



## Agenda for Personnel Committee Tuesday, 30th June, 2026, 10.00 am

### Members of Personnel Committee

Councillors: E Rylance (Chair), J Loudoun (Vice-Chair), P Arnott, A Bailey, B Bailey, K Blakey, V Bonetta, J Brown, M Chapman, T Dumper, J Heath, S Hunt, Y Levine, S Westerman and E Wragg

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

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(or group number 01395 517546)

Monday 22 June 2026; re-issued 24 June 2026

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This meeting is being recorded for subsequent publication on the Council's website and will be streamed live to the [East Devon District Council Youtube Channel](#)

1 Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 3 - 6)

To agree the minutes of the previous meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

2 Apologies

3 Declarations of interest

Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)

4 Public speaking

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 Annual People Data (Pages 7 - 34)

8 HR Update (Pages 35 - 41)

9 Probation Policy (Pages 42 - 59)

10 Health and Safety update (Pages 60 - 93)

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Members of the public exercising their right to speak during Public Speaking will be recorded.

[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 31 March 2026****Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 10.59 am

**21 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026 were confirmed as a correct record.

**22 Declarations of interest**

None.

**23 Public speaking**

None.

**24 Matters of urgency**

None.

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

None.

**26 Health and Safety update quarter 3**

The Assistant Director for Environmental Health had provided the committee with a review of the Council's performance in relation to Health and Safety and the work undertaken by the Corporate Health and Safety Team during the third quarter of 2025/26. Highlighted work included:

- Implementation of the new Corporate Safety and Lone Worker systems are progressing well.
- Meeting of Central Joint Safety Panel on 18/11/25. Currently reviewing membership criteria before arranging next meeting.
- No reportable (to HSE) accidents in Q.3. Other accidents and violent incident reports reviewed and investigated as necessary.
- Significant amount of training delivered in Q3.
- Site audits carried out. Significant progress in addressing issues.
- Fire and blue light drills up to date.
- Service risk assessments currently being updated.

The Vice Chair welcomed the report and the improvements made over recent months, particularly in light of the time resource required for aspects such as detailed risk assessments.

**RESOLVED that the third quarter report be noted.**

## 27 **People Data**

The Corporate Lead – People and Information presented her report, highlighting key data from the period up to end January 2026:

- Headcount increased from 565 to 569; FTE rose from 529.34 to 532.52, moving closer to the budgeted establishment.
- 10 posts currently attract market supplements, covering 21 employees (down by one this period). The annual review for market supplements is scheduled for April 2026.
- Vacancy administration alignment work with Finance still ongoing; figures expected to change once completed. Recorded vacancies reduced from 67 to 57; further reductions are expected after Assistant Director review.
- Recruitment Activity stood at 24 posts actively being recruited; 13 appointments made and pending start. 34 posts were under review as part of vacancy reconciliation work.
- Agency-filled positions reduced from 29 to 20 following iTrent data cleansing.
- Average time to hire increased to 84.73 days (short-period fluctuation).
- Longer-term trend remains stable at between 58 and 62 days, within acceptable margins.
- Year-to-date voluntary turnover at 7.82%, projected 9.38% by year end (improved from earlier 10.42%);
- 58 leavers by end of January (2 fewer than same period last year) with the main drivers being retirement (28%) and career moves (27.1%).
- Involuntary Turnover increased to 2.67% from 1.78% same period last year; still within expected norms.
- Sickness Absence
- The projected year-end absence: 10.60 days per FTE (improved from July's 11.42); Work-related stress remains main long-term cause, mirroring national trends. Without long-term sickness, projected absence would be 5.13 days per FTE. To mitigate this, targeted wellbeing and management support interventions ongoing.

Comment from the committee included congratulating on the improving figures.

**RESOLVED that the Committee noted the People Data report.**

## 28 **HR update**

The Corporate Lead – People and Information outlined her report to the committee that set out an overview of key areas of activity across the organisation in relation to people activity.

People Strategy & Staff Survey: A staff briefing was held on 11 March which included the people strategy. Following the survey feedback, the key priorities were on greater visibility and communication.

Further work on the delivery of the strategy has included:

- Mentoring Programme framework developed following strong demand from staff and the scheme is expected to go live April 2026;
- Coffee & Connect initiative launched to encourage networking post-Covid. A successful event was held for International Women's Day and further sessions are planned;
- Total Reward Information: one-stop resource for all reward/benefits developed and due to be launched on One Team East Devon hub; with an external version to follow for recruitment.
- Staff survey feedback would be incorporated into People Strategy Action Plan, and each directorate had agreed and is communicating three priority areas to their teams;

- Two staff-led groups had been established: “How We Connect” and “Safe & Supported” with their terms of reference completed and first meetings scheduled;
- Review underway on Performance Excellence Reviews and 1-2-1 meetings to ensure alignment with new behaviours and the people strategy. The annual timing of PERs under consideration due to operational challenges;
- Major legislative update implemented across 2026–27 in relation to the Employment Rights Act 2025, including ensuring compliance and updating policies as stages of the new act roll out.
- A team of four will represent EDDC at the South West Challenge on 26 March, participating in strategic simulations for leadership development.

On learning and development, it was reported that:

- 14 active apprentices; 9 completions between April 2025–March 2026.
- No levy funds expired; average spend £7,887/month.
- Government’s 10% levy top-up removed from April 2026—minimal impact expected.
- Learning and Development Plan being shaped around the 70:20:10 learning model; with greater focus on blended learning and shorter (½-day) sessions.
- Positive pilot of change & resilience workshops—now incorporated for 2026/27.

The committee were also updated on the Streetscene workforce:

- Improved resourcing through integration of permanent/seasonal needs and reduced essential criteria (e.g., removal of driving licence requirement for some roles); with a new accessible application form created.
- Recruitment fair held 13 March at Camperdown Depot (15 expressions of interest); Manstone Depot event planned for April.
- Induction pack currently being reviewed for consistency and quality.

A new employee benefit – Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) would be available from May 2026, providing tax and NI savings for staff and NI savings for the Council. A suggestion from the committee included consideration of the contribution saving to the Council under the scheme being passed onto the employee, as happened in some private sector businesses.

In response to a question, the committee would also be kept updated on work specifically relating to assisting staff during the period of preparation for local government review. The committee welcomed the comprehensive update and specifically highlighted the success of the apprentices.

The Chair welcomed the national campaign for recruitment to local government, and thanked the Corporate Lead – People and Information and her team for their continued work.

**RESOLVED** that the HR update report be noted.

## 29 **2025 LGA Survey results**

The committee considered the Local Government Association’s published data on the national picture of the local government workforce. This gave the committee some benchmarking data and helpful information of the national picture, including:

- Changes in size of the workforce;
- Factors impacting sourcing staff;
- Apprenticeships;

- Staff age groups across sectors;
- Staff ethnicity;
- Staff disability status;
- Gender breakdown and pay gap;
- Average salaries;
- Total staff bills;
- Collective bargaining for pay awards.

The report would be disseminated to all Councillors for information.

**RESOLVED** to note the LGA government workforce report for 2025.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

E Rylance (Chair)  
J Loudoun (Vice-Chair)  
P Arnott  
K Blakey  
V Bonetta  
T Dumper

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

S Westerman  
R Collins

**Officers in attendance:**

Matthew Blythe, Assistant Director Environmental Health  
James Docherty, Assistant Director Governance & Legal  
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer  
Gemma Roberts, Corporate Lead People and Information Governance

**Councillor apologies:**

A Bailey  
B Bailey  
J Brown  
J Heath  
N Hookway  
Y Levine  
E Wragg

Chair .....

Date: .....



**Report to:** Personnel Committee

**Date of Meeting** 30 June 2026

**Heading/Title:** Annual People Data Report and Learning and Development Annual Report for 2025/26

**Cabinet Member(s):** N/A

**Director/Assistant Director:** Melanie Wellman

**Author and Directorate:** Sarah Vincent, HR Support & People Development Manager [Governance]

**Contact Details** sarah.vincent@eastdevon.gov.uk

**Key decision** No No

**If a Key Decision has it appeared on Forward Plan** N/A

**Document classification:** Part A Public Document

**Exemption applied:** Choose an exempt classification or “None” if the report can be considered in public. Highlight in yellow the areas of report of confidential/exempt information

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 This report presents the Council’s annual people data for 2025/26. It provides Members with an overview of workforce metrics, trends and analysis across key areas including headcount, recruitment, vacancies, turnover, learning and development, apprenticeships, sickness absence, employee relations and workforce profile. The report highlights that the workforce remains broadly stable, with modest headcount growth, steady turnover and continued progress in learning, development and grow our own activity. It also identifies ongoing workforce risks, particularly in relation to recruitment in some frontline and specialist roles, an ageing workforce profile and sickness absence remaining above target.

## **2. Recommendations/Decision**

- 2.1 That Personnel Committee notes the contents of the Annual People Data Report 2025/26, including the key workforce trends, risks and areas of progress identified within it.
- 2.2 That Personnel Committee notes the priority actions for 2026/27, including continued focus on recruitment and retention in hard-to-fill roles,

management capability, sickness absence reduction, employee wellbeing, succession planning and workforce development in preparation for future organisational change.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendations/Decision**

- 3.1 The report enables the Committee to discharge its oversight role in relation to workforce matters by reviewing the Council's annual people data, understanding key workforce risks and considering areas where further action or monitoring may be required.

### **4. Options**

- 4.1 The principal option considered is to present the report for noting and discussion, with any further actions addressed through the Council's existing workforce planning, policy and management arrangements.

### **5. Relevance to Council Plan/priorities**

Set out how report links to the Council Plan/priorities:

- A supported and engaged community that has the right homes in the right places, with appropriate infrastructure
- A sustainable environment that is moving towards carbon neutrality and which promotes ecological recovery.
- A vibrant and resilient economy that supports local business, provides local jobs and leads to a reduction in poverty and inequality.
- A well-managed, financially secure and continuously improving council that delivers quality services

#### **Indicate how the recommendations/decision contributes to the delivery of the Council Plan and its priorities**

The report supports the priority of being a well-managed, financially secure and continuously improving council that delivers quality services. It does so by providing evidence on workforce capacity, resilience and organisational performance, and by identifying priority actions to strengthen management capability, workforce planning and service sustainability.

### **6. Financial Comments/Implications**

There are no direct financial implications in the recommendations.

### **7. Legal Comments/Implications**

There are no specific legal implications requiring comment.

### **8. Risk Implications**

**Risk assessment completed below.**

8.1 If the issues identified in the report are not addressed through ongoing management action, there is a risk of reduced workforce resilience, continued recruitment and retention difficulties in key services, higher sickness absence, and weaker succession planning at a time of organisational change.

8.2 The report itself does not create new operational risks, but it highlights existing workforce risks that are being managed through recruitment activity, market supplements where appropriate, targeted workforce planning, management development, wellbeing support, monitoring of sickness absence and continued learning and development activity.

8.3 The risk section should also include the risks for all the options considered.

Activity/ plant/ materials etc	List significant hazards	People at risk	Assessment of Risk			Existing controls e.g. Safety procedures	What further action  Is required to control/mitigate the risk?
			*Impact 1-4	*Likeli hood 1-4	Risk Score		
Workforce planning and service delivery	Reduced workforce resilience arising from recruitment and retention difficulties, higher sickness absence, and an ageing workforce profile.	Service areas, employees and service users	3	3	6	Regular workforce monitoring, recruitment activity, market supplements where justified, management development, sickness absence management , wellbeing support, apprenticeshi ps and succession planning.	Continue targeted workforce planning in hard-to-fill services, improve management capability and mandatory training compliance, monitor absence trends through dashboard reporting, and keep workforce risks under review through regular reporting.

\*Impact – Major = 4 Serious = 3 Significant = 2 Minor = 1

\*Likelihood – Very Likely = 4 Likely = 3 Unlikely = 2 Remote = 1

## 9. Equality Implications (Public Sector Equality Duty)

- 9.1 This relevance assessment aims to analyse gathered information for potential relevance to equality. If a Full Equality Impact Assessment is required ([Equality analysis impact assessment form](#)), include it as an appendix. At the minimum, the following table must be completed.

<p><b>Scope</b> (<i>Provide an overview, including objectives and desired outcomes</i>)</p>	<p>Annual People Data Report 2025/26. The report provides an overview of workforce information and trends to support committee oversight of the Council's people-related risks, priorities and performance.</p>
<p><b>Evidence gathered and engagement</b> (<i>List stakeholders consulted and relevant processes, policies, and data sources</i>)</p>	<p>Evidence has been drawn from the Council's HR and payroll systems, learning and development records, apprenticeship data, sickness absence data, recruitment data, exit information and relevant benchmarking referenced within the annual report.</p>
<p><b>Relevance assessment findings</b> (<i>If relevant to equality, undertake a full EIA or If no relevance to equality, explain why with supporting information</i>)</p>	<p>A full EIA is required: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, this assessment has demonstrated relevance to equality with regard to: Please check relevant boxes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Age                      <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy and maternity  <input type="checkbox"/> Disability              <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation  <input type="checkbox"/> Race                      <input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment  <input type="checkbox"/> Sex                      <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage or Civil Partnership  <input type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief    <input type="checkbox"/> Armed Forces  <input type="checkbox"/> Other, e.g. carers, care leavers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.</p> <p>If no, explain why: The report is primarily an information and monitoring report. It presents workforce data, including information relevant to age, disability, ethnicity and gender, to support oversight and inform future action. It does not in itself propose a policy change or service redesign that would have a direct adverse equality impact. Any future actions arising from the issues identified in the report will need to continue to have due regard to equality impacts where relevant.</p>
<p><b>Relevance ranking</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> High – Very relevant to protected characteristics  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium – Somewhat relevant to protected characteristics  <input type="checkbox"/> Low – Not relevant to protected characteristics</p>
<p><b>Key findings and impacts</b></p>	<p>The report shows the importance of continued monitoring of workforce profile and experience across different groups, particularly in relation to age profile, disability declaration, ethnicity declaration and gender pay considerations. No direct negative impact arises from noting the</p>

	report, but the data supports targeted workforce actions where appropriate.
<b>Conclusion drawn</b> ( <i>i.e No major changes needed; EIA found no negative impact or adjust policy/process to remove identified barriers</i> )	No major change is required as a result of this report. The report should continue to inform workforce planning and monitoring, and any specific proposals arising from it should be subject to further equality consideration where necessary.
<b>Actions</b> ( <i>Proposed actions to mitigate negative impacts on identified groups</i> )	Continue to monitor workforce trends and, where specific actions are developed in response to the report, ensure these are supported by appropriate equality analysis.
<b>Signed off by</b>	[Officer completion required]

## 10. HR and Workforce Implications

- 10.1 The report sets out the Council's workforce position and identifies HR and workforce priorities for 2026/27. These include continued focus on recruitment and retention, management capability, absence management, learning and development, apprenticeships, employee wellbeing and succession planning.

## 11. Community Safety Implications (Crime and Disorder)

- 11.1 There are no direct community safety implications arising from this report.

## 12. Climate Change Implications

- 12.1 The report includes information on business travel and associated emissions, and therefore supports monitoring of workforce-related climate impacts. It does not in itself propose a change to the Climate Change Strategy or Action Plan, but it provides relevant workforce data that can inform the Council's wider climate objectives.

## 13. Health & Safety and Health & Wellbeing Implications

- 13.1 There are no direct additional health and safety implications arising from the report itself. However, the report highlights workforce health-related issues, including sickness absence trends, which continue to be managed through existing policies, management processes and support arrangements.
- 13.2 The report has clear health and wellbeing relevance because it includes analysis of sickness absence, stress-related absence, employee assistance provision and wider wellbeing activity. The report supports continued attention to employee wellbeing as part of the Council's workforce planning and management approach.

#### **14. Procurement and Social Value implications**

14.1 There are no direct procurement or social value implications arising from this report.

**Further guidance is provided at the end of the report.**

#### **15. Land and Buildings (non-housing)/Asset Management Implications**

15.1 There are no land, buildings or asset management implications arising from this report.

#### **16. Overview and Scrutiny Committees Comments/Recommendations**

16.1 Not applicable at this stage.

#### **17. Digital and Data**

17.1 The report draws on digital HR, payroll and learning system data to provide workforce analysis. There are no new digital or data implications arising from the recommendation to note the report.

#### **18. Consultation and Engagement**

18.1 The report is based on internal workforce data and analysis compiled by officers. It also reflects ongoing management monitoring and relevant external benchmarking referenced in the annual people data report.

#### **19. Communications**

19.1 There are no specific communications implications arising from the recommendation to note the report. Any external communication would be subject to the Council's normal communications processes if required.

#### **20. Next Steps**

20.1 Following consideration by Personnel Committee, the report will inform continued workforce planning and management action during 2026/27. Priority areas already identified include recruitment and retention, management development, absence reduction, wellbeing support, succession planning and learning and development.

#### **21. Appendices**

21.1 Appendix 1 – Annual People Data Report 2025/26  
Appendix 2 - Annual Learning and Development and “Grow our Own” 2025/26.

#### **22. Background Papers**

22.1 None.

### Proposed Report Sign Off process

Please make sure you have obtained the relevant sign off and the date completed before submitting your report to Democratic Services.

	<b>Officer Name</b>	<b>Date requested</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
Legal & Governance	Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer	16/6/2026	Required
Finance	Section 151 Officer or Deputy S151 Officer	16/6/2026	Required
Communications	<a href="mailto:communications@eastdevon.gov.uk">communications@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>		If applicable
Digital and Data	<a href="mailto:digital@eastdevon.gov.uk">digital@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>		If applicable
Engagement	<a href="mailto:engagement@eastdevon.gov.uk">engagement@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>		If applicable
HR	HR Lead		If applicable
Chief Executive	Chief Executive		If applicable
Director	Relevant Director		Required
Assistant Director(s)	Relevant Assistant Director(s)		Required
Cabinet Lead Member(s)	Relevant Lead Member (s)		Required
Executive Leadership Team	ELT	16/6/2026	Required
Strategic Leadership Team	SLT		If applicable

# People Data Annual Report 2025/26

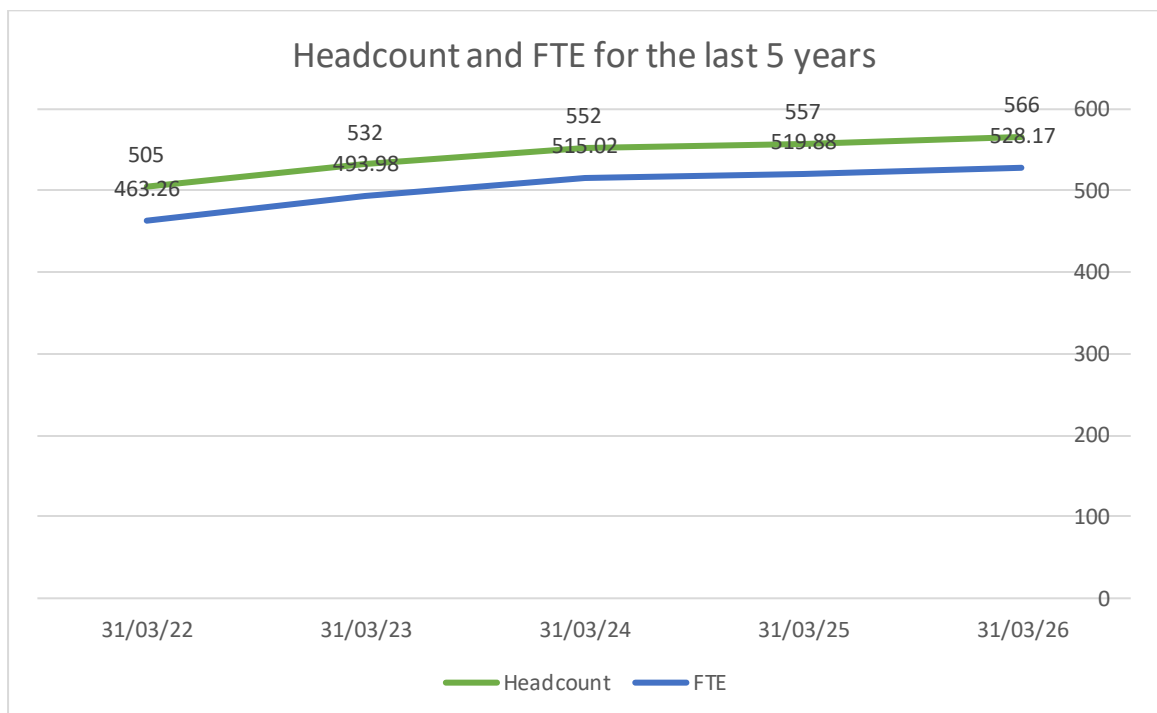
## 1 Introduction

This report presents East Devon District Council’s annual people data for 2025/26. It provides workforce metrics, trends and analysis to support the Strategic Leadership Team and Members in understanding the organisation’s workforce position, key risks and areas of progress.

