

People Data Annual Report 2024/25

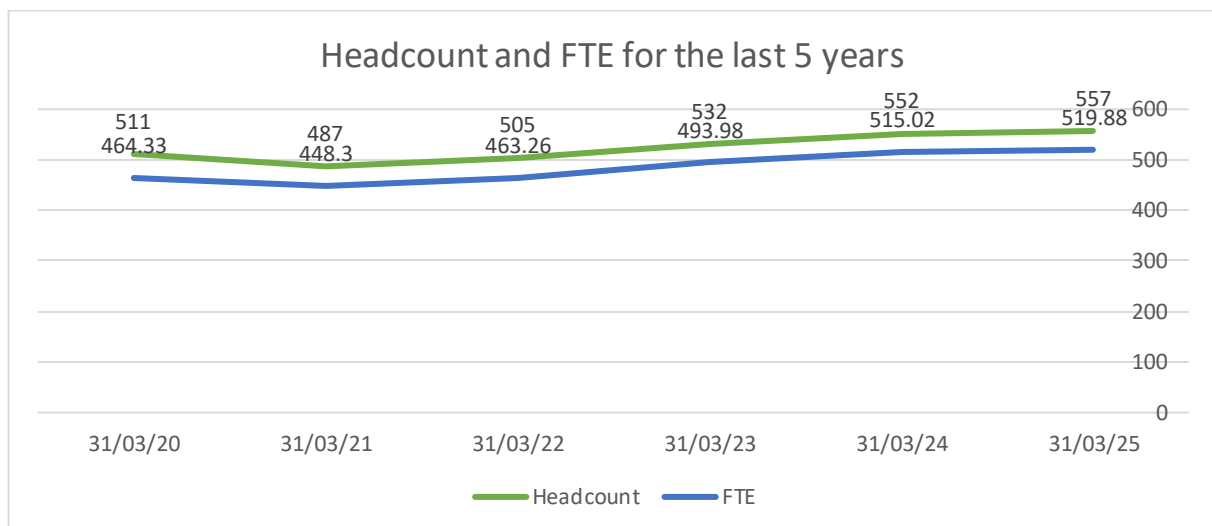
1 Introduction

This report presents East Devon District Council 2024/25 Annual People Data. Annual people data has been produced for several years with the aim of providing important people data and analysis to the Strategic Leadership Team and members.

2 Headcount and full time equivalent

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

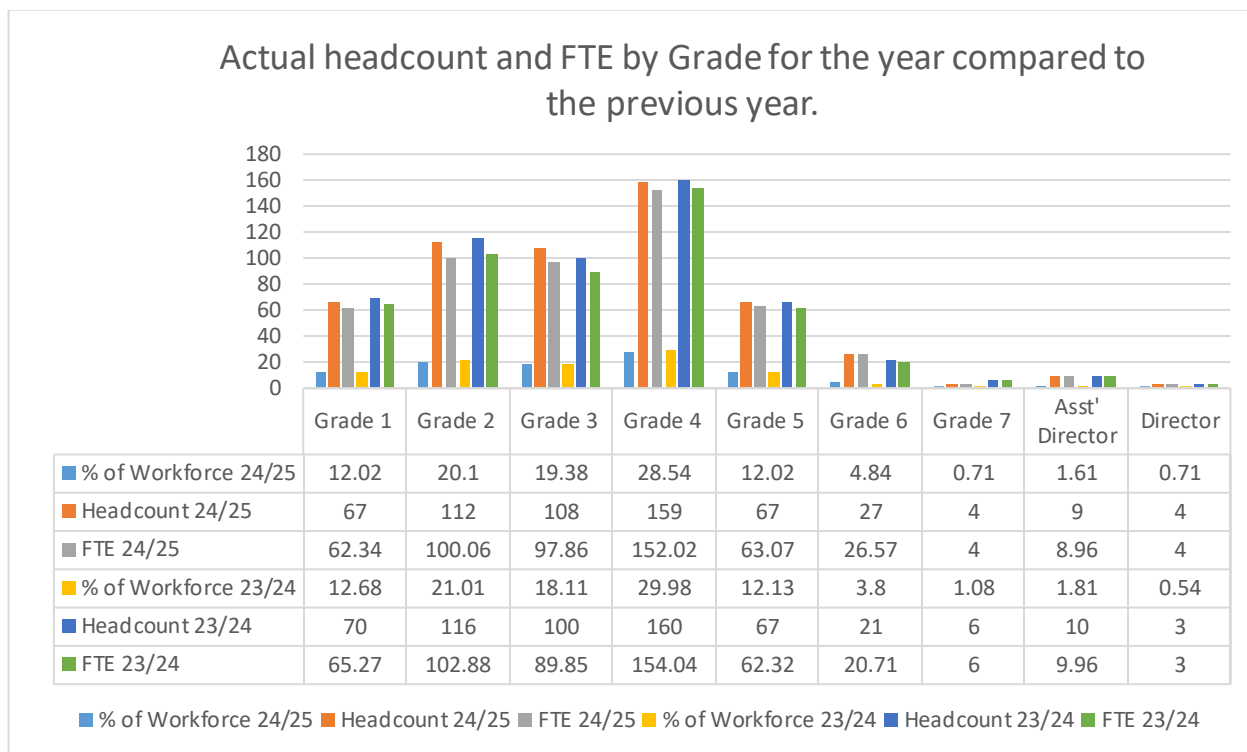
As of 31st March 2025, the headcount was 557 and the full time equivalent (FTE¹) was 519.88. Headcount has increased by 6 (1.08%) compared to 2023/24 and reflects the increase in posts in some areas as part of the budget planning process. We remain below the budgeted FTE of 565.4.



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

2.2. Actual headcount and FTE by grade

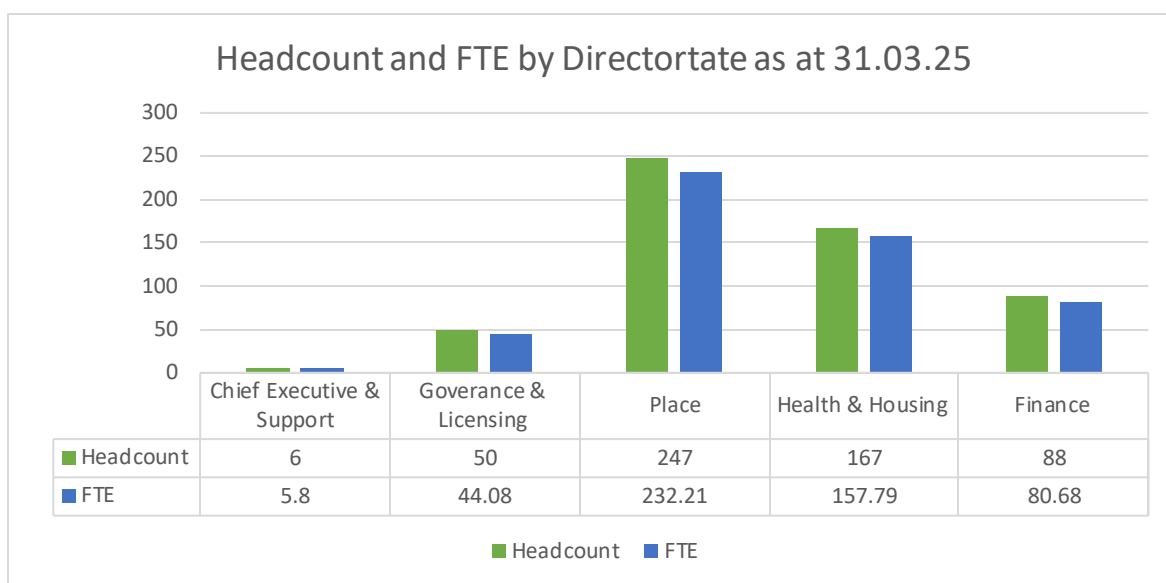
As was reported last year, Grade 4 (£35,325- £41,511) remains the largest proportion of the workforce; however, it has seen a reduction of 2.2% compared to the previous year. This is followed by Grade 2 (£28,624 – £31,067) which has maintained the same ranking position in the workforce composition but has also declined in number. Notable decreases are also seen at grade 7, which has reduced from 1.08% to 0.71%. The most significant growth in grade distribution is Grade 6 (£50,788 -£57,766) which has increased by 23.80% (6) due in part to interim restructuring arrangements. Workforce data published by the LGA May 2025 states £34k is the average pay of all Council Staff across England whilst East Devon's average is slightly below this at £33,151 which includes pro rata pay for part time employees.



