People Data Annual Report 2025/26

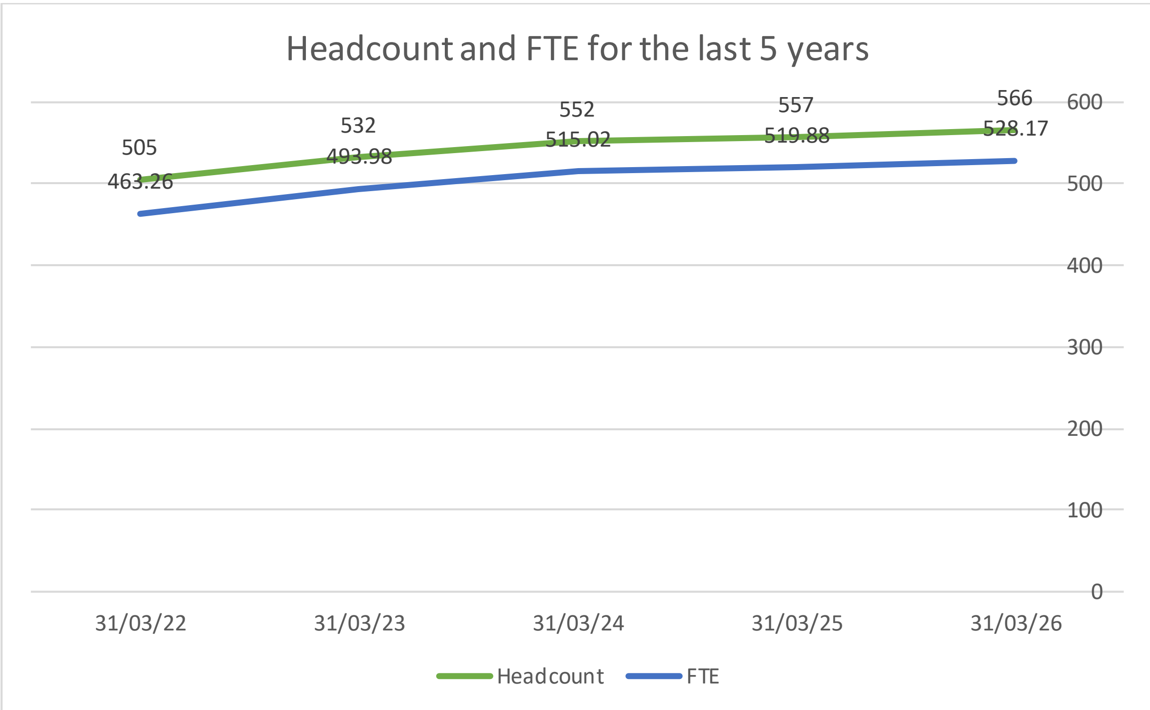
1 Introduction

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.

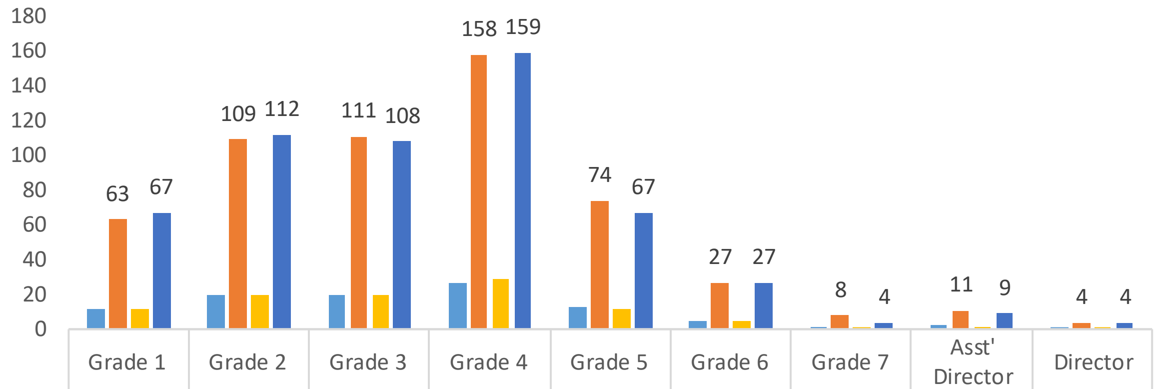


2.2. Actual headcount and FTE by grade

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.