## 2 Headcount and full time equivalent

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

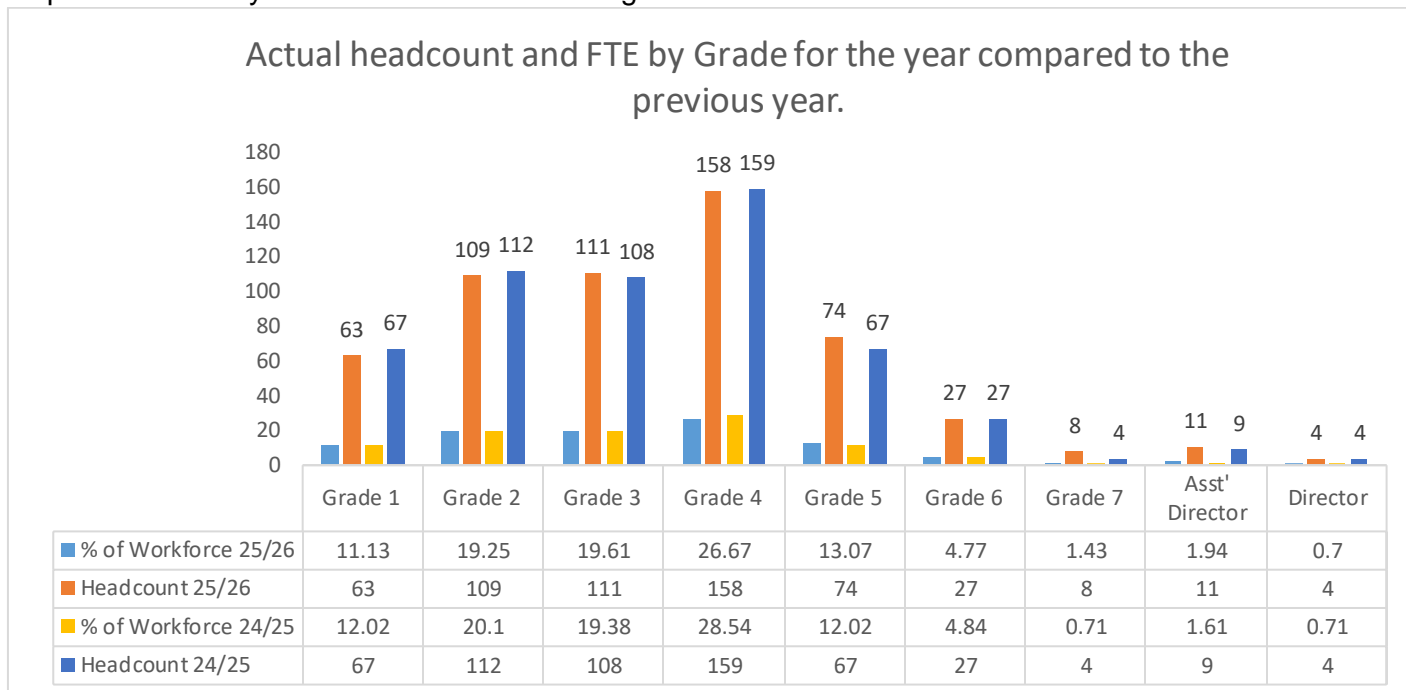
As of 31 March 2026, headcount was 566 and full-time equivalent (FTE) was 528.17. Headcount increased by 9 employees (1.61%) compared with 2024/25, reflecting additional posts in some areas through the budget planning process. Despite this increase, FTE remains below the budgeted level of 565.4.



## 2.2. Actual headcount and FTE by grade

As in previous years, the workforce profile remains concentrated in the middle grades. **Grade 4** continues to be the largest group with **158 employees (26.67%)**, followed by **Grade 3** with **111 (19.61%)** and **Grade 2** with **109 (19.25%)**. The smallest groups are **Grade 9**, Directors with **4 employees (0.7%)**, **Grade 7** with **8 (1.43%)** and **Grade 8**, Assistant Directors with **11 (1.94%)**. Overall, this indicates a workforce weighted towards operational and middle-management grades. The overall grade profile is broadly stable, although **Grade 5** has increased from **67 to 74** and **Grade 3** from **108 to 111**, while **Grades 1 (down from 67 to 63)** and **2 (down from 112 to 109)** have reduced slightly.

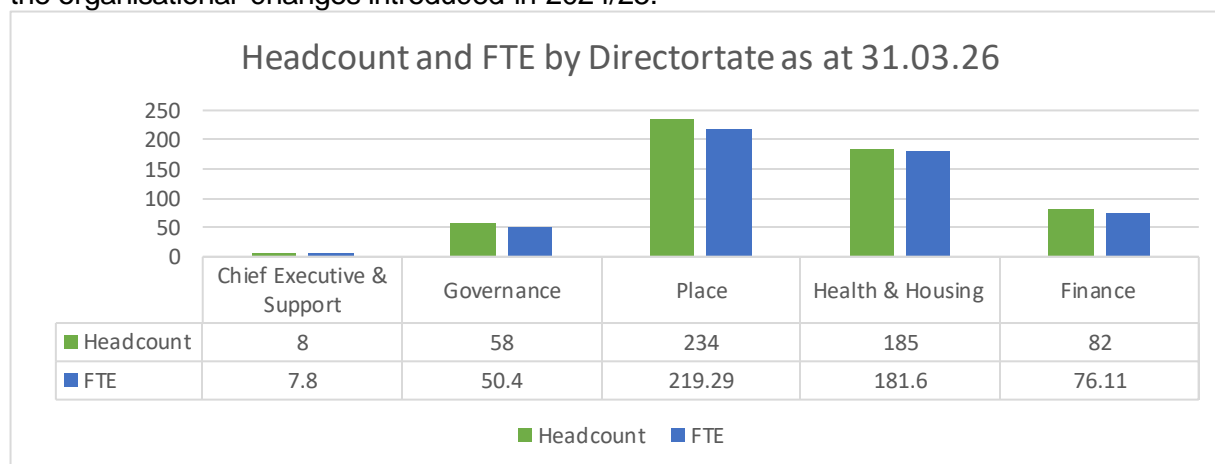
Local Government Association workforce data published in November 2025 reports an average full-time salary of **£37,000** across local government in England. East Devon's average pay of **£38,846** therefore compares favourably with the wider sector average.



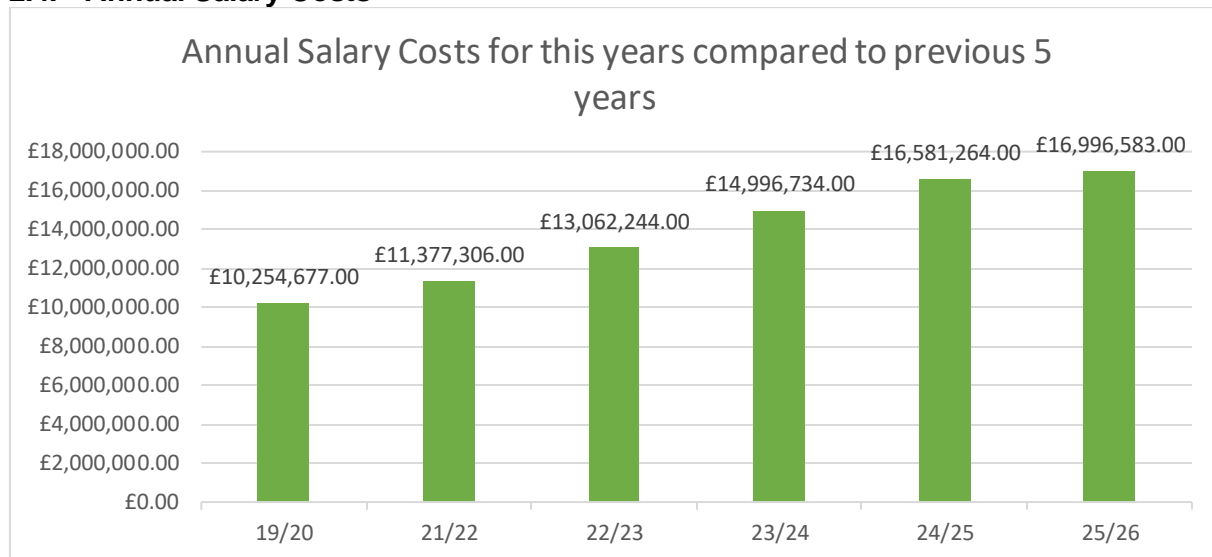
## 2.3. Headcount by Service

The graph below shows headcount and FTE by service area as of 31 March 2026. Place remains the largest service area), followed by Health and Housing).

Compared with the previous year, the overall service structure remains broadly consistent following the organisational changes introduced in 2024/25.



## 2.4. Annual Salary Costs



Salary costs in the graph above relate only to the general fund and externally funded posts. Posts which are paid from the Housing Revenue Account are excluded from these figures.

Salary costs increased by **10.56%** in 2025/26, following a **14.8%** increase in 2024/25. This reflects both higher employee numbers and the nationally negotiated pay award. The 2025 local government services pay agreement confirmed a **3.20%** increase on all spinal column points, backdated to 1 April 2025.

At the time of writing, the 2026/27 pay position remains subject to national negotiation, so this continues to present a budget planning risk for the year ahead.

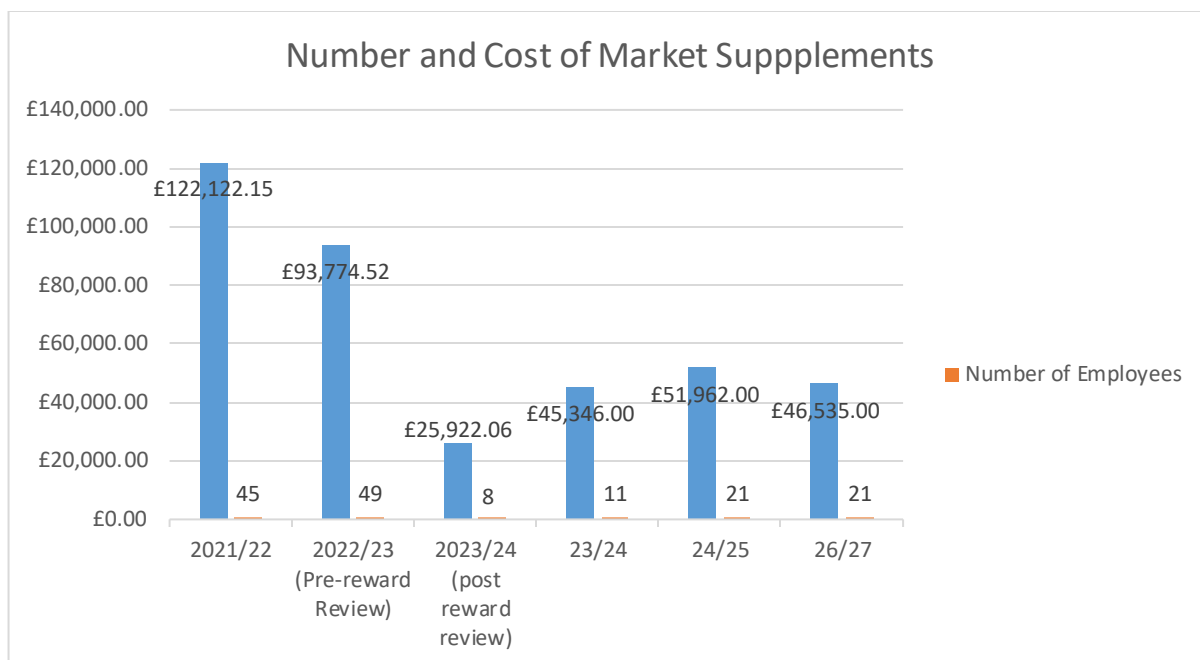
## 2.5 Market supplements

Market supplements are temporary additional payments made where labour market pressures would otherwise prevent the Council from recruiting or retaining employees in hard-to-fill roles.

At the end of 2025/26, **21 posts** were in receipt of a market supplement. Numbers and values have remained broadly stable. Market supplements are reviewed annually to ensure evidence continues to support their application.

Local Government Association workforce data also shows that **94%** of councils in England experienced recruitment and retention difficulties, underlining the wider sector challenge.

The graph below shows the level and cost of supplements before and after the Reward Review introduced in December 2022.



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

Over the past five years, travel expenses for business and training mileage have fluctuated. Spend is now **£96,481**, down from **£125,426** in the previous year, a reduction of **23.07%**. This reduction also supports the Council's climate objectives, with estimated travel emissions reducing from **76.65 tCO<sub>2</sub>e** to **62.66 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**, a decrease of approximately **18%**.

## 3 Vacancies, Agency Workers and Recruitment

### 3.1. Recruitment activity

The table below shows recruitment advertising spend over recent years. It illustrates sustained recruitment activity, reflecting ongoing recruitment and retention pressures as well as higher advertising costs.

In 2025/26, the Council recruited **80 new starters**, compared with **81** in 2024/25. Recruitment advertising spend reduced to **£133,156** from **£180,848** in the previous year. This equates to an average advertising cost per starter of **£1,664**, compared with **£2,233** in 2024/25. The previous year was unusually expensive because executive search support was required for the appointments of the Chief Executive and two Director posts.

This remains proportionate in context. CIPD research continues to show that overall recruitment costs vary significantly depending on role level, market conditions and the use of external support, while CIPD labour market data indicates that around 32% still report hard-to-fill vacancies and LGA (September 25) stated 94% of Councils experienced recruitment and retention difficulties.

### 3.2. Vacancy and Agency Data

Vacancy, market supplement and agency data is reported regularly to Personnel Committee. The table below provides a year-end snapshot for 2025/26 compared with 2024/25

	<b>31.03.26</b>	<b>31.03.25</b>
<b>Total Vacancies (Recruiting and not Recruiting)</b>	75 (13.25% Vacancy rate)	38 (6.82% Vacancy Rate)
<b>Average length of time a recruiting in progress is vacant</b>	78.63 days	68.21 days
<b>Total positions covered by an Agency</b>	29	29

Recruitment Advertising Spend	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24
	£133,156	£180,848	£102,662N

Last year, the report noted that changes to vacancy management and budget monitoring were likely to increase the number of vacancies recorded. That has now happened. Previously, vacancies unfilled for more than six months were archived. They are now kept open, so they remain aligned to the relevant budget provision, even where recruitment is not currently active. Vacancies will only be removed once removed from the budget. This change in approach accounts for a significant part of the increase in reported vacancies.

On 31 March 2026, there were **75 vacancies**. Of these, **31** were under active recruitment with closing dates and interviews planned. A further **22** did not yet have an approved authority to recruit in place, and **16** had approval but recruitment had not yet started. The remainder related to posts temporarily held open because the substantive postholder was seconded elsewhere, the role was being covered on an interim basis, or temporary arrangements such as an honorarium were in place while longer-term decisions were made.

A notable proportion of open vacancies sit within Streetscene. A workforce planning exercise has been undertaken in this area, including revised recruitment methods, attendance at recruitment events, and the introduction of a simplified application form. These frontline roles remain harder to recruit to because of labour market competition and the physically demanding nature of the work, so targeted support continues, particularly ahead of the busy summer period.

Agency worker numbers remained unchanged at **29**. Of these, **12** were supporting Streetscene operations. Agency cover has also been used to maintain service delivery in hard-to-fill roles, including surveyor, planning and legal posts, while permanent recruitment continues.

Although the recorded vacancy rate increased to **13.25%**, this should be interpreted in the context of the revised recording method described above. Local Government Association summary workforce data indicates that the median vacancy rate in local government is around **9%**. On a like-for-like basis, if only actively recruiting vacancies were considered, East Devon's position would be closer to **7.7%**.

The average time a recruiting vacancy remained open increased to **78.63 days**, compared with **68.21 days** in 2024/25. This measure can fluctuate because of factors such as notice periods, seasonal recruitment patterns and the complexity of some roles. However, average time to recruit remained below 100 days across the year.

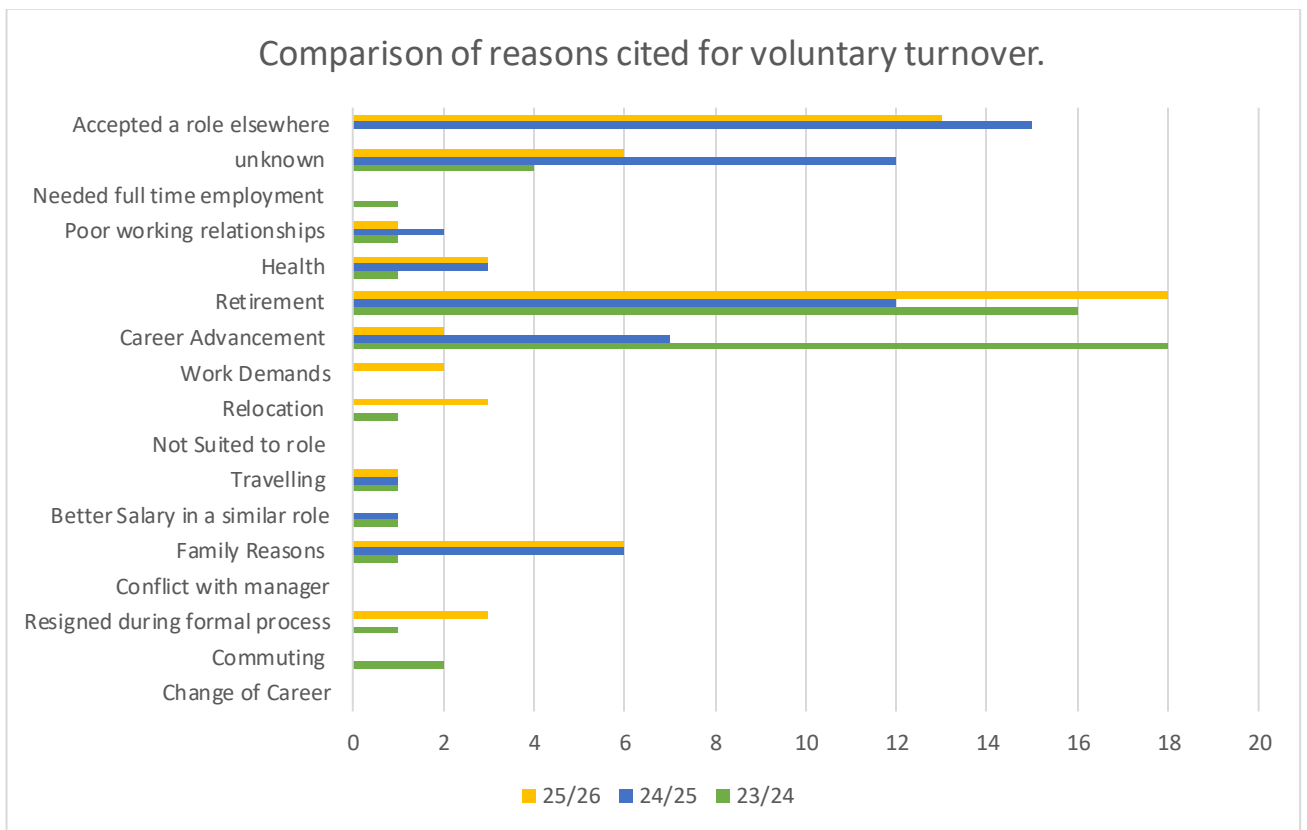
## 4 Turnover

### 4.1 Cumulative Voluntary Turnover

Voluntary turnover has remained lower than its 2022/23 peak. At that point it reached **12.62%**; by the end of 2025/26 it was **10.50%**, compared with **10.93%** in 2024/25. This is a positive outcome given the wider recruitment and retention pressures affecting local government and the uncertainty created by local government reorganisation.

Analysis of leaving reasons in 2025/26 shows a similar pattern to previous years. Retirement remained the largest single factor, increasing to **18 employees** compared with **12** in 2024/25, reinforcing the impact of an ageing workforce in some service areas. Employees leaving for roles elsewhere was at **13**, this was slightly lower than the **15** reported in 2024/25. There was also a notable reduction in employees leaving for career progression, falling from **18** in 2023/24 to **7** in 2024/25 and **2** in 2025/26. This may indicate improved internal development opportunities and stronger retention following recent reward changes. Reasons linked to relocation, work demands and poor working relationships remained comparatively low.

It is important to recognise that forthcoming local government reorganisation may affect this trend over the next two years. Periods of organisational change can create uncertainty for employees and may influence retention. While turnover has remained stable to date, continued monitoring will be important to understand the longer-term impact on workforce stability.



## 4.2 Exit Questionnaires

Exit questionnaires provide useful context in employees’ own words and can highlight themes such as perceived opportunity, management experience and working environment that standard leaving codes do not fully capture. Response rates are limited and the feedback is self-reported, so questionnaire findings should be used to complement, rather than replace, the coded reasons for leaving.

Exit questionnaire analysis indicates that retirement is the largest single leaving reason. For non-retirement exits, the main themes relate to career progression, management relationships and aspects of role design. Feedback was generally strongest on colleague relationships, inclusion and benefits, while lower scores related to progression opportunities, regularity of one-to-ones, resources and some senior communication channels.

Exit Survey Insights Report							
Summary of 26 exit survey responses captured highlighting reasons for leaving, sentiment hotspots, ethics flags and qualitative themes.							
Total responses	Retirement	Better career opportunity	Career change	Conflict-related	Ethics concerns	Follow-up requested	Similar role for salary leavers
26	9	5	2	3	7	2	4
100% of responses	34.6%	19.2%	7.7%	11.5%	26.9%	7.7%	15.4%

Sentiment area	Average score (1-5)	Report interpretation
Job experience	3.65	Positive
Remuneration & benefits	4.01	Very positive
Communication channels	3.68	Positive
Council experience	3.98	Positive
Line manager experience	3.78	Positive

Some themes emerging from the exit questionnaire sample included:

- Workload and resourcing pressures, particularly in property, assets and surveyor roles.
- Requests for clearer face-to-face communication, more regular updates from senior leaders and smaller discussion forums.
- Hybrid working is generally valued, but some respondents asked for more in-office time to support team coordination.
- Line management experience is mixed, with some very positive feedback alongside repeated concerns about the consistency of one-to-one meetings.

#### 4.3 Cumulative Non-voluntary Turnover

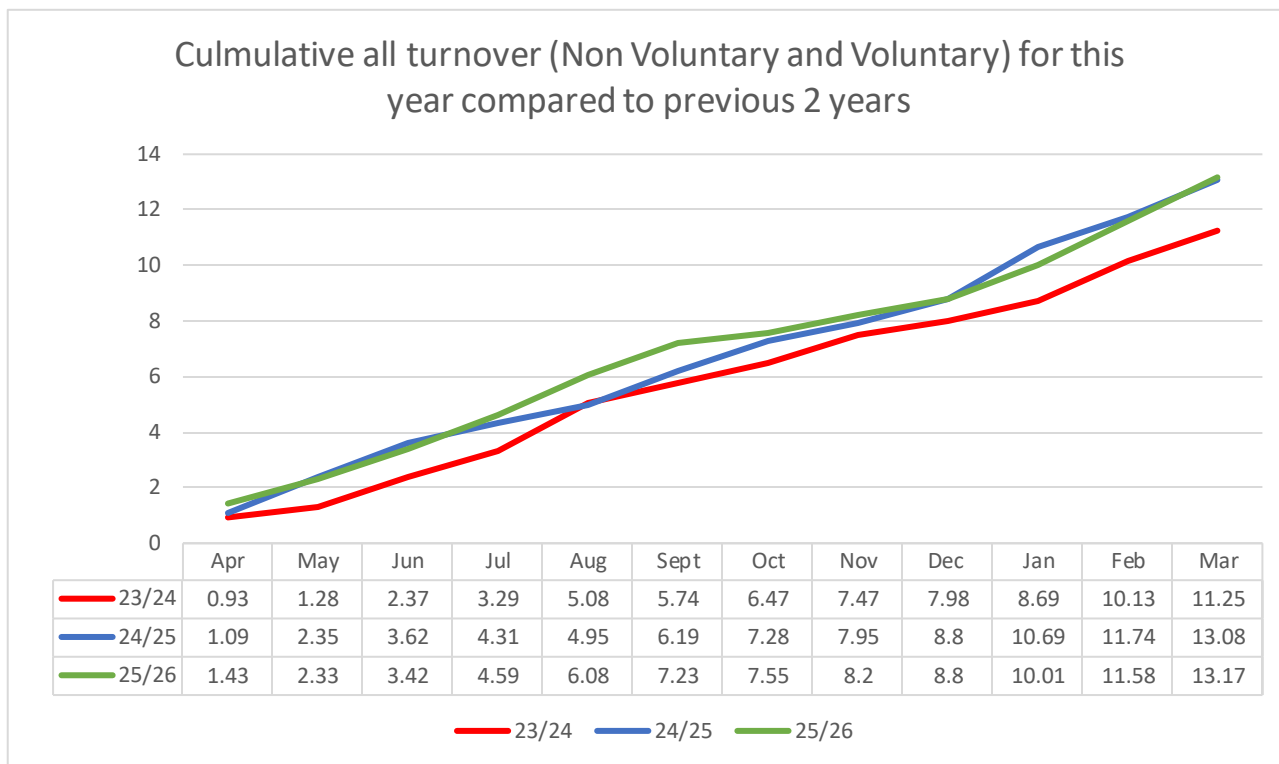
Non-voluntary turnover includes dismissals, redundancy, end of fixed term contracts and death in service.