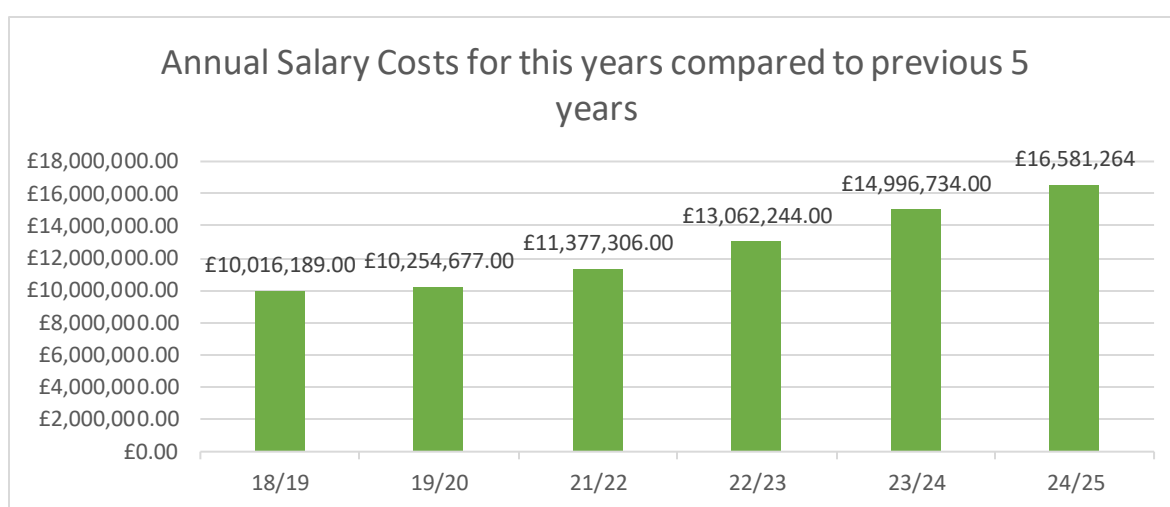
2.3. Headcount by Service

The graph below shows the headcount and FTE by service area as of 31st March 2025. Since the previous report and the appointment of the new Chief Executive an organisational restructure has been implemented to reduce the size of the largest service which was previously Housing, Health and Environment which accounted for 55.25% of the total workforce.

As part of this restructure, Streetscene were separated from this service and incorporated into a newly established Directorate "Place". As a result, Place is now the largest service area standing at 44.34% of the workforce while Health and Housing following the removal of Streetscene now represents 29.98% of the organisations workforce. This reflects a significant redistribution of posts across service areas to support improved operational management by rebalancing the size of service areas, reducing the operational pressures associated with managing overly large directorate and enabling greater focused oversight of service delivery.



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 have increased by 10.56% compared to an increase of 14.8% the previous year, which is the result of increased headcount and the Pay Award which is negotiated nationally. The Pay Award for 2024/25 was agreed in November 2024 and backdated to April 2024 and was £1,290 on all spinal column points. In addition, this increase can be attributed to an additional Director post and increase of those paid at grade 6, as noted above.

The Pay Award for 2025/26 is currently still under negotiation between the national employers and trade unions (UNITE, GMB and UNISON).

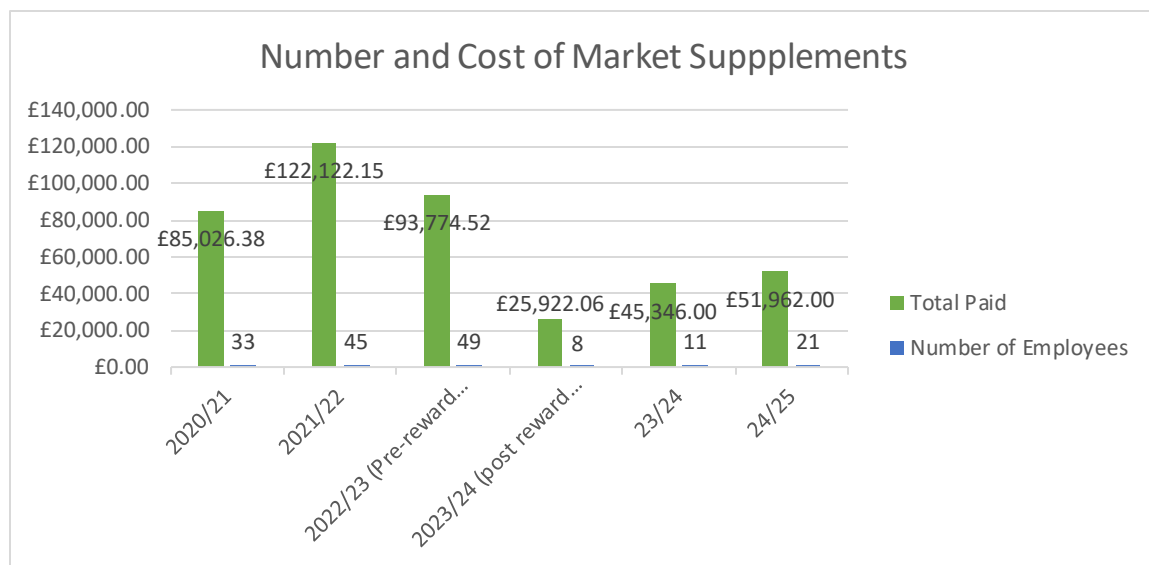
The unions have requested £3,000 on all spinal column points or 10% whichever is greater, however the employers have offered a full and final offer of 3.2% on all spinal points, and therefore the pay negotiations currently remain unresolved. Despite the reward review there is still ongoing challenges in maintaining competitive pay rates for specific professions where market rates have risen faster than the standard pay framework and there is an acknowledgement from the employers side that there needs to be a review of the overall grading structure to address these challenges and ensure it is fit for purpose in a changing labour market, until this is reviewed the organisation will continue to benchmark and use market supplements, where appropriate, to attract and retain valuable skills.

2.5 Market supplements

Market Supplements are an additional temporary payment to the basic salary of an employee where market pressures would otherwise prevent the Council from being able to recruit or retain staff in hard to recruit areas and professions.

At the end of 2024/25 21 posts were in receipt of a market supplement. Although this remains below its highest level of 49, prior to the reward review, it demonstrates ongoing pressure for certain professions such as solicitors and surveyors. LGA report that 96% of Council's in England are experiencing recruitment difficulties. This trend underscores the critical need for strategic initiatives to attract and retain skilled professionals in the public sector. Addressing these recruitment challenges will require a multifaceted approach, including competitive compensation packages, professional development opportunities, and a supportive work environment.

The 21 posts which were in receipt of a market supplement at the end of 2024/25 are in Legal, Place, Assets and Leisure and Environmental Health and Housing. All posts are reviewed on an annual basis. The graph below shows the level and cost of market supplements applied to posts up to the introduction of the Reward Review in December 2022 and post Reward Review.



2.6 Staff Travel Costs for the last 5 years

Over the past 5 years travel expenses which include business and training mileage have shown notable fluctuations, in 20/21 expenditure stood at £127,460 increasing to £180,827 as restrictions eased following the pandemic. Since then, costs have gradually declined year on year, dropping to £125,426 in 24/25. This represents an 8.16% reduction in travelling expenses from the previous year. On average travelling officers are claiming for 1,373 miles per annum which is 64 miles less than last year's 1,437 miles per annum, overall this translates into 91 tonnes of carbon down from 138 tonnes of carbon in 2018/19, supporting our Climate Change Strategy.