Actual headcount and FTE by Grade for the year compared to the previous year.



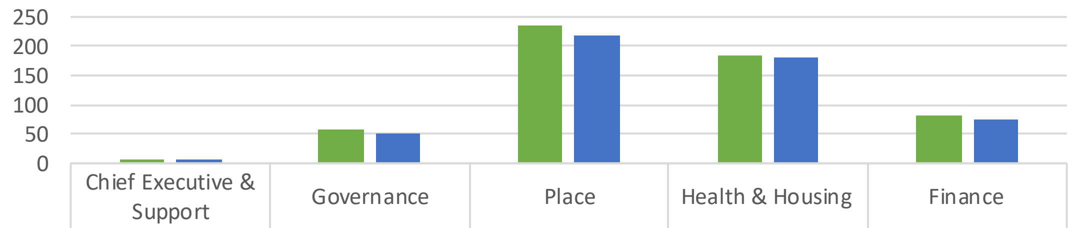
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Asst' Director	Director
% of Workforce 25/26	11.13	19.25	19.61	26.67	13.07	4.77	1.43	1.94	0.7
Headcount 25/26	63	109	111	158	74	27	8	11	4
% of Workforce 24/25	12.02	20.1	19.38	28.54	12.02	4.84	0.71	1.61	0.71
Headcount 24/25	67	112	108	159	67	27	4	9	4

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.

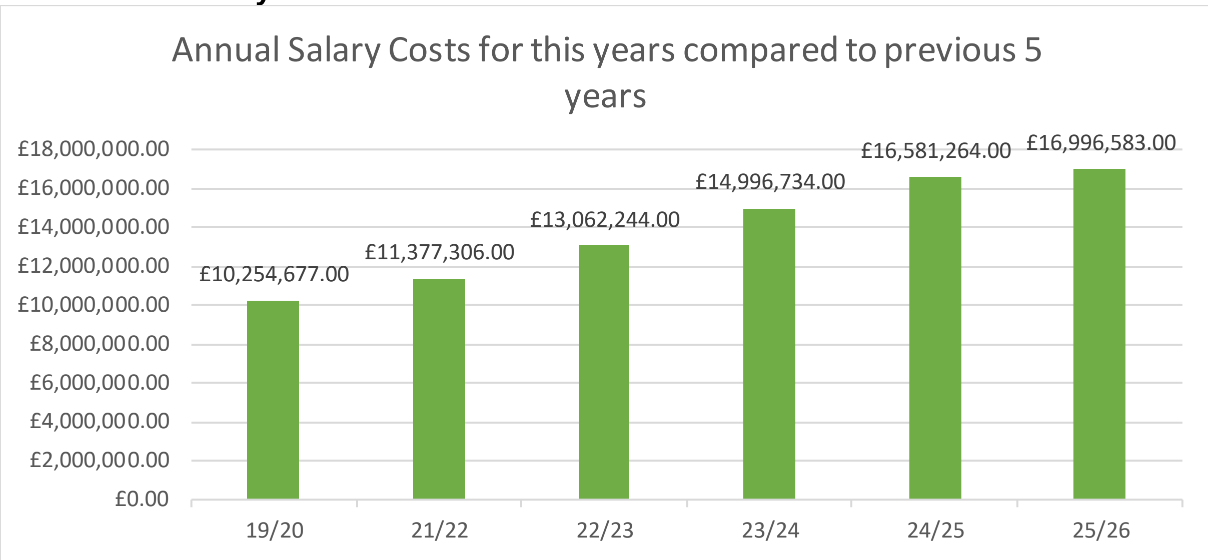
Headcount and FTE by Directortate as at 31.03.26



	Chief Executive & Support	Governance	Place	Health & Housing	Finance
Headcount	8	58	234	185	82
FTE	7.8	50.4	219.29	181.6	76.11

Headcount FTE

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.

