UK website.** This qualifying expense limit may be subject to review by the Inland Revenue and the following rules will apply:
    - Relocation expenses must have been agreed by the Chief Executive for the particular post prior to the commencement of the recruitment process. This should be done via the authority to recruit form (ATR).
    - The appointment must be to a permanent post **which is identified as a key role within the Council and/or where there are significant recruitment challenges, which the offer of a relocation package may help to mitigate against.**
    - The employee's current residence must be 30 miles or more from the boundary of East Devon.
    - The employee's new residence must be located within East Devon or within 5 miles of its boundary.
    - **The employee's new home must be their primary residence where they travel to work from.**
  - 4.2. Payment will only be made if the relocation is brought about as a direct result of the employee's appointment and payments will not be made to two members of the same household in the employment of the Council.
  - 4.3. **Expenses are only payable once up to the £8,000 limit, regardless whether a sale falls through and further costs are incurred.**
  - 4.4. **Payroll Services are responsible for all reimbursement of claims approved by a Director/Assistant Director and for ensuring the limits of this policy are applied. Queries regarding the limits and what can be claimed should be to your manager or Payroll Services.**

## 5. Relocation expenses

5.1 Relocation expenses, which can be reimbursed, include:

- removal expenses in accordance with the amount of the lowest of three competitive estimates, copies of which must be supplied
- the disconnection and reconnection of appliances and **installation cost of a broadband connection (but not monthly rental)**, telephone installation or transfer charge
- legal fees connected with the sale and purchase of a residence. This includes:
  - estate agent fees
  - solicitors' fees
  - mortgage valuation fees
  - mortgage redemption fees
  - survey fees
  - furniture storage.

5.2 Please note that stamp duty fees are not included and the reimbursement of relocation expenses will only be made on production of the original receipts.

5.3 A standard sum of a maximum of £1,000 will be paid on moving into rental or purchased accommodation. This amount is payable only once and is intended to cover soft furnishing and the alteration of fixtures and fittings (receipts need not be supplied). This amount of £1000 is included in the overall maximum of £8,000 allowable for relocation expenses.

5.4 You may claim this allowance once contracts have been exchanged and a completion date has been agreed using the [Relocation Expenses and Miscellaneous Expense Claim Form](#).

5.5 Please note that resettlement must be within twelve months of taking up the appointment in order to qualify for reimbursement of relocation allowances. All expenses must be claimed within eighteen months of commencement of employment to meet the HMRC qualifying tax rules.

## 6. Lodging allowance

6.1 For new employees who are unable to sell their property and/or do not move immediately, lodging allowance is payable **for a period of up to 6 months to a maximum sum of £4,000** ~~for a maximum of 6 months in payable at the rate of £73.25 per week.~~ Proof of payment for lodgings in the form of a signed tenancy agreement or letting agent confirmation letter is required. ~~Up to £73.25 may be paid in respect of daily travel in lieu of lodging in approved, exceptional cases. Receipts must be provided. If the employee is provided with Council owned accommodation, the lodging allowance is reduced to the amount of rent charged by the Council.~~

6.2 Payment of a lodging allowance applies whilst the employee's property is empty and waiting to be sold to ensure compliance with tax treatment of the allowance. If the property is rented out then a lodging allowance will not be paid.

6.3 Monthly claims must be submitted to the relevant Director/Assistant Director for approval using the standard expenses form. Payroll Services will monitor the payments as they form part of the £8,000 limit.

~~Leave allowances — one day's special leave of absence to enable the employee to look for permanent accommodation and one day's special leave of absence to move. Further leave in respect of relocation should be taken from the annual leave entitlement.~~

## 7. Employees leaving the Council

7.1 Where an employee leaves the Council (for any reason except redundancy) within three years of appointment, proportional repayment of the expenses are required.

7.2 The proportional repayment is as follows:

- last day of service within 12 months of the date of appointment – 100% repayment
- last day of service between 12-24 months of date of appointment – 75% repayment
- last day of service between 24-36 months of date of appointment – 50% repayment.

### **Allocation of temporary council housing for newly appointed employees**

The provision of temporary Council housing may in some exceptional circumstances be available to new employees, where there is a need for assistance. Any such accommodation will be provided for a maximum of 12 months.

Employees who are allocated temporary Council housing will be charged the full rent while they are in this accommodation.

Please note that no guarantees can be provided by the Housing and Social Inclusion Service that they will be able to meet a request, as this is dependent upon accommodation being available.

Normally, 'harder to let' properties will be made available to employees.

Individuals should only request temporary accommodation via Human Resources who will contact the Housing and Social Inclusion Service to forward any appropriate forms and make subsequent arrangements.

### **Fixed term contracts and temporary employment**

Where employees are appointed on fixed term contracts or on a temporary basis, relocation expenses will not normally apply. However, in exceptional circumstances, where the fixed term contract is for a minimum of two years, assistance of up to £4,000 may be agreed by the Chief Executive or Strategic Lead at their absolute discretion. The elements of relocation expense that will be reimbursed are as outlined in the Relocation Expenses section of this policy.

Reimbursement will be made on the production of original receipts and will be repayable in full should the individual leave before the end of the fixed term or temporary appointment.

### **Policy administration**

- **Equality impact** – Low provided that policy and procedures are followed. Human Resources will monitor implementation of this policy.
- **Who authorised the policy/strategy and date of authorisation** - This policy was agreed with SMT+ on xxx, UNISON on xxx and Personnel Committee on xxx and takes effect from xxx.
- **Policy date for review and responsible officer** - Corporate HR Manager 2026.

Report to: **Personnel Committee**



Date of Meeting 04 July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## People Data Report

### Report summary:

This report provides key data on the workforce, to support policy decision making and an overview of workforce matters. It also includes the annual People Data Report for 2022/23, which sets out a wider range of detail on workforce matters.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

That the Committee endorses the content of the report.

### Reason for recommendation:

To support policy decision making and an overview of workforce matters.

Officer: Jo Fellows, HR Manager. [jfellows@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:jfellows@eastdevon.gov.uk)

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk;

**Links to background information** [211130 People Data Proposals Report for Personnel Ctte FINAL.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#)

**Link to [Council Plan](#)**

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
  - A greener East Devon
  - A resilient economy
- 

## **Report in full**

1. This report provides a regular update on key people data, as agreed by Committee in November 2021. Analysis is summarised below, with the full data at appendix 1.
2. Alongside this, Committee agreed that an Annual People Data Report, providing a wider range of information, including equalities, training and employee relations activity, be provided to the Committee each year and the 2022/23 annual report is included at appendix 2.
3. The people data aims to inform policy decisions and to provide an overview of workforce matters.
4. **Regular People Data Report (appendix 1)** - The latest report reflects the data available from the HR system up to 31 May 2023 unless otherwise stated. Particular areas to note are:
  - 4.1. Headcount has increased from 526 in December 2022 to 549 and is at the highest level over the last 12 months. This is mainly due to the new posts that were agreed as part of the 2022/23 budget, cover for maternity leave and also the TUPE in of employees for the Homes for Ukraine project. The full time equivalent (FTE) figure remains within budget.
  - 4.2. Market supplements have increased slightly from 6 to 8 posts since December, which is due to the completion of two reviews after Christmas linked to the Reward Review implementation. Market Supplements are for specific roles where recruitment and retention is challenging because market forces dictate salary levels. Market Supplements are subject to annual review.
  - 4.3. Vacancies are at 34, compared to 47 in December 2022, but still remain lower than 60 in August 2022. When considering this against the increased headcount, vacancies as a proportion of headcount have reduced from 8.9% to 6.19%. The number of applications for posts appears to be generally increasing as a result of the improved pay rates.
  - 4.4. The average time taken to fill vacancies is at 108.92 days which has decreased since December (when it was 122.61). General benchmarking data indicates that c100 days is around the average time taken by organisations to fill posts and we continue to work with managers to ensure recruitment is undertaken in a timely manner. There were several vacancies which had a direct impact on the average number of days to fill a vacancy due to long notice periods in some instances, advertising more than once or covering the vacancy with an agency before going out to advertise. With the latter, managers are being encouraged to review agency worker arrangements now that the improved pay rates are in place, although it is noted that overall agency worker numbers have increased by 1 in this period and there continues to be market pressure, in some occupational areas, where demand for roles has led to greater pay rates in the agency and interim market, compared to pay as an employee.

- 4.5. The annual cumulative voluntary turnover rate at the end of March 2023 was 12.62% which was higher than the annual turnover rate for 2021/22 which was 9.91%. Benchmarking data suggests that this is not an uncommon trend, with a recent Cendex report stating that voluntary turnover for the UK economy as a whole in 2022 was 16.4% compared to 9.6% in 2021. The current cumulative turnover rate so far this year (April to May 2023) is 1.10% with a projected end of year forecast of 6.6%. We only had 2 leavers in May 2023 which is the lowest we have seen since the pandemic.
- 4.6. There has been a small decrease in the number of full time equivalent (FTE) days lost through sickness absence, from 0.96 days lost per FTE in December 2022 to 0.81 days in May 2023. The projected forecast is currently 9.72 days, which is still above our target of an end of year absence of 8.5 days per FTE. Of particular note is the following:
- As has previously been reported, cases of medium and long term absence as a result of personal stress, anxiety and fatigue due to bereavement and continued operational demands continue to feature. Training funded from the public health budget was recently delivered on a pilot basis to Housing teams who were experiencing particularly stressful situations and working with challenging client groups, which was leading to absence in some cases. The sessions, similar to team 'supervision' sessions used in the NHS, social work and counselling, enabled staff to express concerns, worries and to decompress. The pilots were positively received and will now be offered on a quarterly basis to those who need it. In addition, following a particularly difficult incident, specialist trauma support was provided very quickly to affected employees, which has also been positively received. Analysis of the implications of long-term absence on our overall sickness absence figures is currently being undertaken and will be shared with Committee at the meeting.
  - Covid which had featured in first place for short term absence for some time is now in third place and we are now seeing the return of issues such as stomach, kidney, liver and digestion and cold/flu as the most commonly cited reasons for short term absence.
  - Sickness absence continues to be actively managed and employees are supported in accordance with the Absence Management Policy.