At the end of 2025/26, cumulative non-voluntary turnover increased slightly to **2.67%**, compared with **2.15%** in 2024/25. Although levels were marginally higher through much of the year, non-voluntary turnover continues to represent a small proportion of overall leavers. The figures suggest that the Council's approach to probation, performance and disciplinary processes has remained broadly steady, with no significant upward trend.

#### 4.4 Combined Cumulative Voluntary and Non-voluntary Turnover and Benchmarking

Overall employee turnover, combining voluntary and non-voluntary leavers, was **13.17%** at the end of 2025/26. This is broadly in line with **13.3%** in 2024/25 and above the **11.25%** recorded in 2023/24.

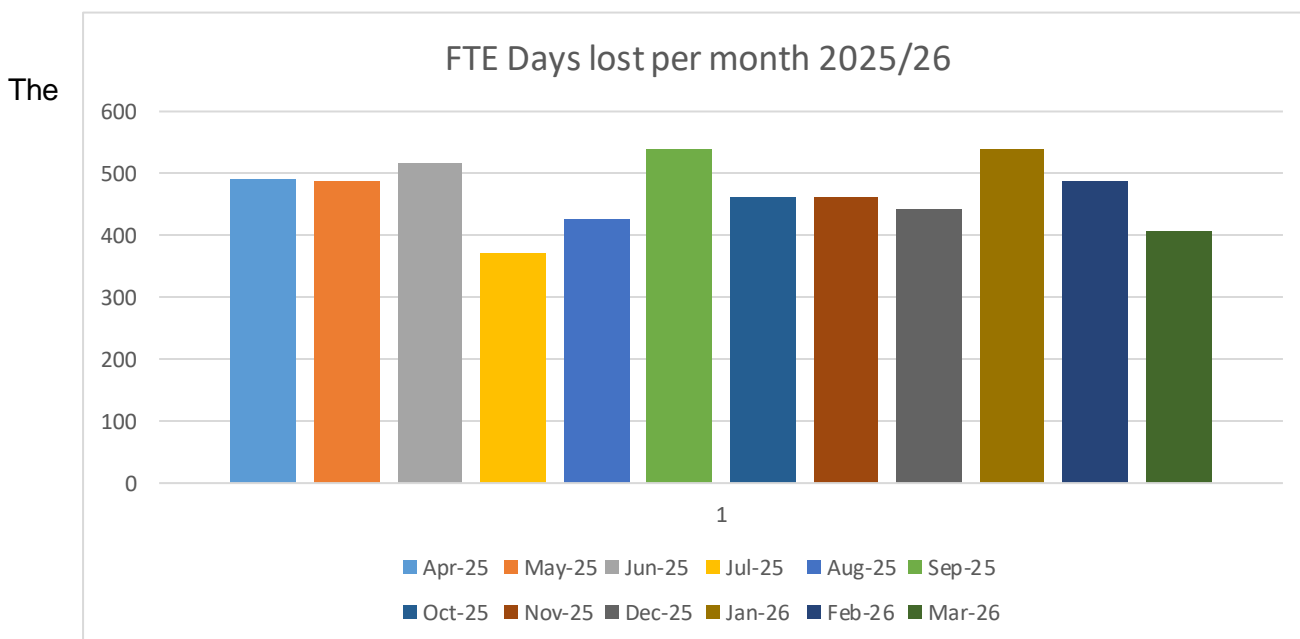
The Council's turnover position also remains broadly in line with wider local government trends. Local Government Association workforce summary data indicates annual leavers across the sector at around **12%**, with variation between services and regions.



## 5 Sickness Absence & Wellbeing

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

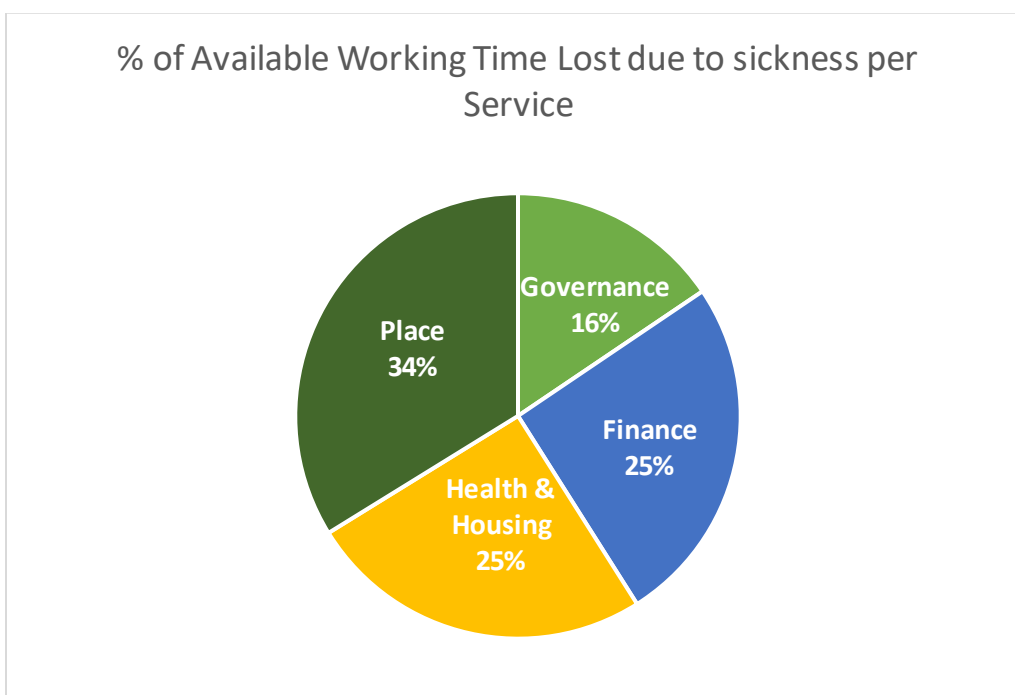
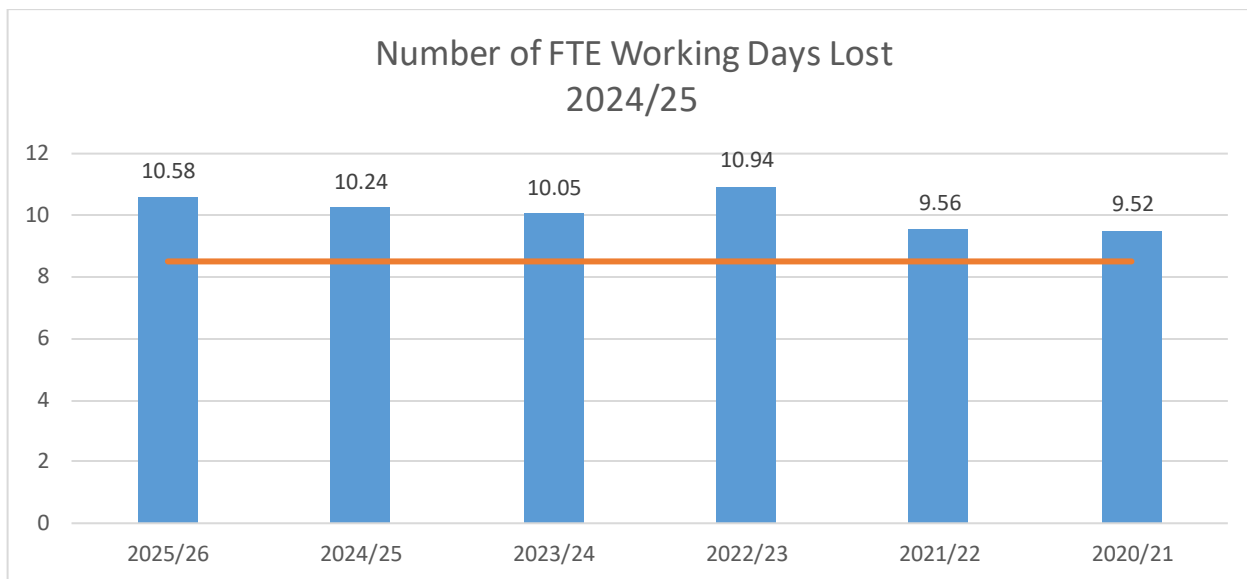
The graph below shows the total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) working days lost per month during 2025/26.



Council's target is no more than 9 working days should be lost through sickness absence per employee. As the graph below shows, the Council has exceeded this target in each of the last five years, apart from the year in which the Covid pandemic began.

Average days lost increased slightly to **10.58** per FTE, compared with **10.24** in 2024/25. This represents a year-on-year increase of **1.89%**, equivalent to approximately **213 additional days** lost.

Of the total workforce, **38.7%** of employees had no sickness absence during the year, an improvement on **36%** in 2024/25. This means that around three in five employees recorded at least one period of absence.



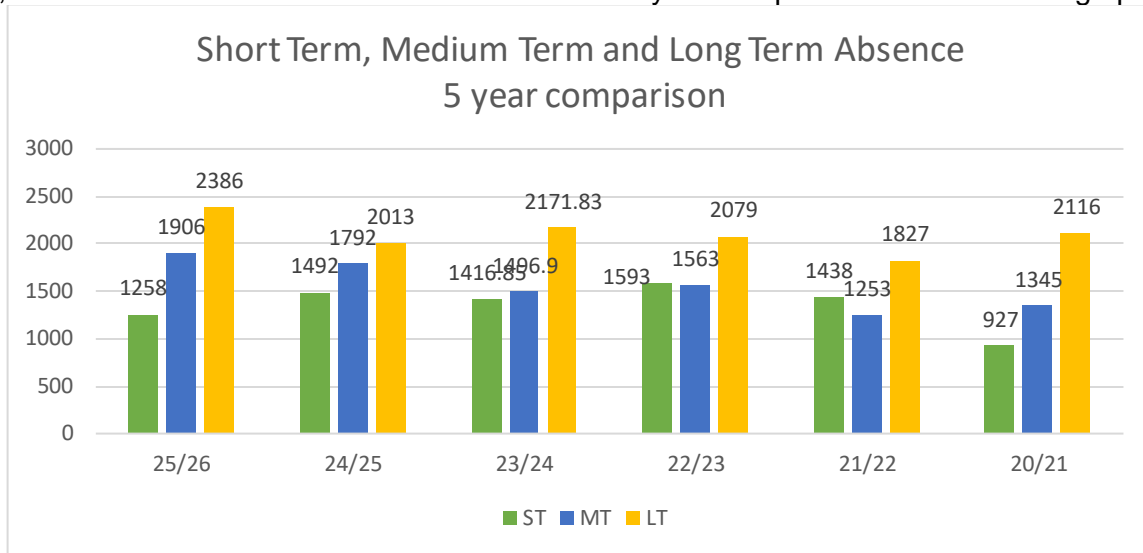
The chart above shows the percentage of time lost due to sickness absence by directorate. This provides a more meaningful comparison than total days lost alone because it reflects absence as a proportion of available working time and therefore takes account of directorate size. It highlights where sickness absence has the greatest relative operational impact. Long-term absence remains a significant driver of these results.

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

Total days lost increased from **5,085** in 2024/25 to **5,555** in 2025/26. The increase was driven by medium- and long-term absence. Short-term absence (less than 8 days) decreased by **234 days** or **15.68%** and accounted for **22.64%** of all absence.

Long-term absence (more than 2 months) increased for the fourth consecutive year and was **10.48%** higher than the previous year, equivalent to **211 additional days**. It accounted for **40.03%** of all absence.

Medium-term absence (more than 8 days and less than 2 months) increased by **15.68%**, equivalent to **432 days**, and accounted for **37.31%** of all absence. A five-year comparison is shown in the graph below.



**6.2.1 Short-term Absence**

Short-term absence decreased by **15.68%** compared with the same period last year.

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

Short Term Absence (less than 8 days) - Top 3 Reasons						
		2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
1	Cold & Flu (217 days)	Cold & Flu (409 days)	Cold & Flu (332 days)	Covid-19 (Positive Test) (458 days)	Cold & Flu (280 days)	Phased Return to work (140 days)
2	Stomach, Liver, Kidney, Digestion (80 days)	Phased Return (242 days)	Covid -19 (Positive Test) 234 days	Cold/Flu (306 days)	Covid-19 Positive Test (244 days)	Stomach, Kidney, Liver Digestion (103 days)
3	Neurological, Headaches & Migraines (71 days)	Stomach, Kidney, Liver Digestion (129.33 days)	Stomach, Kidney, Liver, Digestion (187.2 days)	Phased return to work (176 days)	Phased return to work (159 days)	Cold & Flu (100 days)

**6.2.2 Medium-term Absence**

Overall medium-term absence increased by **15.68%**. 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 less than 2 months) - Top 3 Reasons						
		2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
	2025/26					
1	Stress, Anxiety and Fatigue (personal (400 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (personal) (553 days)	Other Muscular Skeletal Problems (293.82)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (personal) (410 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (personal) (303 days)	Stress, anxiety fatigue (personal) (525.5 days)

2	Stress, Anxiety and Fatigue (work Related) (292 days)	Other Muscular Skeletal Problems (262 days)	Stomach, Kidney, Liver Digestion (178.5 days)	Other Muscular Skeletal Problems (225 days)	Other Muscular Skeletal Problems (148 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (work-related) (165 days)
3	Hospital Treatment or operation (235 days)	Hospital Treatment (248)	Depression (personal) 122 days	Chest/ Respiratory Problems (166 days)	Hospital treatment/ operation (133 days)	Hospital Treatment/ Operation (162 days)

Further in-year analysis indicates that personal stress absence is often linked to bereavement and family or relationship issues. A workshop on dealing with grief is planned for the coming year.

### 6.2.3 Long-term Absence

Long-term absence increased overall by **10.42%**. 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) - Top 3 reasons						
	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
1	Stress, Anxiety, Fatigue (work Related) (467 days)	Other Muscular Skeletal Issues (561 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (Personal) (596.64)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (work-related) (494 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (Personal) (504 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (Personal) (525.5 days)
2	Stress, Anxiety, Fatigue (personal) (326 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (work and personal) (241 days)	Other Muscular Skeletal Issues (384.5 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (Personal) (477 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (work-related) (329 days)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (work-related) (165 days)
3	Cancer Treatment (220 days)	Stress, Anxiety and Fatigue (personal) (197 days)	Neurological Headaches (295 days)	Covid-19 (289 days)	Heart, blood pressure, circulation (263 days)	Hospital treatment/ operation (142 days)

Long-term absence accounted for **40.03%** of all absence. There were **31** long-term cases during the year, up from **24** in 2024/25. Of these, **12** were in Streetscene operations and a further **12** were across the rest of Place, meaning more than half of all long-term cases were within that directorate. All cases were managed under the Council's absence policy. If long-term absence were excluded, the average number of days lost would reduce to **6.35** per FTE.

### 6.3 Benchmarking

According to Local Government workforce data, the average number of absence days per worker is 8.8 days. These figures represent an average across diverse organisations, so a more accurate benchmark would involve comparing similar entities however at the time of writing other South West Council's have not yet advised of their sickness absence figures. The CIPD's Health and wellbeing at work report (2025) found that average sickness absence has risen to 9.4 days per employee per year, the highest level in over 15 years. Absence rates remain highest in the public sector (13.3 days) compared with the private sector (9.1 days)

### **6.3.2 Analysis of Stress, anxiety and mental health related absence.**

Anxiety and related mental health absence increased during 2025/26 and remained a significant contributor of overall sickness absence accounting for 1708 FTE days lost from a 5555 days (30.7%).

87 employees recorded at least one period of absence relating to stress anxiety or associated mental health reasons.

The increase in stress related absences appears to have been driven primarily by a relatively small number of complex cases rather than widespread short-term absence across the workforce. Of the total stress related absence 867 FTE days related to long term absence of 2 months or more involving 14 employees.

Long term cases identified as work related in many instances coincided with employees being subject to formal management processes including performance management or disciplinary procedures, this context is important when interpreting work related stress data as formal employee relation processes can be inherently stressful for employees involved and do not necessarily indicate broader organisational cultural concerns across the wider workforce.

National benchmarking indicates that mental health related absence continues to be a significant challenge across employers generally the CIPD data reports that 41% of long term sickness absence is linked to mental health issues and 28% stress.

### **6.4 Actions to mitigate against sickness absence**

The steps we have taken to address absence levels include return to work meetings, absence reviews, support via the employee assistance programme, hybrid/flexible working, risk assessments, support on return to work and in some cases formal warnings. We also continue to offer absence management training for managers.

We refer to Occupational Health for advice. In the last year we instigated 72 Occupational Health referrals and implemented reasonable adjustments where appropriate in accordance with the Equality Act.

We are in the final stages of developing a Power BI dashboard which will enhance our ability to report and analyse sickness absence trends at a service level, resulting in targeted and appropriate interventions in a timely manner.

### **6.5 Employee wellbeing support**

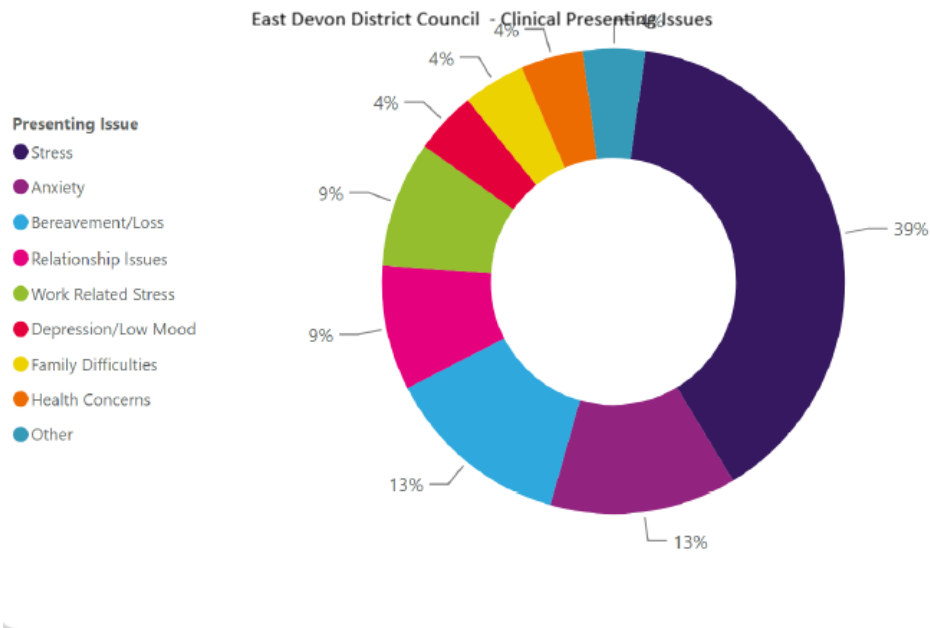
The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provides a confidential and anonymous service for employees to get impartial advice and support through counselling or advice on a range of issues which affect employee wellbeing. It also provides in the moment support on point of contact, podcasts and blogs, self-help downloads, debt advice and domestic abuse help.

During 2025/26 usage of the employee helpline remained consistent throughout the year, with a noticeable increase in both inbound calls and new clients towards the end of the reporting period. This may reflect the increased awareness of the service and increased numbers of people registered to our Wellbeing portal.

Stress was the most common presenting factors for employees accessing counselling support accounting for 39% of cases, followed by anxiety and bereavement loss. This reflects the range of pressures employees may experience inside and outside of work and reinforces the importance of maintaining accessible early intervention support.

Over the year, we supported 151 Counselling sessions, Clinical outcomes data demonstrates a positive impact from the support provided. Average clinical scored reduced from 17.19 (Moderate level of distress) at initial assessment to 8.23 (Mild, non clinical) following intervention, with 92% of clients showing improved outcomes after support.

Alongside the EAP provision, the council continued to promote a broad wellbeing offer, through the Happy healthy here programme, including, health campaigns, webinars, and financial wellbeing resources. Engagement with the wellbeing portal has continued to increase, with 93.3% of the total workforce registered, suggesting employees are making greater use of the resources available.



During 2024/25, the Council has actively supported various initiatives under the "Happy Healthy Here" offer. These initiatives include;

- flu vaccinations,
- health checks for manual workers,
- webinars focused on Neurodiversity, Managing Uncertainty, Heart Health, Mastering Self Belief and the imposter syndrome and Revitalise and Energise.
- Planning for retirement talks
- Additionally, the Council has regularly promoted health-related campaigns and provided signposting to resources available to support employees.

Financial wellbeing continues to be a focus, and we still provide access to monthly webinars for all staff, on a range of topics from budgeting to debt management. Our wellbeing portal also provides access to specialised help for debt and financial wellbeing and provides employees with discounts on a comprehensive range of lifestyle savings. The top two brands for savings are on the weekly shop. This highlights the practical benefits of our wellbeing portal, which not only supports financial health but also helps employees manage everyday expenses more effectively. Our payroll team have also organised Pension Talks raising awareness of retirement planning and Additional Voluntary Contributions.