3 Vacancies, Agency Workers and Recruitment

3.1. Recruitment activity

The costs of recruitment advertising for the last few years are shown in the table below and demonstrate the increase in recruitment activity, linked to recent recruitment and retention challenges, as well as increased recruitment media costs. Included in this cost is executive search recruitment for senior management and professional posts which is more expensive than media only recruitment. We use executive search in cases where normal advertising has either not yielded sufficient or suitable applicants, or where we know there is a shortage of supply in the market. Executive searches can provide expertise in identifying and attracting candidates with specific skills.

In 2024/25 we recruited 81 new starters compared to 75 in 2023/24. The cost per head of recruiting was £2,232 compared to last years, £1,368. The additional expenditure is due to agency executive

search which was required for the appointments of the Chief Executive and two Director posts. Without this high profile and necessary expenditure, the costs per head would have been £1,303.

According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Resourcing and Talent Planning Report 2024 the average cost of recruitment per employee can range from £3 to 5k so despite the increase we are still performing well against this benchmark, making effective use of media and using free resources where possible as well as publicising via our social media channels.

3.2. Vacancy and Agency Data

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

Although vacancy numbers remain similar at the beginning and end of the year it should be noted that vacancy levels are lower than at the peak of the recruitment challenges and prior to implementation of the Reward Review. The most recent reported LGA data (2024/25) has a vacancy rate median benchmark figure of 12% and our latest vacancy rate of 6.82%.

As at the end of 2024/25 there were 38 vacancies 15 were under active recruitment with closing dates and interviews planned. 13 posts did not have an ATR to recruit in place, and the remaining were either being covered by Agency or secondments whilst decisions were being made.

Work is taking place corporately to assess how we manage vacancies and enhance budget monitoring as part of this. This is likely to result in changes to reporting and how vacancy figures are represented moving forward.

In the main, agency cover has been used to provide essential cover too hard to fill jobs where there are significant local/national labour shortages for certain skills, such as surveyors, planning and legal roles, whilst permanent recruitment is pursued.

The length of time a role is vacant has decreased since the last reporting period. We often see fluctuations in this marker due to factors such as lengthy notice periods and seasonal variations such as summer and Christmas, however in the main, the time taken to recruit has not exceeded 100 days over the year.

Over the coming months, it is likely that we will see some increase in this indicator due to change in process in order to see better alignment with accountancy vacancy budgeting which retains budget for a post even if there is no ATR. This will allow greater oversight across the Council with one master record.

Total Vacancies (Recruiting and not Recruiting)		01.04.24				31.03.25	
		45 (8.15% of the workforce)				38 (6.82%)	
Average length of time a recruiting in progress is vacant		100.37 days				68.21 days	
Total positions covered by an Agency		36				29	
Recruitment Advertising Spend	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	
	£180,848	£102,662	£95,714	£68,349	£30,105	£32,917	

4 Turnover

4.1. Cumulative Voluntary Turnover

Voluntary turnover includes resignations and retirements (there is no compulsory retirement age). In the last annual report, we advised that it would take up to 12 months to establish if the 2022 Reward Review along with other actions had had a positive effect on our voluntary turnover rates and we reported there was an early indication that turnover had slowed in the last quarter of 2023/24.

It is important to note that 20/21 and 21/22 were exceptionally low due, to the impact of the pandemic, during which labour market uncertainly, fewer job opportunities and general economic instability contributed to a reduction in voluntary movement.

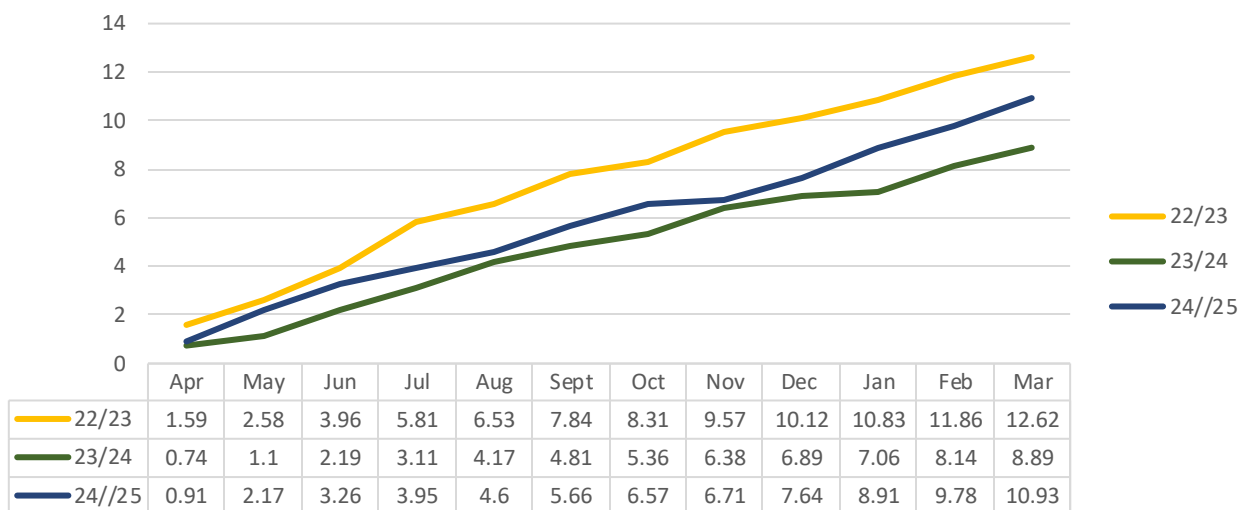
At the end of 2023/24 voluntary turnover was 8.89%, equating to 49 voluntary leavers compared to 9.91% the previous year where there were 65 voluntary leavers - a decrease of 24.61%.

However, this year there has been an increase of voluntary leavers by 2.04% equating to 59 leavers (10.93%), an increase of 10 leavers compared to the previous year. The average voluntary turnover rate for district Councils in England is approximately 12% per annum and therefore despite the increase we remain below the average benchmark. (source.LGA).

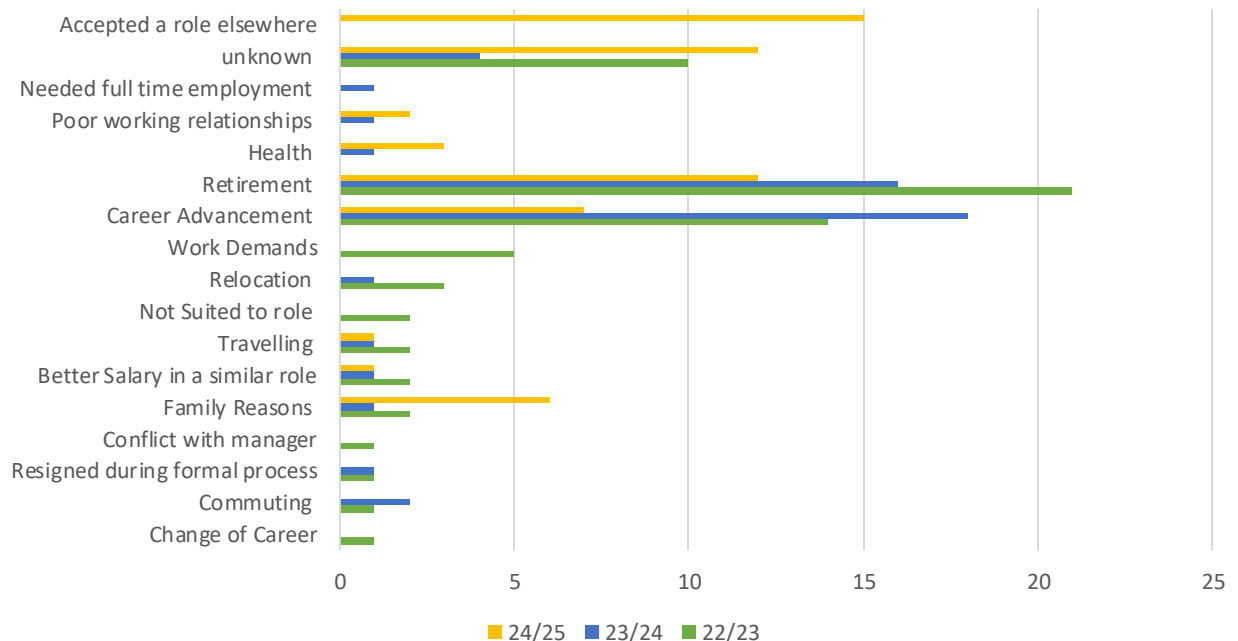
Identifying specific reasons for leaving can be difficult, as not all employees complete exit questionnaires or provide detailed reasons in resignation letters. We've improved our leavers form to collect more meaningful data, which has been very helpful and further improvements are planned as part of the People Strategy.

