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Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Committee: Personnel Committee

Date: Tuesday 9 July 2024

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA

Membership

Councillor Amanda Watkins (Chairman)

Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Chris Pruden

Councillor Gemma Coton (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Chris Brant
Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Barry Wood

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.

3. **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

The Chairman to report on any requests to submit petitions or to address the meeting.

4. **Urgent Business**

The Chairman to advise whether they have agreed to any item of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.

5. **Minutes** (Pages 5 - 10)

To confirm as correct records the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 7 February 2024 and 22 May 2024.

6. **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive communications from the Chairman.

7. **Policy Review Updates** (Pages 11 - 52)

Report of Assistant Director of Human Resources

Purpose of report

To seek approval from the Personnel Committee on proposed changes to existing HR policies.

Recommendations

The Personnel Committee resolves:

1.1 To review and approve the following policies for implementation:

- Flexible Working Request Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Flexi scheme Policy
- Employers LGPS Discretions Policy

8. **Workforce Profile Statistics - Quarter 4 2023-24** (Pages 53 - 80)

Report of Assistant Director of Human Resources

Purpose of report

To provide the Personnel Committee with an update on CDC's workforce including measuring staff well-being and to highlight the actions officers are taking to address any issues.

Recommendations

The Personnel Committee resolves:

1.1 To review and note the workforce data for quarter 4 of 2023/24 provided in appendix one.

Councillors are requested to collect any post from their pigeon hole in the Members Room at the end of the meeting.

Information about this Meeting

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence should be notified to democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or 01295 221534 prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item.

Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare the fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

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If you make a representation to the meeting, you will be deemed by the council to have consented to being recorded. By entering the Council Chamber or joining virtually, you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.

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Queries Regarding this Agenda

Please contact Natasha Clark, Democratic and Elections democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, 01295 221534

Shiraz Sheikh
Monitoring Officer

Published on Monday 1 July 2024

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Cherwell District Council

Personnel Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 7 February 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Amanda Watkins (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair)

Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor George Reynolds
Councillor Bryn Williams
Councillor Barry Wood

Substitute Members:

Councillor Sandy Dallimore (In place of Councillor Lynn Pratt)
Councillor Rob Pattenden (In place of Councillor Gemma Coton)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Lynn Pratt
Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Officers:

Claire Cox, Assistant Director Human Resources
Susan Blunsden, HR Manager
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

Officers Attending Virtually:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader

41 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interests.

42 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or request to address the meeting.

43 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20 November 2023 and the reconvened meeting held on 27 November 2023 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

44 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

45 **Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plans - Inclusive Workplace**

The Assistant Director – Customer Focus submitted a report to seek approval of the draft action plan for delivering the council's equality, diversity and inclusion commitments for creating an inclusive workplace, which are set out in its Equalities Framework, Including Everyone.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the action plan for an Inclusive Workplace for 2024/25 be recommended to Executive for agreement.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director for Customer Focus to make minor amendments to the agreed action plans in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Chair of the Equalities Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group.

46 **Gender Pay Gap Report**

The Assistant Director Human Resources submitted a report to provide the Personnel Committee with the latest Gender Pay Gap report for information

Resolved

- (1) That the Gender Pay Gap report 2023 be noted.

47 **Policy Updates**

The Assistant Director Human Resources submitted a report to seek approval from the Personnel Committee on proposed changes to existing HR policies.

Resolved

- (1) That the following policies be approved for implementation:

- Learning and Development Policy
- Smoke Free Policy
- Use of E-Cigarettes at Work Policy

48 **Workforce Statistics for Quarter 3 2023-24**

The Assistant Director Human Resources submitted a report to provide the Personnel Committee with an update on CDC's workforce including measuring staff well-being and to highlight the actions officers were taking to address any issues.

Resolved

- (1) That the workforce data for Quarter 3 2023/2024 be noted.

49 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Cherwell District Council

Personnel Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 22 May 2024 at 7.56pm

Present:

Councillor Amanda Watkins (Chairman)
Councillor Gemma Coton (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Chris Brant
Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor Barry Wood

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Phil Chapman

1 Appointment of Chairman for the municipal year 2024/2025

It was proposed by Councillor Parsons and seconded by Councillor Biegel that Councillor Watkins be appointed Chairman of Personnel Committee.

There were no further nominations.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Rebecca Biegel be appointed Chairman of Personnel Committee for the municipal year 2024/2025.

2 Appointment of Vice-Chairman for the municipal year 2024/2025

It was proposed by Councillor Hingley and seconded by Councillor Pruden that Councillor Coton be appointed Vice-Chairman of Personnel Committee.

There were no further nominations.

Resolved

- (1) That Councillor Gemma Coton be appointed Vice-Chairman of Personnel Committee for the municipal year 2024/2025.

The meeting ended at 7.57 pm

Chairman:

Date:

This report is public	
Policy Review Updates	
Committee	Personnel Committee
Date of Committee	9 July 2024
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	26 June 2024
Report of	Assistant Director of Human Resources, Claire Cox

Purpose of report

To seek approval from the Personnel Committee on proposed changes to existing HR policies.

1. Recommendations

The Personnel Committee resolves:

1.1 To review and approve the following policies for implementation:

Flexible Working Request Policy
 Domestic Abuse Policy
 Flexi scheme Policy
 Employers LGPS Discretions Policy

2. Executive Summary

2.1 This report provides overview of the latest policies that have been updated for review and approval by the Committee, as part of a rolling programme of policy reviews and updates.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
Finance	There are no financial implications arising from this report. Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 21 May 2024

Legal	The policies being put forward for adoption reflect changes in employment law and good practice and therefore assist the Council in meeting its legal obligations and support good employment relations. Shahin Ismail, Interim Head of Legal Services. 22 May 2024			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact		X		The attached policies have been developed/reviewed in line with our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion framework "Including Everyone", in compliance with the Equality Act 2010. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 21 May 2024
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
Climate & Environmental Impact				N/A
ICT & Digital Impact				N/A
Data Impact				N/A
Procurement & subsidy				N/A
Council Priorities	N/A			
Human Resources	It is essential that policies are regularly reviewed and kept up to date with both legislative and organisational requirements. Claire Cox, Assistant Director of Human Resources, 20 May 2024			

Property	N/A
Consultation & Engagement	UNISON, the Extended Leadership Team and the Corporate Leadership Team have all been consulted on these policies ahead of submission for approval by the Personnel Committee.

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 The policies outlined above are part of the rolling programme of policy updates that officers are bringing to Personnel Committee for approval as HR systematically work through and refresh all HR-related policies.
- 3.2 UNISON, and Extended and Corporate Leadership Teams have been provided with these documents for review and comment ahead of approval being sought from the Personnel Committee.

4. Details

- 4.1 The approach officers are taking to review all HR policies is to prioritise those needed to reflect changes in legislation and or work practices.
- 4.2 The aim of the review was to simplify the content where possible, removing any unnecessary information and ultimately making them more user friendly for managers and employees to understand and follow them.
- 4.3 The table in Appendix 1 gives an overview of all the proposed changes for each policy.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: The alternative option would be to continue with the existing policies however officers have rejected this as the policies would not reflect current legislation or the Council's objectives of being an attractive, modern employer.

6. Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 Officers have updated the policies attached to this report to reflect current legislation and good practice but also to make them much more user friendly

and attractive for existing and potential employees. For these reasons officers recommend the committee approves the revised policies.

Decision Information

Key Decision	N/A
Subject to Call in	N/A
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	N/A

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Outline of changes to each policy
Appendix 2	Flexible Working Request Policy
Appendix 3	Domestic Abuse Policy
Appendix 4	Flexi scheme Policy
Appendix 5	Employers LGPS Discretions Policy
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
Report Author	Assistant Director of Human Resources, Claire Cox
Report Author contact details	Claire.cox@cherwell-dc.gov.uk , 01295 221549

Appendix 1: Changes to Policies

Policy	Changes
Flexible Working Request Policy	<p>This policy has been updated following changes to legislation in April 2024 whereby:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Qualifying periods to request flexible working have been removed and employees can now request this from their first day. - Employee is able to request two requests within a 12-month period. - Employee does not have to give reason; CDC have left this section as optional. <p>The policy has been streamlined to make it more user friendly for both manager and employee.</p>
Domestic Abuse Policy	<p>This is a new policy that aims to ensure that all employees know where to seek help and support if they, or a colleague, are affected by domestic abuse.</p> <p>This policy also supports our ambition to achieve the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation.</p>
Flexi scheme Policy	<p>Reducing accrual from 37 hours to 22.2 hours per four-week period.</p> <p>Ability for employee to book two flexi days per four-week period with a floating day to be used throughout the four week period.</p> <p>Local arrangements with regard to bandwidth.</p>
Employers LGPS Discretions Policy	<p>The LGPS requested all policies to be updated for 2024. They provided example copy template for CDC to be able to use. Therefore, our policy was updated to ensure it covered any new or revised regulations to pensions in line with LGPS's guidance. All amendments have been sense checked by LGPS ahead of being presented at Personnel Committee.</p>

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Flexible Working Request Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Flexible working request policy
Owner	Human Resources
Version	1.0
Date of implementation	10 July 2024

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

This document requires the following committee approvals:

Committee	Date of meeting pending approval
Personnel Committee	9 July 2024

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District

DATE FOR REVIEW

No later than 1st June 2027 but sooner if impacted by legislative changes.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision date	Summary of revision

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Appendix 1 Flexible working request form

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Every employee has a statutory right to request flexible working from the first day of employment. An employee is allowed to make two flexible working requests in any 12-month period.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the procedure for requesting flexible working and the process that will be followed at Cherwell District Council in considering such requests.
- 1.3 This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or other contract to provide services and it may be amended at any time following consultation with trade union and subject to agreement from the Personnel Committee.
- 1.4 Cherwell District Council's flexible working request policy applies to employees only. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants, self-employed contractors, volunteers, or interns.