**5. Annual People Data Report (appendix 2) –** This report provides more analysis on a wider range of workforce factors. Some of the key analysis includes:

- 5.1. Headcount was at the highest level since 2020 when it was 511, compared to 532 as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. Salary costs had also increased, reflecting the increased headcount and the Reward Review pay increases which were implemented in 2022/23 to support recruitment and retention. Costs are also impacted by the annual nationally determined Pay Award. However travel costs continued to be at a reduced level linked to changed ways of working as a result of the pandemic and Worksmart.
- 5.2. The number of market supplements significantly reduced from 45 to the current 8, as a result of the Reward Review.
- 5.3. Voluntary turnover was at its highest since 2018/19, reflecting the recruitment and retention challenges. As stated at paragraph 4.5, this is in line with the experience of other employers.
- 5.4. Take up of training by employees increased compared to the previous year, although there continues to be capacity challenges for staff finding time to attend training, which is also reflected in the Investor in People (IiP) reaccreditation report feedback. The use of free fully funded training courses funded by the EU social fund and delivered by South Devon College, alongside the sharing of training with Mid Devon District Council has enabled us to offer a wider range of training than would otherwise be possible as



part of the corporate training budget. Apprenticeship numbers also increased to 11 as at 31st March 2023 compared to 5 the previous year.

- 5.5. The Council's target is that no more than 8.5 working days should be lost through sickness absence, per employee. However, we have been in excess of this target for the last five years, with 2022/23 being the highest at 10.94 days. The main reason for short term absence was Covid-19 - if Covid-19 absence was excluded from our figures, the average FTE working days lost per person would be 9.9 days. Work-related stress, anxiety and fatigue was the most significant reason for long term absence, alongside, for the first time, long-Covid, both of which reflect the picture in the wider public sector. During 2022/23 we were able to continue to develop our Happy Healthy Here offer, alongside absence management, to support employees.
- 5.6. Unfortunately we have had 2 grievance cases submitted by employees during 2022/23 citing the underlying reason as poor management as well as an increase in disciplinary cases from 3 to 6 compared to the previous year.
- 5.7. In terms of the workforce profile, the average age of the workforce in 2022/23 was 48 compared to the previous year when it was 49. Disability and ethnicity figures remain similar, with many staff not completing this field in the HR system, which we continue to remind staff to do to assist us with analysis and the identification of support and other interventions. The Gender Pay Gap reduced from 8.29% to 6.18% due to more females being paid in the upper middle quartile.

6. The HR team will continue to provide regular people data reports to Committee.
- 

#### **Financial implications:**

There are no recommendations within the report.

#### **Legal implications:**

There are no specific legal implications requiring comment.

## People Data Annual Report 2022/2023

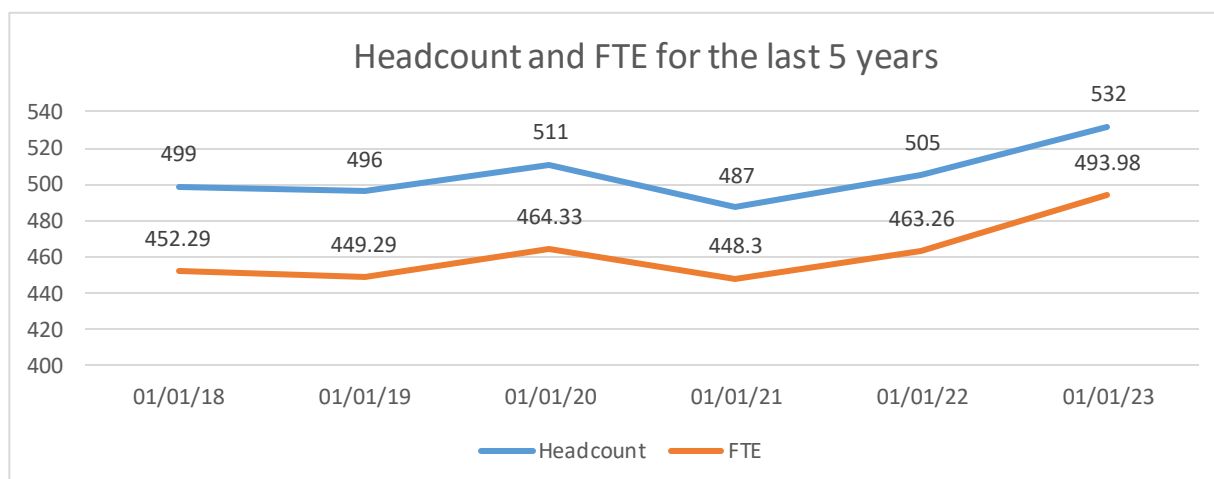
### 1 Introduction

This report has been produced annually for a number of years with the aim of providing important people data and analysis to the Strategic Management Team and to Councillors. Personnel Committee agreed some revisions to the annual report on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021, which is reflected in the information below.

### 2 Headcount and full time equivalent

#### 2.1. Headcount for this financial year compared to the previous 5 years

As at March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023 the headcount was 532 and the full time equivalent (FTE)<sup>1</sup> was 493.98. Headcount is at the highest level since 2020 when it was 511. This is a 6.6% increase compared to the same period the previous year and reflects the increase in posts in some areas as part of the budget planning process. We remain below the budgeted FTE of 531.8.



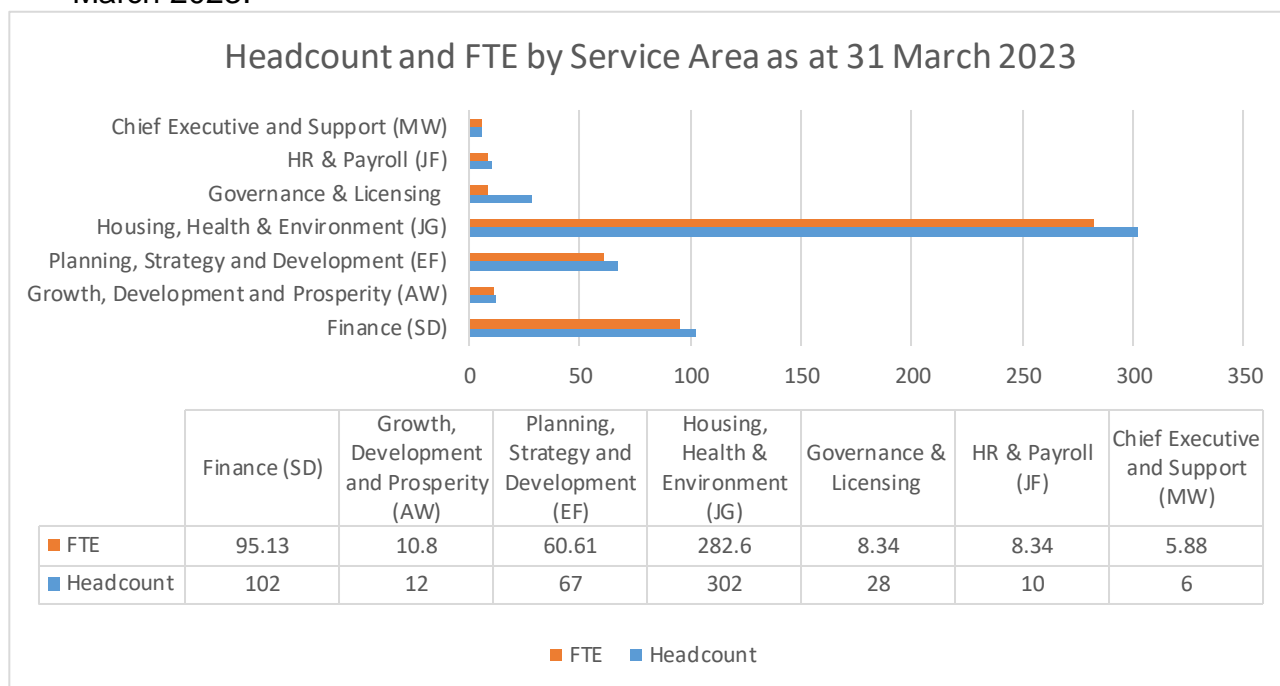
#### 2.2. Actual Headcount and FTE by Grade for the year compared to previous year

Following the 2022 Reward Review our grading structure has been revised. As a result a direct comparison to previous years is difficult, but the analysis shows that our middle grades, previously grades 4-6 (salary range £25,409 - £31,099 – 59.6% of the workforce) and now new grade 4 (£32,020 - £38,296 – 27.47% of the workforce) remains where most of our workforce are paid.

<sup>1</sup> Full Time Equivalent (FTE) measures employees in a way that makes them comparable although they may work a different number of hours per week. The unit is obtained by comparing an employee's average number of hours worked to the average number of full time hours. A full-time person is therefore counted as 1 FTE, while a part-time worker is a proportion of 1 FTE. For example, a part-timer employed for 18.5 hours a week where full-time work consists of 37 hours, is counted as 0.5 FTE.