Last year the top two reasons for leaving were career advancement (18) and retirement (16). The number of retirements has reduced for the 3rd successive year to 12.

Culmulative Voluntary Turnover compared to previous 2 Years



Comparison of reasons cited for voluntary turnover.



4.2 Exit Questionnaires

While exit questionnaires are a valuable tool for gathering feedback, they are not always reliable or a balanced reflection of the workplace experience, one of the key limitations is the potential for bias in responses particularly when employees use the platform for venting frustrations, they also lack context making it hard to distinguish isolated issues and employees leaving on good terms may choose to avoid criticising the organisation. To address this, as part of the people strategy HR intend to carry out pulse surveys which will monitor engagement and morale during employment.

Last year, we changed the exit questionnaire to a Microsoft forms approach as opposed to a word document, however there is a marked decrease in return over the last financial year and investigations will be made to establish the reasons for this, in part we can point to late completion of leavers forms by line managers.

Overall, in 24/25 we had a 25.42 % return which is a decrease from last year's 48.97%. Of the exit questionnaire respondents, the following insights were gathered.



26.6% of respondents were retiring and 26.6% were either leaving because of a better career opportunity which mirrors reasons selected on the leavers form.

From responses received 67.53 % either strongly agreed or agreed that they were paid adequately for the role they did which is an increase on last year's 58%. It's encouraging that 80% felt positively about the range of benefits that the Council has to offer reflecting the strength of our overall employee offering. 33.4% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that there were sufficient opportunities to advance with the Council, whilst 65% agreed that there was. This will be considered as part of the people strategy development and grow theme. 73.3% agreed or strongly agree that they would recommend EDDC as an employer to others.

4.3 Cumulative Non-voluntary Turnover

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

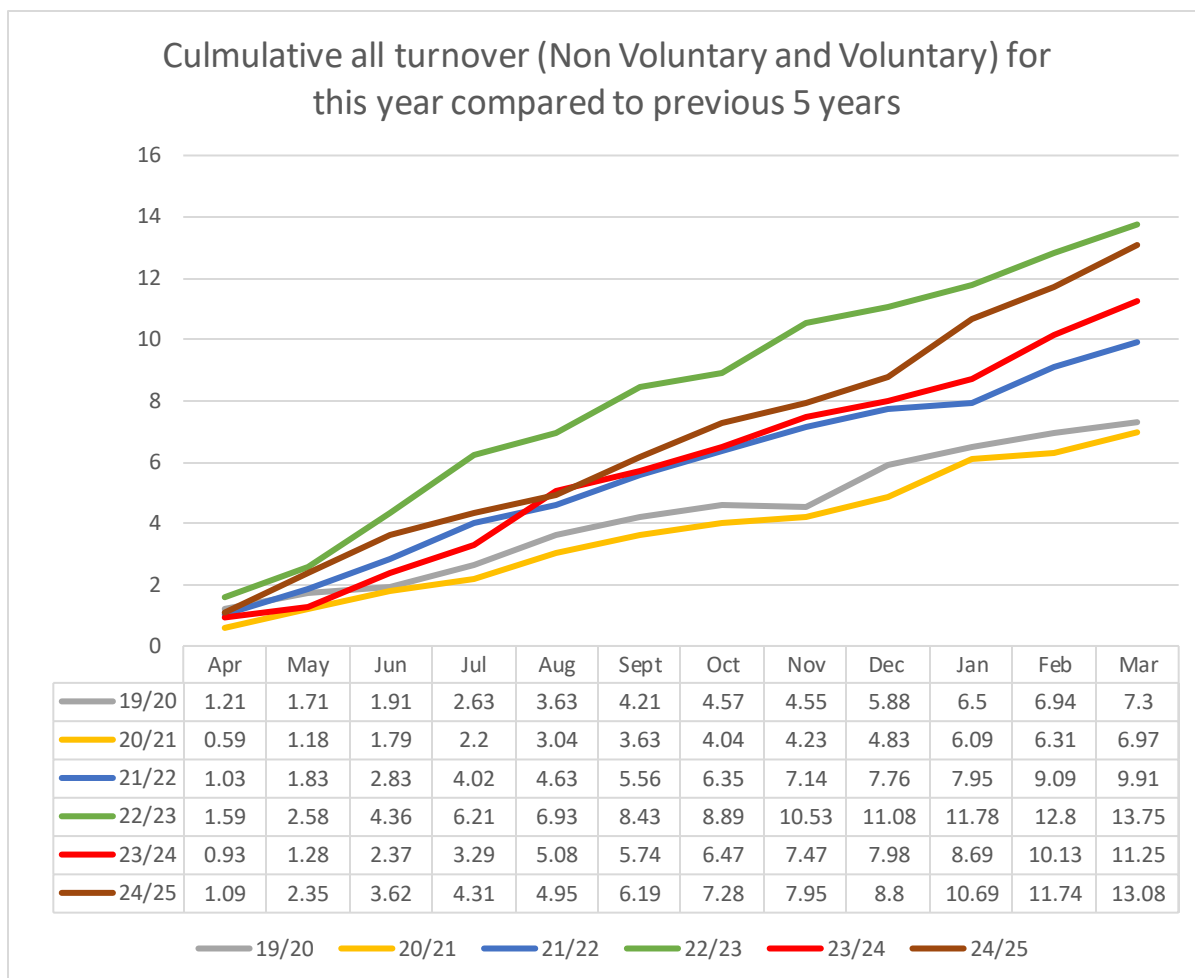
At the end of 2024/25 cumulative non-voluntary turnover was 2.15%. This figure is broadly consistent with the previous year's 2.36%. Looking back, non-voluntary turnover was 1.13% in 2022/23, 1.98% on 21/22, 3.07% in 2020/21 and 2.37% in 2019/20. The figures suggest that the

organisations approach to managing probation and disciplinary processes has remained steady with turnover levels showing no concerning upward trend.

4.4 Combined Cumulative Voluntary and Non-voluntary Turnover and Benchmarking

When examining overall turnover combining both voluntary and non-voluntary leavers the rate for 2024/25 was 13.08% reflecting an increase from 11.25% in 2023/24.

According to LGA turnover rates for local government across all authorities in England was 13.5%. Our turnover rate of 13.08% is slightly below this average suggesting that turnover is within the typical range for local government.



5 Learning and development and 'Grow Our Own'

5.1. Learning and Development Activity

This is a summary of training activity across the organisation during the 2024/25 period, it highlights participation levels, completion rates and key areas of focus over the coming months.

Last year we reported that we had moved to a new e-learning system which allowed for better reporting and flexibility, this has allowed us to analyse the volumes of e-learning.

Headline Figures

Face to Face Training

32 training sessions were run, totalling 508 attendees, this represented an average cost per employee of £104.26.

E-Learning Training Breakdown

Training Type	Number of Courses accessed	Number of employees	Number of course completions
Mandatory Staff Training	16	342	1929

Personal Development	81	274	686
Totals	142	616	2615
Average Cost Per employee			£3.73

Learning and Development events 2024/25		
Absence Management for Managers	Assertiveness, Self-confidence & Communications Training	PER Skills for Managers
Business Writing Skills	Conflict Resolution	Pre-retirement planning
Creating a high Performing Team	Dealing with difficult people	Procurement Training
Dealing with Stress & Burnout	Disciplinary, Capability and Grievance Issues	Positive steps to good mental health
Managing Poor Performance and Giving Feedback	Menopause Awareness for Staff	Presentation Skills
Mental Capacity act Training	Mindfulness at work	Recruitment & Selection
Safeguarding Level 3	Stress Management	Thinking Differently
Welcome Morning	Time Management	4 wellbeing webinars

We also entered two teams of aspiring managers into the South West Council Challenge and plan to enter another team this year. Post Training evaluation feedback continues to be positive.