2. What is Flexible Working?

- 2.1 Flexible working refers to any non-standard working pattern including but not limited to:
 - Part-time working
 - Term time working
 - Job sharing
 - Home or remote working
 - Compressed hours
- 2.2 Flexible working is any arrangement that gives some flexibility on how long, where and when an employee works.

3. Making a Request for Flexible Working

- 3.1 A Flexible Working Request Form (Appendix 1) should be completed by the employee. The form should be submitted well in advance of the date when the employee would like the change to commence due to the time required to allow the procedure to be completed.
- 3.2 All requests must be in writing and include the following: -
 - The date of the flexible working request form.
 - The changes that the employee is seeking to their terms and conditions of employment.
 - The date from when the employee would like the proposed change to come into effect.
 - Whether a previous flexible working request form for flexible working has been made and the date(s) of any previous forms.
- 3.3 If the employee is making the request in relation to a disability under the Equality Act 2010, this should be made clear in the form.

4. The Needs of the Organisation

- 4.1 The Council is committed to providing a range of appropriate working patterns. However, employees and management need to be realistic and to recognise that not all flexible working options will be appropriate for all roles.
- 4.2 Where a flexible working arrangement is proposed, the Council will need to take into account a number of factors including (but not limited to) the following: -

- The burden of additional costs.
- An inability to reorganise work amongst existing staff.
- An inability to recruit additional staff.
- A detrimental impact on quality.
- A detrimental impact on performance.
- A detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand.
- Insufficient work for the periods the employee proposes to work.
- A planned structural change to the organisation. (Where a restructure is planned or being undertaken there may be a delay in the decision especially where the employee's post may be changing.)

4.3 A request can be rejected for any one or more of these reasons. However, an employee will be given the right to appeal against a refusal (Section 9).

5. Timescales

5.1 All requests must be dealt with promptly must be considered and decided upon within a period of 2 months from receipt of the flexible working request form, unless the employee agrees to an extension.

5.2 They can be extended in the following circumstances:-

- Where the employee or line manager both agree to an extension, for example, to ensure any flexible working request form can be fully explored and discussed.
- Where the line manager who is required to deal with the flexible working request form is absent either due to leave or sickness absence.
- Where there is a planned structural change.

5.3 Any agreed extension must be made clear to the employee in writing.

6. Responding to a Request

6.1 Upon receiving a request for flexible working, the line manager will arrange a meeting to discuss the flexible working request with the employee within 2 months. This time limit may be extended with the agreement of both the employee and the line manager.

6.2 The employee will be given advance notice of the meeting and will be reminded of their right to be accompanied by another employee or a Trade Union Representative. The companion can address the meeting, and confer with the employee during it, but they cannot answer questions for the employee. The employee is responsible for organising the companion and ensuring that they know the date and time of the meeting. If the companion cannot attend the initial meeting, the employee must seek to rearrange the meeting for a time convenient to all parties. This should take place within 7 days of the date initially proposed for the meeting. If this cannot be achieved, the employee should consider an alternative companion who can attend the meeting. The companion is entitled to paid time off during work hours for these duties.

7. Meeting to Discuss a Request

7.1 The line manager must ensure that the meeting is held at an appropriate time and place convenient to both parties.

7.2 The aim of the meeting will be to discuss the flexible working request in greater depth and to explore how it might best be accommodated.

- 7.3 If the employee does not attend the arranged meeting without notification, they should contact their line manager as soon as possible to explain the reason for their absence, and to allow the line manager to rearrange the meeting to another mutually convenient time. If the employee fails to attend a meeting more than once without reasonable explanation, the employer can treat the flexible working request as having been withdrawn.
- 7.4 The following guidance notes can be used by both parties to ensure that they explore all options during the meeting in order to reach a decision: -

i) Line Manager

- Make a list or draft an agenda of the issues you want to discuss at the meeting.
- Inform the employee of anyone you have asked to join the meeting – this may include other members of the team upon whom any change in hours / pattern of working may have an impact and may help you reach a decision.
- Familiarise yourself with this policy and with the different types of flexible working that the Council can offer, including seeking advice from your HR Business Partner.
- Be prepared to discuss all options as an alternative arrangement may be agreeable.

ii) Employee

- Be prepared to expand on any points within the flexible working request.
- Prepare to be flexible, you may be asked to consider alternative flexible working patterns, start dates or a trial period.
- Make sure any companion is fully briefed beforehand, providing them with any relevant information required, and ensure that your line manager is aware that a companion will be present.
- Familiarise yourself with this policy and any other flexible working options that may be open to you.

8. Outcome of a Flexible Working Request

- 8.1 Once the meeting has taken place and the request has been discussed, the line manager must notify the employee of their decision in writing within 14 days of the date of the meeting.
- 8.2 When accepting a request for flexible working the line manager should submit a contract change form to Human Resources.
- 8.3 When refusing a request, it must be on one of the acceptable grounds outlined in section 4. The line manager is advised to contact their HR Business Partner for guidance ahead of any notification to an employee.

9. Right to Appeal

- 9.1 If it is not possible to agree to a request for flexible working due to the Council's business needs, the employee may appeal against the line manager's decision. The employee may, for example:
- Believe their request has not been properly considered.
 - Want to challenge a fact given to explain why the business reason applies.
 - Present information that wasn't available when the application was rejected.
- 9.2 The employee needs to put their appeal in writing to their line manager, within 5 days of notification of the decision, including the grounds for the appeal.
- 9.3 The appeal will be heard by a Senior Manager, usually from the same service area or Directorate and who has not been previously involved, and a representative from Human Resources. The employee has the right to be accompanied at the appeal hearing by a fellow employee or a Trade Union Representative.

- 9.4 Should the line manager agree to the request following the letter of appeal from the employee, then an appeal meeting is not required to take place.
- 9.5 Where an appeal meeting is held to discuss an appeal, the Senior Manager will provide a written decision within a reasonable timeframe of the appeal meeting, either stating:
- a) Agreement to the contract variation.
 - b) Grounds for the decision relating to the dismissal of the appeal and why it applies in these circumstances.

10. Trialling new Working Arrangements

- 10.1 Where there is some uncertainty about whether the flexible working arrangement is practicable for an employee and /or the Council, a trial period may be agreed. If a trial period is arranged the Council will allow sufficient time for an employee and their manager to implement and become used to the new working arrangements before taking any decisions on the viability of a new arrangement.
- 10.2 Where a trial period has been arranged, the Council will provide the employee with correspondence detailing their new working pattern and make it clear that it is only a temporary variation to the terms of the employee's contract. The employee will be informed in writing of the start and end dates of the trial period (although the Council may reduce or lengthen the trial period where necessary with the agreement of the employee). The Council will reserve the right to require the employee to revert to their previous working arrangement.

11. Varying the Contract of Employment

Where flexible working practices are agreed as a permanent change, a variation will need to be made to the employee's contract of employment. HR will issue a new contract of employment to the employee confirming the new working arrangements. As this is a permanent contractual change there will be no entitlement for employees to revert to previous contractual working hours.

12. Withdrawing a Request for Flexible Working

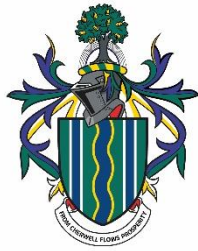
A request for flexible working will be treated as withdrawn if:-

- The employee decides to withdraw their flexible working request.
- The employee fails to attend two meetings to discuss the flexible working request.
- The employee unreasonably refuses to provide the employer with the required information.

Flexible Working Request Form

Employee Name:	
Line Manager Name:	
Department:	
<p>I am writing to make a statutory flexible working request. Delete as applicable.</p> <p>[A] I have not made any previous statutory flexible working requests.</p> <p>[B] I have previously made [a statutory flexible working request(s)] on [give date(s)].</p>	
Describe your current working pattern (days/hours/time worked):	
Describe the working pattern you would like to work in the future (days/hours/time worked)	
Date you would like this working pattern to commence from:	
Optional – Explain the reason for this change	
Employee signature:	
Date:	

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR LINE MANAGER FOR CONSIDERATION.



Domestic Abuse Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Domestic Abuse Policy
Owner	Human Resources
Version	1.0
Date of implementation	10 July 2024

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

This document requires the following committee approvals:

Committee	Date of meeting pending approval
CDC Personnel Committee	9 July 2024

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District Council.