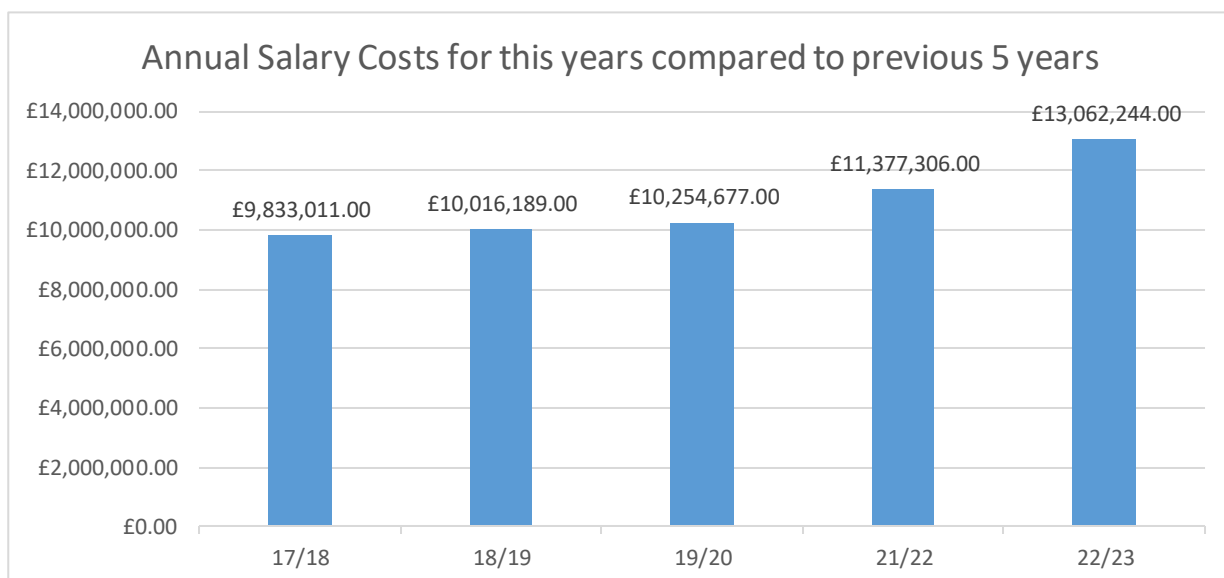
### 2.3. Headcount by Service

The graph below shows the headcount and FTE by Service area as at 31st March 2023.



### 2.4. Annual Salary Costs for this financial year compared to the last 5 years

Salary costs relate only to the general fund and externally funded posts. Posts



which are paid from the Housing Revenue Account are excluded from these figures. The increase in costs in 2022/23 reflects the increase in headcount and the Reward Review pay increases which were implemented to support recruitment and retention. Costs are also impacted by the annual nationally determined Pay Award.

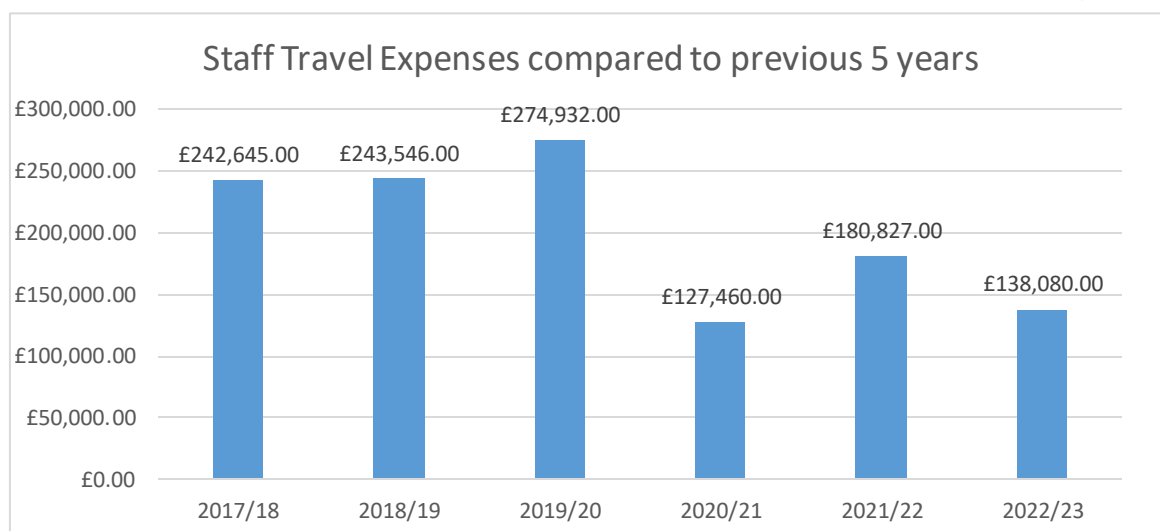
## 2.5. Staff Travel Costs for the last 5 years

Travel expenses includes business and training mileage. The graph below shows there has been a significant reduction of 23.63% for travel expenses claimed by employees compared to the same period last year although not as low as 2020/21 levels which was attributed to the limiting of visits and meetings during the pandemic and the Government's 'stay at home' message. This reduction, which equates to circa an average of 500 miles less mileage claimed per travelling officer, is likely due in the main to the increased use of technology which allows more meetings to take place remotely, in line with the Council's Worksmart Policy and supports our Climate Change Strategy aspirations.

## 3 Vacancies, Agency Workers and Recruitment

### 3.1. Recruitment activity

The costs of recruitment advertising for the last few years are shown in the table below and demonstrate the increase in recruitment activity, linked to the current recruitment and retention challenges. In 2022/23 we recruited 107 new starters compared to 82 in 2021/22 and 34 in 2020/21. The cost per head of recruiting in



2022/23 was £894 per head, an increase on the previous year when it was £833.

Recruitment Advertising Spend	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
	£95,714	£68,349	£30,105	£32,917

### 3.2. Vacancy and Agency Data

We regularly report vacancy, market supplement and agency data to Personnel Committee. The table overleaf provides a snap shot of the beginning and end of the year.

	01.04.22	31.03.23
<b>Total Vacancies for EDDC (Recruiting in Progress &amp; Not Recruiting)</b>	38 (7.14% of the workforce)	35 (6.93% of the workforce)
<b>Average length of time a Recruiting in Progress vacancy is vacant</b>	99.94 days	125.21 days
<b>Total Positions filled by Agency</b>	22	35

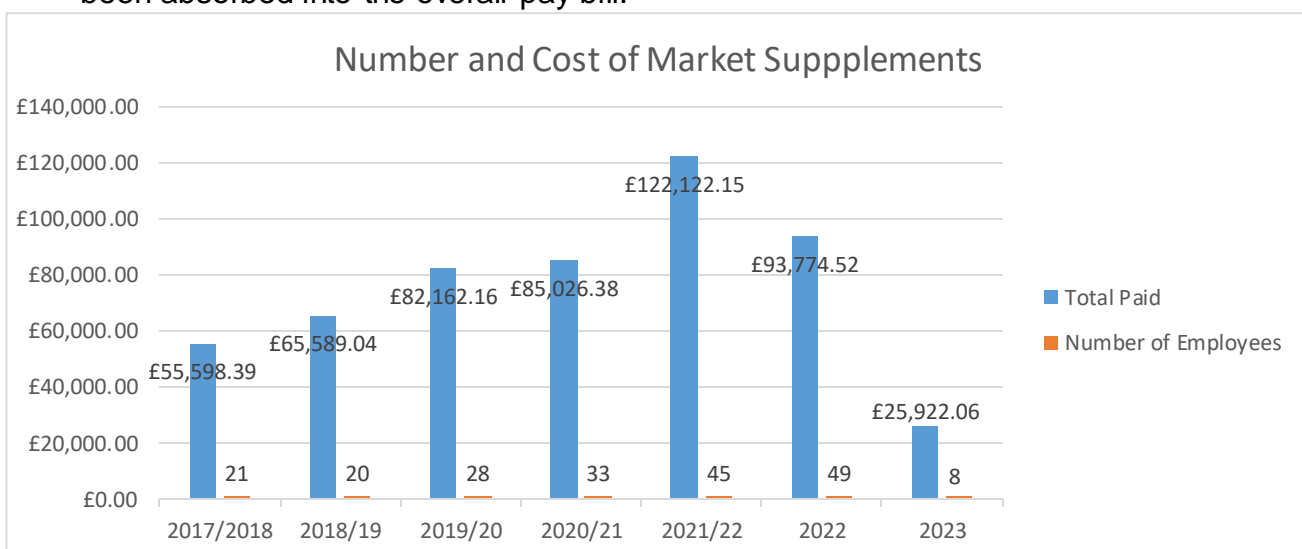
Although vacancy numbers remain similar it should be noted that as headcount this year has increased, the proportion of vacancies compared to the overall headcount has decreased (the figures shown in brackets above).

The increase in agency staff is due to seasonal appointments in StreetScene, assistance with elections and Homes for Ukraine and cover for posts whilst actively recruiting or for sickness absence.

The increase in length of time a recruiting in progress vacancy is vacant is due to a senior level recruitment campaign which has skewed the average. We needed to advertise one senior level post twice before a successful appointment was made and the successful applicant also needed to serve longer than 1 month notice period with the previous employer.

### 3.3. Market supplements

Market Supplements are an additional temporary payment to the basic salary of an employee where market pressures would otherwise prevent the Council from being able to recruit or retain staff with a particular skill. Market supplements are reviewed annually taking into account market data at that time. Up until the end of March 2022 there had been a 114% year on year increase in the number of market supplements applied to posts since 2018 from 21 to 45 at the end of March 2022. One of the aims of the Reward Review was to reduce the requirement for market supplements by ensuring alignment of standard grades to the market, where possible, thus negating their need. The graph below shows the level and cost of market supplements applied to posts up to introduction of the Reward Review in December 2022 and post Reward Review, with a significant reduction of 83.67% of the number of posts in receipt of a market supplement (from 49 to 8) and a 72.5% saving on market supplement costs which have now been absorbed into the overall pay bill.