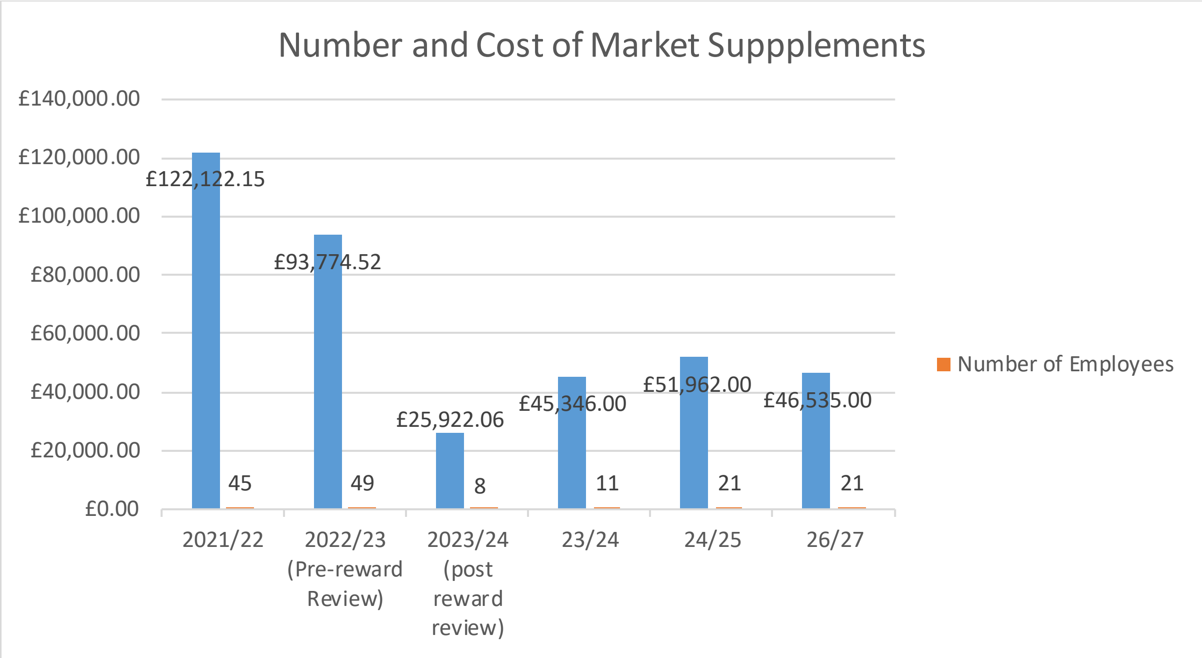
2.5 Market supplements

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_2e** to **62.66 tCO_2e**, 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