DATE FOR REVIEW

No later than 09 July 2027 but sooner if impacted by legislative changes.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision date	Summary of revision
1.0	09 July 2024	Introduction of policy

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Domestic abuse can happen to anyone, regardless of age, background, gender, religion, sexuality, or ethnicity. Cherwell District Council is committed to developing a workplace culture that recognises that some employees may be experiencing domestic abuse, and that the workplace should be a place of safety.
- 1.2 This policy aims to ensure that all employees know where to seek help and support if they, or a colleague, are affected by domestic abuse.
- 1.3 This policy seeks to benefit the welfare of individual employees and challenge abusive behaviours. It is the Council's expectation that managers will show empathy and understanding with victims or survivors of domestic abuse.
- 1.4 This policy also covers the approach to be taken where there are concerns that an employee may be the perpetrator of the abuse. The Council is clear that domestic abuse is unacceptable.

2 Purpose and scope

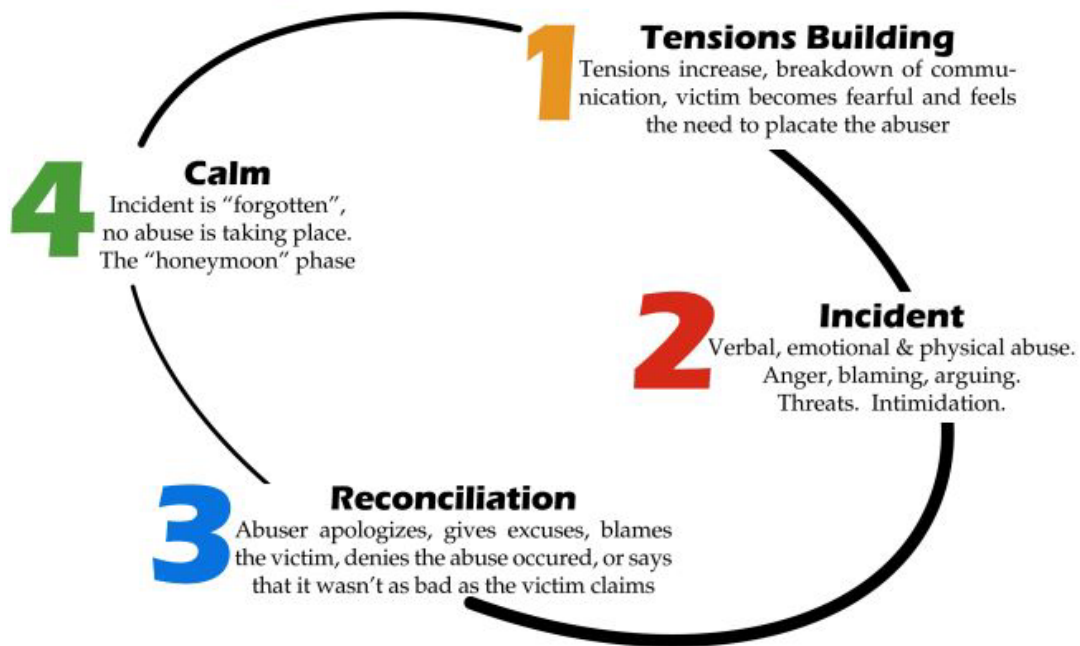
- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to:
 - support employees experiencing domestic abuse
 - enable employees to remain productive and at work
 - aid managers seeking to help team members experiencing domestic abuse
 - assist colleagues of those experiencing domestic abuse
 - outline the approach to be taken where there are concerns that an employee may be a perpetrator of domestic abuse
- 2.2 This policy applies to all employees. The Council will also offer support to agency, contract workers and volunteers as far as is reasonably possible.

3 Definitions

- 3.1 **Domestic abuse** is defined as, *“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 years or over who are or who have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional abuse.”* (Domestic Abuse Act 2021)
- 3.2 This definition includes stalking and so called ‘honour’ based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage otherwise known as Harmful Practices.
- 3.3 **Harmful practices** are a collective term for several different forms of abuse which all share a similar characteristic, that they are seen as acceptable practices within sections of society. Harmful practices can cover, amongst other forms of abuse, child marriage, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, breast flattening/ironing, hate crimes, child abuse linked to faith or belief and so called “honour-based” abuse.
- 3.4 **Female Genital Mutilation** refers to procedures that intentionally alter and cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is classed as child abuse and leads to severe short and long term physical and psychological consequences and is illegal within the UK, as is taking a child abroad to undergo this practice.

- 3.5 **So called “Honour” Based Abuse** is an incident or crime involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation, coercion, or abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional abuse), which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family and or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and / or community’s code of behaviour. It can be distinguished from other forms of abuse as it is often committed with some degree of approval and / or collusion from family and/or community members.
- 3.6 Often, when people hear the term ‘domestic abuse’ they picture acts of physical violence, but there is also a more subtle form of behaviour that is equally harmful. Since 2015, the offence of coercive and controlling behaviour within a relationship has been illegal in England and Wales. While this abuse takes many forms, it typically involves manipulation, humiliation, intimidation, and isolation to control and instil fear in people who are harmed, leaving lasting effects.
- 3.7 **Controlling behaviour** is defined as a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.
- 3.8 **Coercive behaviour** is defined as an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten their victim.
- 3.9 **Stalking and Harassment** can be defined as persistent and unwanted attention that makes someone feel pestered and harassed. It includes behaviour that happens two or more times, directed at or towards the individual by another person, which causes them to feel alarmed or distressed or to fear that violence might be used against them.
- 3.10 Ultimately, domestic abuse is the abuse of power and control over one person by another.
- 3.11 Domestic abuse can result in lasting trauma for victims and their extended families, especially children and young people who may not see the abuse but may be aware of it or hear it occurring. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 makes clear that children, irrespective of whether they are injured or see the offending, are deemed to be victims of domestic abuse if they live in an abusive household. The impact of domestic abuse can range from loss of self-esteem to loss of life.
- 3.12 It is important to recognise that both females and males can be subjected to domestic abuse from and by a current/ex-partner, their children (aged 16+) or a member of their family or people that they live with. Perpetrators can be either male or female.
- 3.13 Most abusive relationships display a distinct pattern. The cycle of abuse is a social cycle theory developed by Lenore E Walker.

Cycle of Abuse



4 Victims of domestic abuse

4.1 There are ways in which a manager may become aware that an individual is being subject to domestic abuse. These may include:

- an employee may disclose domestic abuse directly to their manager or tell them something which makes them concerned for their safety.
- an employee may inform their manager that a colleague is suffering from domestic abuse.
- there may be obvious effects of physical abuse, or injuries that don't match the explanation given (it is important not to make assumptions).
- the situation may become known during discussions regarding a workplace concern such as sickness absence, timekeeping, drop in performance or a change in behaviour.
- there might be increased contact from a partner, ex-partner or family member to the employee during working hours.

4.2 Possible signs of domestic abuse include:

- Receiving repeated calls, texts, emails, or visits to the workplace
- A change in appearance, behaviour or demeanour
- Unexplained bruises / injuries, or wearing clothes that cover their body
- Avoiding lunch breaks or socialising outside of work
- Loss of self-esteem or confidence, or becoming withdrawn
- Increased absenteeism

- Alcohol or substance misuse
- Financial hardship / not having control over their money
- Changes in quality of work for no explained reason
- Reluctance for video calls or partner is always in the background
- Seeming nervous of their partner's reaction to things they've done.

4.3 This is not an exhaustive list, and it is important to understand that any of the above may arise from a range of circumstances of which domestic abuse may be one.

5 Confidentiality and right to privacy

5.1 The Council encourages employees at risk from domestic abuse to disclose this so that they can receive support.

5.2 The Council respects an employee's right to privacy should they make a disclosure and recognises the importance of maintaining confidentiality to protect the safety of an employee and any associated children or adults who may be experiencing domestic abuse. However, in certain circumstances including those of child protection or the protection of adults at risk from abuse, relevant safeguarding authorities may need to be informed. Complete confidentiality therefore cannot be guaranteed in these situations.

5.3 If it is necessary to disclose certain information the manager will discuss with the employee, the reasons why. Information will only be disclosed on a need-to-know basis and will be proportionate. Any decision to disclose without consent (if an employee is at serious risk of injury or death, or a child or other adult is at risk of significant harm) should be documented.

5.4 Employees can be assured that the information they provide will not be shared with colleagues without their agreement. In some cases, it may be advisable to share some information with colleagues, for example, it may be helpful for colleagues to know how to respond in cases where the alleged perpetrator of the abuse tries to contact the employee at work.

5.5 All records concerning domestic abuse will be kept strictly confidential.

5.6 All incidents of violence or threatening behaviour, or breaches of security in the workplace, should be recorded via a See it – Report it (SIRI) form.