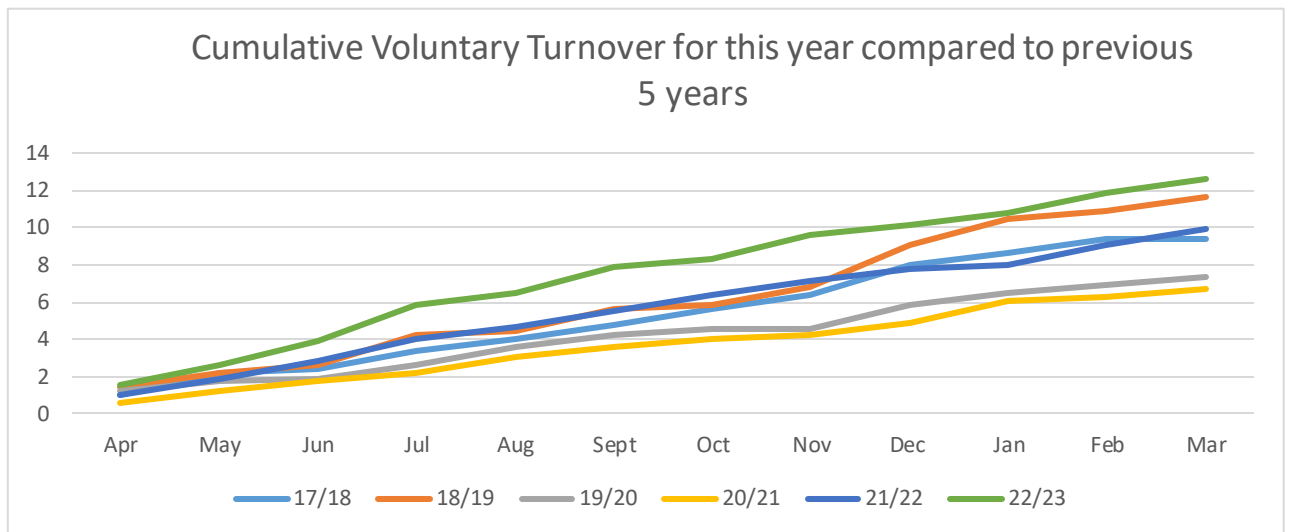


The 8 posts which are still in receipt of a market supplement are in Legal, Place, Asset and Commercialisation, Growth Development and Prosperity, and Environmental Health.

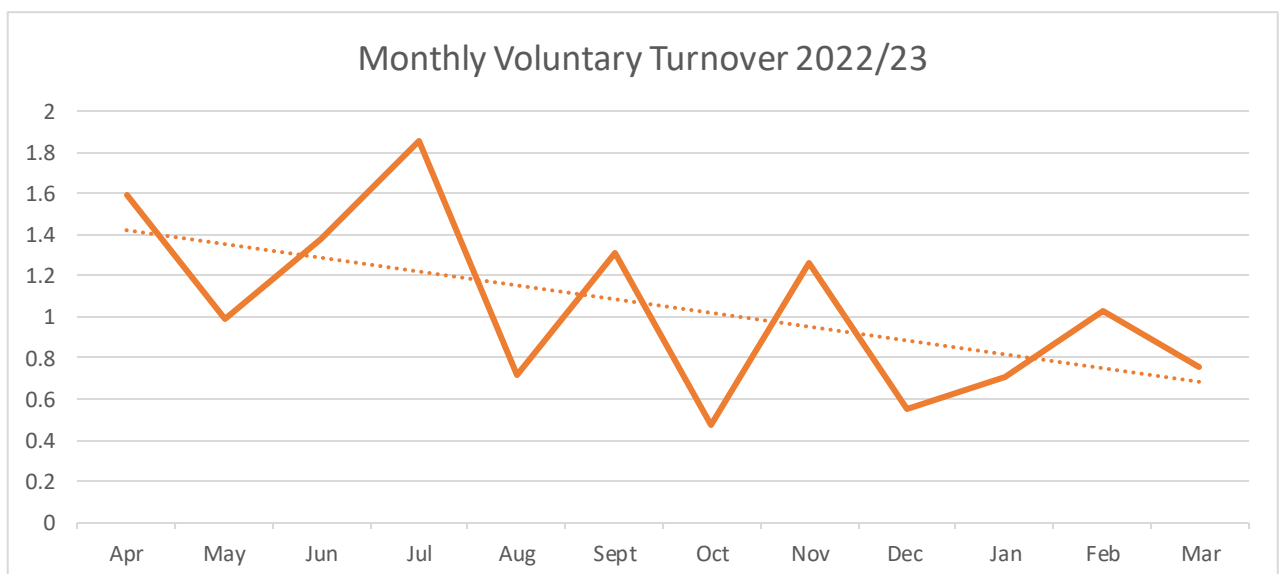
## 4 Turnover

### 4.1. Cumulative Voluntary Turnover

Voluntary turnover includes resignations and retirements (there is no compulsory retirement age). The graph below shows cumulative voluntary turnover for the last five years. At the end of 2022/23 voluntary turnover was 12.62%, equating to 67 voluntary leavers compared to 9.91% the previous year where there were 49 voluntary leavers. This is the highest level reported since 2018/19.



The Reward Review, along with other actions to mitigate against recruitment and retention challenges, aims to contribute to a reduction in voluntary turnover rates, although PwC (the consultancy who supported us with the Reward Review) advise that it can take circa 6-12 months to see the impact. However, as illustrated in the graph below, turnover slowed down at the end of the financial year to 0.76% compared to July when it was at its peak of 1.85%, which may indicate that the improved pay rates are starting to have an impact.



Reasons for leaving are varied and it is not always possible to identify a specific reason, particularly as not all leavers return an exit questionnaire or specify detailed reasons within their resignation letter. However from the data we have collected and held over the last year, the most common reason for leaving is “retirement”, followed by career advancement opportunity as shown below. Compared to the same period last year, there has been a shift in the reasons for leaving, with “better salary” and “change of career” being the joint most frequent reasons for 2021/22, closely followed by retirement. In order to obtain more qualitative data going forwards we have made improvements to our leavers form and implemented an on-line questionnaire which we hope will encourage a better response rate.



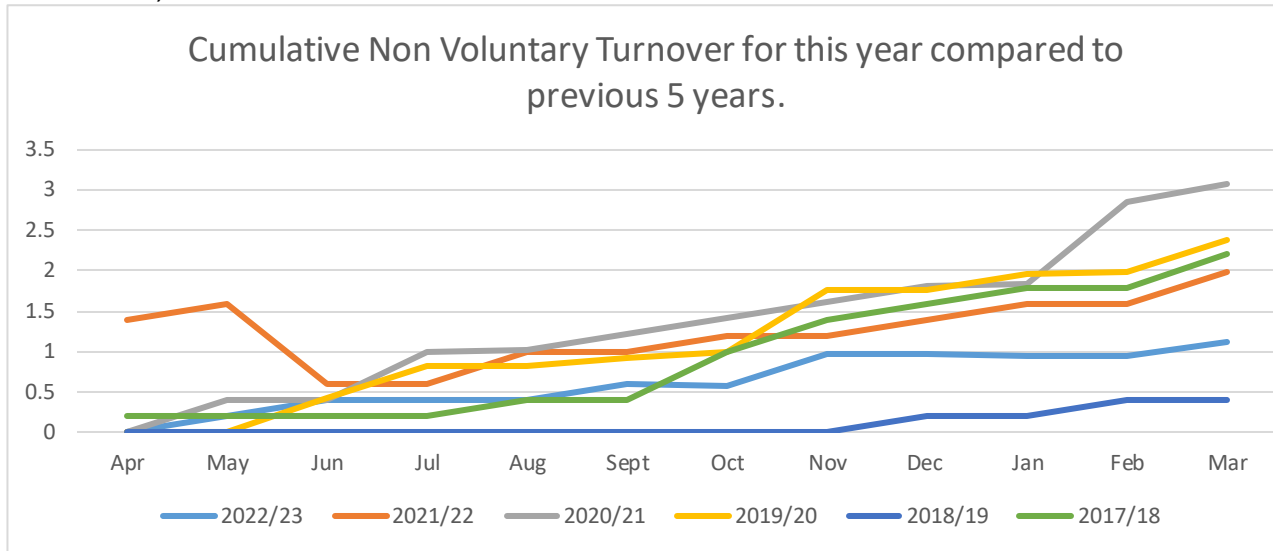
In 2022/23 7 employees left the Council within nine months of starting, this compares favourably with the previous year where we had 16 employees leave within 9 months. Reasons for leaving included:

- Approached by former employer with a higher salary
- Relocation
- Opportunity to Travel
- Family Reasons
- Unknown

#### **4.2. Cumulative Non-voluntary Turnover**

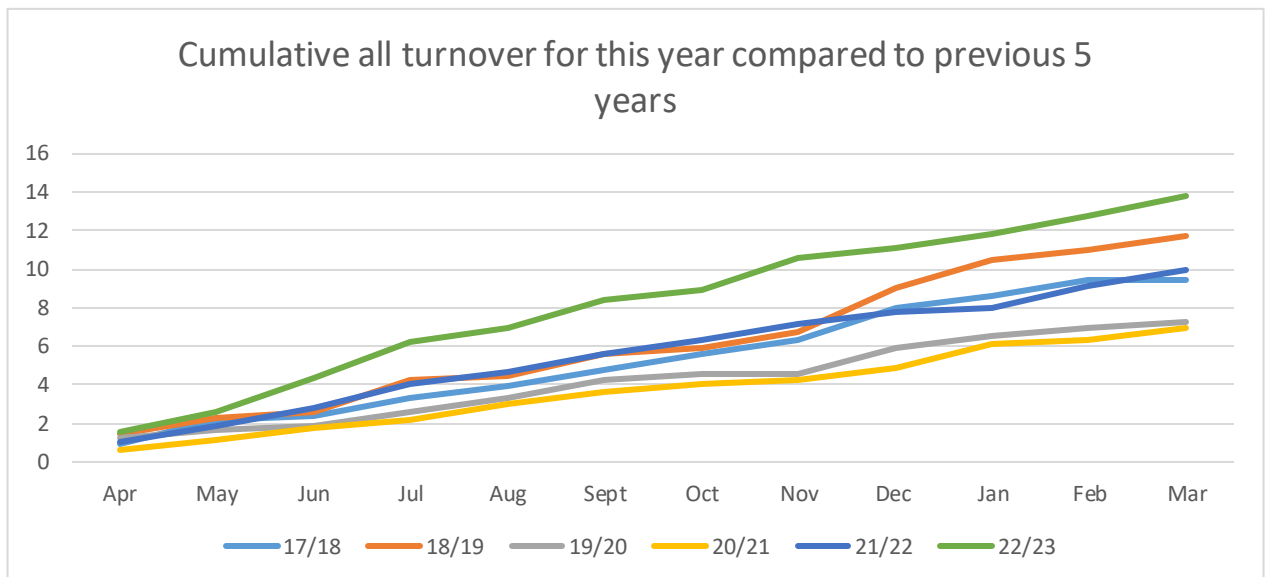
Non-voluntary turnover includes dismissals, redundancy and end of fixed term contracts. At the end of 2022/23 cumulative non-voluntary turnover was 1.13% (6 dismissals) which is lower than last year's at 1.98% (9 dismissals) and is lower than some of the previous years, particularly 2020/21 when it was 3.07% (14

dismissals).