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

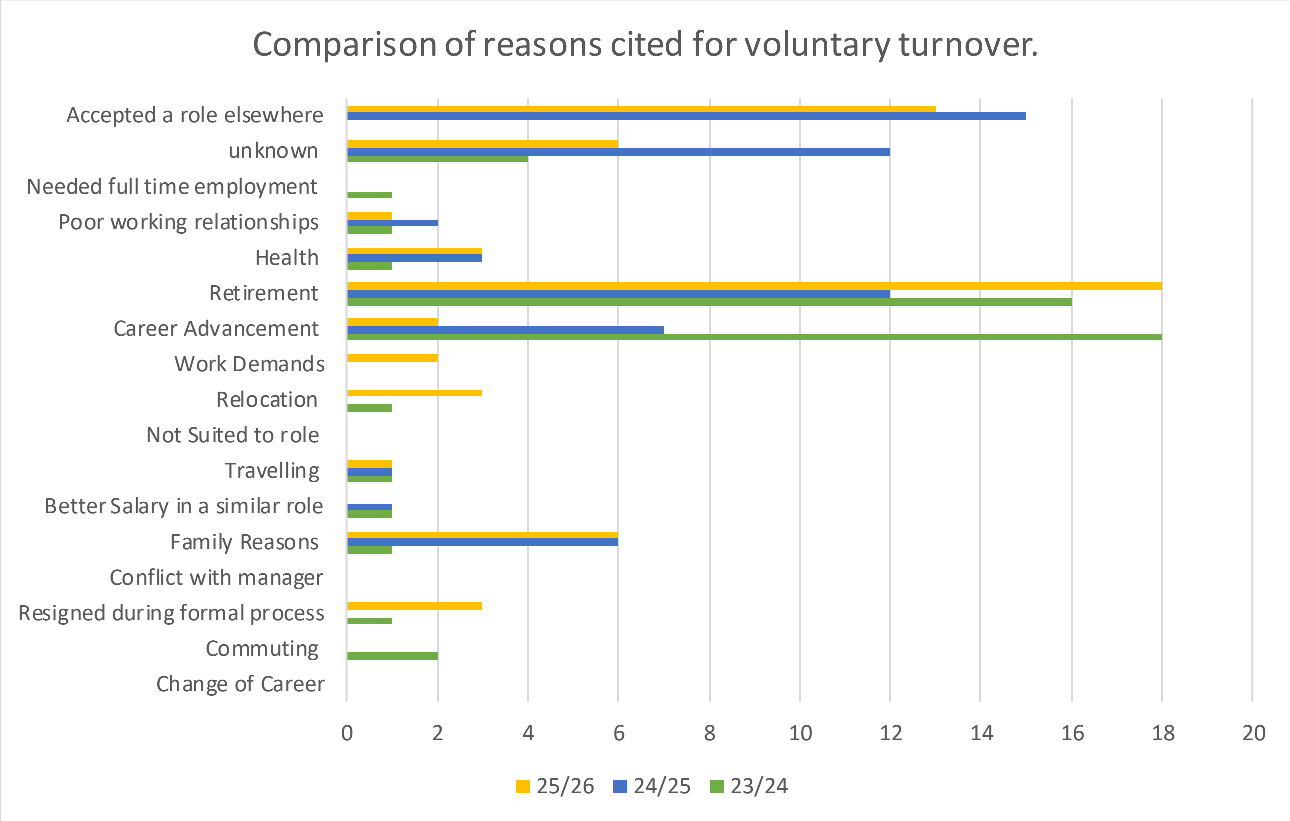
4 Turnover

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

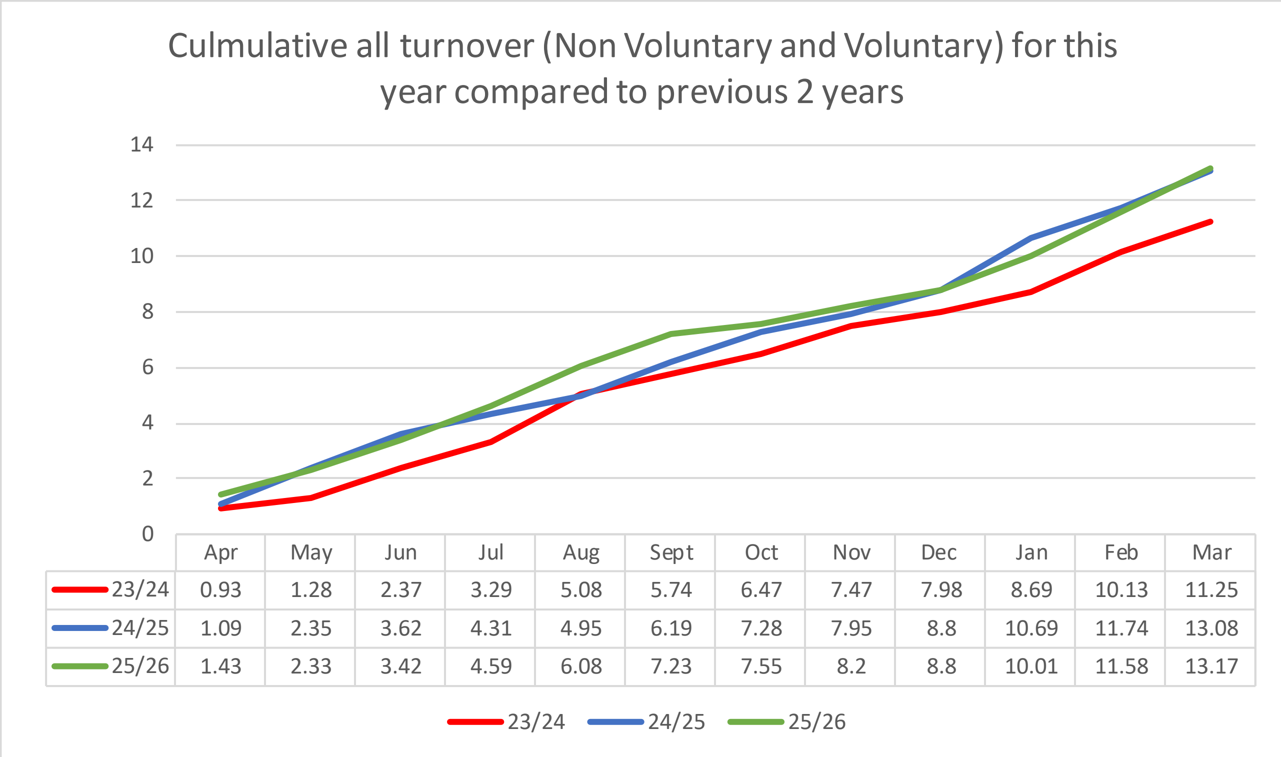
Non-voluntary turnover includes dismissals, redundancy, end of fixed term contracts and death in service.