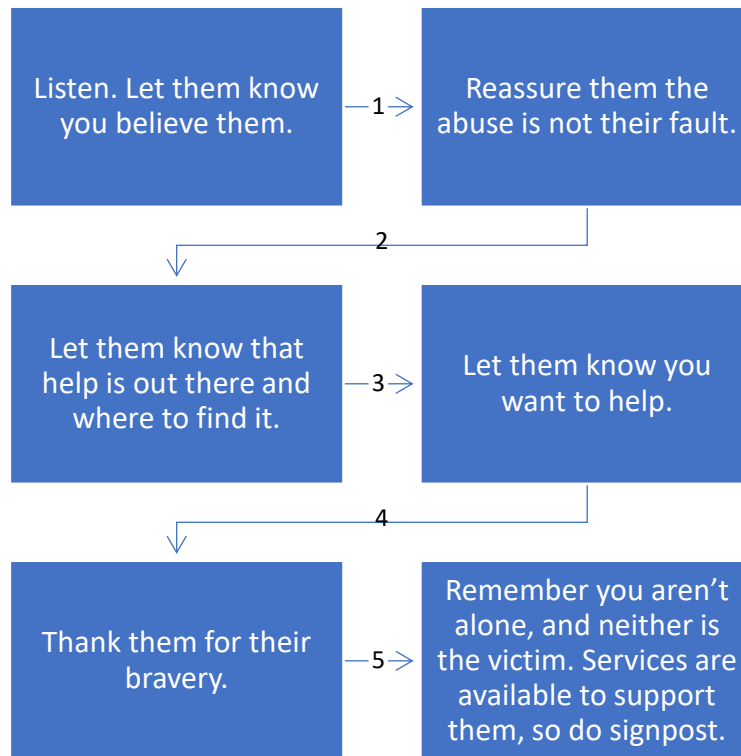
6 Internal support

6.1 Support is available to employees involved in domestic abuse through:

- line managers
- the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator
- Human Resources
- domestic abuse champions
- Trade Union representatives

Employees are encouraged to seek support from their line manager in the first instance however it is recognised that an employee may be more comfortable seeking support from other sources.

- 6.2 If you suspect that an employee is experiencing domestic abuse, you should facilitate a conversation to discuss this and identify / implement appropriate support. Often employees will not feel confident in speaking up, so making the first move to begin a conversation can be key.
- 6.3 Always have the conversation face to face. Make sure you are in a safe space, won't be interrupted or overheard and have enough time to chat. Approach the subject with kindness and concern. A good starting point might be to mention things you have noticed in their behaviour, or that of the potential abuser.
- 6.4 In supporting the employee, the manager should:



- 6.5 It should be recognised that the employee may need some time to decide what to do and may try many different options during this process.
- 6.6 The Employee Assistance Programme should also be signposted.

Heath Assured is a confidential counselling and information service available 24/7 to assist employees and their immediate family members with personal or work-related problems. Through Wisdom employees can access a range of instant features to aid physical and mental health and wellbeing.

- ✓ Telephone line, **0800 030 5182**, open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year
- ✓ [Wisdom](#) portal / smartphone app, access using code **MHA222473**

7 External support

7.1 External sources of help include:

- **Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Services** (tel. 0800 731 0055) for those living in Oxfordshire who are suffering from domestic abuse.
- **Victims first** (tel. 0300 1234 148) for emotional and practical support for victims and witnesses of crime.
- **Domestic Violence Assist** (tel. 0800 195 8699) for support with non-molestation, prohibited steps and occupation orders.
- **National Domestic Violence Helpline** (tel. 0808 2000 247) for assistance with refuge accommodation and advice.
- **ManKind Initiative** (tel. 0808 800 1170) for male victims of domestic abuse.
- **Karma Nirvana** (tel. 0800 5999247) for advice on forced marriage and 'honour' based violence.
- **Broken Rainbow** (tel. 08452 604460) for LGBT victims of domestic abuse.
- **Respect** (tel. 0808 8024040) offering support for perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- **ASK ANI** is a codeword scheme that enables victims of domestic abuse to discreetly ask for immediate help in Boots and other independent pharmacies.
- **Bright Sky** is a free app providing support and information to anyone who may be in an abusive relationship or those concerned about someone they know.

8 Line managers' role

8.1 Managers have a crucial role to play in enabling employees experiencing domestic abuse to seek help.

8.2 All managers have a responsibility to:

- be aware of this policy and be able to apply it when they suspect or have identified an employee who may be suffering from domestic abuse.
- understand it can be difficult to make a disclosure and make it clear that the employee will be supported.
- prioritise safety over work efficiency.
- seek support from colleagues listed at 6.1 as required to determine the best source of help and support for the employee.
- report anything that raises concern via a See it – Report it (SIRI) form.

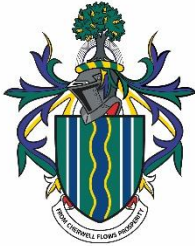
9 Attendance

9.1 Where domestic abuse has been reported managers, with guidance from Human Resources, should be flexible with unplanned absences and timekeeping.

9.2 Managers may offer employees experiencing domestic abuse flexibility to attend relevant appointments, including those with support agencies, solicitors and court.

10 Perpetrators of domestic abuse

- 10.1 Any allegation of involvement in domestic abuse should be reported promptly via a See it – Report it (SIRI) form where an assessment will be made on the most appropriate course of action. This may include referral to the police and/or the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).
- 10.2 Should an employee approach the Council about their abusive behaviour, information will be provided about the services and support available to them.
- 10.3 Employees are expected at all times to present high standards of personal integrity and conduct that will not reflect adversely on the Council and its reputation. In line with the Council's disciplinary policy and procedure it would therefore be considered gross misconduct if an employee were to be convicted of the physical violence, threat or assault of another person.
- 10.4 The Council is committed to ensuring that:
- all allegations and convictions of domestic abuse are dealt with fairly and proactively.
 - confidentiality is maintained and information restricted only to those who have a need to know.
 - all efforts are made to put support in place as quickly as possible.



Flexi Scheme Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Flexi Scheme Policy
Owner	Human Resources
Version	
Date of implementation	1 September 2024

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

This document requires the following committee approvals:

Committee	Date of meeting pending approval
CDC Personnel Committee	9 July 2024

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District

DATE FOR REVIEW

No later than 1st June 2027 but sooner if impacted by legislative changes.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision date	Summary of revision

This policy covers:

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2	Entitlement to flexi scheme	4
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Cherwell District Council's flexi scheme applies to employees only. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants, self-employed contractors, volunteers or interns.
- 1.2 This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or other contract to provide services, and the Council may amend it at any time. Flexitime is a non-contractual benefit.
- 1.3 Cherwell District Council has a long-established commitment to flexible working arrangements and other policies/information/advice to help ensure staff achieve a healthy work-life balance.
- 1.4 Managers are responsible for ensuring that agreement to any requested amendments to working arrangements are sought in advance by staff. It is important to ensure service requirements are fully considered and customer service levels are not compromised by lack of staff availability.
- 1.5 It is important to remember that staff are contracted to work a specified number of hours to carry out their job requirements. Where individuals are regularly working sufficient hours in excess of this to build up the maximum allowable flexitime, it should be as a result of service requirements rather than personal choice. Managers are encouraged to regularly monitor working patterns to ensure this is the case. The primary function of the flexitime arrangements is to facilitate minor variations to working time and not the creation of additional leave days. For this reason, flexitime should not normally be booked more than one month in advance or without having built up the relevant hours.
- 1.6 This policy specifically addresses how our flexi scheme works and can be utilised. Flexitime can help employees to combine their work and personal responsibilities and can help workflow to be managed more efficiently by being able to respond to urgent, unplanned demands or dealing with sudden variations in workload.
- 1.7 It is not the intention of the scheme to enable employees to accumulate large amounts of time off, and managers must ensure that the operation of the scheme does not affect the quality of service provided by the Council. Where necessary, local scheme arrangements will be put in place to ensure business needs are met and maintained.

2. Entitlement to the flexi scheme

- 2.1 Wherever possible, all employees will be given the chance to participate in the scheme. However, it is recognised that for certain staff, flexitime is not practicable. Employees should refer to their individual contracts of employment to determine if they are eligible.
- 2.2 This scheme does not apply to staff on Grade J and above.
- 2.3 Managers may, at any time, over-ride the provisions of the flexitime scheme in the interests of operational efficiency or quality of service and they may wish to seek the advice/support of the Assistant Director, or Head of Service if areas do not have

an Assistant Director, should they wish to do so. Sufficient staffing cover must be provided during business hours/opening times.

3. Flexitime bandwidth

- 3.1 The daily working bandwidth is from 7.00am to 10.00pm. This is the period within which the employee's working day must be contained, and employees must not start work earlier or finish later than these times, or complete work on weekends, without the prior authorisation of their line manager.
- 3.2 Managers will decide their local arrangements in line with the needs of their business area and this bandwidth. The manager's decision on the working pattern is final.
- 3.3 Managers will decide upon local arrangements in line with the needs of the business area and this bandwidth. The managers' decision on the working pattern is final.

4. Accounting for time worked under Flexitime

- 4.1 Employees may bank up to a maximum of 3 standard full-time working days (7 hours and 24 minutes per day, 22 hours and 12 minutes for 3 days), or pro-rata to hours worked for part time employees (60% of weekly contractual hours) at any time. Any additional hours to this will be lost at the end of each 4-week accounting period.
- 4.2 Employees may request up to a maximum of 2 days flexi-leave (14 hours 48 minutes) within a 4-week period. Under no circumstances can the leave be taken without the manager's consent. It is important that the manager consider this request before granting or refusing the request. The manager's decision will be final.
- 4.3 Throughout the 4-week period it remains possible to utilise the flexi scheme for occasions that are personal to employees i.e, routine personal appointments, caring responsibilities, extended lunch breaks. Employees must notify their manager of their intentions ahead of any such occasion, and they must fit around business need.
- 4.4 Where employees appear to be consistently working in excess of their contractual hours each week, managers should investigate and if necessary, review workload, objectives and working methods. An action plan must be developed, and review periods agreed if the working time regularly exceeds 48 hours per week.
- 4.5 In extenuating circumstances, an employee may go into deficit by up to a maximum of 1 full-time day (7 hours, 24 minutes), or pro-rata for part-time employees (20% of weekly working hours). This debit will need to be made up by the end of the following flexi period. In exceptional circumstances a flexi debit balance could be deducted from the employee's salary.
- 4.6 Where an employee is consistently working fewer than their agreed hours, resulting in a flexi deficit, this should be investigated by their manager and appropriate action taken.