### 4.3. Combined Cumulative Voluntary and Non-voluntary Turnover and Comparisons with Benchmarking Data

Looking at all turnover data (voluntary and non-voluntary), the 2022/23 cumulative turnover rate (13.75%) is the highest over the last five years, with only 2018/19 being second highest at 11.69%.



The table below from Local Government Inform shows local government turnover benchmark data for all (voluntary and non-voluntary) turnover. East Devon District Council's cumulative voluntary and non-voluntary turnover is less than the maximum for all the years where benchmarking data has been reported. Unfortunately there is no current benchmarking data for 2021/22 or 2022/23, although anecdotal feedback from other South West councils suggests that the sector is continuing to experience high levels of turnover, which is also evident in the wider economy.



Period	Labour turnover		
	%		
	Minimum for All local authority districts in South West	Mean for All local authority districts in South West	Maximum for All local authority districts in South West
2016/17	11	13	15
2017/18	9	15	22
2018/19	14	19	30
2019/20	no value	no value	no value
2020/21	7	11	19

Source:  
Local Government Association

## 5 Learning and development and ‘growing our own’

### 5.1. Learning and Development Activity

As shown in the table below, take up of training by employees has increased this year compared to last year, although there continues to be capacity challenges for staff finding time to attend training, which is also reflected in the Investor in People (IiP) reaccreditation report feedback.

This year we were allocated a larger training budget which we used to deliver a wider range of training including level 3 safeguarding training for front line staff. We were also allocated £10K from public health monies to provide training to support staff with positive mental health and to provide strategies to deal with difficult and challenging customer behaviour (which staff feedback as a growing trend).

As well as investment from our corporate budget for training we have made use of free fully funded training courses funded by the EU social fund and delivered by South Devon College. This training included Chartered Management Institute (CMI) level 3 in Coaching and Mentoring, CMI level 3 Project Management and CMI Level 2 Team Leading. This training would have cost the Council £36,000 and therefore is a significant saving.

Post training evaluation feedback on the learning and development offered continues to be positive.

Learning and development activity	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Number of learning and development events organised and delivered	32	31	61
Number of attendees	372	227	452
Overall spend (corporate training budget only)	£60,000	£34,514	£32,819
In addition to the above we also have 412 users with e-learning licenses who have completed 2304 courses comprising of 2998 modules.			

**Learning and development topics include:**

- Coaching Skills for Managers
- Coaching and Mentoring
- Dealing with Difficult Customers and Challenging Behaviours
- Developing a Growth Mind-set
- First Aid at work
- Job Evaluation
- Management Academy
- Managing for Efficiency
- Managing Hybrid Team
- Mental Health Awareness
- Mental Health and Resilience facilitated discussion group
- Pre-retirement Planning
- Project Management
- Recruitment and Selection
- Safeguarding Level 3
- Team Leading
- Wellbeing seminars
- Welcome Morning
- Superwellness webinars on 5 topical wellbeing areas.

**5.2. Apprenticeship Activity**

Apprenticeships are nationally accredited qualifications available to new and existing employees, which are funded by the Council's Apprenticeship Levy (the Council has to allocate 0.5% of its annual paybill to fund the Levy, which for 2022/23 was c£58k).

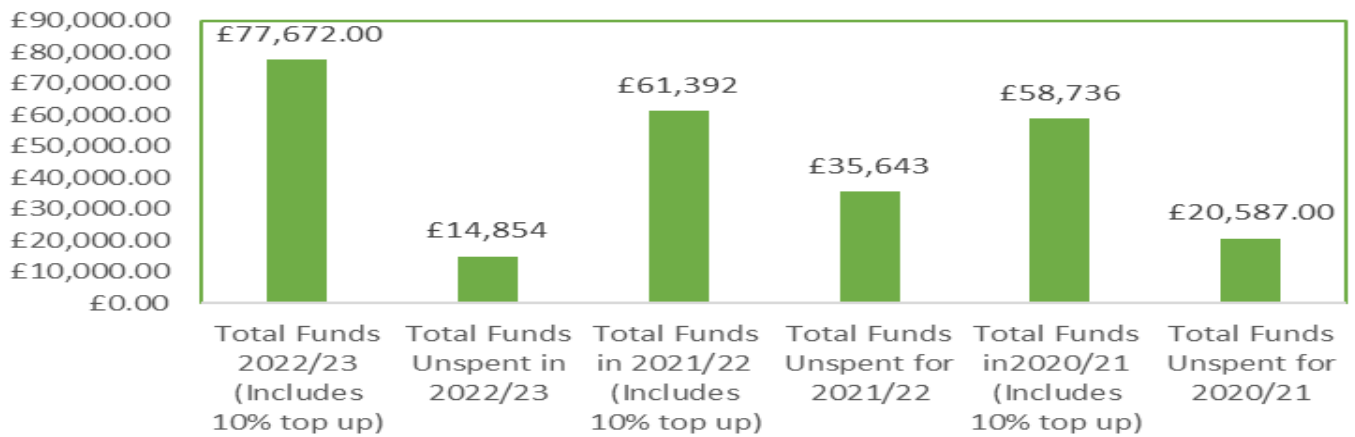
As at 31 March 2023 we have 11 employees undertaking an apprenticeship, this compares favourably to the same period the previous year where we had just 5 apprentices.

We have recruited to 3 new apprenticeship positions this year, 2 in Revenue and Benefits and 1 in Building Control, alongside existing staff who are undertaking apprenticeships to aid their development. The box below shows the apprenticeship qualifications being utilised.

**Apprenticeship qualifications currently used include:**

- Level 7 Chartered Town Planning (masters level)
- Level 7 Senior leader (masters level)
- Level 6 Environmental Health Practitioner (degree level)
- Level 6 Building Control Surveyor (degree level)
- Level 4 Business Analyst
- Level 3 Business Administrator

## Apprenticeship Levy Contribution and Spend for 2022/23 compared to previous 2 years



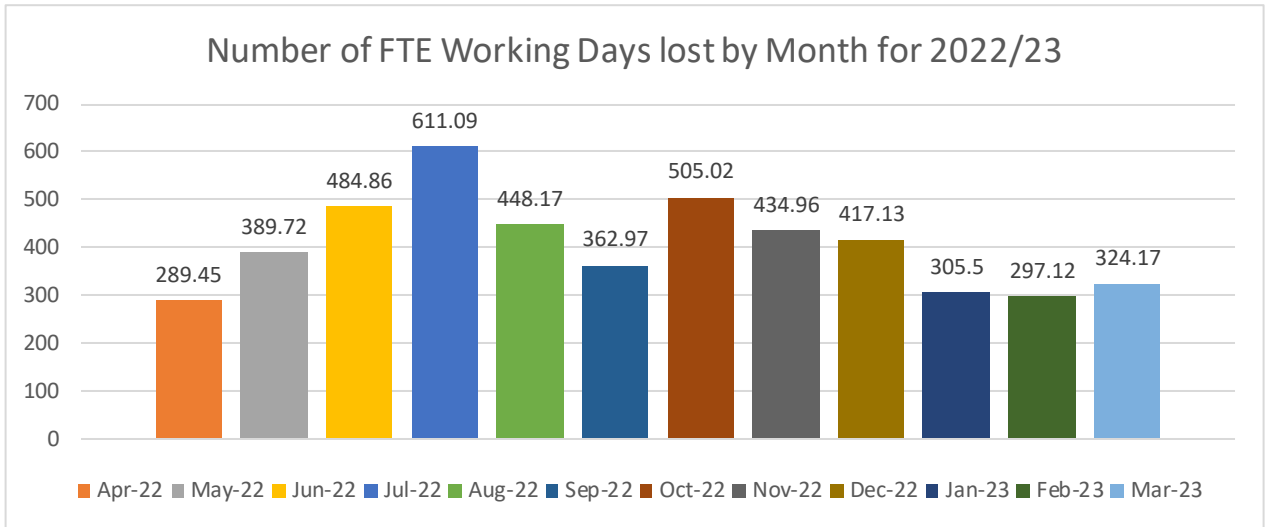
The Government's Levy Funding Rules mean that funds will expire and transfer to HMRC if they are not utilised within 24 months from the first month in which it is paid into our account. Monitoring Levy spend is therefore important, to ensure that we maximise its use. The graph above shows the total Levy fund and the amount that expired and was reclaimed by HMRC. The level of unspent funds has decreased compared to the same period last year which is as a result of the increase in apprenticeships,

Some progress has been made in the number of apprenticeships offered to new and existing staff over the last three years. The 'grow our own' work which is now in progress includes improvements to how the Council utilises apprenticeships which will also maximise Levy spend, whilst supporting recruitment, retention, workforce development and succession planning. We are currently working closely with Environmental Health to develop a pilot scheme to creating a structured career path and apprenticeship programme, which will then be used to support other service areas, aligned to their Workforce Plans.