Next Steps / Areas of focus.

We will be rolling out mandatory Sexual Harassment Training for all staff due to the new duty to prevent sexual harassment, Cyber Training to mitigate against risks of Cyber Attacks, and Fraud Training because of an Audit recommendation. We also intend to roll out Investigation Training for managers. Additionally, we recognise that there is a need to refine the reporting on learning and development activity which is still in its infancy due to staffing changes and we anticipate by next year that this will be more developed and informative.

Alongside the proposed people strategy there will be a focus on reviewing mandatory training requirements to identify whether this is still appropriate or can be refined and work to improve the reporting in this area. We are also in the early stages of implementing an improved training needs analysis method which will ensure we are providing the right training at the right time to the right people.

5.2. Apprenticeship Activity

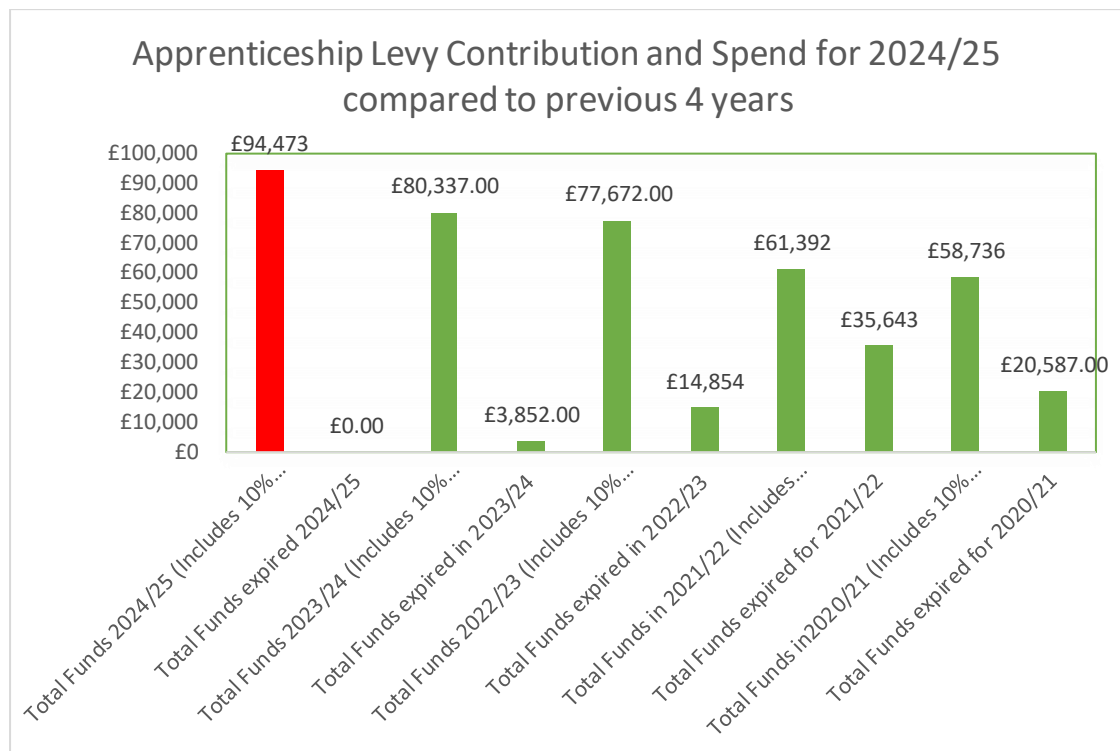
Apprenticeships are nationally recognised qualifications available to both new and current employees, funded through the Council's Apprenticeship Levy. The Council is required to allocate 0.5% of its annual payroll to this Levy.

For the 2024/25 financial year, the Levy amounted to £94,473, with total expenditure of £84,983. Any remaining funds will be carried forward to the next financial year. No funds expired during this period, demonstrating that the Levy is being fully utilised, unfortunately there is no official published benchmarking to compare our performance in this area.

During 2024/25, the Council supported 21 apprenticeships. In comparison, there were 17 apprenticeships in 2023/24 and 11 in 2022/23, this represents a 90.9% increase since 2022/23. Apprenticeships have been supported across Levels 2 through to 7. Overall, we had 8 apprenticeship starts in 24/25, the average is 7 per district council (LGA).

The Government's Levy Funding Rules mean that funds will expire and transfer to HMRC if they are not utilised within 24 months from the first month in which it is paid into our account. Monitoring Levy spend is therefore important, to ensure that we maximise its use. The graph below shows the total Levy fund and the amount that expired and was reclaimed by HMRC. Progress has been made in the number of apprenticeships offered to new and existing staff through our grow our own work

which is demonstrable through maximising Levy spend and through the reduction of expired Levy funds to zero in 24/25.



We have successfully recruited to The **Pathways to Planning** initiative which is a graduate recruitment programme aimed at addressing staffing shortages in local government planning teams. It offers graduates a fast-track entry into a career in planning within local authorities. Participants are employed full-time by a local council and undertake a fully funded postgraduate qualification in planning, which is accredited by the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI).

We have also successfully recruited to the LGA's **Graduate Management Trainee programme**, which is designed to attract and develop future leaders in local government. The trainee gains experience in different areas of the Council by rotating placements.

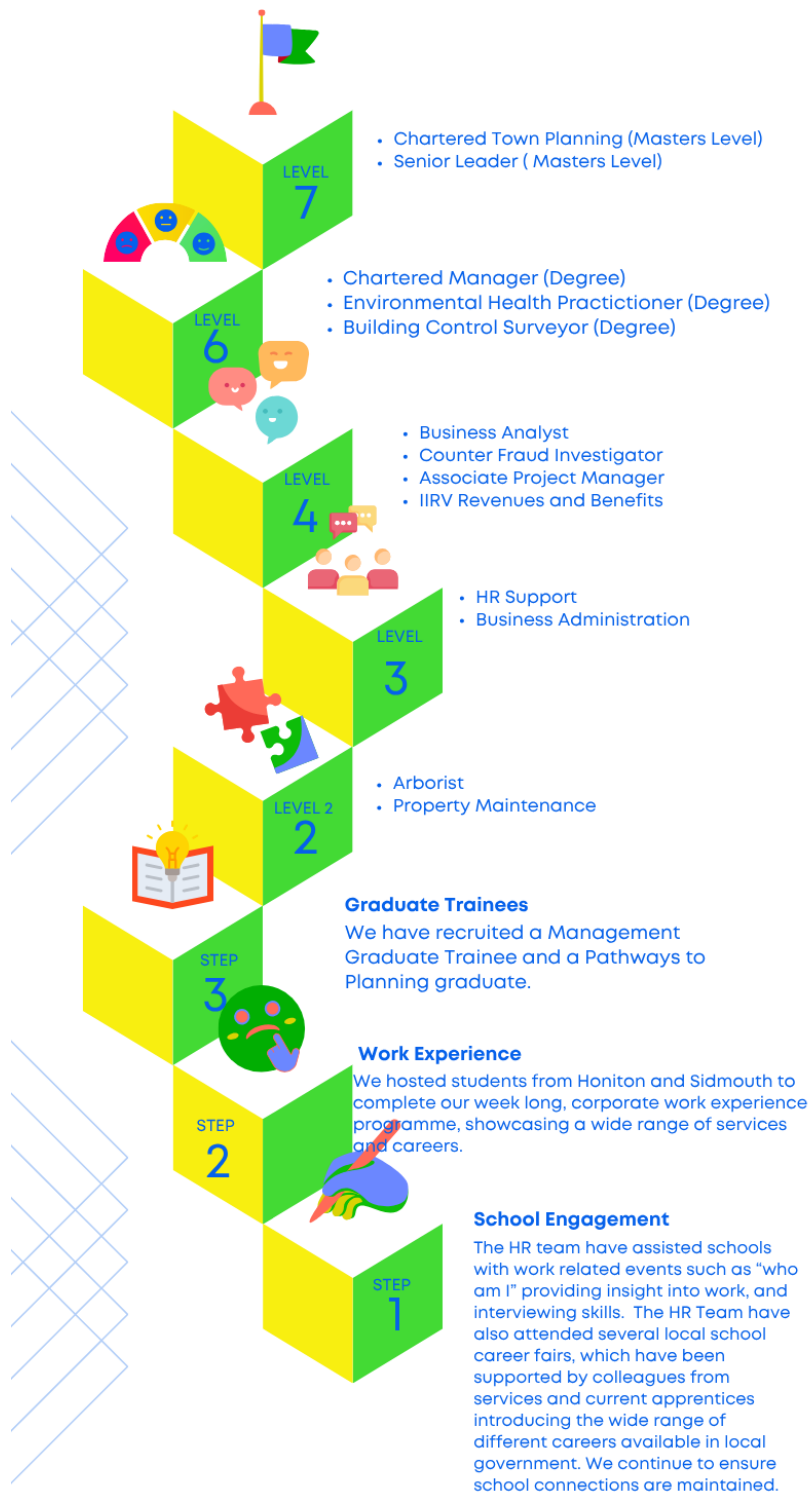
Through the agreed Grow our Own budget, we have recently recruited two new early career Business Administration Apprentices in the Executive Support team. Additionally, we have recruited three early career posts in Streetscene in the Property Maintenance and Tree teams and a Revenues Apprentice in Finance.