- 4.7 Approval for taking flexi-leave must be obtained from managers in the same way as for annual leave, i.e. agreed in advance and subject to service delivery requirements. Flexi-leave must not be booked until after the time has been accumulated.
- 4.8 If, because of urgent service delivery requirements, booked flex days/half-days have to be cancelled then a suitable alternative date should be agreed at the earliest possible opportunity.

5. Recording and settlement periods

- 5.1 The recording period is 4-weekly. This is the point at which the 'bank' of hours must be within the agreed limits.
- 5.2 Payment of credit flexi balances will **not** be paid when an employee leaves the council.
- 5.3 The council reserve the right to deduct money from final salary for any debit flexi hours owed.

6. Doctors/Dentist/Optician Appointments

- 6.1 No additional time will be credited for these routine appointments unless it is for the purpose of 'routine' cancer screening such as for cervical, breast or prostate cancer.
- 6.2 Where regular treatment for a recognised medical condition is needed over a number of weeks or months, this rule may be waived with the manager's agreement.

7. Hospital Appointments

The council recognise that attendance for hospital appointments can be time consuming and that the timing of such appointments may be out of the control of the individuals. Managers will therefore grant back reasonable time for hospital appointments on production of a hospital letter or appointment card.

8. Training

- 8.1 The council consider the provision of training to be a benefit to employees and will generally support such training by paying or sponsoring course fees and providing paid time off for attendance.
- 8.2 Attendance away from your normal working environment should be recorded as 7 hours, 24 minutes per day and 3 hours, 42 minutes per half day.
- 8.3 Excess travel time will not be reimbursed.

9. Meetings

Employees who are required to attend meetings away from their normal workplace will be credited with reasonable excess time for travel etc. less normal travel to work time.

10. Breaks

Staff who take a break are required to clock out of iTrent to do so and clock back in upon their return to working. Employees who work more than 6 hours in a working day must ensure that at least 30 minutes is taken for lunch and iTrent will automatically deduct this if working time recorded is over 6 hours and no breaks have been booked in.

11. Time Recording

11.1 The recording of flexi is carried out using the HR / Payroll system (iTrent). Eligible employees will need to record their start and end times on a daily basis within Employee Self-Service. Managers are able to monitor the working hours of employees within iTrent through their Manager Self-Service and must arrange discussions with employees if excessive hours are regularly being worked or the employee is in significant deficit of hours.

11.2 Time taken must be recorded as follows for full days and half days:-

- A full day must be recorded as 7 hours, 24 minutes.
- A half day must be recorded as 3 hours, 42 minutes.

11.3 Bookings should not be made or approved if there is not the sufficient number of accrued flexitime hours available to book.

12. Abuse of flexitime scheme

The flexitime scheme is based on trust between the Council and employees. It is operated as a benefit and may be withdrawn at management discretion. In cases where there is abuse or non-compliance with the scheme, disciplinary action may be taken. Such cases must be discussed with Human Resources prior to any action being taken.

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Employers Local Government Pension Scheme Discretions Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Employers Local Government Pension Scheme Discretions Policy
Owner	Human Resources
Version	1.0
Date of implementation	10 July 2024

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

This document requires the following committee approvals:

Committee	Date of meeting pending approval
Personnel Committee	9 July 2024

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District

DATE FOR REVIEW

No later than 1st June 2027 but sooner if impacted by legislative changes.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision date	Summary of revision

INTRODUCTION

This policy has been prepared and approved by Cherwell District Council to satisfy the requirements of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations. This policy therefore meets the requirements of the appropriate discretionary LGPS regulations which states that each employing authority must formulate and keep under review its policy concerning the exercise of certain discretionary functions within these Regulations.

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations define the details of the scheme for members, employing authorities and the administering authority (Oxfordshire Pension Fund, as part of Oxfordshire Council).

However, the LGPS Regulations do allow both Oxfordshire Pension Fund and the employing authorities, discretion over various elements of the pension scheme; the first six of these should be outlined in an employer discretions policy.

1. Whether to grant additional pension
2. For the employer to part fund an Additional Pension Contribution (APC) contract for extra pension
3. Allowing a member to go on flexible retirement
4. Waiving actuarial reductions on flexible retirement
5. Waiving actuarial reductions on early retirement
6. Turning on the rule of 85 for members aged between 55 and 59
7. Whether to extend the 30 day deadline for members to elect for a shared cost APC

1: Summary of MANDATORY discretions affecting Active members and Leavers on and after 2 April 2014

Discretion & Regulation	Employer's decision
<p>Will the employer grant extra annual pension (up to £7,579 pa as at 2023)?</p> <p><u>2013 LGPS Regulation 31</u></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will not grant extra annual pension.</p>
<p>Will the employer share the cost of purchasing additional pension (SCAPC) with a member?</p> <p><u>2013 LGPS regulation 16(2) and (4)</u></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will not share the cost for a member's purchase for additional pension.</p>
<p>Will the employer permit flexible retirement?</p> <p><u>2013 LGPS regulation 30(6)</u></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) will consider applications for flexible retirement subject to cost/ business case. b) will not waive any pension reductions. c) will permit member to choose which part of their pension to draw (subject to employer cost/ business need).
<p>Will the employer switch back on '85-year rule' protections?</p> <p><u>2014 Transitional Provisions regulations Sched 2</u></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council <i>will only agree to "switch on" the rule of 85 in exceptional circumstances following approval from the Executive Board after considering the costs that will apply. Each case will be considered on the merits of the financial and/or operational business case put forward.</i></p>
<p>When would the employer waive actuarial reductions to benefits being drawn on early voluntary retirement?</p> <p><u>2013 LGPS regulation 30(5)</u></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will not consider applications to waive actuarial reduction for early voluntary retirement from active members.</p> <p>Cherwell District Council will not consider applications to waive actuarial reductions made by members with deferred pensions etc.</p>

2. Summary of recommended discretions (not Mandatory) affecting Active members and Leavers on and after 2 April 2014

An employer has discretion to exercise in these areas	Employer's decision (to be completed by employer)
<p>Employer to determine who will join the scheme (Admitted and Designated Bodies)</p> <p><u>2013 LGPS regulation 2</u></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council employees are automatically eligible to be in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) if they are under age 75 and have a contract of employment of at least three months.</p>
<p>Employer to determine member contribution band and terms of review. This decides the member contribution rate.</p> <p><u>2013 LGPS regulations 9/10</u></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will review employee contribution band every April and will not generally review mid-year following a material change to pay.</p>
<p>Will the employer extend time limits for member to make decision on transfer of pension rights from an approved pension scheme?</p> <p><u>2013 LGPS regulation 100(6)</u></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will not extend time limits for transfer decisions.</p>
<p>Will the employer extend the time limit for members to NOT link (aggregate) their LGPS memberships?</p> <p><u>2013 LGPS regulation 22(7)+(8)</u></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will not extend the time limits the member has to make an election to keep pension records separate.</p>
<p>Will the employer extend the time limit for members to link (aggregate) their LGPS memberships?</p> <p><u>Amendment LGPS regulations 2018 27 and TP 2014 Regulations 10</u></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will not extend time limits for transfer decisions.</p>
<p>Will the employer contribute to Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions (SCAVC)?</p> <p><u>2013 LGPS regulation 17</u></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will not contribute to SCAVC arrangement.</p>
<p>Will the employer include regular lump sums when assessing value for Assumed Pensionable Pay (APP)?</p> <p><u>2013 LGPS regulation 21</u></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will not, when appropriate, add back the regular lump sum payment to provide the assumed pensionable pay figure.</p>
<p>Will the employer substitute a higher value of pensionable pay when assessing APP ?</p> <p>2018 amendment regulations 7</p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will not consider substituting a higher value of pay in place of APP.</p> <p>.</p>
<p>Will the employer extend the time limit for a member to decide to restore lost pension by shared cost additional pension contributions (SCAPC) after a</p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will not extend deadlines beyond 30 days of return to work.</p>

An employer has discretion to exercise in these areas	Employer's decision (to be completed by employer)
period of no pay (other than due to sickness or paid child related leave.)? <u>2013 LGPS regulation 16(16)</u>	

3: Other MANDATORY provisions to be included in a policy, under different regulations and which can apply to active employees regardless of LGPS membership

An employer has discretion to exercise in these areas	Employer's decision
<p>Will the Employer make an injury award to compensate for loss of</p> <p>a) pay, or b) job, or c) death due to injury or disease sustained at work?</p> <p><u>Regulation 3-7 of the Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Injury Allowances) Regulations 2011 employers (LGPS employers)</u></p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will not set up an injury award scheme under these regulations.</p>
<p>Will the employer pay enhanced redundancy payments and /or compensation for loss of employment on redundancy?</p> <p><u>Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006</u></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Cherwell District Council will base redundancy pay on actual pay when greater than the 'statutory week's pay' for a redundancy payment. 2) Cherwell District Council will not award termination compensation lump sum of 104 week's pay following redundancy.