## 7 Employee Relations

Employee relations activity includes the management of grievances, disciplinary matters, performance concerns and dismissals, including redundancies and the ending of fixed-term contracts. Dismissal figures relate to employer-led terminations only; mutual agreements are recorded separately and are not included in these totals.

In 2025/26, there were 10 dismissals, two fewer than last year. Four of these were on disciplinary grounds, with the remainder relating to the ending of fixed-term contracts, unsuccessful probation periods or absence.

During the year, 14 performance-related cases were managed, of which 7 progressed to formal stages. There were also 22 investigations into employee conduct, with 9 progressing to formal stages, while the remainder were either still ongoing or resulted in no further action.

Three grievances were raised during the year, which is three fewer than in 2024/25. This reflects the continued focus on resolving concerns at an early stage, before matters escalate to the formal grievance process.

## **8 Workforce Profile**

### **8.1 Age**

The average age of the workforce has increased from last year's reported 49 to 52

The age profile of the workforce remains fairly stable for 2025/26 compared to previous years,, with the largest proportion of employees in the 45-54 age group, at 31.57% of the workforce, closely followed by those aged 55-64 at 30.30%. Compared with 2024/25 there has a small increase in the 20-24, 25-34 and 35-44 groups, while the 45-54 and 65+ groups have reduced slightly, which demonstrates that the pipeline is gradually improving in attracting younger talent. The data continues to show an older workforce profile, with more than 60% aged 45 and over, reinforcing the need for succession planning and knowledge transfer and continued focus on apprenticeships and early careers.

The LGA reports that the average age of all Council staff is 47.

### **8.2 Ethnicity**

According to the most recent 2021 Census, 5.4% of East Devon's residents are from ethnic groups other than White.

91.27% of employees have provided information relating to their ethnicity. Based on this data, 2.14% of the workforce identified as belonging to an ethnic group other than White.

Employees who identify as White UK (English, Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish) make up 85.56% of the workforce, compared with 94.6% of the local population. Nationally, the LGA's workforce data reports that 11% of Council's employees are from an ethnic group other than white.

### **8.3 Disability**

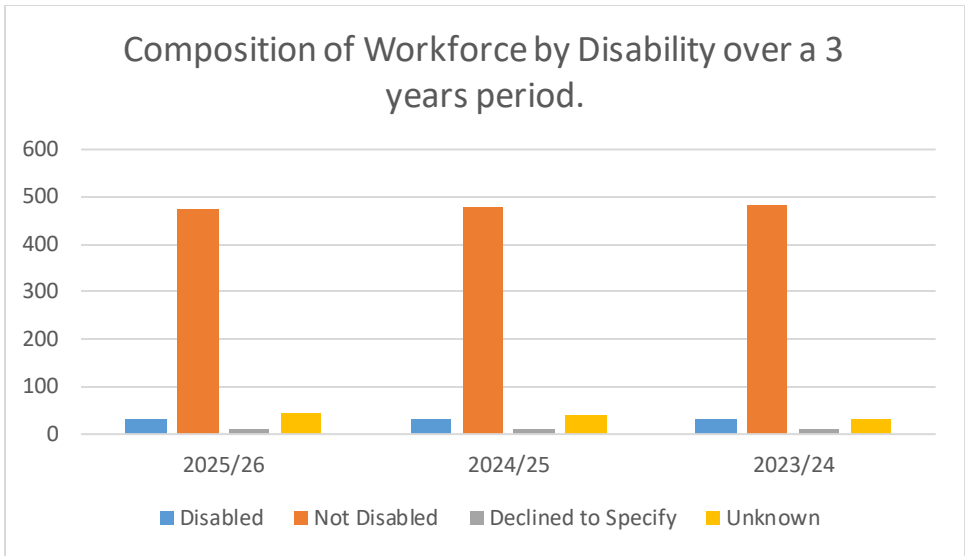
In 2025/26 the % of employees declaring a disability has decreased marginally from 5.94% of our workforce to 5.30%.

Disability declaration rates within the workforce remain broadly comparable with the local population, Census data from 2021 for East Devon indicates that approximately 17% of residents reported that their days to day activities were limited to some extent by long term health problem or a disability, although this measure is broader than workplace disability declarations and includes retired or economically inactive residents. Direct comparison should be treated with caution as employee declaration rates are typically lower due to under reporting difference. As with ethnicity data we continue to actively encourage staff to update their personal information in the HR system to ensure we have an accurate picture of our workforce currently completion rate for Disability stands at 92.05%.

The LGA workforce data reports that Nationally 5% of Council staff have declared a disability.

The council's status as a disability confident and mindful employer highlights our ongoing commitment to supporting the health, well-being and inclusion of all employees.

Unknown represents no response.



**8.4 Gender**

For the fourth consecutive year the number of females is higher compared to males in 25/26 compared to same period last year. The current gender split is 51.59% females (292) and 48.40 males (274).

The composition of our workforce closely mirrors the UK National overall workforce which sits at 51% women compared to 49% men(Census 2021)

The LGA reports that 73% of council staff are female compared to 27% men - this will reflect the occupational profile of the public sector, particularly as it includes employees working in education, children’s services, adult social care which traditionally attract a higher proportion of women.

**8.5 Gender Pay Gap**

Employers in Great Britain with more than 250 staff are required by law to publish their Gender Pay Gap.

The Gender Pay Gap is a measure of the difference between men’s and women’s average earnings across an organisation or the labour market. It is expressed as a percentage of men’s earnings. This is different to the term ‘equal pay’ which means that men and women in the same employment performing equal work must receive equal pay, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The purpose of Gender Pay Gap reporting is to achieve greater gender equality across the UK and increase pay transparency. Causes of a gender pay gap can include the ability to progress into higher pay roles, for example through a wish to work part time or because of caring responsibilities or less access to career progression support and development opportunities.

In 2025/26, the Council reported a median gender pay gap of -7.99% in favour of females, meaning males are paid less on average. For 2025/26 the Council’s median gender pay gap is 2.6% in favour of men. The change largely reflects appointment of additional male employees during the year into grade 7 roles, following a year in which women were appointed into high graded positions.

Despite this fluctuation, the Council’s median gender pay gap remains significantly lower than wider local government averages. The LGA’s workforce data identified an average median pay gap of approximately 1% across Council’s, although over half of Council’s continued to report a pay gap favouring men. The Council’s position therefore indicates a broadly balanced pay structure, while recognising that relatively small changes in staffing can have a noticeable impact on gender pay reporting on an organisation of our size.

Benchmarking data with other neighbouring authorities who have published their 2025/26 gender pay gap reports are shown in the table below.

Local Authority	Median hourly rate difference between male and female*
East Devon District Council	2.60%

Exeter City Council	-11.85%
Mid Devon	-3.49%
Teignbridge	-3.30%
North Devon	-6.28%
South Hams	-5.0%

\* A minus calculation indicates that women earned more than men in the organisation.

## 9. Conclusions

Overall, the 2025/26 people data shows a workforce that remains broadly stable and committed, with positive progress in several areas. Headcount has increased slightly, turnover has remained relatively steady, and the Council has continued to strengthen its learning, development and apprenticeship activity. These are positive indicators and support the Council's longer-term objective of building workforce capability and resilience through development and grow our own approaches.

At the same time, the report highlights several continuing workforce risks. Recruitment remains challenging in some frontline and specialist roles, the workforce profile continues to reflect an ageing demographic, and sickness absence remains above target, driven particularly by medium- and long-term absence. These areas will remain priorities during 2026/27, alongside strengthening management capability, supporting employee wellbeing and maintaining a clear focus on succession planning as the organisation prepares for future change.

## Appendix 2

### Annual Report of Learning and Development activity and 'Grow Our Own'.



#### 1.1 Learning and Development Activity

This section summarises learning activity across the organisation during 2025/26, including participation levels, compliance with mandatory learning and priority areas for the year ahead.

As reported last year, the Council moved to a new e-learning system with improved reporting and flexibility. This has enabled better analysis of participation, compliance and completion levels.

#### 1.2 Headline Figures

##### 1.2.1 Face to Face Training

During 2025/26, the Council delivered **27** face-to-face training sessions with a total of **300 attendees**, compared with **32** sessions and **508 attendees** in the previous year. This is the first full year in which training activity has been managed by the current People Development team, reflecting a revised approach and renewed oversight

Attendance patterns suggest that work demands and double-booking continue to affect take-up, with many sessions not reaching full capacity.

The quality and value for money of on-site training remains strong, but under-filled sessions reduce overall value. To improve accessibility, providers have been asked to offer more half-day sessions rather than full-day courses. Early indications from the 2026/27 programme suggest this is improving participation, and the programme is now commissioned in stages so future bookings can better reflect demand and organisational need.

Manager compliance with mandatory management training remains an area of concern and is reflected in some case management activity. A report is being prepared for the Executive Leadership Team on manager training compliance and the actions needed to improve it, including a briefing video, a dedicated resource hub, automatic enrolment and stronger monitoring.

##### 1.2.2 Mandatory e-learning

The updated e-learning system has also improved reporting on mandatory training compliance and confirmed that completion levels were below the expected standard.

In August 2025, the mandatory training compliance rate reported to ELT was **67.25%**. A number of actions were introduced to improve this, with an internal target of **90%**. The 10% tolerance recognises employees on long-term sickness absence, maternity or shared parental leave, or sabbatical.

Automated reminders were introduced for employees and copied to managers so that teams' compliance could be monitored more effectively. Compliance increased to **82.53%** in November but then reduced when new mandatory courses were added in response to new employer duties and audit recommendations. A further cyber awareness course was introduced in February 2026, and stress management training changed from a one-off requirement at induction to a refresher every two years. These changes reduced the headline compliance rate temporarily, although the underlying position has improved.

The mandatory training suite has been reviewed and reduced where possible, and modules have been refreshed to make them more engaging. Employees are now also given clearer information about the time required to complete each module so they can plan this more effectively.

Refresh frequencies have also been adjusted so that mandatory learning is spread more evenly across the cycle. This is intended to reduce peaks in workload and make completion more manageable for employees.

A manager dashboard has been introduced so that managers can monitor and discuss their teams' training compliance and compare completion levels across the organisation.

The dashboard below shows that compliance is strongest in long-established mandatory modules and lowest in newer or recently refreshed courses, including cyber awareness and preventing sexual harassment. This reflects the time needed for employees to complete new requirements and highlights where further follow-up is needed.

Mandatory Training Compliance by Course (EDDC)



[View full report](#)



Training Requiring Action (My Team)

User's Fullname	Certification Name	Status
[Redacted]	Staying Safe with DSE	Overdue since 8 Feb 2025
[Redacted]	Under Lock & Key: Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR	Expired since 17 May 2026
[Redacted]	Handling Workplace Stress	Expired since 8 Feb 2026

[View full report](#)



While compliance was the main objective, the introduction of automated e-learning reminders has also improved value for money from the Council's training investment. Increased completion volumes mean the annual licence cost is being spread across a higher number of course completions, reducing the average cost per course from **£5.83** to **£2.26** after implementation.

Mandatory Staff Training	Number of Courses accessed	Number of employees Completed	Number of course completions	Average cost per course (Annual Fee/number of course completions)

2024/25	16	342	1929	£5.08 per course
2025/26	13	455	2751	£3.56 per course
learning volume before reminder functionality in November 26	10	129	980	£5.83 per course
Learning volumes post reminder functionality implemented	13	451	1799	£2.26 per course

The table below shows the training events that were hosted at the Council during the year. (Mandatory for Managers is indicated by\*)

<b>Learning and Development events 2025/26</b>		
Absence Management for Managers *	Assertiveness, Self-confidence & Communications Training	PER Skills for Managers *
Disciplinary, Performance & *Grievance Issues	Positive Steps to Mental Health	Pre-retirement planning
Neurodiversity	Managing Poor Performance and giving feedback	Presentation Skills
Mental Capacity act Training	Stress Management for Staff	Recruitment & Selection *
Safeguarding Level 3	Stress Management for Managers	Thinking Differently
Welcome Morning	Change and Resilience	6 wellbeing webinars

We also entered one team of aspiring managers into the Southwest Council Challenge and plan to enter another team this year. Post-training evaluation feedback continues to be positive.

### 1.3 Next Steps / Areas of focus.

The focus for 2026/27 will be mandatory manager training. Because the Council does not currently have a full learning management system, it has not been possible to identify accurately which manager modules remain outstanding. An interim reporting approach has now been developed to give better oversight and help ensure managers are equipped with the people management skills needed to lead teams confidently and address issues such as absence management.

The positive impact of reminder communications on e-learning engagement suggests that further promotional activity for face-to-face learning may also help increase participation and maximise value from the wider learning and development programme.

Recent Government changes to apprenticeship funding will affect access to Level 5 and Level 7 management apprenticeships. In response, the Council is piloting a new programme for aspiring or new managers and a separate programme for experienced managers, while also exploring other ways to fill the gap left by the Senior Leader apprenticeship route.

A revised approach to evaluating training will also be introduced, using pre-course and post-course assessment to better understand the impact of learning, based on the Kirkpatrick evaluation model.

The refreshed PER and one-to-one process will be launched shortly and will support a more structured training needs assessment, helping ensure that the right development is provided at the right time, including in preparation for local government reorganisation.

### 1.4 Apprenticeship Activity

Apprenticeships are nationally recognised qualifications available to both new and current employees and are funded through the Council's Apprenticeship Levy. The Council contributes 0.5% of its annual payroll to this Levy.

The total levy paid into the Digital Apprenticeship account in 2025/26 was **£100,543**, with total expenditure of **£94,651**.

Any remaining funds will be carried forward to the next financial year. For the second year running, no funds expired during the year, demonstrating that the Levy is being fully utilised.

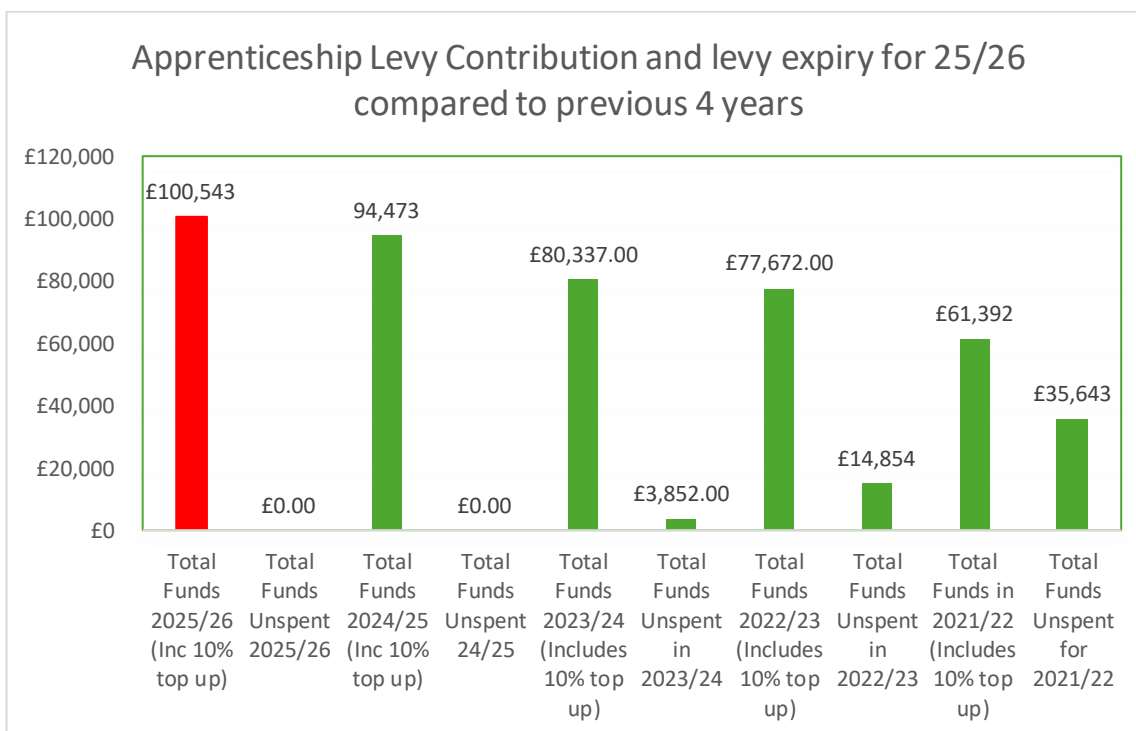
Financial Year	Apprenticeships supported through the Levy
2025/26	22
2024/25	21
2023/24	17
2022/23	11

The number of new apprenticeships starts in 2025/26 was **9**, compared with an average of **7** as cited by LGA.

Apprenticeships started this year were Senior Leader Level 7 (3), Town Planning Level 7 (1), Business Administrator Level 3 (4) and Payroll Administrator Level 3 (1). Of these nine starts, four were external appointments new to the organisation.

22 Apprenticeships were being supported through the levy overall in 25/26, depending on the level some of these will have commenced apprenticeship training in previous years and are continuing into 2025/26, 9 apprenticeships were successfully completed in this period. This is a significant achievement, reflecting the commitment required to balance work and study. It also recognises the important role of managers in supporting apprentices to gain the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed to complete their programme successfully.

The Government's Levy funding rules mean that funds expire and are returned if they are not used within 24 months of entering the account. Monitoring Levy spend therefore remains important. The graph below shows total Levy funding and the amount that expired. The reduction of expired Levy funds to zero in both 2024/25 and 2025/26 demonstrates continued progress in maximising Levy use through the Council's grow our own approach.



The Council also continues to engage with schools through careers fairs and work-related activities and is hosting eight students from schools across East Devon through this year's corporate work experience programme.

The Pathways to Planning initiative also started in September. This programme is designed to help address staffing shortages in planning teams by offering graduates a fast-track entry route into a career in local government. Following the success of the management trainee placement, the Council is also exploring a further two placements through the LGA programme within Place services.

Building Control is also working with LABC to support a seconded placement in response to skills shortages in the sector. Following the success of the management trainee placement, the Council is also exploring a further two placements through the LGA programme within Place services.

**Report to:** Personnel Committee

**Date of Meeting** 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026

**Heading/Title:** HR Update

**Cabinet Member(s):** Cllr John Loudoun

**Director/Assistant Director:** Melanie Wellman

**Author and Directorate:** Gemma Roberts, Corporate Lead – People & Information Governance, Governance

**Contact Details:** Gemma.roberts@eastdevon.gov.uk

**Key decision No**

**If a Key Decision has it appeared on Forward Plan**

**Document classification:** Part A Public Document

**Exemption applied:** None

## 1. Background

This report provides Members with an overview of current HR activity and key developments across the Council, aligned to People Focused, our people strategy and themes of Connect, Grow and Thrive. It highlights progress made, alongside updates on workforce initiatives, policy changes and preparations for Local Government Reorganisation. The report is intended to give Members a high-level view of how the organisation is supporting its workforce.



### 1.1 Reward & Recognition

The Total Reward Booklet is now live, providing employees with a single, accessible resource outlining the full range of rewards and benefits available to them as part of working at East Devon District Council (EDDC). This includes key information on pay, pensions, leave, wellbeing support, and additional benefits, helping to ensure staff have a clearer understanding of the overall value of their employment package.

The booklet will also act as a useful tool for managers, enabling them to more effectively signpost and discuss the support and benefits available to their teams.

We continue to acknowledge the great work of staff both locally by managers and via weekly bouquets via East Devon – Connected, our staff newsletter.

## 1.2 Staff led group – How we connect

The staff led group 'how we connect' is in full swing and already coming up with some great ideas on how to support and facilitate connection across the organisation. They are looking to plan a monthly walk, utilising our amazing Happy, Healthy, Here initiative and a summer picnic lunch. It is great to see our people taking ownership and moving this forward, with peer-to-peer events, which we hope will encourage engagement.

## 1.3 Coffee & Connect

We continue to hold Coffee & Connect sessions, we held a Walk and Talk led by Simon Davey, Director of Finance as part of Stress Awareness month and have plans to link with the Thelma Hubert Gallery to support people to craft and connect in an alternative EDDC environment.



## 1.3 Our 'We Grow' Offer

We have now completed our review of our 'we grow' offer (learning and development). Our people are central to everything we do, and the skills, confidence and behaviours they bring shape both our services and workplace experience. The 'we grow' offer 2026–27 sets out a clear and practical approach to supporting this, through a cohesive six pillar learning and development framework. Aligned to People Focused – Connect, Grow & Thrive, Organisational Behaviours and Manager Charter, the offer is accessible, proportionate and grounded in the realities of our work. It complements everyday learning through experience, collaboration and mentoring, helping create a supportive environment where people can grow and do their best work, now and in the future. The 6 pillars are;

1. Mandatory Training – for all
2. Managers mandatory training
3. Management & Leadership development
4. Employee development offer
5. Wellbeing, inclusion & psychological safety
6. Health & Safety

## 1.4 Development of the Managers Hub

Phase 1 of the Managers Hub is progressing well. The recruitment pages have now been developed and are currently being tested with a small group of managers ahead of wider rollout. Work has also commenced on a dedicated space for our learning offer.

In addition, to support the launch of the refreshed Performance Excellence Framework (see above), a dedicated space has been created within the hub bringing together tools, guidance and practical resources in one place. This will make it easier for managers to quickly access consistent, up-to-date information, helping to build confidence and improve practice.

## 1.4 Mentoring Programme Launched

The One Team East Devon mentoring programme has now been successfully launched. The programme has been carefully designed to be deliverable within existing resources and budget, enabling implementation within a realistic timeframe. Its introduction demonstrates a clear "You

Said, We Did” response, reflecting consistent feedback from staff expressing an appetite for mentoring opportunities across the Council.

This initiative will play an important role in supporting employees to connect, grow and thrive, strengthening collaboration, development and knowledge-sharing across the organisation. It is particularly timely as we continue to support our workforce through organisational change and prepare for Local Government Reorganisation, helping to build resilience and capability for the future.

## **1.5 Grow Our Own**

### Work Experience

Work Experience Week will take place from 13<sup>th</sup> July, with eight students from schools across the district attending. The programme offers a structured and engaging introduction to the Council, including site visits, “Speedy Insights” sessions with colleagues from across services, mock interviews, and the opportunity to develop and present their own presentation at the end of the week. This initiative provides valuable early engagement with young people, helping to raise awareness of local government careers and showcasing EDDC as an employer of choice. We look forward to welcoming the students and providing a positive and enriching experience.