During 2024/25, six apprenticeships have successfully completed which is an accomplishment not to be underestimated given the balance between working and studying. This is also a big achievement for the apprenticeship manager who needs to provide the apprentice with both support and work experience to evidence the required skills, knowledge and behaviours.

Work is currently being progressed for the next phase of our grow our own project, which is to engage, and support looked after children and care experienced young people to gain workplace skills and confidence to take their first steps into employment, our plans include offering interview skills, taster days, and ring fencing suitable apprenticeship opportunities. We have also developed relationships with The Deaf Academy but as of today no students have been placed for work experience, however we will continue to work with the Deaf Academy to support placements wherever possible.

We continue to engage with schools through career fairs and specific work-related school activities. The infographic overleaf summarises the apprenticeships supported and the grass roots work that is being done to attract talent to Local Government.

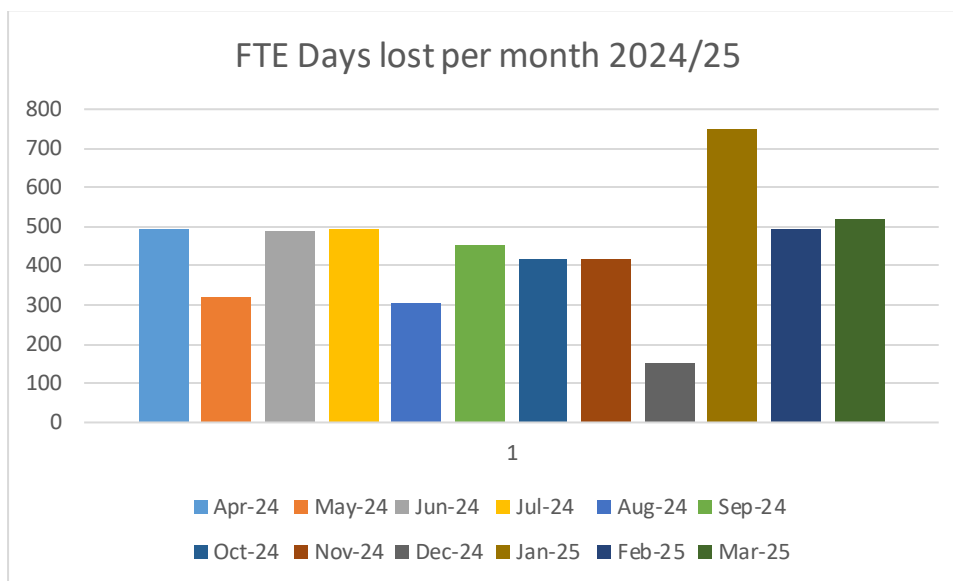
Grow Our Own Activity from school engagement to apprenticeships



6 Sickness Absence & Wellbeing

6.1. FTE Working Days Lost due to Sickness Absence

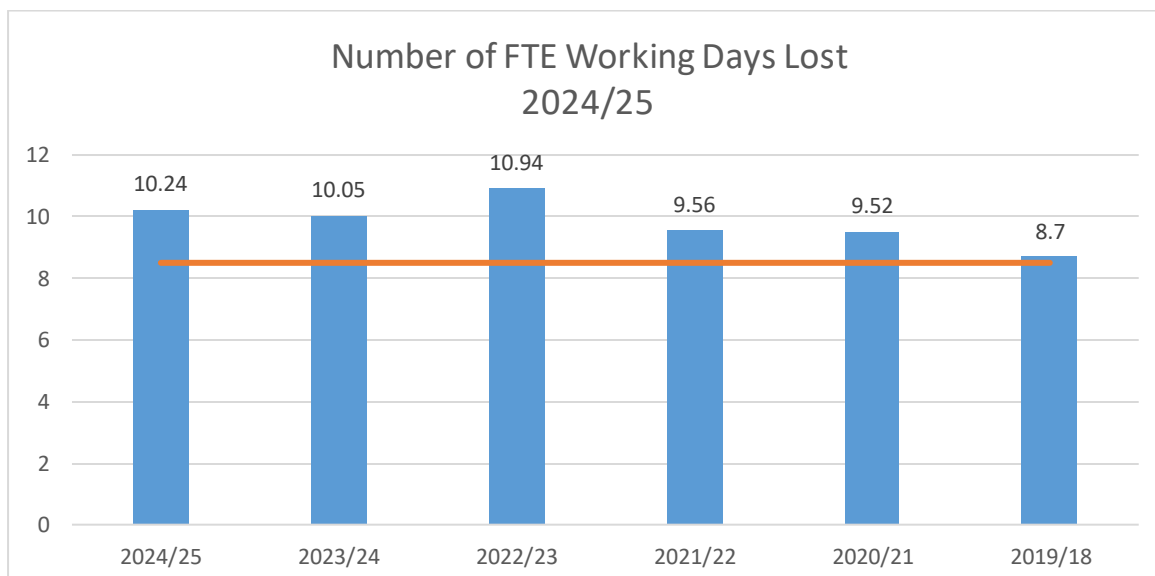
The graph below shows the total number of full time equivalent (FTE) working days lost per month for the 24/25 financial year.

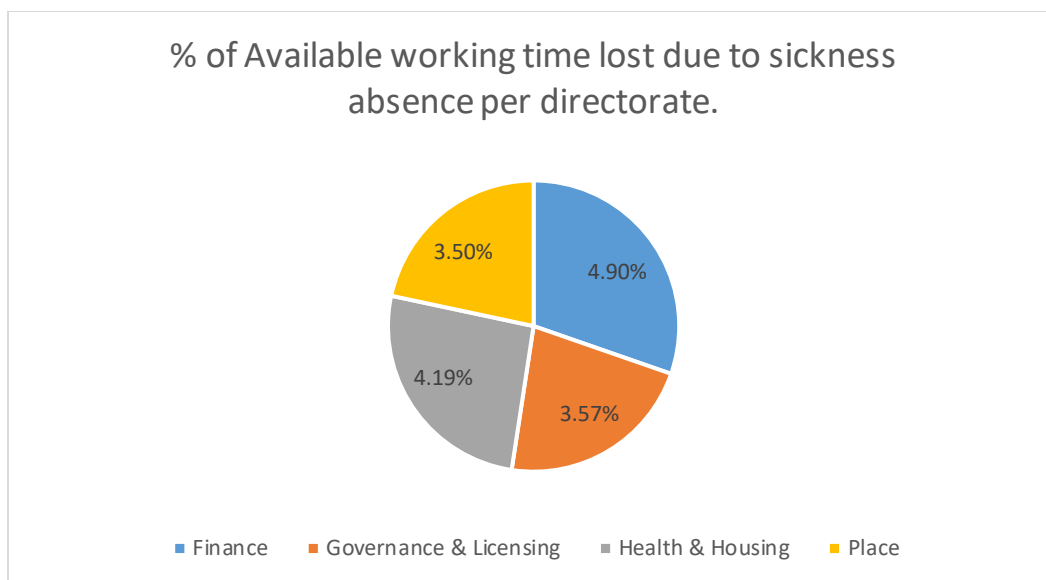


The Council's target is that no more than 8.5 working days should be lost through sickness absence, per employee. However, as shown in the graph below, we have been in excess of this target for the last 5 years, apart from the year in which the Covid Pandemic commenced.