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.

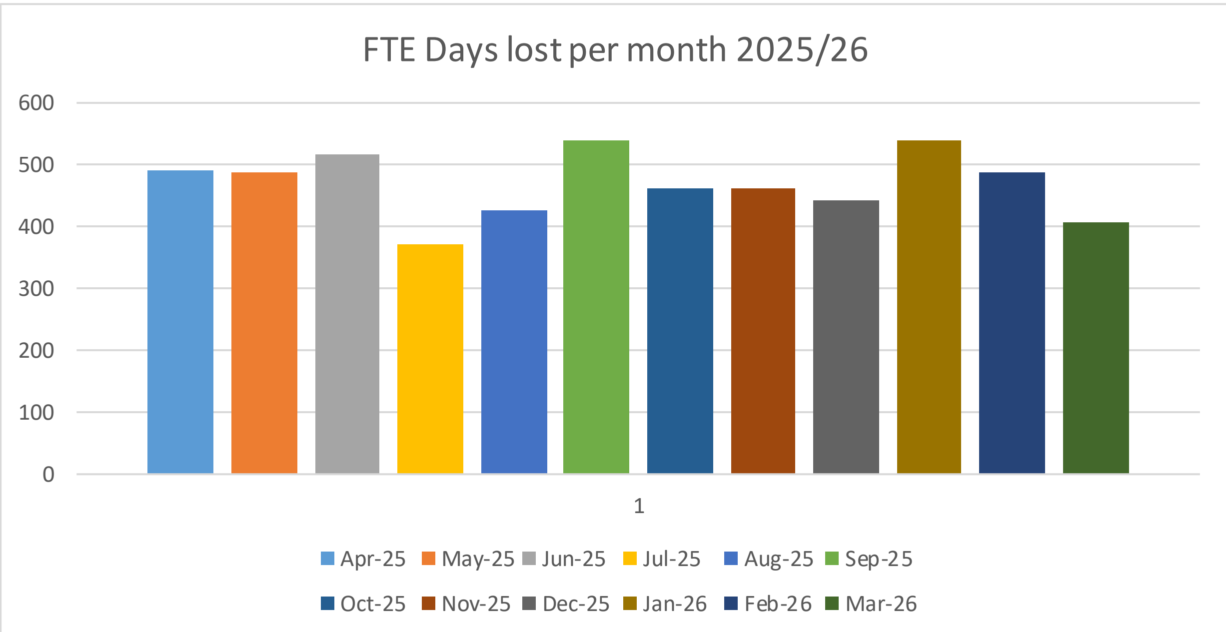


	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
23/24	0.93	1.28	2.37	3.29	5.08	5.74	6.47	7.47	7.98	8.69	10.13	11.25
24/25	1.09	2.35	3.62	4.31	4.95	6.19	7.28	7.95	8.8	10.69	11.74	13.08
25/26	1.43	2.33	3.42	4.59	6.08	7.23	7.55	8.2	8.8	10.01	11.58	13.17