### Care Experienced Young People

Thelma Hulbert Gallery has successfully secured Arts Council funding to support a placement opportunity for a care-experienced young person and is working in partnership with Devon County Council to identify a young person.

In addition, EDDC has joined a county-wide group facilitated by Devon County Council, focused on improving employment opportunities for vulnerable young people. It is hoped this collaborative work will help to strengthen pathways into employment and demonstrates the Council’s commitment to supporting inclusive opportunities and positive outcomes for young people across Devon.



## **1.6 Refreshed Performance Excellence Framework**

Our refreshed Performance Excellence Framework is launching on 1<sup>st</sup> July with the first of two managers briefings. The approach aims to create a more consistent, user-friendly and continuous model of performance and development. The updated approach places greater emphasis on regular ‘check-ins’ (re-named from 1-2-1’s) between managers and employees. Alongside an annual Performance Excellence Review, which is an opportunity to reflect and plan. This is an important milestone, but it is now positioned as part of an ongoing cycle rather than a standalone event.

Alongside this, the revised framework places stronger focus on quality of conversation, wellbeing, and career development, supporting managers to take a more coaching-based approach. Guidance, forms and manager resources have been developed to support consistency across the organisation, and to make it easier for both managers and employees to engage meaningfully in the process. The approach aligns with the Council’s People Strategy themes of Connect, Grow, and Thrive, supporting stronger working relationships, continuous development, and a positive

working environment, ultimately contributing to improved performance, engagement, and service delivery.

A tailored approach will be introduced for operational staff to ensure it is fit for purpose, including the introduction of a team-based check-in model. Implementation in these areas will follow the busy summer period.

### **1.7 Pulse Survey**

A pulse survey was launched on 10<sup>th</sup> June and will run until 1<sup>st</sup> July. The survey focuses on staff wellbeing and provides an important touchpoint to understand how employees are feeling, building on key themes identified in the last annual survey. The next full annual survey is scheduled for September, ensuring a continued and structured approach to listening to staff feedback and responding to emerging priorities.

### **1.8 Staff led group – Safe & Supported**

The Safe and Supported group has now met, following a similar approach to the 'how we connect' group, to explore how it can best support the organisation. Constructive discussions were held around the group's future focus and ways of working.

While initial membership has been limited, there is an opportunity to build momentum. Planned promotion and wider engagement will aim to encourage broader participation, strengthening the group's impact and ensuring it represents a diverse range of voices across the organisation.

### **1.9 Change & Resilience workshops**

We have delivered a further change and resilience workshop; however, attendance was lower than anticipated. Additional sessions are planned for July and September, with a renewed focus on promotion to encourage greater participation.

Should uptake remain limited, we will review the approach to ensure it continues to meet workforce needs and that resources are being targeted where they will have the greatest impact.

### **1.10 Other activity**

#### Policy Updates

Changes arising from the Employment Rights Act have required updates to several HR policies. In most cases, these are minor amendments to ensure continued legal compliance, particularly reflecting the introduction of day one rights to certain entitlements. Policies being updated include:

- Compassionate Parental Leave Policy
- Paternity Leave Policy
- Shared Parental Leave Policy
- Unpaid Parental Leave Policy

In addition, the Council's Probation Policy has been reviewed and updated, and will be presented to Personnel Committee for approval.

#### Apprenticeship Reform

The Council is responding to national apprenticeship funding reforms being introduced during 2026, which will materially change how levy funding can be used. Key changes include the removal of the 10% government top-up and a reduction in the expiry period for new levy funds from 24 to 12 months from August 2026, alongside restrictions on funding for certain higher-level (Level 7) apprenticeships from January 2026. These reforms reduce overall funding available, limit

flexibility, and increase the need for more active planning, prioritisation and monitoring of apprenticeship activity.

For the Council, the immediate financial position remains broadly stable, with levy income currently supporting existing commitments. However, modelling indicates that whilst short-term risk of levy loss is low, there is potential for funding expiry to emerge from early 2028, coinciding with Local Government Reorganisation and ongoing uncertainty about how levy balances and commitments will transfer to a successor authority. This reinforces the need for stronger governance, clearer prioritisation of apprenticeship investment towards organisational priorities (such as hard-to-fill roles and succession planning), and appropriate approval and monitoring arrangements to ensure levy funding is used effectively and strategically ahead of transition.

### Local Government Reorganisation

The latest all-staff briefing on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) was held on 1<sup>st</sup> June, with strong attendance and positive feedback from those who attended. As expected, many colleagues are seeking greater clarity on what LGR will mean for them personally; however, at this stage, there remain uncertainties and we will continue to provide updates as further information becomes available.

Following the staff briefing, two in-person workshops titled “*Coping and Thriving through LGR*” were delivered on 2<sup>nd</sup> June by Sophie Hosking. These sessions provided a valuable opportunity for colleagues to explore the opportunities, challenges, hopes and concerns associated with LGR. Sophie brought significant expertise, having played a central role in the development and implementation of the Unitary Authority in Cornwall, which added practical insight and credibility to the discussions.

HR has also been supporting the collection of key workforce data as part of LGR preparations, with activity expected to increase in the coming months. In response, consideration is being given to how capacity is prioritised across both business-as-usual activity and organisational development work, ensuring the Council is well positioned to manage the increasing demands associated with LGR.

## **2 Recommendations/Decision**

To note the content of this update.

## **3 Reasons for Recommendations/Decision**

To ensure members of Personnel Committee are up to date with activity taking place across HR.

## **4 Options**

N/A

## **5 Relevance to Council Plan/priorities**

Set out how report links to the Council Plan/priorities:

- A supported and engaged community that has the right homes in the right places, with appropriate infrastructure
- A sustainable environment that is moving towards carbon neutrality and which promotes ecological recovery.
- A vibrant and resilient economy that supports local business, provides local jobs and leads to a reduction in poverty and inequality.

- A well-managed, financially secure and continuously improving council that delivers quality services

**6 Financial Comments/Implications**

There are no direct financial implications in the recommendations.

**7 Legal Comments/Implications**

There are no direct legal implications in the recommendations.

**8 Risk Implications**

Not applicable.

**9 Equality Implications (Public Sector Equality Duty)**

Equality consideration is embedded within HR practice and where required Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken for relevant work.

**10 HR and Workforce Implications**

As detailed within main body of report.

**11 Community Safety Implications (Crime and Disorder)**

Not applicable.

**12 Climate Change Implications**

Not applicable.

**13 Health & Safety and Health & Wellbeing Implications**

Detailed within main body of report, where applicable.

**14 Procurement and Social Value implications**

Not applicable.

**15 Land and Buildings (non-housing)/Asset Management Implications**

Not applicable.

**16 Overview and Scrutiny Committees Comments/Recommendations**

Not applicable.

**17 Digital and Data**

Not applicable.

**18 Consultation and Engagement**

Not applicable.

**19 Communications**

Not applicable.

**20 Next Steps**

Not applicable.

**21 Appendices**

Not applicable.

**22 Background Papers**

Not applicable.

Please make sure you have obtained the relevant sign off and the date completed before submitting your report to Democratic Services.

	<b>Officer Name</b>	<b>Date requested</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
Legal & Governance	Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer	16/6/2026	
Finance	Section 151 Officer or Deputy S151 Officer	16/6/2026	
Communications	<a href="mailto:communications@eastdevon.gov.uk">communications@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>		If applicable
Digital and Data	<a href="mailto:digital@eastdevon.gov.uk">digital@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>		If applicable
Engagement	<a href="mailto:engagement@eastdevon.gov.uk">engagement@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>		If applicable
HR	HR Lead		If applicable
Chief Executive	Chief Executive		If applicable
Director	Relevant Director		Required
Assistant Director(s)	Relevant Assistant Director(s)	N/A	Required
Cabinet Lead Member(s)	Relevant Lead Member (s)		Required
Executive Leadership Team	ELT	16/6/2026	Required
Strategic Leadership Team	SLT		If applicable



**Report to:** Personnel Committee

**Date of Meeting** 30 June 2026

**Heading/Title:** Revised Probation Policy

**Cabinet Member(s):** Cllr John Loudoun

**Director/Assistant Director:** Melanie Welman

**Author and Directorate:** Caroline Hall, HR Operations Manager, Governance

**Contact Details** Caroline.hall@eastdevon.gov.uk

**Key decision No**

**If a Key Decision has it appeared on Forward Plan**

**Document classification:** Part A Public Document

**Exemption applied:** None

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Council's Probation Policy has been reviewed and updated in light of a change to employment legislation which takes effect on 1 January 2027; specifically the reduction in the qualifying period for unfair dismissal rights from two years to six months and the removal of the unfair dismissal compensation cap.
- 1.2 These changes require the Council to ensure that any decisions regarding the termination of employment during probation are made within a shorter timeframe and are supported by clear, fair, and evidence-based processes in order to mitigate the risk of successful, potentially high value, claims.
- 1.3 The revised policy introduces a more structured approach to probation management, including earlier intervention, defined review points, and strengthened governance, to ensure the Council remains compliant and mitigates legal risk whilst benefiting employees with a transparent and fair process aimed at supporting success.
- 1.4 The revised policy introduces the following key changes:
  - a. Legislative alignment: Updated to reflect the reduction in qualifying service for unfair dismissal rights from 2 years to 6 months.

- b. Structured review framework: Retaining but clarifying timing of probation review stages at end of months 1, and start of months 3 and 5 to ensure timely monitoring and decision-making.
- c. Earlier intervention: Stronger expectation for managers to identify and address performance concerns early, with clear documentation.
- d. Formal improvement process: Clear process for formal review meetings and improvement plans where concerns arise, including employee right to representation.
- e. Timely decision-making: Requirement that decisions regarding continued employment, including dismissal, are made by the end of Month 5; and dismissals following a probation extension are affected under the relevant employment policy rather than the probation policy to reflect employment protection status.
- f. Enhanced governance and fairness: Stronger emphasis on evidence-based decision making, consistency, and transparency throughout the probation process.

## **2. Recommendations/Decision**

2.1 Personnel Sub Committee is asked to:

- a. Approve the revised Probation Policy (June 2026) for implementation from 1 July 2026.
- b. Note that this follows Executive Leadership Team (ELT) consideration and reflects a legislative change.

## **3. Reasons for Recommendations/Decision**

3.1 Approval is recommended to ensure the Council:

- Complies with employment legislation relating to unfair dismissal.
- Has a robust, fair, and consistent process for managing employees during probation.
- Reduces the risk of legal challenge and associated costs.
- Supports employees through a clear, transparent and structured onboarding and performance process aligned with the People Strategy.

## **4. Options**

- 4.1 Option 1 – Approve the revised policy (recommended)  
Ensures compliance with legislation and embeds best practice processes.
- 4.2 Option 2 – Do not approve  
Would leave the Council exposed to legal and financial risk and operating under a policy that no longer reflects current legislative requirements.
- 4.3 Option 3 – Request revisions

Would delay implementation and increase risk of non-compliance.

## 5. Relevance to Council Plan/priorities

Set out how report links to the Council Plan/priorities:

- A supported and engaged community that has the right homes in the right places, with appropriate infrastructure
- A sustainable environment that is moving towards carbon neutrality and which promotes ecological recovery.
- A vibrant and resilient economy that supports local business, provides local jobs and leads to a reduction in poverty and inequality.
- A well-managed, financially secure and continuously improving council that delivers quality services

**Indicate how the recommendations/decision contributes to the delivery of the Council Plan and its priorities**

- 5.1 The policy strengthens governance, workforce management, and legal compliance, supporting the delivery of high-quality services through effective people management.

## 6. Financial Comments/Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the policy update.
- 6.2 Indirectly, the policy supports cost avoidance by reducing the risk of employment tribunal claims and associated legal costs.

## 7. Legal Comments/Implications

- 7.1 The revised policy is required to ensure continued compliance with employment legislation and mitigate associated legal and financial risk associated with the reduction in the qualifying period for unfair dismissal rights to six months, and removal of the compensation cap for unfair dismissal claims.
- 7.2 The policy strengthens procedural fairness and documentation, which are critical in defending potential claims.

## 8. Risk Implications

**Please complete the risk table – further guidance available on the [Intranet](#)**

- 8.1 Risks if decision is not taken:
  - a. Increased risk of successful employment tribunal claims.
  - b. Non-compliance with current employment legislation.
  - c. Inconsistent management of probation across services.

- 8.2 Risks if decision is taken:
- a. Implementation risk (manager understanding and application).

8.3 Mitigation:

- a. Manager briefings and guidance.
- b. HR support and oversight.
- c. Clear documentation and structured review processes.

**9. Equality Implications (Public Sector Equality Duty)**

- 9.1 An EqIA is included at Appendix B.

**10. HR and Workforce Implications**

- 10.1 As detailed within the main body of the report.

**11. Community Safety Implications (Crime and Disorder)**

- 11.1 No applicable.

**12. Climate Change Implications**

- 12.1 Not applicable.

**13. Health & Safety and Health & Wellbeing Implications**

- 13.1 Detailed within main body of report and EqIA, where applicable.

**14. Procurement and Social Value implications**

- 14.1 Not applicable.

**15. Land and Buildings (non-housing)/Asset Management Implications**

- 15.1 Not applicable.

**16. Overview and Scrutiny Committees Comments/Recommendations**

- 16.1 Not applicable.

**17. Digital and Data**

- 17.1 Not applicable.

**18. Consultation and Engagement**

- 18.1 The policy has been shared with Unison for consideration, comment and review.

## 19. Communications

19.1 Not applicable.

## 20. Next Steps

20.1 Once the new policy is approved, it will be published taking effect from 1 July 2026. It will apply to all new hires from that date. Existing 'in-probation' cases as at that date will be managed in line with the new policy in principle and where reasonably practicable on a case-by-case basis.

## 21. Appendices

21.1 Appendix A – Probation Policy

21.2 Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment

## 22. Background Papers

22.1 Not applicable.

### Proposed Report Sign Off process

Please make sure you have obtained the relevant sign off and the date completed before submitting your report to Democratic Services.

	<b>Officer Name</b>	<b>Date requested</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
Legal & Governance	Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer	11/06/2026	Required
Finance	Section 151 Officer or Deputy S151 Officer	11/06/2026	Required
Communications	<a href="mailto:communications@eastdevon.gov.uk">communications@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>		If applicable
Digital and Data	<a href="mailto:digital@eastdevon.gov.uk">digital@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>		If applicable
Engagement	<a href="mailto:engagement@eastdevon.gov.uk">engagement@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>		If applicable
HR	HR Lead		If applicable
Chief Executive	Chief Executive		If applicable
Director	Relevant Director		Required
Assistant Director(s)	Relevant Assistant Director(s)		Required
Cabinet Lead Member(s)	Relevant Lead Member (s)		Required
Executive Leadership Team	ELT	9/6/2026	Required
Strategic Leadership Team	SLT		If applicable

## Probation policy

Issue details	
<b>Title:</b>	Probation Policy
<b>Version number:</b>	2.0
<b>Policy owner:</b>	Corporate Lead – People and Information Governance
<b>Policy sponsor:</b>	Strategic Director - Governance
<b>Authorisation by:</b>	ELT
<b>Authorisation date:</b>	
<b>Future review date:</b>	July 2028
<b>Delegated authority to make changes to the policy:</b>	<i>[Provide job/group title rather than name(s) of those who have delegated authority. This could be a Director, an Assistant Director, a Portfolio Holder, Cabinet, a Committee, SLT, or ELT.]</i>

# 1. Purpose of policy

1.1 This policy supports 'People Focused', our people strategy, enabling our people to connect, grow and thrive from the commencement of their employment.

1.2 It sets out how we:

- Support new employees to succeed through clear expectations, training and feedback;
- Build a culture of trust, respect, and open communication;
- Ensure performance is managed in a fair, consistent and evidence-based way;
- Make timely and legally sound decisions about continued employment.

1.3 Our approach reflects our values of fairness, accountability, inclusivity, and transparency.

# 2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all newly appointed employees within their first 6 months of employment.

2.2 It does not apply to agency workers, contractors or consultants.

2.3 The principles of this policy do apply to existing employees who change roles within the Council.

# 3. Key Principles

3.1 **In line with our People Strategy and behaviours:**

- We start from a position of trust and treat people with dignity and respect;
- We have open, honest and proactive conversations;
- We take accountability for our decisions and actions;
- We support people to grow through clear expectations and feedback.

3.2 **Operationally:**

- The probation period is 6 months (including notice, where applicable);
- A decision to dismiss must be made no later than the end of month 5;
- Managers must act early, consistently and with evidence;
- Employees will have the opportunity to understand concerns and respond.

# 4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Managers play a key role in delivering a positive employee experience and enabling people to succeed. They will:

- Set clear expectations from the outset;
- Hold regular 'Check-In' (1-2-1s) and review meetings;
- Provide clear, constructive feedback;
- Act promptly where concerns arise;
- Keep clear written records;

- Make timely, fair and evidence-based decisions.

4.2 Employees are expected to:

- Engage with induction and training;
- Take ownership of their performance and development;
- Act on feedback;
- Raise concerns or support needs early.

4.3 Human Resources will:

- Provide advice and guidance;
- Support fair and consistent application of the policy;
- Help managers manage risk and ensure compliance.

## 5. Procedure

### 5.1 Induction and onboarding (Month 1)

5.1.1 We will support employees to connect and feel part of One Team East Devon.

5.1.2 Within the first month of employment managers will have:

- Agreed objectives and expectations;
- Identified training and development needs;
- Explained expected behaviours and standards;
- Scheduled regular check-ins and review meetings.

### 5.2 Probation review prompts and timeframe

5.2.1 Progress through the probation period will be monitored as a minimum using the following structured approach to ensure employees are provided with early support and clarity and time to improve where needed. Human Resources will issue a formal prompt for a progress review at the end of month 1 and the start of months 3 and 5.

Stage	Timing (by end of):	Focus
Initial review (Manager led / HR prompt)	Month 1	Early feedback and support for employee HR prompt is to ensure objectives and monitoring is in place.
Progress review (HR initiated)	Month 3	Confirm progress on track OR conduct formal probation/implement formal PIP review meeting where concerns remain unresolved
Critical review (Manager led)	Month 4 - 4.5	Formal PIP review to confirm progress on track or initiate final formal probation meeting
Final decision (HR prompt / Manager led)	Month 5	Confirm, extend (exceptionally), or dismiss.

5.2.2 In addition to timely completion of the 1, 3 and 5-month prompts, Managers are expected to conduct and evidence regular reviews throughout the probation period through the

Council's 1-2-1 'Check-in' process are to make timely, documented and fair decisions at each of the above stages.

5.2.3 Employee's will be entitled to 5 working days' notice of any formal probation review meetings.

### **5.3 Internal moves**

5.3.1 Where employees move roles internally a structured review period will apply with concerns being managed under the relevant Council policy.

## **6. Managing probation concerns**

6.1 In reflecting our commitment to open communication and supporting people to succeed, from the start of employment and prior to month 3, managers will:

- Raise concerns promptly;
- Provide examples and clear expectations;
- Agree improvement actions and support;
- Maintain a transparent record of progress; and
- Confirm discussions and the above in writing.

6.2 HR will prompt managers for a formal review at the start of month 3. Managers must have either confirmed the probation is on track or hold a meeting to instigate a formal improvement by the end of month 3. There is nothing preventing instigation of a formal improvement process prior to this where circumstances warrant it.

### **6.3 Formal improvement stage (typically Months 3–4)**

6.3.1 Where concerns warrant, the manager will arrange and hold a formal probation review meeting with the employee to discuss this. Employees may be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative at the formal review probation meeting.

6.3.2 This meeting may result in a formal improvement plan being issued. This will include:

- Clear evidence of concerns
- Required standards
- Measurable objectives
- Timescales – the formal improvement plan must have concluded prior to the end of month 4.5.
- Support and development

### **6.4 Final review stage (no later than Month 5)**

6.4.1 HR will prompt managers for a formal review at the start of month 5. Where performance remains insufficient the manager will be responsible for arranging and holding a final probation review meeting which must be timed for a decision to be taken prior to the end of month 5.

6.4.2 The employee may be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative and will:

- Receive evidence in advance;
- Have the opportunity to respond;
- Be treated fairly and respectfully.

- 6.4.3 Managers must decide on one of the following outcomes prior to the end of the 5th month:
- Confirm in post; or
  - Dismiss with notice following a formal review process and having obtained advice from HR; or
  - Extend (exceptional circumstances only see 6.6 - Extension of probation).

6.4.4 In addition, by the end of month 5, managers must have completed the 5-month probation review prompt sent by HR.

## **6.5 Termination during probation**

6.5.1 If employment is terminated a decision must be made and confirmed in writing by end of Month 5. Manager must complete a leaver form to this effect at least 1 week prior to the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> month.

6.5.2 A minimum of 1 months' notice will be given (unless the reason for dismissal relates to gross misconduct).

6.5.3 The written outcome will include:

- Reason(s) for dismissal
- Evidence
- Right of appeal

## **6.6 Extension of probation**

6.6.1 Extensions are exceptional and will only be used where:

- There is clear potential for improvement within a reasonable timeframe.
- Or where disability related absence has prevented a fair assessment

6.6.2 Where an extension is granted this:

- Must be agreed before the end of Month 5;
- Normally limited to 1–3 months;
- Confirmed in writing with clear expectations.

6.6.3 Should the extension not bring about sufficient improvement, the process will move to the relevant Council policy and may commence at the final stage of that policy depending on the circumstances.

## **6.7 Appeals**

6.7.1 Employees may appeal a decision to dismiss. Appeals must be submitted in writing within 5 working days.

6.7.2 An appeal meeting will be arranged and the outcome will be confirmed in writing.

# **7. Policy administration**

# **8. Equality impact considerations**

Equality Impact Assessment completed in June 2026

## 9. Data protection

The [EDDC Data Protection Policy](#) outlines how we store and use personal information.

The following privacy notice(s) provide further information on how we will use personal data, how it is gathered, how long we will retain this information, and what rights individuals have in relation to this.

*Choose the relevant privacy notices from the drop-down menu below.*

Choose an item.

GDPR Privacy Notice for Staff

All our privacy notices can be found on the EDDC website – <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/access-to-information/data-protection/privacy-notices/>.