## 6 Sickness Absence & Wellbeing

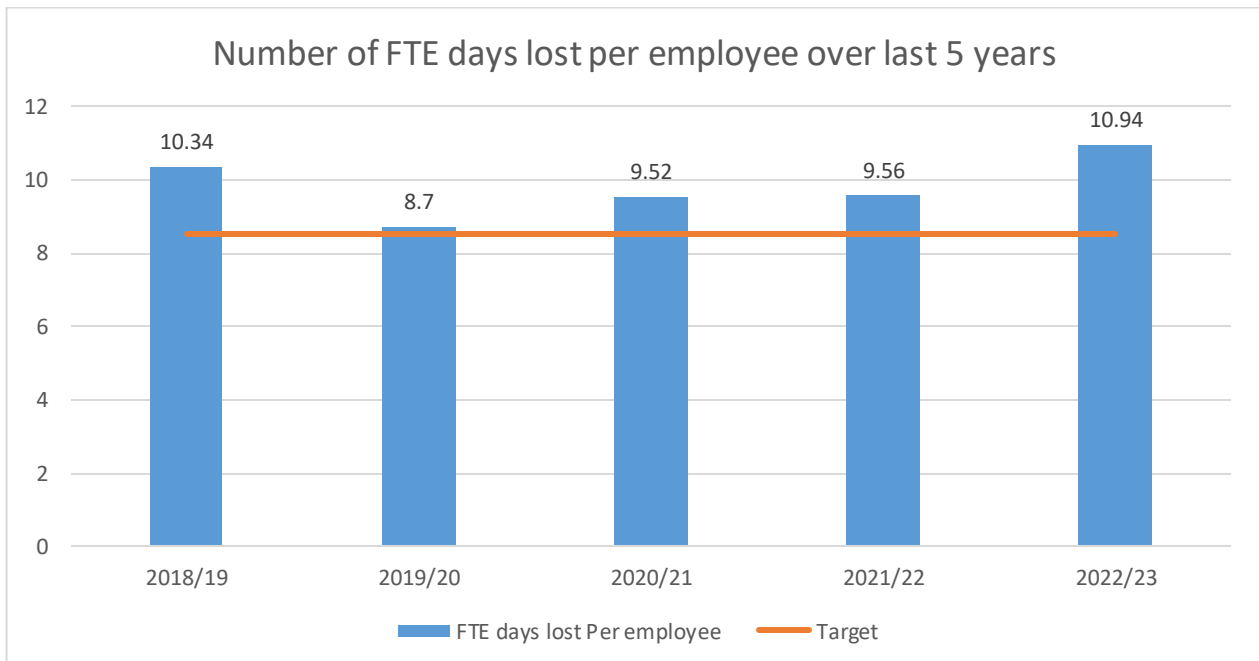
### 6.1. FTE Working Days Lost due to Sickness Absence

The graph below shows the total number of full time equivalent (FTE) working



days lost per month for the 2022/23 financial year.

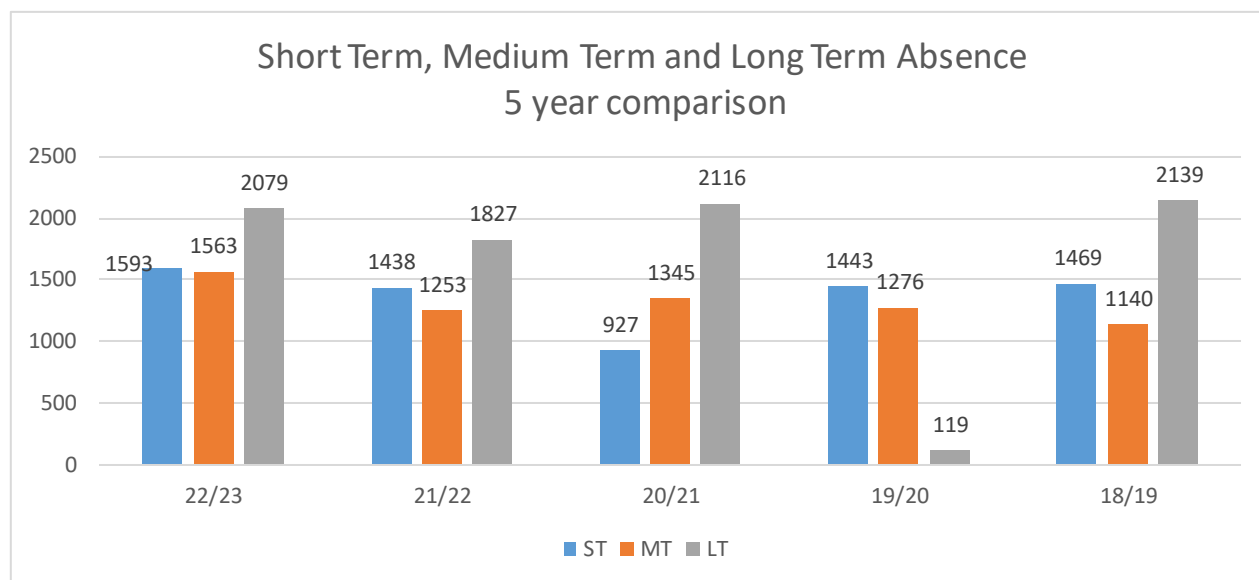
The Council's target is that no more than 8.5 working days should be lost through sickness absence, per employee. However, as shown in the graph below, we have been in excess of this target for the last five years, with 2022/23 being the highest at 10.94 days.



There is currently no up to date relevant benchmarking data available for district council's in Devon in relation to sickness absence. However we have recently gained data from 6 South West Councils which include County, Unitary and District and the average was 8.91 FTE days lost per person.

## 6.2. Reasons for Sickness Absence Short, Medium and Long-term Absence

Short-term absence (8 days or less) accounted for 30.4% of all absences in 2022/23, medium term (9 days – 2 months) was 29.89% and long term absence (more than 2 months) was 39.71%. Whilst the number of days have increased, the proportional split of all short/medium/long term absences remains comparable to last year. Comparison over the last five years is shown in the graph below.



### Short-term Absence

Short-term absence has increased by 10.7% compared to last year and has returned to similar levels previously reported prior to the pandemic. The number of FTE days lost is at the highest level reported in the last 5 years. Covid-19 is the main reason cited for short term absence, replacing the usual trend of Cold and Flu which is the second most common reason for short term absence. The Office for National Statistics reports national peaks in Covid-19 cases in July and October 2022 and analysis of our absences mirror the national trend with 28 employees reporting Covid-19 as their reason for absence in July 2022 and a second peak in October 2022 with 17 employees. If Covid-19 absence was excluded from our figures, the average FTE working days lost per person would be 9.9 days. According to an absence rates survey carried out by XpertHR, nearly half of the respondents (47.9%) reported that short-term sickness absence had increased in the last 12 months.

Phased return, which is used to assist employees to return to the workplace after a prolonged period of absence, was the third most common reason for short-term absence, compared to last year where it was the most common. The number of days lost to phased return has marginally increased by 10.7%.

The most common reasons for short-term absence over the last five years are shown in the table below:

Short Term Absence – 8 days or less.						
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
1	Covid-19 (Positive Test) (458 days)	Cold & Flu (280 days)	Phased Return to work (140 days)	Cold & Flu (399.5 days)	Cold & Flu (387 days)	Cold & Flu (313 days)
2	Cold/Flu (306 days)	Covid-19 Positive Test (244 days)	Stomach, Kidney, Liver Digestion (103 days)	Phased Return (251 days)	Chest, Respiratory (257.5 days)	Stomach, Kidney, Liver, Digestion (185.5 days)
3	Phased return to work (176 days)	Phased return to work (159 days)	Cold & Flu (100 days)	Stomach, Kidney, Liver, Digestion (217 days)	Back Problems (230 days)	Infections (80.5 days)

### Medium-term Absence

The most common reasons for medium-term absence over the last five years are shown in the table below:

Medium Term Absence (9 days to 2 months)						
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
1	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (personal) (410 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (personal) (303 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (personal) (525.5 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (personal) (446 days)	Other Muscular Skeletal Problems (243 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (personal) (317 days)
2	Other Muscular Skeletal Problems (225 days)	Other Muscular Skeletal Problems (148 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (work-related) (165 days)	Hospital treatment/operation (203 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (personal) (230 days)	Hospital treatment/operation (260 days)
3	Chest/Respiratory Problems (166 days)	Hospital treatment/operation (133 days)	Hospital Treatment/Operation (162 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (work-related) (193 days)	Hospital treatment/operation (173 days)	Other Muscular Skeletal Problems (247 days)

Medium Term absence has increased by 24.74% compared to the same period last year. For the 4<sup>th</sup> year running, personal stress, anxiety and fatigue is the most significant reason, cited by 19 employees which accounts for 26.23% of all medium term absence. Underlying issues which account for stress/anxiety include bereavement and family caring responsibilities as well as increase in operational demands.

## Long-term Absence

The most common reasons for long-term absence over the last five years are shown in the table below:

Long Term Absence (more than 2 months)						
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
1	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (work-related) (494 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (Personal) (504 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (Personal) (525.5 days)	Hospital treatment/operation (354 days)	Hospital treatment /operation (777 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (Personal) (282 days)
2	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (Personal) (477 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (work-related) (329 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (work-related) (165 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (Personal) (210 days)	Other Muscular Skeletal Issues (422 days)	Other muscular Skeletal Problems (208 days)
3	Covid-19 (289 days)	Heart, blood pressure, circulation (263 days)	Hospital treatment/operation (142 days)	Chest/Respiratory (165 days)	Eye, Ear, Nose & mouth /dental, Sinusitis (253 days)	Infections (114 days)

The number of employees absent for 2 months or more is up from the same period last year from 23 employees to 25. Consequently long term absence has increased for the second year by 13.79% from the previous year. Work-related stress, anxiety and fatigue is the most significant reason for long term absence, cited by 5 employees and ranging from between 44 to 177 days. 23.76% of long-term absence and 9.4% of all absences were lost as result of work-related stress, anxiety and fatigue, an increase on last year's reported 7.2%. Work-related stress has not appeared in the top 3 reasons for absence in the previous 5 year reporting period. All cases have been under careful case management in accordance with our Absence Policy, including proactive discussions and support, risk assessment and occupational health advice.