5 Sickness Absence & Wellbeing

6.1. FTE Working Days Lost due to Sickness Absence

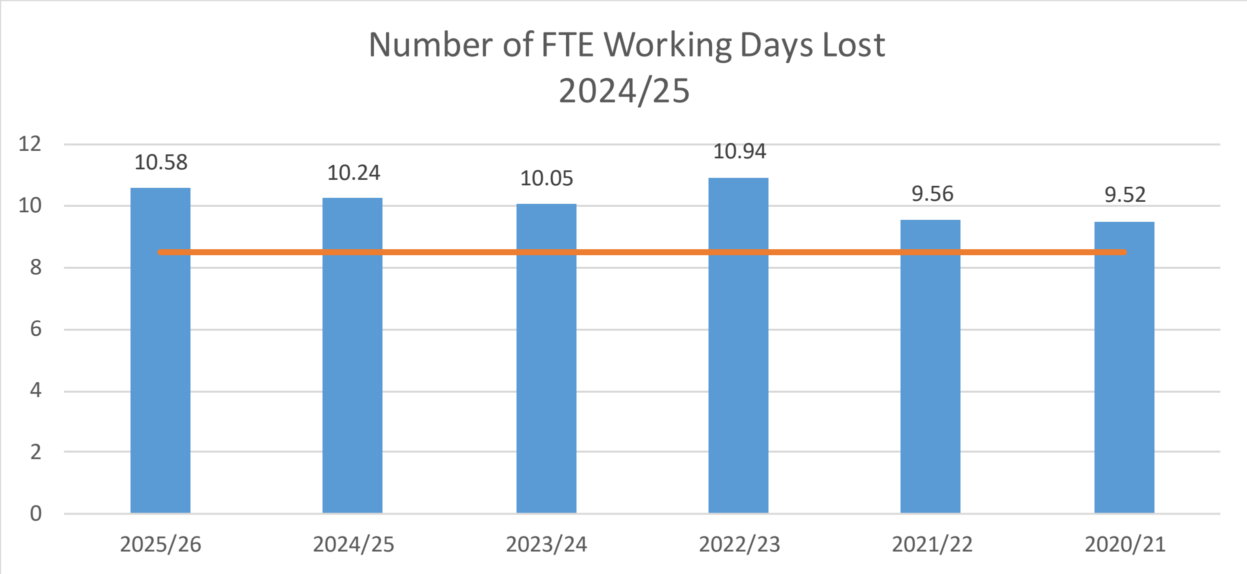
The graph below shows the total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) working days lost per month during 2025/26.