## 10. Policy review

History of most recent policy changes – Must be completed			
Date	Section	Change	Origin of change (e.g. change in legislation)
June 2026	5 and 6	Changes to ensure timely, evidence based, clear and fair probation review processes within the 6-month probation period to reflect the reduction from 2 years to 6 months continuous service for acquiring unfair dismissal rights. Additionally, linkage to the people strategy and refreshed performance management framework.	Employment Rights Act

## 11. Policy authorisation

This policy was originally approved by ELT, Personnel Sub Committee and Unison on 14 January 2025.

## 12. Policy dissemination

This policy will be communicated via:

- One Team East Devon Hub
- Manager briefings
- HR guidance materials

## 13. Related policies, strategies, procedures, and legislation

- People Strategy (2025–2028)
- Capability Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Employment Rights Act 2025
- ACAS Code of Practice

# Equality Impact Assessment

*Before completing this EIA please ensure you have read the EIA guidance notes and other resources, available on the [intranet](#)*

<b>Version</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>	<b>04/06/2026</b>
<b>Description of what is being impact assessed</b>			
<p>Revised Probation Policy (May 2026) introducing a structured, time-bound, evidence-based probation process including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tighter staged review framework (Months 1, 3, 4 - 4.5, 5)</li> <li>• Mandatory early intervention and formal improvement processes</li> <li>• Requirement to make dismissal decisions by Month 5</li> <li>• Increased emphasis on documentation, consistency, and manager accountability</li> <li>• Restriction of probation extensions to exceptional circumstances</li> </ul>			
<b>Evidence</b>			
<b>What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups?</b>			
<p><i>Further information is available at <a href="#">Equality data</a> and will be added to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal workforce equality data (recruitment, probation outcomes, turnover)</li> <li>• Existing probation policy outcomes and case reviews</li> <li>• ACAS guidance on fair dismissal and probation</li> <li>• Employment Rights Act changes (reduction in qualifying service)</li> <li>• HR best practice on performance management and early intervention</li> <li>• Feedback from HR advisors and managers on current process challenges</li> </ul>			

**Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups and what have they told you?** If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?

- HR Leadership Team
- Senior Leadership / ELT (9 June 2026)
- Policy owner (Corporate Lead – People & IG)
  
- General support for clearer structure and earlier intervention
- Recognition that tighter timelines may create risk for some groups (e.g. disability, pregnancy)
- Need for strong guidance for managers on reasonable adjustments and inclusive practice

<b>Analysis of impact on protected groups</b>				
<p>The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. The Council also has a legal duty to have due regard to armed forces personnel when carrying out healthcare, housing and education functions. Consider how this policy/service will achieve these aims. In the table below, using the evidence outlined above and your own understanding, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Based on this information, assess the likely outcome, before you have implemented any mitigation.</p>				
<b>Protected group</b>	<b>Summary of impact</b>	<b>Negative outcome</b>	<b>Neutral outcome</b>	<b>Positive outcome</b>
<b>Age</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential risk for younger or less experienced employees who may need longer to develop.</li> <li>• Positive impact through clearer expectations and structured support and recruiting against clear skills, knowledge and experience described as essential to undertake the role from day 1.</li> </ul>	□	⊗	□
<b>Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential negative impact due to compressed timelines (e.g. Month 5 decision point).</li> <li>• Risk where disability-related absence affects ability to evidence performance early and/or impact of disability in the absence of reasonable adjustments.</li> <li>• Policy includes some mitigation (extensions where absence prevents fair assessment) but relies on manager judgement.</li> </ul>	⊗	□	□
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No direct adverse impact identified.</li> <li>• Positive impact through emphasis on fairness, evidence, and structured process.</li> </ul>	□	⊗	⊗

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific impacts identified.</li> <li>Positive impact through emphasis on fairness, evidence, and structured process.</li> </ul>	☐	☒	☒
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential <b>negative impact due to absence</b> affecting ability to demonstrate performance within fixed timelines.</li> <li>Risk that Month 5 decision deadline may disadvantage employees on maternity leave or pregnancy-related absence.</li> </ul>	☒	☐	☐
<b>Race and ethnicity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structured, evidence-based process reduces subjectivity and potential bias.</li> <li>However, risk remains if manager capability is inconsistent.</li> </ul>	☐	☐	☒
<b>Religion or belief</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential indirect impact if review scheduling or expectations do not accommodate religious observance.</li> <li>Overall neutral with appropriate flexibility.</li> </ul>	☐	☒	☐
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No direct differential impact identified.</li> <li>Potential indirect impact linked to maternity (covered above)/menopause in the absence of reasonable adjustments.</li> </ul>	☐	☒	☐
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific impacts identified.</li> <li>Positive effect through consistent, fair process.</li> </ul>	☐	☒	☒

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
<b>Armed Forces (including serving personnel, families and veterans)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential indirect impact where reservist duties or mobility affect availability or performance evidence within timelines.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Other, e.g. carers, care leavers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carers or those with external pressures may be disproportionately affected by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accelerated timelines</li> <li>Requirement for consistent performance evidence</li> </ul> </li> <li>Positive impact from clearer expectations and structured support.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Negative outcomes action plan</b>				
Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.				
Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
Produce manager guidance on reasonable adjustments during probation	31/07/2026	HR Operations Manager	Audit of probation outcomes by protected group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flag mandatory HR advice for cases moving to a formal review involving disability/pregnancy (inclusion in documentation)	31/07/2026	HR Operations Manager	Incorporated into supporting documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Negative outcomes action plan</b>				
Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.				
<b>Action taken/to be taken</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>How will it be monitored?</b>	<b>Action complete</b>
Provide manager training on inclusive probation management	31/08/2026	HR Operations Manager	Included in manager on-boarding and mandatory training	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitor probation outcomes by protected characteristic (quarterly reporting)	31/03/2027	HR Operations Manager / HR Support & People Development Manager	Annual people data	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strengthen guidance on use of extensions in mitigating circumstances	30/06/2026	HR Operations Manager	Incorporated into supporting documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Include explicit reference to equality considerations in manager prompts/templates	30/06/2026	HR Operations Manager	Incorporated into supporting documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.</b>				

<b>Negative outcomes action plan</b>				
Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.				
<b>Action taken/to be taken</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>How will it be monitored?</b>	<b>Action complete</b>

<b>Completed by:</b>	<b>Caroline Hall, HR Operations Manager</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>4 June 2026</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<i>Should be reviewed by the relevant Assistant Director/Director and signed off</i>
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>To be reviewed by:</b>	<b>Caroline Hall, HR Operations Manager</b>
<b>Review date:</b>	<b>No later than 30 June 2028</b>

***Ensure that a final copy of this impact assessment is sent to HR as per the equality impact assessment guidance.***



**Report to:** Personnel Committee

**Date of Meeting** 30/6/26

**Heading/Title:** Annual Health and Safety Report 2025/26

**Cabinet Member(s):** John Loudoun

**Lead Officer:** Matthew Blythe

**Author and Directorate:** Matthew Blythe

**Contact Details** matthew.blythe@eastdevon.gov.uk

**Key decision No**

**Document classification:** Part A Public Document

**Exemption applied:** None

## **1. Summary/Background**

East Devon District Council has a moral and legal responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of its staff, members, customers and partners. For this reason the Council employs specialist qualified officers who are based in the Environmental Health Service.

This report is review of the work carried out by the Corporate Health and Safety Team during 2025-26 and includes relevant examples and statistics.

## **2. Introduction**

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, imposes duties on employers for the health and safety of its employees and non-employees who are affected by the 'work activity'. These wide-ranging duties include:

- assess risks to employees, customers, partners and any other people who could be affected by their activities;
- arrange for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of preventive and protective measures;
- have a written health and safety policy if they employ five or more people;
- ensure they have access to competent health and safety advice;
- consult employees about their risks at work and current preventive and protective measures.

Failure to comply with these requirements can have serious consequences – for both organisations and individuals. Sanctions include fines, imprisonment and disqualification.

In order to assist EDDC to discharge its responsibilities as an employer it employs two health and safety officers who are based in the Commercial Premises Team in the Environmental Health Service and managed by a Principal Environmental Health

Officer (PEHO). The Corporate Health and Safety Officer tends to focus on corporate policies and procedures whereas the Interim Senior Health and Safety Officer focuses on Street Scene as this is the highest hazard area of work. However, under the management of the PEHO resilience across all services is assured.

The Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations 1977 and the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996, require the Council to consult with employees' representatives on:

- the introduction of any measures that may substantially affect the health and safety of employees
- the arrangements for appointing "competent persons"
- any health and safety information that must by law be provided to employees
- the planning and organisation of health and safety training for employees
- the health and safety consequences of new technology to employees

In respect of this undertaking, meetings of the Central Joint Safety Panel, consist of equal numbers of representatives of Council employers and employees, are held. The purpose of this committee will include monitoring safety matters affected by the Council's undertaking and as a consultee to matters that affect the health and safety of employees.

### **3. Accidents**

It is a requirement that all accidents, 'near-misses' and violent incidents are reported via a FirmStep form on the intranet. The Corporate Safety team review all reports and carry out further investigations where required. The team can also assess if there are any trends that need to be considered.

In total in 2025/26 there were 157 recorded accidents related to EDDC employment activities, the majority relating to Street Scene or members of the public. The total includes 17 near-miss reports which is part of our incident and injury requirement. Of the accidents reported, 2 were reportable to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) with no follow-up by the HSE (these have been summarised below). Table 1 and Chart 1 give a more in-depth break down.

While overall reported accident numbers have increased, this reflects a positive and developing safety culture, particularly within the Streetscene service. There is clear evidence of improved reporting behaviours, with operatives demonstrating greater engagement in both their own safety and that of their colleagues. This increased transparency and ownership is a key indicator of cultural maturity and aligns with best practice in proactive health and safety management.

Of the 113 reported Streetscene incidents, 38 relate to damage to vehicles and/or property. These incidents include non-injury vehicle collisions and equipment-related damage, such as strimmer operations resulting in broken windows. It is important to note that these figures include incidents where no harm to individuals occurred, reflecting broader and more comprehensive reporting rather than solely injury-based incidents.

The 2025/26 reporting year represents the first full year in which this level of detailed data has been systematically captured. This enhanced dataset has enabled a more informed analysis of incident trends and risk areas.

In response, targeted control measures have already been implemented to mitigate identified risks ahead of the 2026/27 operational season. These include the introduction of in-house strimmer training, the use of A-boards and protective netting in proximity to vulnerable assets such as windows and vehicles, alongside additional operational controls.

Collectively, these actions demonstrate a proactive approach to risk management, with a focus on continuous improvement, prevention, and embedding a positive safety culture across the service.

<b>Table 1. Accidents by Service</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>
Streetscene	36	63	113
Member of the general public	23	27	29
Housing	7	11	5
Environmental Health	2	4	2
Planning Strategy and Development	1	0	0
Councillor	1	0	3
Revenues and Benefits	1	0	0
Place, Assets, Commercialisation	1	3	5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>157</b>

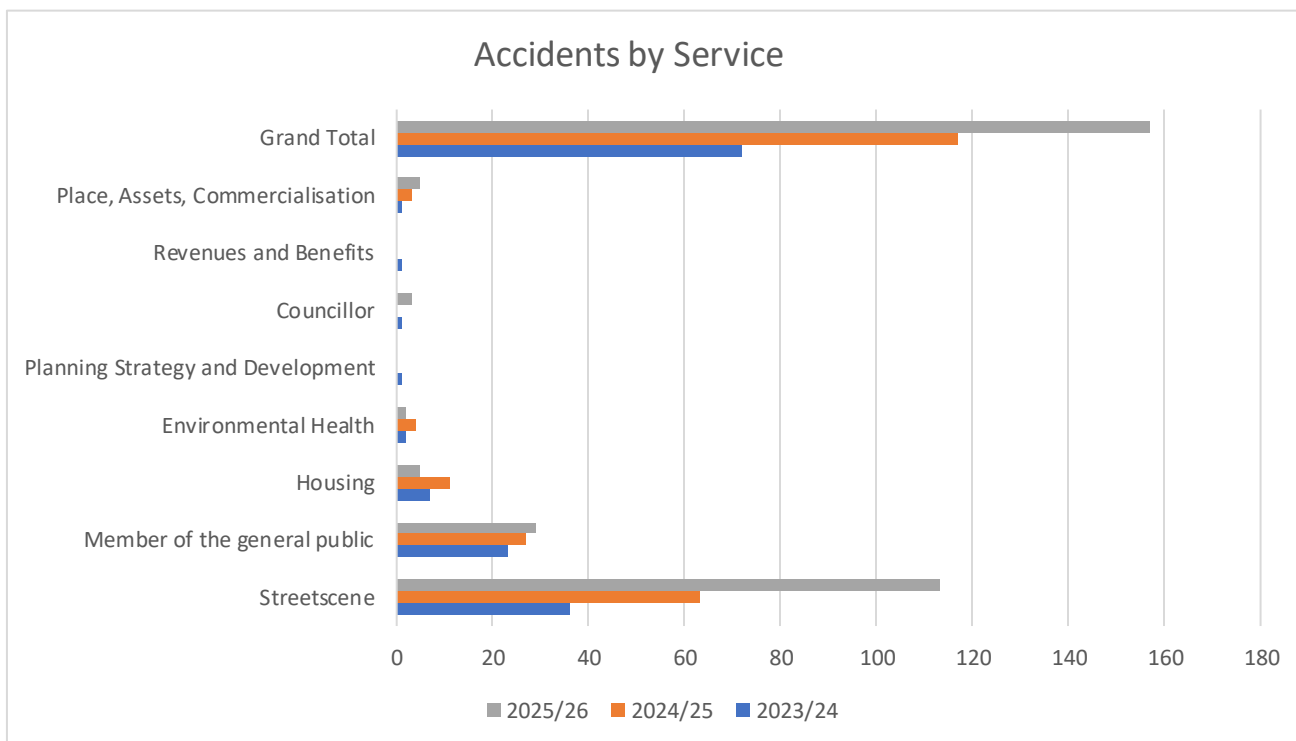


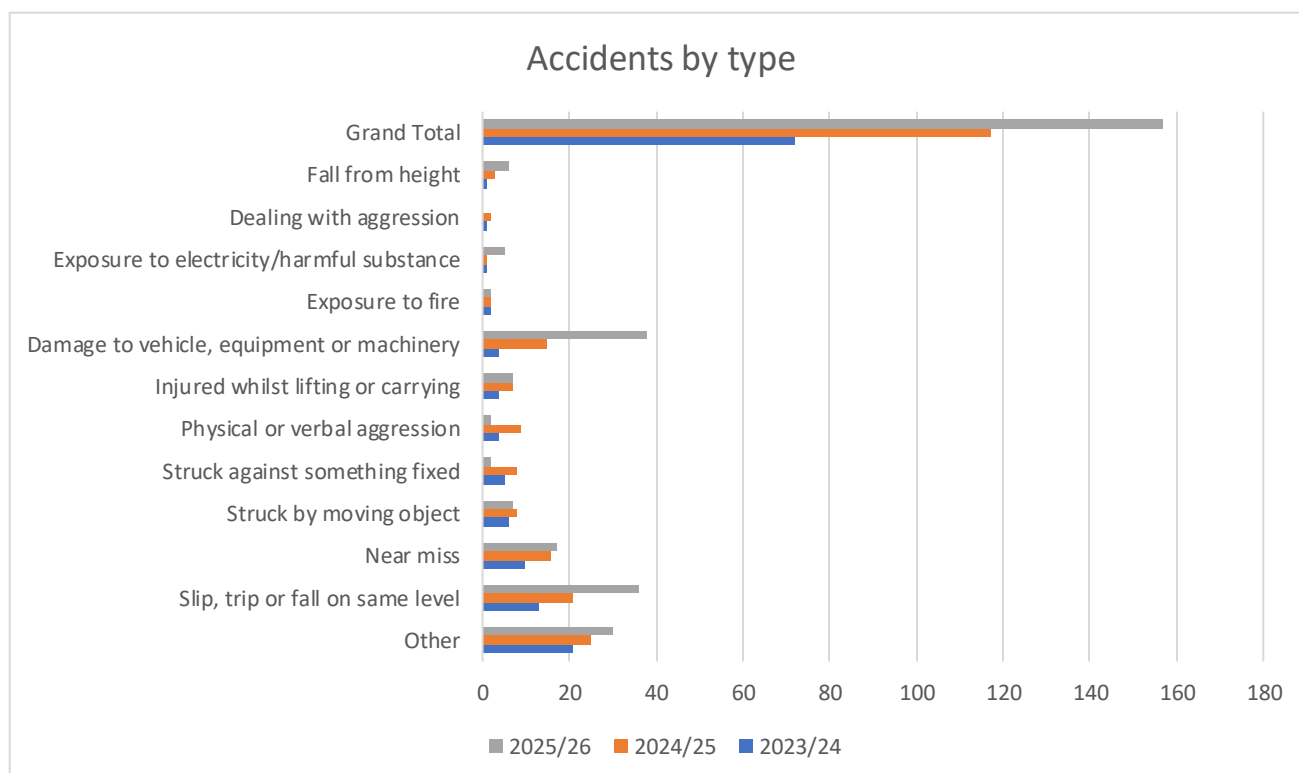
Chart 1: comparison of accidents by service over 3 years

## 2025/26 RIDDOR reported accidents:

1. RIDDOR completed 02/10/2025 for an accident occurring on 28/06/2025. Over 7 days but not reported as over a weekend. Lifting heavy bag pulling muscle in chest. Not reported to H&S till 02/10/2025 by Area officer. Raised with the line manager. Resulted action changed bin (old design 'Neo' litter bin).
2. RIDDOR completed 26/05/26 for an accident occurring on 03/01/26. A child sustained a fractured ankle falling down the stairs of a Council owned tenanted property. The handrail was removed during re-plastering of the stairwell by contractors in July 2024 but not replaced. This was raised by housing officers to surveyors but not actioned. Surveyors are now asked to complete reports for every survey.

**Table 2. Accidents by Type**

	23/24	24/25	25/26
Other	21	25	30
Slip, trip or fall on same level	13	21	36
Near miss	10	16	17
Struck by moving object	6	8	7
Struck against something fixed	5	8	2
Physical or verbal aggression	4	9	2
Injured whilst lifting or carrying	4	7	7
Damage to vehicle, equipment or machinery	4	15	38
Exposure to fire	2	2	2
Exposure to electricity/harmful substance	1	1	5
Dealing with aggression	1	2	0
Fall from height	1	3	6
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>157</b>



For comparison, for the same period in 2024/25, there were 117 recorded accidents and near misses. These were mainly associated with Streetscene and members of the general public. Of these, one was reportable under RIDDOR to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), following a muscle strain sustained while emptying a heavy bin, which resulted in an absence of more than seven days. This was reported late as the line manager was not initially aware of the reason for the absence. For comparison, in 2023/24 there were 72 recorded accidents, again mainly relating to Streetscene.

Do note, however, that ‘physical or verbal aggression’ is more likely to be reported via the specific ‘Employee Safety Database’ – see Table 3.

## Violent Incidents

As can be seen in Table(s) 3, violent incidents continue to be closely monitored. The ongoing risk staff handling violent incidents has resulted in the Corporate Safety Team arranging Conflict Management Training with 47 attendees attending a course. With 80% of Streetscene Operatives having completed the training within the last twelve months with the aim to have 100% attendance by the end of 2026/27. Further courses will be arranged throughout the year.

**Table(s) 3 Violent Incidents by Service, Type and Location**

Service	2024/2025	2025/2026
Environmental Health	2	1
Finance	1	4
Housing	23	18
Streetscene	1	1
Member of the public	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>

Type	
Abusive on the phone/intimidation or harassment/threatening behaviour	3
Animal related	2
Criminal damage, intimidation or harassment, verbal abuse	4
Drug or substance misuse/intimidating or harassment/threatening behaviour/violence	3
Intimidation or harassment	4
Intimidation or harassment/neighbour dispute/noise/rowdy behaviour/threatening behaviour/verbal abuse /violence	3
Referred by outside agency	1
Threatening behaviour/verbal abuse	3
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour	3
Violence	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>

Location/method	
Axminster	1
Budleigh Salterton	1
BDH	7
ETH	6
Exmouth	4
Lyme Regis	1
Report by partner agency	1
Seaton	1
Sidmouth	1
Telephone	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>

The number of violent incidents recorded in 2025/26 (27) continues the downward trend seen over recent years. This is a slight reduction from 2024/25 (28) and a significant decrease from the 2023/24 total of 53, indicating a sustained improvement overall.

In addition, the Corporate Safety Team manages the use of our Lone Worker App. Whilst we see good levels of usage, it can be seen from the data that some officers use it rarely and we know that there are lone workers who don't use it. However, we are currently in the later stages of implementing a new lone worker solution, working in conjunction with Exeter and Teignbridge District Council. Testing is underway with the aim of rolling out the solution from June onwards.

**Table 4. Lone Worker App Usage**

	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Total Uses	1618	1482	1579	1203.00	1414.00	1501	1573.00	1433	1185	1432	1480	1638
Total Users	111	109	109	105	99	102	101	99	98	105	100	99
Average Use	14.58	13.60	14.49	11.46	14.28	14.716	15.57	14.47	12.09	13.64	14.80	16.55

#### 4. Training

During 25/26 the following training was provided or sourced by the Corporate Safety Team.

**Table 5. Corporate Health and Safety Training**

Course title	Date	Attendees
Director's Managing Safely Training	04/02/25 – 05/02/25	11
Risk Assessment for manager part 1	3/11/25 – 24/11/25 - 26/11/25	36
Risk Assessment for managers part 2	8/12/25	4
Conflict & de-escalation	19 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> March	66
Manual handling	19 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> March	66
Sharps /Needlestick	19 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> March	66
Emergency first aid	28/08/25 – 23/10/25 – 04/11/25	27
Fire Warden training	31/10/25 – 24/11/25	17
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>293</b>

In addition, the corporate H&S team have:

- Reviewed the induction process for Streetscene operatives – This is ongoing with further changes in place.
- Reviewed the Welcome morning presentation .
- One member of the team completed NEBOSH Health and Safety Management for Construction. This will allow us to review our Construction Design Management and review a wider scope of construction work.
- Completed face-fit testing training so that we can carry out in-house face fitting of respiratory protective equipment.
- 1 member of the H&S corporate team has completed the NEBOSH Certificate in Fire Safety which will enable us to carry out fire risk assessment and DSEAR (Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations) risk assessments. A further member is near to completion.
- 2 members of the H&S corporate team attended Counter Terrorism training pending the enactment of Martyns Law.
- 1 Member of the corporate team undertaking their MSc in Safety and Risk management at Strathclyde University, Dissertation is on the ‘transition from petrol powered hand tools to electrical hand tools and the effects of Hand Arm Vibration (HAVS)’ Self-funded. After having achieved their Postgraduate Diploma they are now in the final year of the Masters.
- One member of the corporate team attended avian flu working party for joint working across the southwest, including other EDDC departments and corporate leads.
- Completed toolbox talks for Street Scene, completion rate at 100%. A new TBT plan has been devised and written for Streetscene to maximise training and wider issues for the 2026/27 season.
- Internal Strimmer training for Streetscene Operatives to reduce window breakages as excess is now £500.
- One member of the corporate team was an integral part of the Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) in January, buying and bringing all duvets from Exeter Tesco to Exmouth LED as well as being on site to help with all those affected by the UXO including some of our colleagues.