For the first time we are also seeing Covid-19 as a reason for long term absence. 3 employees have experienced long-Covid and absence ranges from 61-157 days. Long-Covid is still a relatively new illness and it may take time to fully understand the effects which can be wide ranging and substantial. In terms of managing this type of absence we have focused on making reasonable adjustments in order to facilitate a return to work, with 2 of the 3 employees since making a successful return to work.

A recent sickness absence survey carried out by XpertHR states that the public sector continues to record the highest levels of absence compared to the private sector and reports an increase in levels of anxiety, stress, depression, long-Covid and work-related stress which mirrors our experience this year.

For all sickness absence, the Council continues to proactively utilise its Absence Management Policy and uses a HR Business Partner model which focuses on distinct areas of the organisation to proactively advise and support on workforce issues. The aim is to secure an early return to work where possible and utilise return to work interviews, counselling and support, coaching, wellbeing initiatives, and Mental Health First Aiders. The Policy also includes 'trigger points', for

example 9 days or 4 or more instances of sickness absence in a rolling 12 month period which ensure that timely action is taken. We also initiate occupational health referrals where necessary, with 46 referrals during 2022/23, and implement reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act and use phased returns as an approach to facilitate a return to work.

### 6.3. Employee wellbeing support

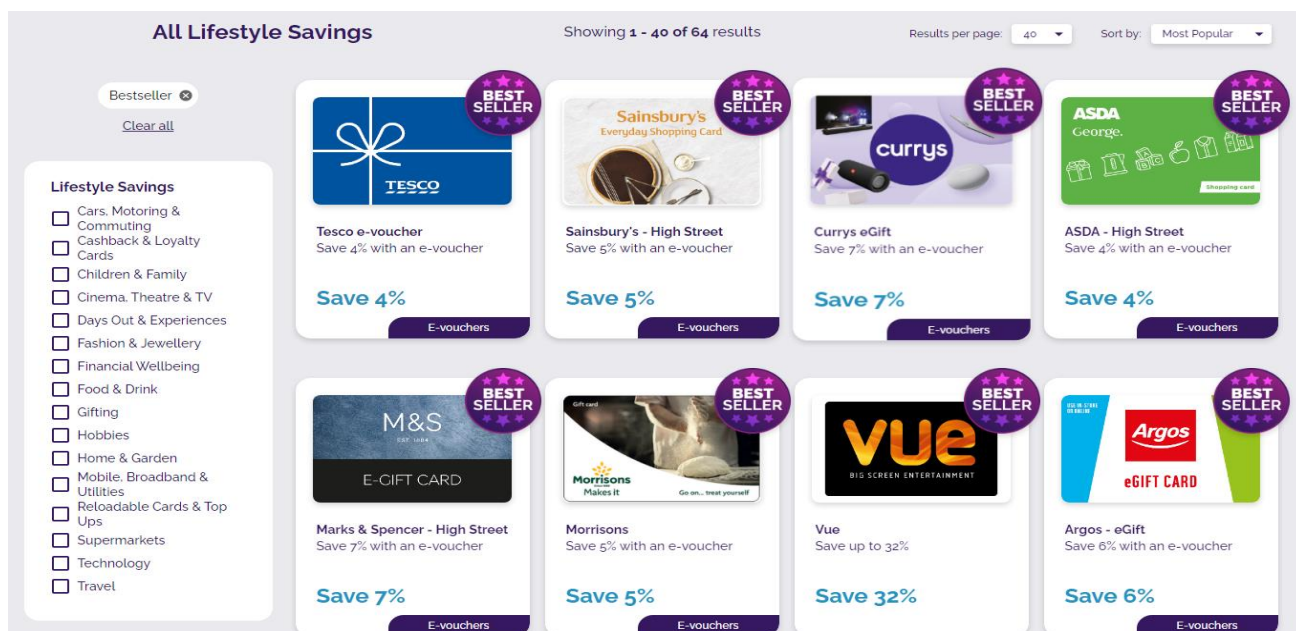
Overall spend on employee wellbeing and support services for the year 2022/23, which includes the Employee Assistance Programme, fitness for employment screening and occupational health referrals, health surveillance of StreetScene staff and flu vaccinations was £20,368, an increase on the previous year when it was £8,936. This is due to a combination of an increase of new starters who require pre-employment screening and completion of the compulsory health surveillance of StreetScene staff who use hand held vibration equipment and have exposure to high levels of noise.

The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provides a confidential and anonymous service for employees to get impartial advice and support through counselling or advice on a range of issues which affect employee wellbeing. During 2022/23 there were 32 calls to the employee helpline, with 31.25% of all calls related to bereavement, followed by anxiety at 21.87% and then low mood and work demands, both at 12.5%. We have recently changed EAP supplier. Our new EAP programme offers up to 6 face to face counselling sessions with qualified counsellors on a range of issues but also provides employees access to "Your Care" a wellbeing hub with assessments, goal setting and a plethora of resources which incorporate the spectrum of aspects which contribute to a person's overall sense of wellbeing.

The screenshot shows the 'Your Care' wellbeing hub interface. At the top, there are logos for 'your care' and 'East Devon' on the left, and a helpline number '24/7 Helpline: 0330 380 0658' on the right. Below the logos is a navigation bar with icons and labels for 'Dashboard', 'Assessments', 'Goals', 'Resources', and 'Essentials'. The 'Resources' section is highlighted, featuring a search bar and a row of category filters: Alcohol, Finance, General wellbeing, Healthy eating, Mental health and wellbeing, Physical activity, Sleep, and Smoking. The main content area displays several resource cards. The largest card is titled 'Walking for your wellbeing' under the 'Physical activity' category, with a sub-headline 'Regular exercise is one of the most effective ways to protect your health and boost wellbeing.' Below this are four smaller cards: 'Balancing your blood sugar' (Healthy eating), 'Dreams - part 5' (Sleep), 'What Rob Lowe loved about coming off alcohol' (Alcohol), and 'Tyson Fury's fights for his mental health' (Mental health and wellbeing). At the bottom of the page, a taskbar shows various open applications and system icons.



The Council's Happy Healthy Here wellbeing programme, which also includes the promotion of healthy eating, exercise and other wellbeing support, continues to be promoted to all employees. In January 2023, we introduced a new staff benefit to help employee's financial wellbeing, a lifestyles discount hub which allows employees to make savings on every day purchases such as the weekly shop and other everyday items to help salaries stretch further and to relieve some of the burden of the cost of living crisis. So far we are pleased with the level of engagement and sign up which is currently 71.9% and we will continue to encourage employees to take up this offer.



We have also utilised an additional £10k budget to enhance the wellbeing offer provided to employees, through targeted training and coaching to Housing and Revenues and Benefits staff. On a wider scale we have also implemented a series of live webinars, focusing on singular issues which affect mental health and wellbeing.

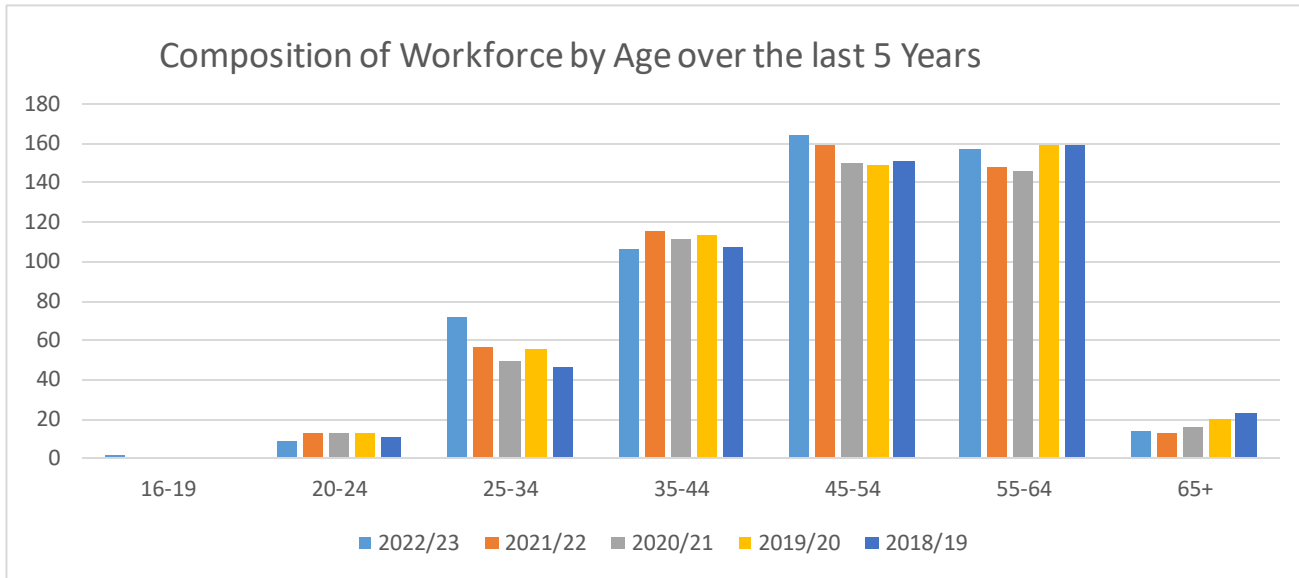
## 7 Employee Relations

Employee relations issues include dealing with employee grievances, disciplinary matters and dismissals (which can include redundancy or cessation of fixed term contract dismissals). In 2022/23 there were 9 dismissals which is the same as the previous year, with 3 due to the end of fixed term contracts and no redundancy dismissals. There were 2 grievances this year, compared to none in 2021/22 and 6 disciplinary matters, compared to 3 the previous year.