There has been a 1.89% increase this year on all absences with an average of 10.24 days lost per FTE compared with 10.05 days lost per FTE in 2023/24 – in relative terms this is an increase of 213 days. See benchmarking information below.

Of the total headcount, 36% of employees had no absence during 2024/25, which means that 3 in 5 employees had at least 1 instance of absence.





The above shows the percentage of time lost due to sickness absence per directorate. This measure provides a more meaningful indicator for absence impact than looking solely at the total number of days lost by expressing absence as a percentage of available working time, it takes account of differences in directorate size and staffing levels. This enables a fairer and more consistent comparison across areas and highlights where sickness absence has the greatest relative operational impact regardless of headcount, supporting informed decision making around well-being interventions and resource planning. Long term absence has a significant impact on sickness absence levels as is explained further down in this report.

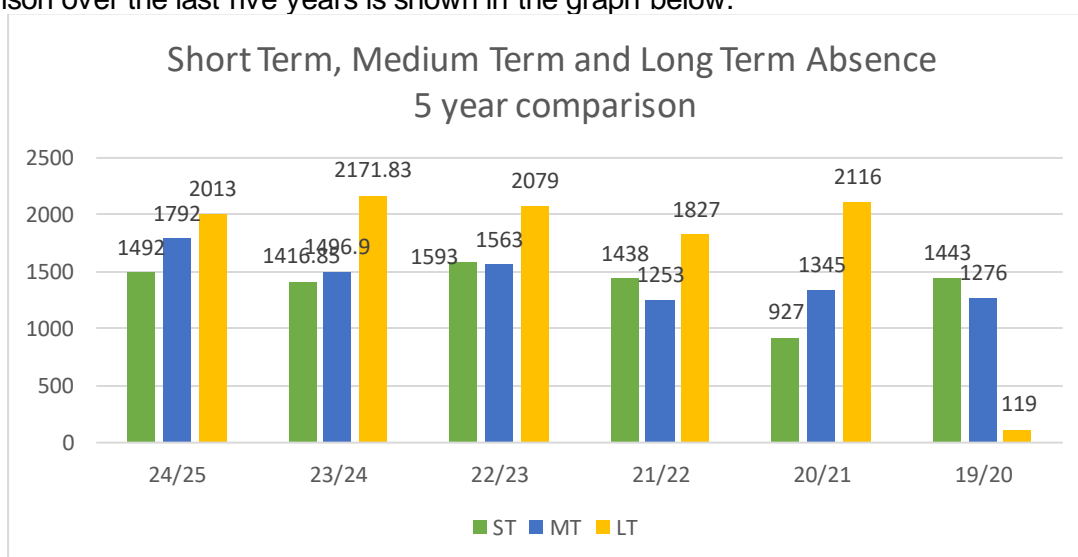
6.2. Reasons for Short, Medium and Long-term Absence

Overall, there has been an increase in total days lost this year, 5085 total days lost last year to 5297 days. The increase in absence is attributable to an increase in short-term and medium-term absence.

Long-term absence has decreased compared to the previous year by 7.31%. or 158.83 days

Short-term absence (less than 8 days) accounted for 28.16% (1492 days), medium-term (9 days to 2 months) accounted for 33.82% (1792 days) and long-term (more than 2 months)(2013 days) accounted for 37.99% of all absences.

Comparison over the last five years is shown in the graph below.



6.2.1 Short-term Absence

Short-term absence has increased by 5.36% compared to 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	2019/20
1	Cold & Flu (409 days)	Cold & Flu (332 days)	Covid-19 (Positive Test) (458 days)	Cold & Flu (280 days)	Phased Return to work (140 days)	Cold & Flu (399.5 days)
2	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)	Phased Return (251 days)
3	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)	Stomach, Kidney, Liver, Digestion (217 days)

6.2.2 Medium-term Absence

Overall Medium-Term absence has increased by 19.78%. 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	2019/20
1	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)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (personal) (446 days)
2	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)	Hospital treatment/ operation (203 days)
3	Hospital Treatment (248)	Depression (personal) 122 days	Chest/ Respiratory Problems (166 days)	Hospital treatment/ operation (133 days)	Hospital Treatment/ Operation (162 days)	Stress, anxiety fatigue (work- related) (193 days)

In year further analysis of absence reason indicated that an underlying cause of personal stress relates in the main to bereavement and relationship issues. To address this, we recently ran a grief and loss webinar as part of our wellbeing programme of which 40 employees attended and the recording is available on the intranet.

6.2.3 Long-term Absence

Long Term Absence reduced overall by 7.27%. 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						
	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20

1	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)	Hospital treatment/ operation (354 days)
2	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)	Stress, anxiety, fatigue (Personal) (210 days)
3	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)	Chest/ Respiratory (165 days)

Long-term absence accounts for 37.99% of all absences. The reduction in long term cases is positive but total days lost remains high due to a small number of complex cases. If long term absence was removed from the calculations our average number of days lost would be 6.22 days 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. At the end of March 2024, the median absence rate among our neighbouring district authorities was 10.59 days. South Hams had the highest rate at 12.7 days, while Torridge had the lowest at 8.9 days, with East Devon following at 10.1 days. The CIPD's most recent absence survey issued in 2023 (latest available) quote 7.8 days per employee based on an average of employees from all sectors. The private sector average being 5.8 days and public sector average being 10.6 days per employee.

6.5 Actions to mitigate against sickness absence

The steps we have taken to address absence levels include return to work meetings, absence reviews, referral to 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.

Last year we reported that we had encountered significant service delays from our occupational health provider which affected the timely scheduling of appointments and in turn impacted on our ability to manage absences effectively. Since then, a new provider was appointed with the contract commencing in October 2024. The positive impact of this change is evident in the reduction of long-term days lost.

HR Business partners will work with managers to help them take a more proactive absence management role, particularly in relation to cases involving stress or mental health to ensure they are reaching out to HR in the early stages of absence for support and guidance. We also plan to develop 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 and plans are currently in place to recruit the expertise to do this.

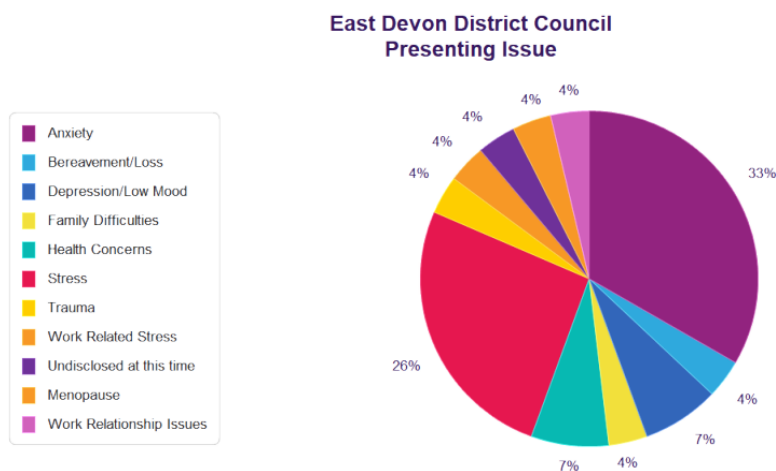
6.6 Employee wellbeing support

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 2024/25, 38 individuals contacted the employee support line for either immediate support or longer-term support which is 6.88% of our headcount.