## 5. General Work and Auditing

**Table 6. Workplace inspections and audits carried out**

Site/Venue	Inspection date
Camperdown Depot (quarterly)	Audits moved to bi weekly due to amount of issues raised. As of December 25 brought back down to quarterly teams have worked hard to improve area. Recent audit May 2026 – 32 issues raised.
Manstone Depot (quarterly)	Audits moved to bi weekly due to amount of issues raised. As of December 25 brought back down to quarterly teams have worked hard to improve area – Audited May 2026 – 13 issues reported.
Withycombe Pitches and Changing Rooms	Changed to 6monthly as no issues raised in the last 3 audits.
Phear Park Work Base	Last Audit Feb 2026 – Due June 2026. 5 Issues raised, 4 completed during audit with the team, one booking in with Maintenance to be fixed.
Manor Gardens Work Base	Last Audit March 2026 – Due June 2026. 4 issues raised, the team have updated with progress, 1 outstanding issue left. (to have a proper work bench / storage in container).
Ottery St Mary Work Base	New Work base acquired with OTC, going through legal and contracts now. It is a gifted space to allow the operative in Ottery a place to have break times and do basic tool maintenance. H&S will continue to audit this working alongside OTC.
Connaught Gardens Work Base	Last Audit Feb 2026 – Booked W/c 15th June 2026. 1 minor issue raised, fixed during audit.
Blackmore Gardens Work Base	Last Audit Feb 2026 – Booked W/c 15th June 2026 – two minor issues raised, fixed during audit.
Blackmore Gardens Bowling Club Work Base	Last Audit Feb 2026 – Booked W/c 15th June 2026 – No issues raised
Honiton Work Base	Last Audit Feb 2026 – Due June 2026. 6 Issues raised during last audit. Have

	had updates from teams since. No outstanding audit actions left.
Sidford Changing Rooms and Playing Pitches	Last Audit Feb 2026 – Booked W/c 15th June 2026. Likely to move to 6monthly as no issues during previous two audits.
Sidmouth Cemetery Work Base and Chapel (Storage Area)	Last Audit Feb 2026 – Booked W/c 15th June 2026
Axminster Millway Rise Work Base	Last Audit Feb 2026 – Due June 2026. No audit actions.
Seaton Seafield Gardens Work Base	Last Audit Feb 2026 – Due June 2026. 2 audit actions from the last audit outstanding.
Thelma Hulbert Gallery	May 26 – Follow up June 26
Manor Pavilion Theatre	May 26 – Follow up June 26
East Devon Business Centre	May 26 – Follow up June 26
Seaton Wetlands – Discovery Hut	May 26 – Follow up June 26

### **A summary of general work**

- Recorded damage caused by Streetscene Strimming with approximately £8k window breakages reported over the year, working practices have been reviewed as a result with further internal training given to all operatives.
- SWAP audit for Health and Safety completed in 2025. Raised several areas for improvement with the corporate health and safety team working through to implement these.
- Over 150 Risk Assessments have been reviewed and updated for Street Scene
- Over 150 Safe Systems of Work reviewed and updated for Street scene
- 8 Wedding Risk assessments reviewed and updated for Communications, Culture and Marketing Events team.
- 15 Event space Risk assessments reviewed and updated for Communication, Culture and Marketing Events Team.
- 20 Risk assessments for all open and closed cemeteries written and updated
- A review of SWW tanking operations at the Maer Car Park was carried out to ensure adequate segregation of the public from vehicle operations.
- In relation to the storage of petrol in sheds and shipping containers used to refuel mowers and strimmer's, the lack of adequate ventilation and a DSEAR (Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations) risk assessment was a concern and changes in working practices were introduced to relocated flammable liquids. These included:
  - A number of extra COSHH cabinets required and to be purchased these are currently being sourced and will be distributed accordingly.

- We've trained all Managers in Fire warden training / Fire awareness from an external party.
- Toolbox talks and training for all operatives. (fire safety, COSHH, Lithium batteries and several more)
- Mini fire risk assessment on all work bases.
- Liaison with Devon and Somerset fire service.
- Reduced the amount of storage of flammable substances (petrol) to below 50litre threshold for DSEAR.
- 600 Litres of waste chemical / oil and unknown substance removed from Manstone depot from fly tips that the Streetscene team collect.

The actions that are to be ongoing.

- Training for new managers coming in and team leads.
- Further audits, - This includes training managers in auditing so they can do basic audits.
- Chemical removal ongoing.
- Working with Devon County council on a new way to remove gas cylinders from fly tips instead of being bought back to the depots.
- Completed year two of Hand Arm Vibration testing of mowers, strimmers, chainsaws and other equipment (600 pieces in total) within Streetscene. Saw a significant decrease in HAVS points in electrical equipment compared to tradition petrol equipment. We invested in our own equipment and staff training (£5,200) to carry this out rather than use the services of an external company who charge £4,800 to monitor 100 pieces of equipment. It is important that ensure our staff are not exposed to excessive levels and to prevent any enforcement action by the HSE, see [Plymouth City Council fined £200,000 over staff hand conditions - BBC News](#)
- Streetscene operational health and safety meetings are held quarterly with the aim of identifying health and safety concerns and raising standards.
- Ladder inspections continue to be carried out throughout the council. With over 35 ladders in Streetscene and a further 20 recorded ladders, step ladders and platforms across the council.
- Face fit testing completed in Streetscene for our REACT team who come into contact with Asbestos, avian flu and other contaminants as well as the maintenance technicians.
- Monthly fire checks are completed at BDH, ETH, CD and MSD with weekly fire alarm checks.
- The Duty Manager procedures were reviewed at BDH and training provided to all Duty Managers covering fire evacuation, responding to a blue light incident, bomb procedures, resetting the fire panel, etc.. This will become a regular occurrence.

- Work continues on building the new Health and Safety management system Evotix, with the first module due for User Acceptance Testing (UAT)
- New Lone Working system Vatrix is currently in User Acceptance Testing (UAT) and due for roll out towards the end-of June.
- The corporate health and safety team continue to provide oversight to risk assessments for the events team, and our venues.
- The corporate health and safety team continue to provide oversight to risk assessments and method statements provided by contractors for the engineers team.
- Oversaw the renovation of the Camperdown depot which included removal of the old contractor ramp to give a further 30m<sup>2</sup> of extra space to be utilised. Further work is ongoing with the engineering department to ensure efficient use fo the depot is maximised.

**Table7. Tests, Drills and Evacuations**

Site	Type of test / drill / evacuation	Date
BDH	Fire evacuation	01 April 2025
BDH	Fire & Intruder alarm test	02 October 2025
ETH	Fire evacuation	06 October 2025
Camperdown	Fire Evacuation	16 February 2026
Manstone	Fire Evacuation	16 February 2026

## 6. Policies and Reports

During 2025/26 the following policies were reviewed:

- Blackdown House and Exmouth Town Hall Fire Procedures - a move to hybrid working arrangements and implementation of the approved fire sweeper evacuation procedure. New fire signage has gone up with additional safeguards included in relation to named sweepers on a duty rota accompanied by guidance and training in the new procedures.
- Driving at Work Policy – policy reviewed and approved.
- Health and Safety Policy – policy reviewed and approved.
- Vibration at work Policy – Updated to reflect the current best practices in EDDC. To be consulted prior to approval.
- Review of Fire Evacuation and First Aid Arrangements making recommendation in relation to the evacuation of disabled persons, first aid provision, Automated Electronic Defibrillators (AED), and fire evacuation.

## **7. Matters of Ongoing Concern**

Significant progress has been made at both the Camperdown and Manstone Streetscene depots, with observable improvements in overall standards and engagement. Routine inspections continue to play an important role in identifying opportunities for further enhancement, with an average of approximately 30 observations and non-conformances noted per inspection cycle. These findings provide valuable insight to support continuous improvement and targeted intervention.

One area that continues to be a focus for development is the management and storage of hazardous substances and chemicals. This has been consistently highlighted through inspections and most recently through the Fire Risk Assessment process. Work is ongoing to achieve a sustainable and embedded approach to compliance, and this remains a key priority for the service moving forward.

It is recognised that the service has been operating during a period of organisational transition, including ongoing recruitment to key operational roles and the recent appointment of new management positions. Despite these pressures, the team has maintained service delivery and continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to improving health and safety performance. With additional resource anticipated in the coming weeks, there is a positive opportunity to further strengthen compliance, embed best practice, and build on the improvements already achieved.

The annual Operational Health Surveillance Programme remains a key statutory requirement to support the health, safety, and wellbeing of Streetscene operatives. The Senior Health and Safety Officer has been proactively engaging with Optima Health to coordinate delivery of this programme for the reporting period. While progress has been slower than anticipated due to limited engagement from the provider, efforts are ongoing to establish an agreed schedule and ensure full compliance. It is standard practice to deliver health surveillance during the summer months, aligning with longer working hours and peak operational activity, to ensure the programme is both practical and accessible for staff. Planning for the upcoming cycle is underway however further engagement from the provider is required to ensure this is delivered in a timely and smooth manner. This remains an area of focus, with the objective of embedding a consistent, sustainable approach that meets statutory obligations while supporting the long-term health and wellbeing of employees.

The SWAP audit highlighted several mandatory health and safety courses on the Totara e-learning system yet to be completed by staff. The difficulty remains for Streetscene operatives to access the Totara e-learning system as they do not have user accounts necessary to be able to access the system.

During the summer season, the RNLI provides beach lifeguard cover at Exmouth and Budleigh Salterton, supporting public safety through preventative patrols, public advice, incident response and rescue activity. Under the Council's arrangements with the RNLI, managed through the Streetscene Beach Safety Officer, the authority is notified of accidents and incidents occurring on these beaches. However, the information provided within these notifications is often limited and does not routinely include the level of detail required to support full accident investigation, internal record-keeping or consideration of potential RIDDOR reporting, such as personal

details, causal factors and the circumstances of the incident. When this matter was raised by the Beach Safety Officer with RNLI headquarters in Poole, the Council was advised that further incident-specific information could not be shared on data protection grounds. From the Council's perspective, this remains an area of concern, given the legitimate requirement to understand accidents occurring on Council-owned land for governance, record-keeping and risk management purposes, and to support the effective discharge of its responsibilities as landowner. The issue has been escalated within the RNLI to the National Lifeguarding Lead and Contract Manager without resolution to date, and has also been raised with the Assistant Director via the Beach Safety Officer. The RNLI has further advised that the level of detail held within its own records may vary depending on the circumstances of the incident.

## **8. Work Programme 2026/27**

A work programme for 2026/27 has been produced covering key areas of business:

- Effective H&S Policies and Procedures
- Organising for H & S (develop the H & S culture)
- Secure competence of employees
- Planning & implementing
- Measuring Performance
- Performance Review

A copy of the programme is attached as Appendix 1.

## **9. Recommendations/Decision**

- To note the work that has been achieved by the Corporate Safety Team in 2025/26, including the Q4 update given in Appendix 2.
- To note the work programme for 2026/27 and offer any suggested additions or amendments.

## **10. Reasons for Recommendations/Decision**

To support the Council's commitment to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its staff, members, customers and partners.

## **11. Relevance to Council Plan/priorities**

Set out how report links to the Council Plan/priorities:

- A supported and engaged community that has the right homes in the right places, with appropriate infrastructure
- A sustainable environment that is moving towards carbon neutrality and which promotes ecological recovery.

- A vibrant and resilient economy that supports local business, provides local jobs and leads to a reduction in poverty and inequality.
- A well-managed, financially secure and continuously improving council that delivers quality services

**12. Financial Comments/Implications**

The report is not highlighting any budget implications (SD)

**13. Legal Comments/Implications**

The legal issues are covered in the report

**14. Risk Implications**

**Please complete the risk table – further guidance available on the Intranet**

Failure to manage health and safety adequately risk the safety of our staff and customers and places the Council at risk of prosecution and reputational loss.

Activity/ materials etc	List significant hazards	People at risk	Assessment of Risk			Existing controls e.g. Safety procedures	What further action Is required to control/mitigate the risk?
			*Severity 1-4	*Likeli hood 1-4	Risk Rating		
Safety Manage ment	Varity	Staff  Contract ors  Public	4	2	8	H&S Team  Procedures in place  Training delivered	New H&S System for better management control.

\*Severity – Fatality/s = 4 Major Injury = 3 Lost Time Injury = 2 Minor Injury = 1  
 \*Likelihood – Certain = 4 Likely = 3 May Happen = 2 Unlikely = 1

**15. Equality Implications (Public Sector Equality Duty)**

This relevance assessment aims to analyse gathered information for potential relevance to equality. If a Full Equality Impact Assessment is required ([Equality analysis impact assessment form](#)), include it as an appendix. At the minimum, the following table must be completed.

<b>Scope</b> ( <i>Provide an overview, including objectives and desired outcomes</i> )	
<b>Evidence gathered and engagement</b> ( <i>List stakeholders consulted and relevant processes, policies, and data sources</i> )	
<b>Relevance assessment findings</b> ( <i>If relevant to equality, undertake a full EIA or If no relevance to equality, explain why with supporting information</i> )	<p>A full EIA is required: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, this assessment has demonstrated relevance to equality with regard to: Please check relevant boxes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Age                      <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy and maternity  <input type="checkbox"/> Disability              <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation  <input type="checkbox"/> Race                      <input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment  <input type="checkbox"/> Sex                      <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage or Civil Partnership  <input type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief    <input type="checkbox"/> Armed Forces  <input type="checkbox"/> Other, e.g. carers, care leavers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.</p> <p>If no, explain why: This is a 'review' and does not propose significant new actions.</p>
<b>Relevance ranking</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> High – Very relevant to protected characteristics <input type="checkbox"/> Medium – Somewhat relevant to protected characteristics <input type="checkbox"/> Low – Not relevant to protected characteristics
<b>Key findings and impacts</b>	
<b>Conclusion drawn</b> ( <i>i.e No major changes needed; EIA found no negative impact or adjust policy/process to remove identified barriers</i> )	
<b>Actions</b> ( <i>Proposed actions to mitigate negative impacts on identified groups</i> )	
<b>Signed off by</b>	

**16. HR and Workforce Implications**

Yes

To be completed by HR (if applicable or none)

**17. Community Safety Implications (Crime and Disorder)**

No

**18. Climate Change Implications**

No (not directly but can work in parallel – e.g. move to electric equipment).

**19. Health & Safety and Health & Wellbeing Implications**

Set out in report.

## **20. Procurement and Social Value implications**

The [Public Services \(Social Value\) Act](#) came into force on 31 January 2013. It requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits.

Before they start the procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure these benefits for their area or stakeholders.

Procurement of new safety management system will bring benefits for health and safety and make management more efficient.

## **21. Land and Buildings (non-housing)/Asset Management Implications**

None direct from this report.

## **22. Overview and Scrutiny Committees Comments/Recommendations**

N/A

## **23. Digital and Data**

Any digital and data implications – email [digital@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:digital@eastdevon.gov.uk) for advice.

## **24. Consultation and Engagement**

N/A

## **25. Communications**

N/A

## **26. Next Steps**

Deliver work programme.

Complete procurement of Assure system.

## **27. Background Papers**

No need to refer to minutes or previous reports on the same matter as these are already publicly available.

## Proposed Report Sign Off process

Please make sure you have obtained the relevant sign off and the date completed before submitting your report to Democratic Services.

	<b>Officer Name</b>	<b>Date requested</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
Legal & Governance	Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer	23/6/26	23/6/26
Finance	Section 151 Officer or Deputy S151 Officer	23/6/26	23/6/26
Communications	<a href="mailto:communications@eastdevon.gov.uk">communications@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>		If applicable
Digital and Data	<a href="mailto:digital@eastdevon.gov.uk">digital@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>		If applicable
Engagement	<a href="mailto:engagement@eastdevon.gov.uk">engagement@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>		If applicable
HR	HR Lead		If applicable
Equalities	Equality Officer	N/A	Required
Chief Executive	Chief Executive		If applicable
Director	Relevant Director	22/6/26	Required
Assistant Director(s)	Relevant Assistant Director(s)		Required
Cabinet Lead Member(s)	Relevant Lead Member (s)	16/6/26	16/6/26
Executive Leadership Team	ELT	23/6/26	23/6/26
Strategic Leadership Team	SLT	10/6/26 (ADCL)	No responses

## 28. Appendices

- **Appendix 1. – Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan 2026/27**
- **Appendix 2. – Health and Safety Report 25/26, Q4**

# Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan 2026 – 2027

Aim: To embed a mature health and safety management system that Plans, Does, Checks, Acts thereby ensuring compliance, reducing harm, and fostering a positive health and safety culture in line with HS(G)65.

No.	Action	Responsible person	Target completion Date	Comments	Progress
					Complete
					In Progress
					Not started
1.	<b>Effective H&amp;S Policies and Procedures</b>				
1A	Fire Policy – To update all fire procedures in corporate and operational buildings.	JP, MC, OH	June 2026	Revised BDH fire procedure to incorporate sweeper system – approved by ELT	Videos to be signed off
1B	First aid policy	OH, MC	Sept 2026	Policy required to incorporate recently reviewed procedures	
1C	Corporate Health and Safety Training Policy  To retain knowledge skills and ability managers and staff require training to ensure their capabilities	OH, MC	Dec 2026	To incorporate training requirements needed at all levels of the organisation including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director’s Responsibilities</li> <li>• IOSH Managing Safely</li> <li>• Risk Assessment</li> <li>• First aid</li> <li>• Fire Warden</li> <li>• Duty Manager</li> </ul> Job specific roles including conflict, needlestick, etc..	Ongoing training program
1D	Display Screen Equipment Policy	JP, MC	August 2026	Policy required to incorporate procedures (currently being reviewed). To incorporate office and hybrid working	Review and incorporate into Assure System
2	<b>Policy Register (see below)</b>				
2A	Bomb and Other Threats Policy	MC, OH	Oct 2026	Policy reviewed as part of Duty Manager procedures	

2C	Employee Safety Database Policy	MC, JP	Oct 2026	Policy review commenced. Aim to incorporate into Violence at Work Policy	
2D	Guidance to the CDM Regulations (review date 1/1/2018)	OH	Oct 2026	(v1 authorised by Cabinet July 2018 with a review date July 2022) Review commenced	Currently under review.
2F	Lone Working Policy (review date 8/1/2019)	JP	Oct 2026	New lone worker system (Vatix) currently being implement. Policy review to follow	Policy review as part of new Vatix lone worker system
2G	The Management of Contractors Policy (review date 1/5/2015)	OH	Oct 2026	Review of arrangements for managing contractors currently underway to include improved communications and corporate oversight concerning RAMS and works in progress.	Initial meeting held, further talks to be discussed.
2H	Vibration Policy (review date 6/1/2015)	OH	Sept 2026	Reviewed arrangements for managing HAV - test equipment purchased, and the majority of 800 pieces of equipment has been tested in conjunction with a stock-take and inventory review.	Update completed. Consultation prior to approval required
2I	Violence at Work Policy (review date 6/1/2012)	JP	Oct 2026	Commenced review, to incorporate Employee Safety Database Policy	
2J	Young People at Work Policy (review date 6/1/2015)	OH, JP	Dec 2026	Current policy on Intranet	
3	<b>Organising for H &amp; S (develop the H &amp; S culture)</b>				
3B	Support H&S training matrix	MC & OH	Dec 26	Training matrix in place	Review as per implementation for Assure system.
3C	Implementing Evotix Assure corporate health and safety management solution	JP, OH, MC	Dec 2026		New system being built currently

3D	Implementing Vatrix Lone Worker Solution	JP, OH, MC	June 2026		New system in UAT trail
3E	Communication Plan  Regular communication and consultation updates to managers and staff	MC, OH	August 2026	To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and Safety Forum meetings (previously CJSP)</li> <li>• SLT/ELT report(s)</li> <li>• News and Views &amp; Stay Connect</li> <li>• Noticeboards</li> <li>• Sharepoint H&amp;S pages</li> </ul>	OH to set up initial Comms meeting. Regular H&S Forum (CJSP) meetings. Noticeboards updated regularly across operational sites.
4	<b>Secure competence of employees (Training)</b> These will continue to carry on as training is always required				
4A	Organise and resource a prioritised programme of Corporate H & S training needs:	MC, OH, JP	March 2026	Training to be recorded on H&S training matrix Include training providers and costings	Ongoing
4B	Fire warden training	MC, OH	Completed May 2025	To cover Camperdown, Manston, THG and Manor Pavilion Theatre	MC organised and is complete.
4C	Conflict training	MC	Ongoing per service need	Courses to be arranged throughout the year To include handling violence and aggression training for all Duty Managers	Ongoing, last one 21 <sup>st</sup> 22 <sup>nd</sup> April
4D	Sharps Training	MC, OH	Ongoing per service need	Arranged as needed	Ongoing, last one 21 <sup>st</sup> 22 <sup>nd</sup> April
4E	Manual Handling Training	MC, OH	Ongoing per service need	Arranged as needed	Ongoing, last one 21 <sup>st</sup> 22 <sup>nd</sup> April
4F	Director's H&S training	MC	Ongoing per service need	Courses to be arranged throughout the year	Ongoing
4G	Risk Assessments	MC, OH	Ongoing per service need	Courses to be arranged throughout the year	Ongoing
4H	IOSH Managing Safely (3 days)	OH & MC	Ongoing per service need	Courses to be arranged throughout the year	Ongoing