4: Summary of MANDATORY discretions to be exercised on and after 1 April 2014 (as at 14 May 2018) in relation to members (excluding councillor members) who ceased active membership between 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2014

Occasionally an employer will receive request from a former employee who left the employment and the LGPS under earlier pension scheme regulations. The following table shows the mandatory discretions under different regulations according to the leaving date. These are all mandatory.

An employer has discretion to exercise in these areas	Employer's decision
<p>Will employer switch on '85-year rule' protections for early payment of deferred benefit? Request made from May 2018</p> <p>LGPS Administration Regulations 2018 66 and sched 2 of 2014 TP Regulations</p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will not consider applications to switch on 85-year rule to provide early unreduced pension to former scheme members.</p> <p>Cherwell District Council will not consider applications to waive actuarial reductions made by members with deferred pensions under any circumstance etc.</p>
<p>Will you 'switch on' the 85-year rule upon the voluntary early payment of a suspended tier 3 ill health pension? from 14 May 2018</p> <p>LGPS Administration Regulations 2018 66 and sched 2 of 2014 TP Regulations</p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will not consider applications to switch on 85-year rule to provide unreduced pension paid early on request to former scheme members after the third-tier ill health pension has ceased, and voluntary request made for early payment between from age 55-60</p> <p>Cherwell District Council will not consider applications to waive actuarial reductions made by members with deferred pensions under any circumstance etc.</p>
<p>Will the employer waive actuarial reductions due to compassionate grounds for early payment of deferred pension - before age 65?</p> <p><u>LGPS regulations 2007 30(5)</u></p> <p>Sched 2 of TP regulations 2014</p>	<p>Cherwell District Council will not consider applications to waive actuarial reduction for early pension payments.</p>

5: Summary of MANDATORY discretions to be exercised on and after 1 April 2014 (for requests made from 14 May 2018) in relation to members (including councillor members) who ceased active membership between 1 April 1998 and 31 March 2008

An employer has discretion to exercise in these areas	Employer's decision
Will the employer waive reductions on compassionate grounds for an early voluntary payment of pension?	Cherwell District Council will not waive reductions on compassionate grounds for an early voluntary payment of pension?
Will the employer switch on the 85-year rule for early payment of DBs requested between ages 55-60?	Cherwell District Council will not consider applications to switch on 85-year rule for early payment of DBs requested between ages 55-60.
Will the employer permit early payment of benefit from age 50 and under 55 (always check on the tax situation as may result in unauthorised payment charge)?	Cherwell District Council will not permit early payment of benefit from age 50 and under 55 (always check on the tax situation as may result in unauthorised payment charge).

6: Summary of the MANDATORY discretions to be exercised on and after 1 April 2014 (as at 14 May 2018) in relation to members (excluding councillor members) who ceased active membership before 1 April 1998

An employer has discretion to exercise in these areas	Employer's decision
Will the employer grant early payment of deferred benefit on compassionate grounds? LGPS regulations 1995 (Transitional Provisions 1997 2)	Cherwell District Council will not grant early payment of deferred benefit on compassionate grounds?

7: Summary of the MANDATORY discretions to be exercised under the 2000 Discretionary Regulations

These regulations still apply as benefits have been awarded in the past for certain leavers before 1 April 2007. Employers, (most likely to be County, District Councils and Oxford City) using these in the past should maintain mandatory policies on:

- Reduction or suspension of annual compensation (added years) during periods of re employment in local government and after leaving and having opportunity to re-join the LGPS (even if doesn't) what level of pension abatement to apply
- If survived by more than one civil partner or spouse how will the pension be apportioned
- Whether to suspend spouse or civil partner pension during periods of re marriage/ partnership or cohabitation

- Whether to reinstate spouse or civil partnership added year's compensatory pension after remarriage etc has ended
- Would children's pension be payable under compensatory regulations when not under LGPS main scheme?

Discretions under Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2000

DISCRETION & REGULATION

Some discretions under the above Regulations continue to be relevant as they apply to pension scheme members who have added years pensions in payment under the Regulations. The relevant discretions are as follows:-

Regulation 17 - The Effect of New Employment on Part IV Compensation

If a member who is receiving a compensatory added years pension in accordance with Part IV of these Regulations is re-employed by a LGPS employer then the annual pension resulting from the award of a credited period will be reduced, or suspended, if the combined total of earnings from the new employment and pensions in payment exceed the value of the current rate of pay of the member's former employment.

It should be noted that this adjustment is in addition to any adjustment that may be made to the basic LGPS pension as a result of re-employment with a LGPS employer. Oxfordshire County Council has a policy, which it is required to make under other Regulations as the administering Authority for the Oxfordshire LGPS fund, which is as follows: -

- (a) no abatement to be applied to pensions of less than £1500 a year or when awarded to someone retiring on their own benefits (ie without added years)
- (b) in other cases abatement will apply if new earnings and pension in payment exceed 125% of leaving pay, increased by the appropriate pension increases.

Regulation 19 - The effect of Cessation of New Employment on Part IV Compensation

After ceasing the re-employment the credited period will be adjusted or stopped altogether if the resulting pension from the re-employment and the basic LGPS pension from the first employment exceed the value of the pension which could have been paid if the member had remained in the first employment until age 65.

Regulation 21 - Awards to Surviving Spouses and Children

Where more than one current, legal spouse has survived a deceased person, the annual compensatory added years pension will be divided equally.

A spouse's pension will continue to be paid even if the spouse remarries or co-habits, unless at 1.4.98 a pension was already suspended due to remarriage.

In the very rare event of a children's compensatory added years pension being payable in circumstances not covered by the main Pension Regulations full details will be supplied to the appropriate officer for a determination.

This report is public	
Workforce Profile Statistics – Quarter 4 2023-24	
Committee	Personnel Committee
Date of Committee	9 July 2024
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Councillor Chris Brant
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	26 June 2024
Report of	Assistant Director of Human Resources, Claire Cox

Purpose of report

To provide the Personnel Committee with an update on CDC’s workforce including measuring staff well-being and to highlight the actions officers are taking to address any issues.

1. Recommendations

The Personnel Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To review and note the workforce data for quarter 4 of 2023/24 provided in appendix one.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report outlines statistical data in relation to CDC’s workforce at the end of quarter 4 of 2023/24 for information.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
Finance	There are no financial implications arising from this report. The report is for information only. Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 21 May 2024
Legal	There are no legal implications with this report as it is for information only. Alison Coles, Legal Services Operations Manager, 21 May 2024
Risk	There are no risks arising directly from this report.

				Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 21 May 2024
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
	Equality Impact		X	
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
Climate & Environmental Impact				N/A
ICT & Digital Impact				N/A
Data Impact				N/A
Procurement & subsidy				N/A
Council Priorities	N/A			
Human Resources	The workforce profile statistics provide valuable insight into the make-up of the council's workforce, which helps form policies and initiatives to suit its diversity. Claire Cox, Assistant Director of Human Resources, 24 May 2024			
Property	N/A			

Consultation & Engagement	The Corporate Leadership Team have reviewed the workforce statistics prior to submission to Personnel Committee.
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Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 Workforce Data for Quarter 4 of 2023/24 has been produced and is available at appendix one of this report. HR monitor workforce data on a quarterly basis to identify emerging trends in staff wellbeing and organisational development. Comparative data is included, where possible, to assist CDC with benchmarking against the local government sector and, for sensitive information such as ethnicity, gender, and age against the make-up of the district and the UK overall.

4. Details

- 4.1 The workforce profile report at appendix 1 provides commentary and data for quarter 4 of 2023/24, as well as quarterly, whole year and end-of-year comparisons.
- 4.2 The report provides statistics on:
- Headcount & FTE
 - Employment and role basis
 - Agency usage
 - Turnover
 - Leavers by length of service
 - Leavers by reason
 - Sickness absence incidents by reason
 - Sickness absence rates –all absence, short-term, long-term, stress-related
 - Percentage of working time lost due to sickness absence
 - Age profile
 - Gender profile
 - Ethnicity profile
 - Disability profile
 - Sexual orientation profile
 - Apprenticeship information
- 4.3 At Personnel Committee in June 2023, it was requested that further data analysis be provided in relation to the sensitive information categories. Our collection of this data has vastly improved, and HR are continuing to encourage all employees to provide this data. CDC recognise this is not mandatory but are encouraging staff to share as widely as possible as all information helps inform future policies / programmes of support.

4.4 Following the implementation of the recruitment module within the HR/Payroll system, data around recruitment has also been included in the latest report. This is initially at a high level to provide details of applicants by EDI categories, in order to monitor that recruitment opportunities are reaching all communities within Cherwell, and that applicant pools are reflective of the district we serve. Initial data shows that communities are being reached and applicant pools are reflective but this will continue to be monitored.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

5.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not to complete workforce statistics, this option is rejected as workforce analytics will enable CDC to address challenges and efficiencies in the workforce more efficiently.

6. Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendations

6.1 Monitoring workforce data helps CDC to measure how well it is supporting staff - focusing on wellbeing and personal development so it can identify issues at the earliest opportunity to address them effectively. It is also helpful for some data sets to compare how we are performing against the rest of the local government sector, to ensure it remains an attractive employer and retains its staff.