In the period 2024/25, 27 employees received clinical counselling, this compares to 17 in 2023/24 as shown in the graph below.

Between the 27, we supported 120 individual counselling sessions. The top reasons for counselling were Anxiety (33%) Stress (26%) and Depression/Low Mood (7%) as shown in the graph below.



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,
- Breast Cancer awareness talks,
- webinars focused on metabolic boost, healthy aging, creating an effective work-life balance, Sleep and Dealing with Grief.
- Additionally, the Council has regularly promoted health-related issues 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. Employee engagement with Vivup has increased from 75.36% to 86.3% since last year. 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.

7 Employee Relations

Employee relations issues include dealing with employee grievances, disciplinary matters and dismissals (which can include redundancy or cessation of fixed term contract dismissals).

In 2024/25 there were 12 dismissals compared to 10 the previous year, 5 due to ending of fixed term contracts.

HR also investigated 10 misconduct cases resulting in warnings, dismissals or no formal action.

6 Grievances were raised by employees last year and is at a similar level to last year's 7. This represents 1% of the workforce.

We are encouraging the organisation to take a resolution focused approach to grievance and are reviewing our grievance process to ensure it focuses on early resolution before escalation to a formal process. We are developing a suite of resources for managers to help them have effective discussions with their teams which enable open communication and gives them the confidence to tackle the “difficult” issues at an early stage.

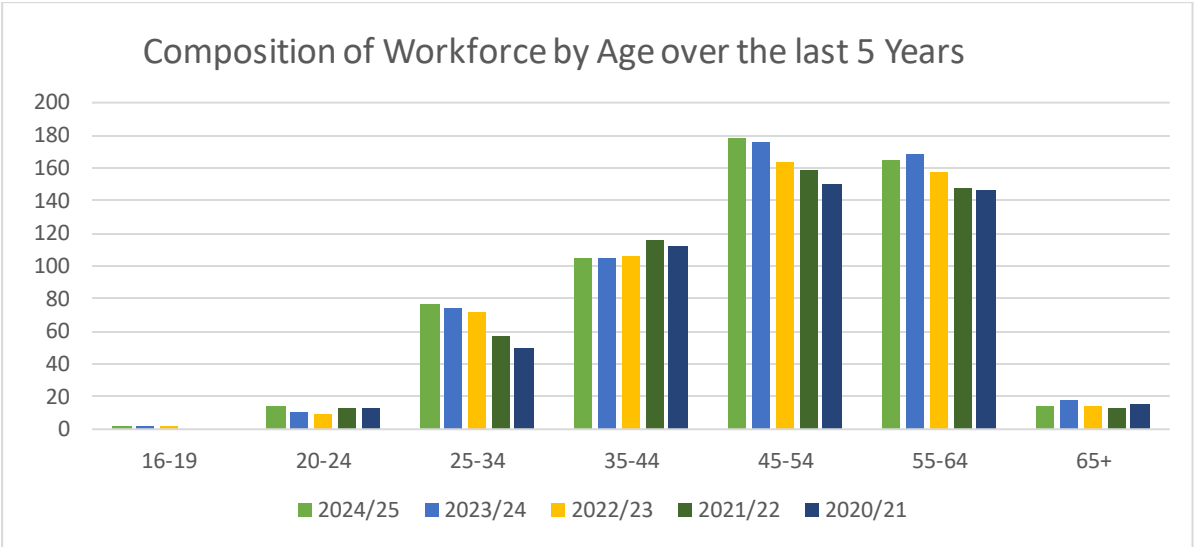
8 Workforce Profile

8.1 Age

The average age of the workforce has increased from last year’s reported 48 to 49.

The number of employees aged 25-34 and 45-54 has consistently increased over the years. The 25-34 age group has grown from 1.81% to 2.52% over the last year. Historically, the largest proportion of our workforce has been aged between 45-54, currently representing 32.07% of our workforce.

The 16-19 age group remains relatively stable with minimal change, partly due to our efforts to recruit new apprentices as part of the "Grow Our Own" strategy. The percentage of employees aged 55-64 has decreased from 30.5% to 29.7% compared to the same period last year. Similarly, the number of employees aged 65+ has decreased from 3.25% to 2.52%.



Local Government benchmarking data records 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.

92.26% of employees have provided information relating to their ethnicity, from this we are able to establish that in our workforce, 3.70% of employees have identified as belonging to an ethnic group other than White, marking a 14.81% increase compared to the same period last year.

Employees who identify as White UK (English, Welsh, Scottish, and Northern Irish) make up 85.40% of our workforce, compared to 94.6% of the local population. However, 7.74% of our workforce have not provided this information. We continue to encourage the completion of this data in the self-service part of the HR system.

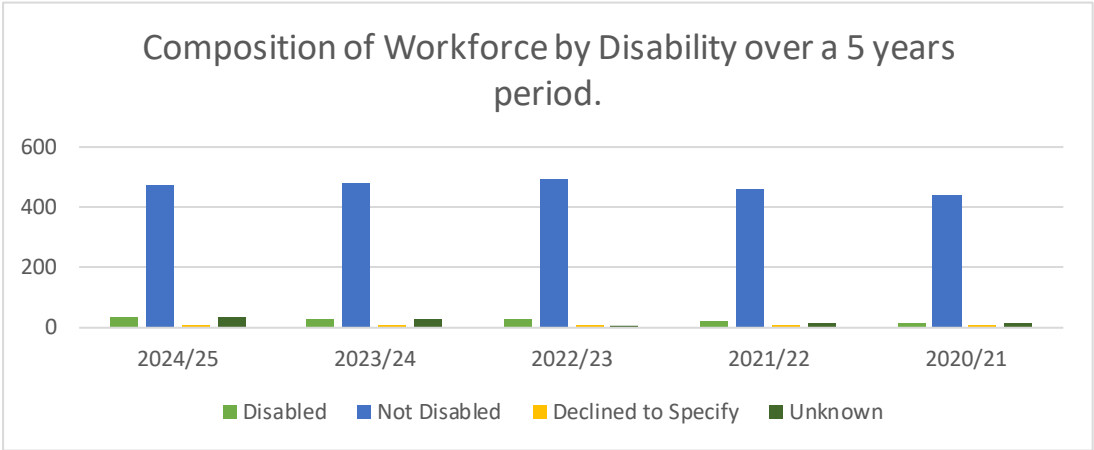
8.3 Disability

Since the start of 2024 to 2025 we have seen an increase in the number of employees who have declared a disability currently 5.94% of our workforce have declared disability, a slight rise from 5.43% last year and higher than the 4.74% reported in 2021/22.

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

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 92.97%

According to LGA workforce data 18% of the wider population have declared a disability while the local government workforce average sits at 5%.



Unknown represents no response.

8.4 Gender

The number of females compared to males has decreased slightly in 2024/25. The current gender split is 292 females (52.61%) and 263 males (47.39%). This marks the third consecutive year that our workforce has a higher proportion of females than males.

The increase in female employees is particularly notable since the pandemic and the shift to more hybrid and flexible working arrangements. The composition of our workforce closely mirrors the UK National overall workforce which sits at 51% women compared to 49% men. (Source Labour force Survey Dec 2024)

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 2024/25, the Council reported a median gender pay gap of -4.29% in favour of females, meaning males are paid less on average. This compares to a +0.41% gap in 2023/24, in favour of males.

The shift in the median pay gap is partly due to more females being employed in the upper middle pay quartile, including the recent appointments of two female Directors and a female Chief Executive.

For context, in 2024/25, the Local Government workforce data reported a National Median Gender Pay Gap of -18%, meaning that on average women’s earnings were 18% higher than men.

Benchmarking data with other neighbouring authorities who have published their 2024/25 gender pay gap reports are shown in the table below.

Local Authority	Median hourly rate difference between male and female*
East Devon District Council	-4.29%
Exeter City Council	-14.03%
Mid Devon	-3.49%
Teignbridge	-3.5%
North Devon	-6.28%
South Hams	-5.05%

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