## 8 Workforce Profile

### 8.1 Age

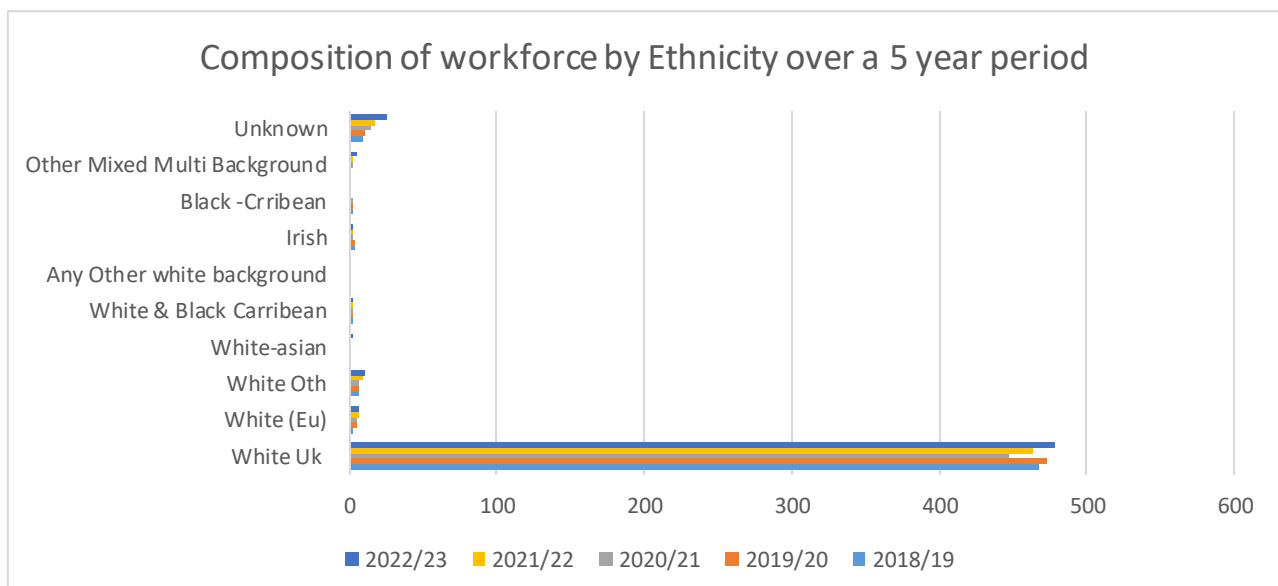
The average age of the workforce is currently 48 compared to last year when it was 49. The largest proportion of the workforce are aged between 45-54



(31.3%), with 55-64 following closely behind at 29.9%, meaning that 61.2% of the workforce is aged between 45-64 years. For the first time in 5 years we have 2 employees who are aged between 16-19.

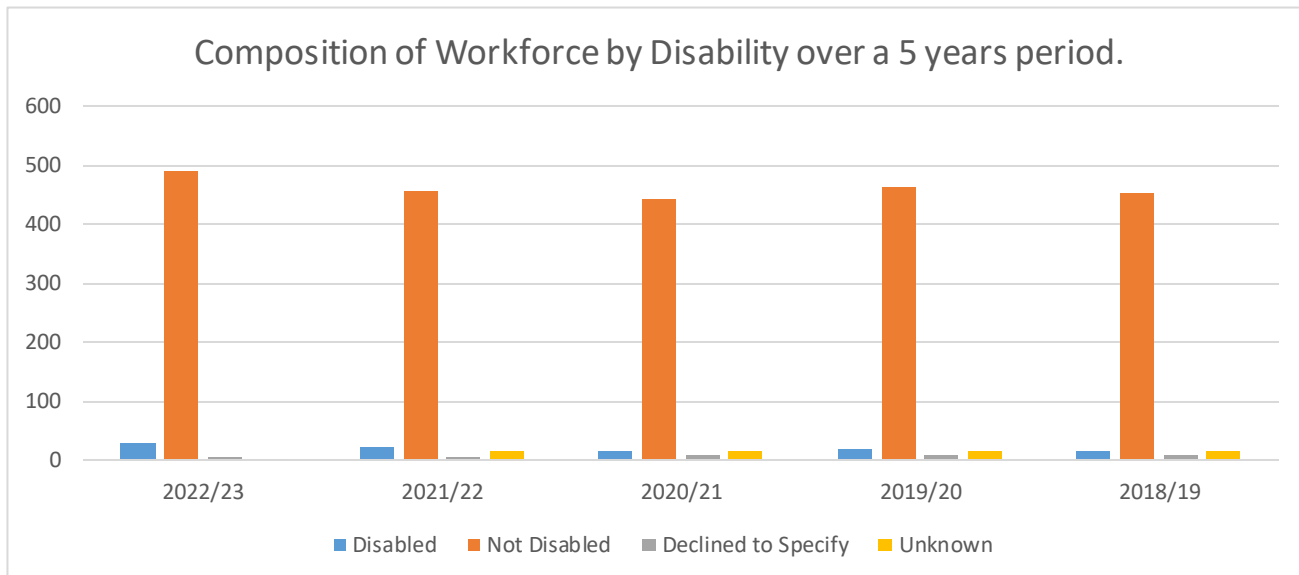
### 8.2 Ethnicity

Results from the most recent 2021 census report that that 2.3% of East Devon's residents are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. From data we have available 1.12% of our workforce is from a BAME background. Those employees who identify as White UK (English, Welsh, Scottish, & Northern Irish) accounts for 90.41% of the workforce compared to 97.4% of the East Devon population. However, as shown on the graph below, many staff do not provide this information and we continue to promote the completion of this data in the self-service part of the HR system, to enable improved monitoring.



### 8.3 Disability

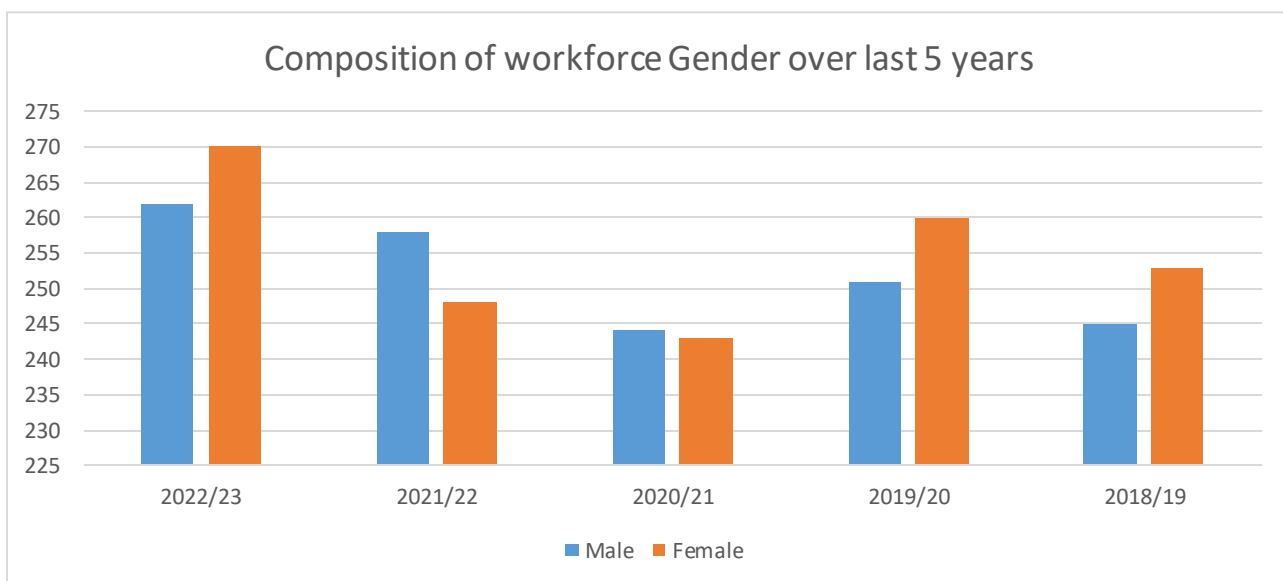
The percentage of employees who have self-declared a disability is currently 5.82% of the workforce which is an increase compared to last years reported figure of 4.74% of the workforce. The Council is a Disability Confident employer and is also signed up to the MINDFUL employer initiative which demonstrates the Council's commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing of its employees. As with ethnicity, we continue to promote the completion of this field with our



workforce.

### 8.4 Gender

The Gender split of the workforce for 2022/23 is generally at an even level. There are 1.5% more females than males working for the Council. The gender split is 270 Females (50.75%) and 262 Males (49.25%). This is a trend which has reversed compared to last year when there were 1.97% more males than females.



Employers in Great Britain with more than 250 staff are required by law to publish their Gender Pay Gap. The results of the Gender Pay Gap analysis for the Council for 2022/23 shows that 6.18% of females are paid lower than males for the mean average of all hourly rates calculated separately for all males and females). This has decreased from last year's analysis which was 8.29%. The increase is a result of more women being paid in the upper middle quartile as shown in the table below. We anticipate that next year our Gender Pay Gap will improve further as we have recently recruited 2 female Directors.

	Female	
<b>MEAN</b> (the average value of all hourly rates calculated separately for males and females and then % difference between the two)	6.18% (8.29%) Lower than males	
<b>MEDIAN</b> (the middle value of all the hourly rates calculated separately for males and females in descending order, highest first and then the % difference between the two)	0.41% (0.67%) Lower than males	
<b>Quartiles</b> – All employees listed from the highest hourly rate to lowest equally divided into 4 quartiles. Represented as a %	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
• Upper (136 employees)	83(59)	53(41)
• Upper Middle (136 employees)	45(35)	91(65)
• Lower Middle (136 employees)	52(36)	84(64)
• Lower (136 employees)	86(60)	50(40)