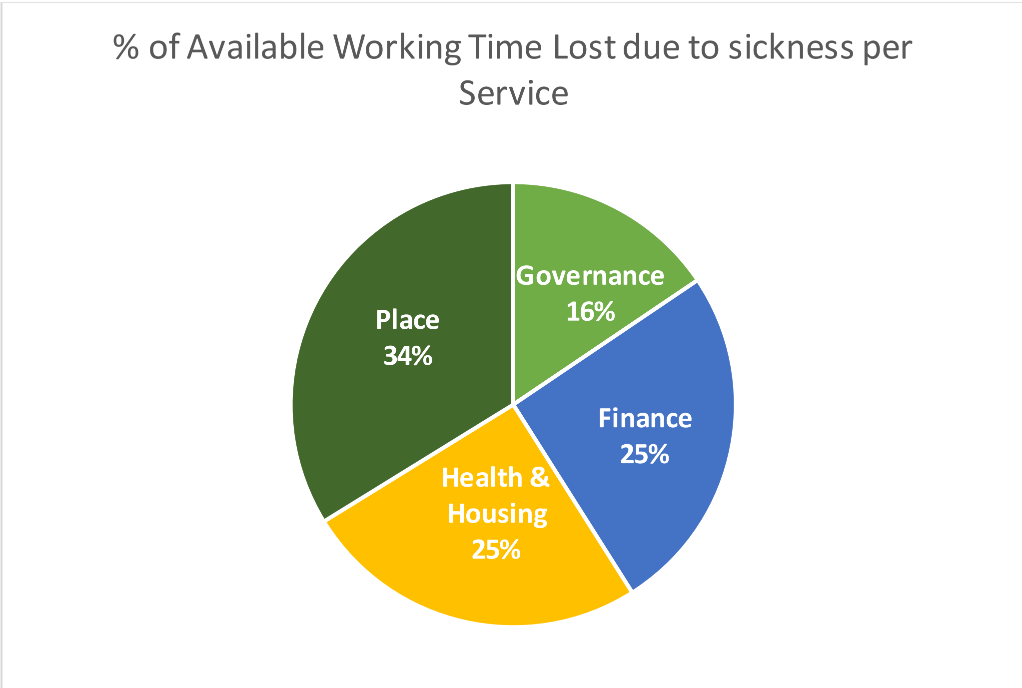


The Council's target is no more than 9 working days should be lost through sickness absence per employee. As the graph below shows, the Council has exceeded this target in each of the last five years, apart from the year in which the Covid pandemic began.

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.





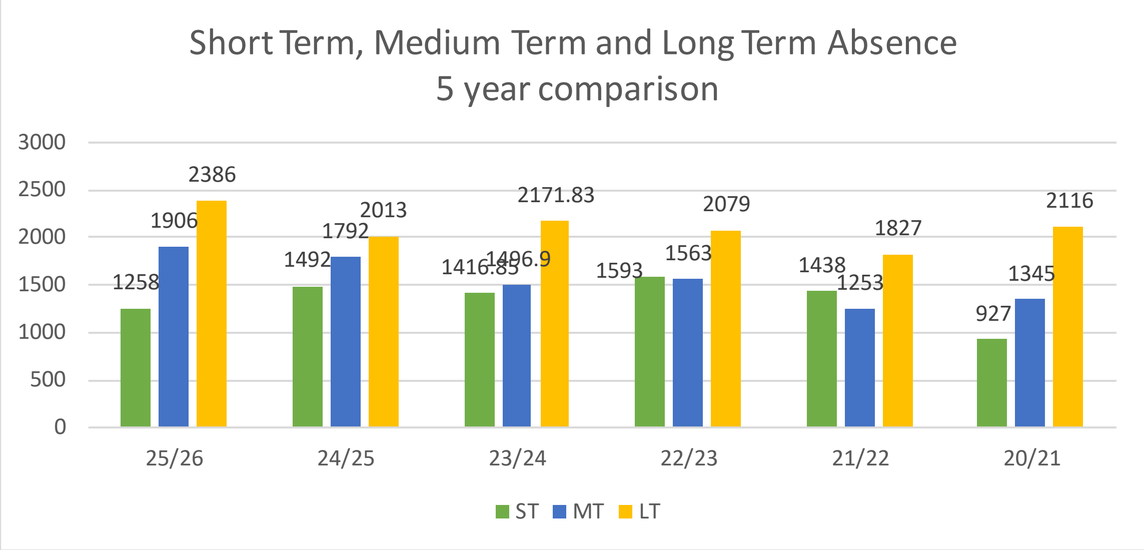
The chart above shows the percentage of time lost due to sickness absence by directorate. This provides a more meaningful comparison than total days lost alone because it reflects absence as a proportion of available working time and therefore takes account of directorate size. It highlights where sickness 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						
	2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
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. he 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