4I	Duty Manager procedural training	MC	Ongoing per service need	Courses to be arranged throughout the year			Ongoing
4J	First aid training	MC	Ongoing per service need	Arranged as necessary			Ongoing
4K	Welcome mornings	MC	Ongoing per service need	Arranged as necessary			Ongoing
4L	Streetscene Induction	OH	Ongoing per service need	Arranged as necessary			Ongoing
4M	Streetscene tool box talks	OH	Monthly completion	<b>Month</b>	<b>Operative Topic</b>	<b>Office Topic</b>	OH writes monthly TBT for any concerning issues and HSE related matters that are relevant for operational purposes, then delivers these on a monthly basis
				January	Manstone + Camperdown Depot Rules	Manstone + Camperdown Depot Rules	
				February	Working around Traffic (chapter 8 Basics)	Working around Traffic (chapter 8 Basics)	
				March	Strimmer and blower safety	Manual Handling and Safe Desk Setup	
				April	Safe use of Lithium Batteries (E-bikes, Tools, Vans)	Safe use of Lithium Batteries (E-bikes, Tools, Vans)	
				May	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Refresh	Display Screen Equipment (DSE) + Eye Health And Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Refresh	
				June	Fire Safety + Heat Stress	Fire Prevention + Office Heat Management	
				July	Noise at Work	Noise at Work	
				August	Smoking at Work	Smoking at work	
				September	Working Near Water	Working Near water	
				October	Driving (Include Winter, Depots) + Securing loads Refresh	Driving (Include Winter, Depots) + Securing loads Refresh	
				November	Slips Trips and Falls (Winter Focus)	Slips Trips and Falls (Winter Focus)	

5	<b>Planning &amp; implementing</b>
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5A	Risk mapping	OH, MC	26-27	<p>Ensure risk assessments are available for all tasks carried out with new risks assessed and recorded when arising.</p> <p>Test risk assessments against audits, inspections and investigations to ensure up-to-date, relevant and implemented.</p> <p>Ensure regular review of risk assessments</p>	
5B	Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessments	MC, JP	Sept 26	Review process and procedures	Review as part of Assure implementation
5C	Consider staff wellbeing skin cancer checks	JP	August 26	Check providers and cost	Requested and waiting for costs and prices.
5D	Health Surveillance via Optima	OH, JP	July 2026 / August 2026	<p>Review Occupational Health Risk Matrix for staff who need it, considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audiometry</li> <li>• Respiratory/lung function</li> <li>• Skin assessment</li> <li>• HAVS T1/T2</li> </ul>	<p>Completed July 2025.</p> <p>In talks for July 2026 awaiting Optima scheduling.</p>
5E	Countryside	OH, MC	25-26	Establish regular meetings with Countryside to ensure risk assessments, procedures, training and support is in place	
5F	Terrorism Protection of Premises Act 2025 (Martyn's Law)	JP, OH, MC	March 26	Need to review the impact of Martn's Law to include the identification and assessment of premises relevant to the act	
6	<h2>Measuring Performance</h2> <p>Ongoing throughout the year</p>				

6A	Regular checks of key operational sites	MC, OH	26-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire checks monthly</li> <li>• First aid box checks monthly</li> <li>• Defibrillator checks monthly</li> </ul>	Ongoing throughout the year.
6B	Regular (minimum annual) inspections of operational sites	MC	26-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• THG</li> <li>• Manor Pavilion Theatre</li> <li>• East Devon Business Centre</li> <li>• Blackdown House</li> <li>• Seaton Wetlands Centre</li> </ul>	Ongoing throughout the year.
6C	Regular (minimum annual) inspections of operational sites	OH	26-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camperdown</li> <li>• Manstone</li> </ul> <p>Other sites: Axminster, Honiton, several in Sidmouth, Ottery St Mary, Phear Park, x2 Exmouth, Withycombe Raleigh Football club and changing rooms and Sidford RFC and Changing rooms plus others</p>	Ongoing throughout the year.
6D	Fire Drills	MC, OH	26-27	To be arranged at key operational sites every 6 months	Schedules in place to ensure compliance.
6E	Lone working usage report. Utilise Vatrix reports, once implemented	MC	monthly	Data to feed into the lone worker policy review	Ongoing throughout the year.
6F	Accident, incident, near-miss statistics Utilise Assure reports, once implemented	MC, OH	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly statistics, reported quarterly for SLT</li> <li>• Annual H&amp;S report</li> <li>• Streetscene Operational H&amp;S meetings</li> </ul>	Ongoing throughout the year.
6G	Violence reported incidents Utilise Assure reports, once implemented	MC	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly statistics, reported quarterly for SLT</li> <li>• Annual H&amp;S report</li> </ul> <p>Streetscene Operational H&amp;S meetings</p>	Ongoing throughout the year.

6H	Health Surveillance checks via Optima	OH	July / August 2026	Annual health checks used to identify ill health caused at work	Ongoing throughout the year.
6I	Corporate Health and Safety Plan	JP, MC, OH	On going	Check progress via annual Performance Excellence Review, monthly 1-2-1 and Corporate H&S team meetings	
7	<h2>Performance Review</h2> <p>Ongoing throughout the year</p>				
7A	Corporate H&S Audit to be carried out by SWAP Internal Audit Services	JP	2026	Audit completed	Actions being worked through.
7B	Audits	JP, MC, OH	26-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audits to review adherence to policy and procedures</li> </ul> Services and scope of audit to be agreed	Audits between Corporate and Operational are now aligned for best practice.
7C	<b>Corporate:</b> Review progress to check that all actions have been completed by managers particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk assessments</li> <li>Corporate H&amp;S training</li> </ul> Training matrix updated	MC	26-27	Every quarter	RA's updated yearly or when accident has occurred. Review RA's prior to updating Assure risk management module
7D	<b>Streetscene:</b> Review progress to check that all actions have been completed by managers particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk assessments</li> <li>Corporate H&amp;S training</li> </ul> Training matrix updated	OH	26-27	Every quarter	RA's updated yearly or when accident has occurred as per HSE's best practices.
7E	Fire risk assessments	OH, MC	Dec 26	Review existing fire risk assessments at operational sites and implementation of findings	RA completed, need to ensure

					findings of action plan(s) completed
<b>8</b>	<b>SWAP AUDIT Actions</b>				
8A	<p>The H&amp;S team will create incident &amp; accident reporting guidance for staff and post this to the intranet.</p> <p>The new H&amp;S system (Assure) will allow action monitoring with visibility across the H&amp;S team, but in the meantime, the H&amp;S team will introduce a monitoring process to ensure that remedial actions arising from incident &amp; accident reports are completed. This will also include an escalation process if actions remain unactioned.</p>	OH, MC	30/06/2026	Assure: UAT testing accident, incident, hazard, violence commencing June. This will include an escalation process to ensure all actions are completed within a specified timescale	
8B	Formal procedure for Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)	OH, MC	31/03/26	<p>PEEPs are mentioned in fire arrangements policies. Strategic Leads are responsible for ensuring PEEPs are in place, though we were advised that line managers are responsible for ensuring their individual staff have plans. The H&amp;S team are comfortable with the number of PEEPs in place and countermeasure are, where possible, put in place to evacuate staff promptly and safely with the need of a PEEP.</p> <p>Need to regularly remind staff to consider whether they require a PEEP so reminders can be incorporate into a communication plan.</p>	

8C	Officers (interviewed) were unaware of the retention/disposal periods for the incident/accident forms or the risk assessments.	OH, MC	Dec 2026	Assure: only relevant and recently reviewed documents, including accident and incident report forms will be uploaded into Assure.  Retention periods need to be considered Corporately	
8D	The H&S team will produce a communications plan which will cover the collating and subsequent publication of relevant H&S policies and procedures via the Stay Connected staff communication channel.	OH, MC, JP	Dec 2026	Selective H&S items communicated via Stay Connect, notice boards and Sharepoint. More to follow as corporately programmes continue to be rolled out.	
8E	Fire drill(s) frequency and remedial actions	OH, MC	Dec 2025	BDH operates a fire sweeper system with other sites adopting a fire warden system. Fire warden training has been completed and all sites operate a minimum 6-monthly evacuation drill. A standardised report covers all sites where actions are reported to the relevant service. Any remedial actions lie with the H&S team until such time as they have been completed with an escalation process in place via ELT.	
8F	Health and Safety Inspections across operational sites	OH, MC	Dec 2025	A standardised report of inspection is completed at regular intervals for all sites. Actions are prioritised according to risk and reported to the relevant service for remedy. Any remedial actions lie with the H&S team until such time as they have been completed with an escalation process in place via ELT.	
8G	Health and Safety training for staff	OH, MC	31/03/26	A Corporate training programme is in place. Training matrices are in place and regularly updated and will be further reviewed prior to uploading to the Assure system.	

				Mandatory H&S training on Totara remains an issue for operatives without a user log-on	
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# 9 – Completed work

## Overview

Throughout the year, the Corporate and Operational Health and Safety functions have delivered a comprehensive programme of work aligned to the HSE Plan–Do–Check–Act model (HSG65). All actions identified as *Green* within the Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan have been successfully completed, embedding improved governance, competence, assurance, and risk control across the organisation. This work continues to strengthen compliance, reduce risk, and support a positive and proactive health and safety culture.

## Work Completed During the Year

### Policies, Procedures and Governance

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- Completion and implementation of multiple reviewed and updated health and safety policies, including Fire Safety arrangements across corporate and operational sites, Health and Safety Policy sign-off, Vibration (HAV) controls, Driving at Work, Lone Working arrangements, and supporting procedural guidance.
- Fire procedures reviewed and updated across key sites, including the introduction of enhanced evacuation and sweeper systems where required.
- Volunteer Handbook implemented, supporting consistent standards for volunteers across services.

### Training and Competence

- A corporate and operational training matrix established and maintained, ensuring visibility and assurance of statutory and role-specific training.
- Delivery of extensive training programmes, including Fire Warden, First Aid, Conflict Management, Manual Handling, Sharps Awareness, Risk Assessment, IOSH Managing Safely, Directors’ Health and Safety responsibilities, Duty Manager training, and operational inductions.
- A structured programme of monthly Streetscene toolbox talks delivered throughout the year, addressing seasonal and risk-critical topics.

### Risk Management and Operational Controls

- Comprehensive risk assessment coverage maintained across services, with regular review and testing through inspections, audits, and investigations.

- Completion of Hand–Arm Vibration monitoring, with equipment tested, tagged, recorded, and a rolling programme in place for future years.
- Completion of DSEAR reviews for petrol storage areas, sewage works risk assessments, and fire risk assessments across operational sites.
- Defibrillator provision reviewed, retained, registered, and placed under appropriate guardianship arrangements.

### **Monitoring, Inspection and Assurance**

- Regular site inspections, fire drills, fire checks, first aid checks, defibrillator inspections, and lone working usage reporting embedded as business as usual.
- Corporate Health and Safety Audit completed via Internal Audit, with actions identified and being addressed through agreed improvement plans.
- Accident, incident, near-miss and violence reporting embedded, with data reviewed monthly and reported quarterly and annually.

### **Ongoing Best Practice: Corporate and Operational H&S**

Health and safety is now embedded as ongoing business practice, not a one-off programme. Key areas of continued focus include:

- Maintaining a robust policy review cycle to ensure arrangements remain current, compliant, and reflective of service needs.
- Continuous training needs analysis, refresher training, and induction for staff, managers, volunteers, and elected members.
- Proactive risk management, ensuring new and emerging risks are identified, assessed, and controlled.
- Regular monitoring through inspections, audits, performance data, and health surveillance to identify trends and prevent harm .
- Strong communication and consultation with managers, staff, unions, and safety panels to support engagement and learning.
- Close alignment between Corporate and Operational Health and Safety, ensuring consistency, shared learning, and best practice across all services.

# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

## QUARTER 4 – 2025/2026

### Agenda

- 1 Items for discussion/comments
- 2 Accident reports
- 3 Violence reports
- 4 Lone Worker App usage
- 5 Health and Safety training
- 6 Health and Safety audits/inspections
- 7 Tests, drills and evacuations
- 8 Risk Assessments

### 1. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/COMMENTS

Item	Comments	Action
1	Fire sweeper video recorded.	Awaiting final edit for approval
2	ETH – Handover to ETC complete.	Fire drill completed by ETC successfully. Staff based at ETH briefed on fire procedures by manager. First aiders in place by ETC Staff sign-in/out book in place.
3	New managers to attend risk assessment training.	Training company contacted for dates.
4	Review of Internal auditing within Streetscene department	Reduce weekly audits at both Camperdown and Manstone depot due to improvement in areas.
5	Gallagher basset insurance – IOSH training	Streetscene Team Leads undertaking IOSH training with insurance company

### 2. ACCIDENT REPORT STATISTICS

#### January

Service	
Streetscene (near miss reported twice *)	5
Housing	1
Member of the general public ** (Occurred on 03/01/26, reported on 26/02/26)	1
CCM – THG (Occurred 29/01/26, reported on 04/04/26 ***)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>

Location	
The Strand, Exmouth	1
Camperdown Depot	1

Langford Avenue Honiton	1
A375 between Sidford and Sidbury (near reported twice*)	2
Steamer Steps, Budleigh Salterton	1
North Street, Axminster ** (Occurred on 03/01/26, reported on 26/02/26)	1
Thelma Hulbert Gallery *** (Occurred 29/01/26, reported on 04/04/26 ***)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>

<b>Accident type</b>	
Damage to vehicle, equipment or machinery	3
Near miss (reported twice*)	2
Slip, trip or fall on same level	1
Other **	1
Other ***	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>

#### **RIDDOR**

Service	Team	Place	Type
None	N/a	N/a	N/a

#### **February**

Service	
Environmental Health	1
Member of the general public	1
Streetscene	7
Streetscene REACT	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

Location	
Membury, Axminster	1
Village Close, Exmouth	1
Steamer Steps, Budleigh Salterton	2
Camperdown Depot	3
Manstone Depot	1
Exmouth beach	1
The Maer, Exmouth	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

Accident type	
Struck against something fixed	2
Slip, trip or fall on same level	1
Damage to vehicle, equipment or machinery	1
Exposure to/contact with harmful substance	1
Near miss	4
Other	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

#### **RIDDOR**

Service	Team	Place	Type
None	N/a	N/a	N/a

#### **March**

Service	
Streetscene	8
<b>Total</b>	

Location	
Triangle toilets, Sidmouth	1
Daisy Mount roundabout	1

BDH	1
School Lane, Sidford	1
Vinnicombes Rd, Stoke Cannon	1
Orchard Way, Honiton	1
Bonner Drive, Axminster	1
High Meadow, EX10 9UW	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>

<b>Accident type</b>	
Damage to vehicle, equipment or machinery	7
Other	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>

#### **RIDDOR**

Service	Team	Place	Type
None	N/a	N/a	N/a

### **3. VIOLENCE REPORT STATISTICS**

#### **January**

Date	Service	Team	Place	Type
12 Jan 26	Housing	Housing Options	ETH	Drug or substance misuse, threatening behaviour, intimidation or harassment

#### **February**

Date	Service	Team	Place	Type
23 Feb 26	Housing	Housing Options	Phone call	Abusive on the phone, intimidation or harassment, threatening behaviour, verbal abuse

#### **March**

Date	Service	Team	Place	Type
05-Mar-26	Housing	Housing Options	Phone call	Abusive on the phone, intimidation or harassment, threatening behaviour, verbal abuse
20-Mar-26	Housing	Housing Options	BDH	Drug or substance misuse, intimidation or harassment, threatening behaviour, violence
31-Mar-26	Housing	Estate Management	Senate Way, Exmouth	Verbal aggression, threatening behaviour

### **4. LONE WORKER APP USAGE**

	Jan	Feb	Mar
Total Uses	1432	1480	1638
Total Users	105	100	99
Average Use	13.64	14.80	16.55

### **5. HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING**

Course title	Date	Attendees	Service
IOSH Managing Safety Training			
Director's training	05 Feb 26	4	Housing Legal Housing Strategy Planning Strategy
Fire Sweeper training	10 Feb 26	8	HR
Driving for Work – toolbox talk	09 Mar 26	8	Place
Lone Working – toolbox talk	09 Mar 26	8	Place
Driving for Work – toolbox talk	18 Mar 26	27	Housing Options
Lone Working – toolbox talk	18 Mar 26	27	Housing Options
Streetscene Tool Box Talks – Annual plan written by O.H for any trends relating to the service. TBT delivered to all members of staff in service. With last Wednesday of the month at Manstone delivered to East side of service at 07:30 January – Depot Rules February - working around traffic March – Work equipment safety for Operatives March – Manual Handling and Safe Desk setup for the office Staff	Jan / Feb / Mar	100+ personnel attend monthly Toolbox talks.  Toolbox talks are tailored to suit the service need sometimes these are split for office and operatives.	Streetscene

## 6. HEALTH AND SAFETY SITE AUDITS

Site/Venue	Inspection date
Camperdown Depot	Biweekly (moved back to quarterly)
Manstone Depot	Bi weekly (moved back to quarterly)
Withycombe Pitches and Changing Rooms	Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup> - 2 issues – raised to Ao
Phear Park Work Base	Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 4 minor Issues raised, fixed on the day
Manor Gardens Work Base	N/a – Completed April 2026
Ottery St Mary Work Base	New workbase acquired working with OTC, a contract / letter is being drafted up with the Area Officer and legal. O.H checked the work base out and is happy for this arrangement to work with the town Council.
Connaught Gardens Work Base	Jan 15 <sup>th</sup> – 1 Minor issue raised
Blackmore Gardens Work Base	Jan 15 <sup>th</sup> – 1 Minor issue raised (out of date HSE poster)
Blackmore Gardens Bowling Club Work Base	Jan 15 <sup>th</sup> – 0 Issues
Honiton Work Base	Jan 28 <sup>th</sup> – 2 minor issues, 1 significant issue – exposed Electrical wire at a plug. Raised and sorted within 48 hours.
Sidford Changing Rooms and Playing Pitches	Jan 21 <sup>st</sup> – No issues
Sidmouth Cemetery Work Base and Chapel (Storage Area)	Jan 21 <sup>st</sup> - 2 minor issues
Axminster Millway Rise Work Base	Jan 21 <sup>st</sup> – No issues
Seaton Seafield Gardens Work Base	Jan 21 <sup>st</sup> – 1 significant issue – lithium battery for work tools, charging on top of combustibles, (should be minimum of 2M distance) moved at the time of audit and TBT delivered to the team regarding fire safety and lithium battery safety.
Thelma Hulbert Gallery	Scheduled for 13 May 26
Manor Pavilion Theatre	

East Devon Business Centre	
Seaton Wetlands – Discovery Hut	

## 7. TESTS, DRILLS AND EVACUATIONS

Site	Type of test / drill / evacuation	Date
ETH	Fire Drill	19 Jan 26
EDBC	Blue Light Drill	11 Feb 26
BDH	Blue Light Drill	01 Mar 26
ETH	Blue Light Drill	09 Mar 26
ETH	Fire Drill (Exmouth Town Council)	27 Apr 26
BDH	Fire Drill	Planned for 27 Jan but cancelled due to storm warning. Re-arranged and cancelled again due to another storm warning. Completed 28 Apr 26
CD	Fire Drill	Feb 16 <sup>th</sup> (scheduled for 6monthly)
MSD	Fire Drill	Feb 16 <sup>th</sup> (scheduled for 6 monthly)

## 8. SERVICE RISK ASSESSMENTS

Directorate	Service	Team	Risk Assessments	Overdue
Finance	Revs & Bens, Customer Access, Fraud & Compliance	Council Tax	11	11
Governance	Communications, Culture and Marketing	Manor Pavilion Theatre	1	1
Governance	Communications, Culture and Marketing	Organisational Development	TBC	TBC
Governance	Communications, Culture and Marketing	Thelma Hulbert Gallery	2	2
Governance	Democratic Services	Democratic Services	1	0
Governance	Electoral Services	Electoral Services	1	1
Housing and Health	Environmental Health	Commercial	1	0
Housing and Health	Environmental Health	Environmental Protection	3	0
Housing and Health	Environmental Health	Licensing	2	0
Housing and Health	Property and Assets	Compliance	1	1
Housing and Health	Property and Assets	Voids	1	0
Housing and Health	Property and Assets	Repairs	1	0
Housing and Health	Property and Assets	Planned Works and Climate Change	1	0
Housing and Health	Tenancy Services	Rental	3	1
Housing and Health	Tenancy Services	Communities	1	1
Housing and Health	Tenancy Services	Estates	1	0

Health				
Housing and Health	Tenancy Services	Sheltered Housing (East)	5	0
Housing and Health	Tenancy Services	Sheltered Housing (West)	1	1
Housing and Health	Housing Solutions	Housing Options	12	0
Housing and Health	Housing Sustainment and Resettlement	Home Safeguard	1	1
Housing and Health	Housing Sustainment and Resettlement	Resettlement	1	1
Housing and Health	Housing Strategy and Operations	Private Sector Housing	1	0
Housing and Health	Housing Strategy and Operations	Tenants and Communities	1	1
Place	Countryside and Leisure	Arboricultural	6	0
Place	Countryside and Leisure	Site Risk Assessments	11	11
Place	Countryside and Leisure	Ranger Activities	1	0
Place	Countryside and Leisure	Activities	38	0
Place	Countryside and Leisure	Education	17	0
Place	Countryside and Leisure	Tool Tasks and Equipment	1	0
Place	Countryside and Leisure	Ecology	1	1
Place	Countryside and Leisure	Habitat Regulation Delivery	7	0
Place	Place, Asset and Commercialisation	Parking Services	1	0
Place	Property & Estates	Property Services	13	0
Place	Planning Strategy and Development Management	Building Control	1	0
Place	Planning Strategy and Development Management	Development Management	1	0
Place	Planning Strategy and Development Management	Growth, Development, Prosperity	TBC	TBC
Place	Planning Strategy and Development Management	Planning Policy	1	0
Streetscene	Streetscene Operations	Streetscene Ops	152	0
Streetscene	Streetscene Operations	Streetscene – Cemeteries, Sewage Treatment Plants	44	0
Streetscene	Streetscene Operations	Streetscene – Red Routes (REACT)	87	0
Governance	Communications, Culture and Marketing	Events – Weddings	8	0
Governance	Communications, Culture and Marketing	Events – Sites	32	0
Total			475	34