Decision Information

Key Decision	N/A
Subject to Call in	N/A
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	N/A

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Workforce Profile Data – Quarter 4, 2023/24
Background Papers	N/A
Reference Papers	N/A

Report Author	Assistant Director of Human Resources, Claire Cox
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Headcount and Full Time Equivalent (FTE) comparison and Agency usage

Chart 1 shows that the headcount (based at the end of each quarter) at Cherwell District Council (CDC) has seen an increase of 6 between quarter 3 and 4 of 2023/24.

Quarter 4 of 2023/24 has seen adjustments of 13 leavers and 19 new starters across the organisation.

Chart 1

**Headcount by Quarter
Quarter 1 2021-22 to Quarter 4 2023-24**

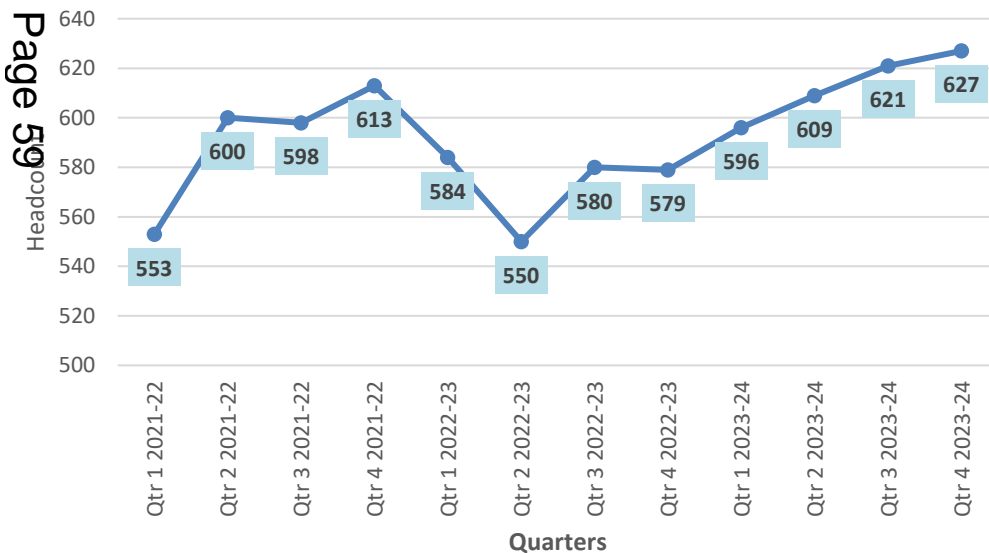


Chart 3

Chart 2 details the distribution of headcount across our departments and directorates as at the end of quarter 4 in 2023/24. Wellbeing and Environmental Services continue to show the highest headcount. The department of Chief Executive’s Office incorporates executive support and employees attributed to the Pan Regional Partnership, for which CDC is the accountable body. CDC are also host employer to the District Councils Network (DCN) and these employees are included in the HR, OD and Payroll directorate.

Wellbeing has had the biggest reduction in headcount with 5 since quarter 3. Environmental Services has reduced by 4 in the last quarter. Planning and Development headcount has increased by 5 and Housing Services by 3 in the last quarter.

Chart 2

**Headcount by Department as at
31 March 2024**

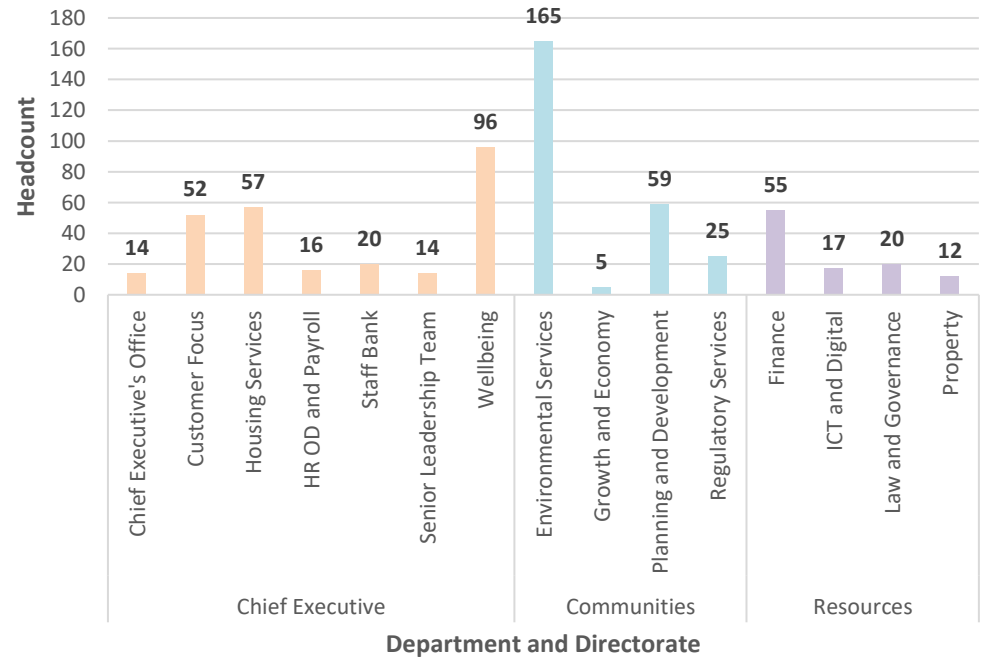


Chart 3 outlines the fluctuation of FTE which has only seen a slight increase of 1.39 from quarter 3 to 4.

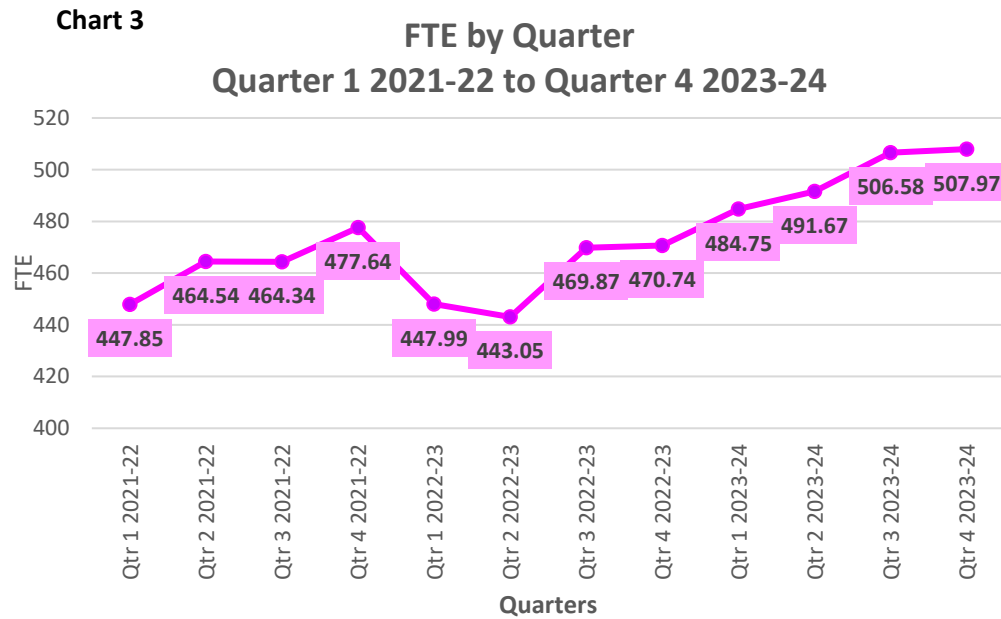


Chart 4
FTE by Department as at 31 March 2024

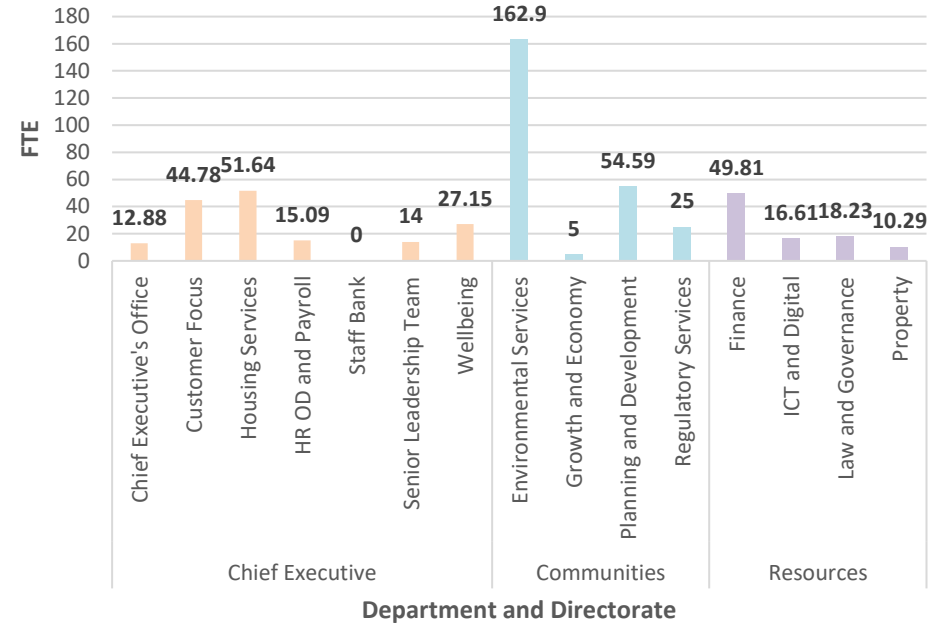


Chart 5
% Breakdown of Role Basis as at 31 March 2024

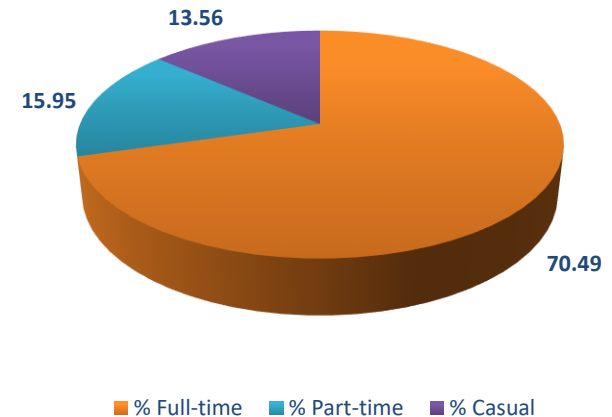


Chart 4 outlines the distribution of FTE across the departments and directorates as at the end of quarter 4 of 2023/24.