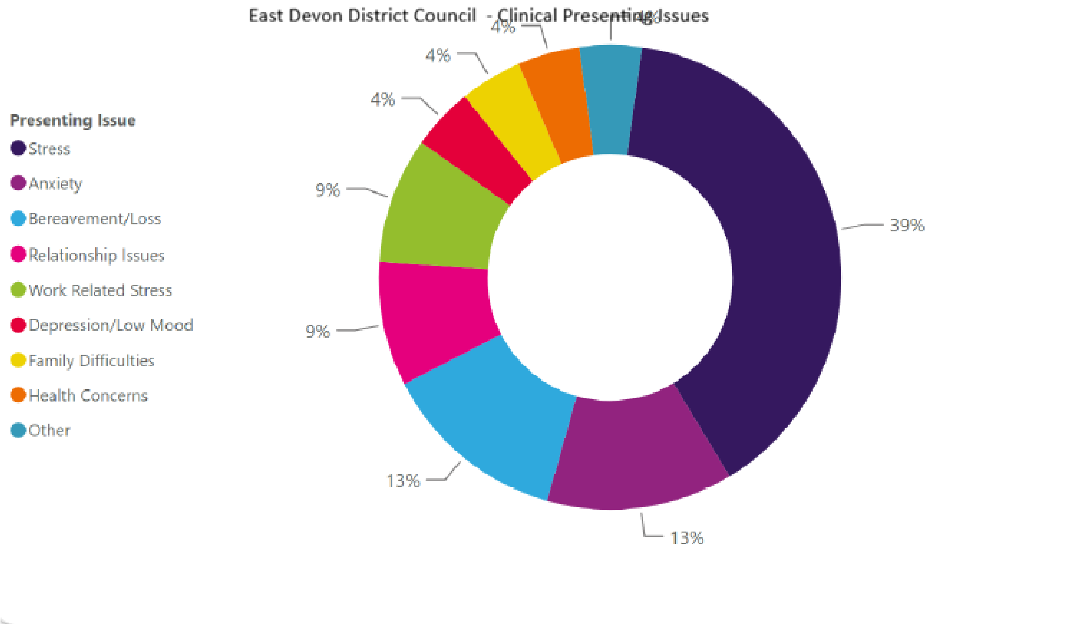
The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provides a confidential and anonymous service for employees to get impartial advice and support through counselling or advice on a range of issues which affect employee wellbeing. It also provides in the moment support on point of contact, podcasts and blogs, self-help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

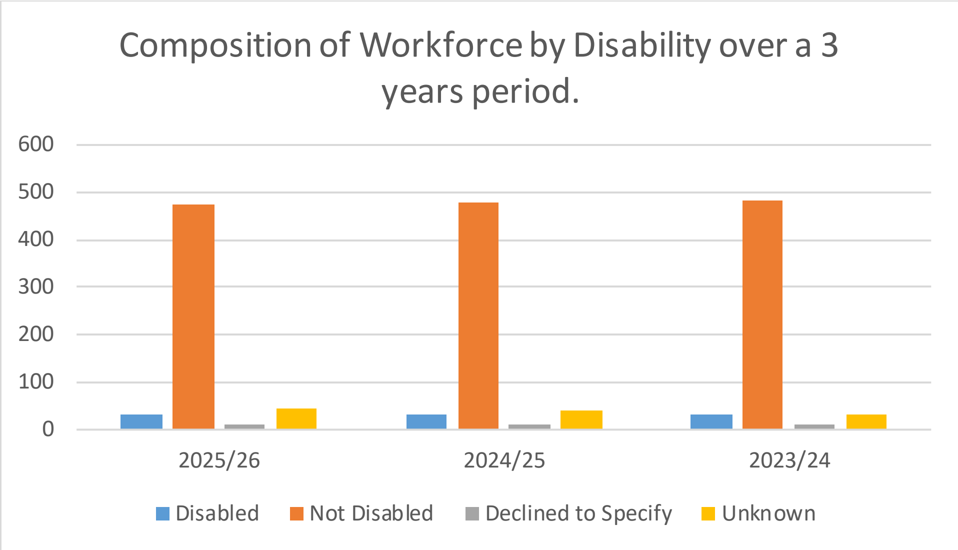
In 2025/26 the % of employees declaring a disability has decreased marginally from 5.94% of our workforce to 5.30%.

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.