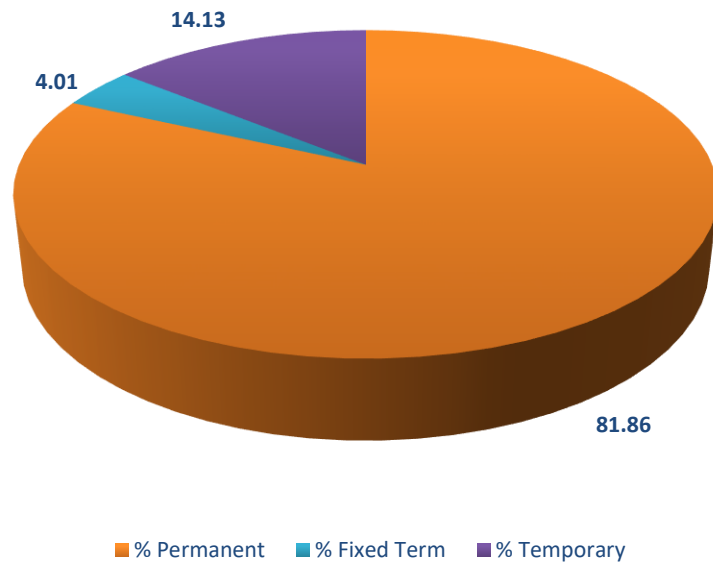
Since quarter 3 of 2023/24; Housing Services has seen an increase of 2.42 FTE, and Planning and Development has increased by 5. Environmental Services has reduced by 4 FTE.

Charts 5 shows the breakdown of basis of hours across our workforce as of 31 March 2024. Since quarter 3 of 2023/24 there has been minimal change to the make-up of role-basis with our full-time increasing by 1.01% and part-time increasing by 0.65%. Our casual workforce has increased by 0.36%.

Chart 6 outlines the employment basis of those directly employed by CDC shows that 81.86% of our workforce are in permanent roles. This has slightly increased by 1.18% since Quarter 3 of 2023/24. There has been minimal fluctuation of employment basis since the last quarter.

Chart 6

% Breakdown of Employment Basis as at 31 March 2024



In addition to employing staff directly, CDC also utilise Agency Workers, either for interim or short-term use for specific posts and projects.

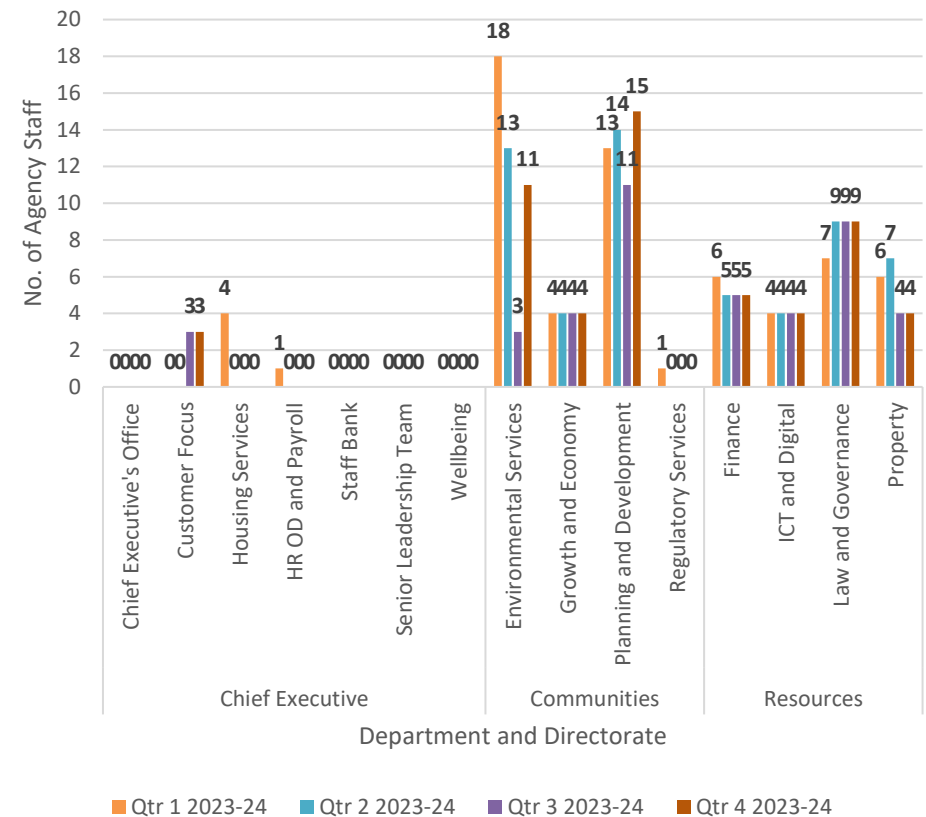
Chart 7 outlines agency usage as at the end of each quarter for the last rolling year by department. A total of 55 Agency workers were engaged with CDC at the end of quarter 4 of 2023/24. This is an increase of 12 since the end of quarter 3 of 2023/24.

The highest agency usage is usually Environmental Services, within refuse collection and this is due to having 3-person crews on refuse collection, often utilising agency staff to cover for employee sickness and holidays. Usage in this area has increased by 8 since the end of quarter 3.

Planning and Development have increased agency usage by 4 in quarter 4. Property have also reduced agency usage by 3. Customer Focus have increased agency usage by 3 in the last quarter.

Chart 7

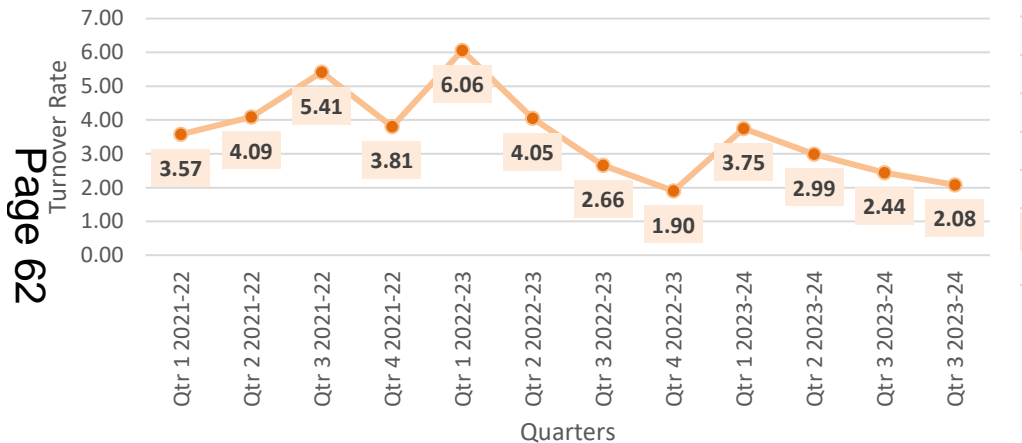
Agency Usage as at Quarter End for the last rolling 12 months



Turnover rates and Leaver information

Chart 8 tracks the turnover rate per quarter over a 3-year period, from April 2021 to March 2024. The turnover rate is defined by firstly calculating the average number of employees for the quarter period and then dividing the number of leavers by the average number of employees.

Chart 8
Quarterly Turnover Rate
Quarter 1 2021-22 to Quarter 4 2023-24



The turnover for quarter 4 shows a reduction of 0.36% in the turnover rate since quarter 3 of 2023/24 and a 1.67% reduction since the start of the financial year.

CDC participate in a workforce metric benchmark exercise that is co-ordinated by the Local Government Association. Data around employee turnover is submitted on a quarterly basis by CDC and other local authorities across the country and this has been translated into a mean average across the local authorities sector.

Table 1 provides comparison of the turnover rate for all local authorities across the UK and CDC. Quarter 4 of 2022/23 is showing CDC as 1.6% below the mean. Quarters 1, 2, 3 and 4 have not been published yet but will be updated in future reports.

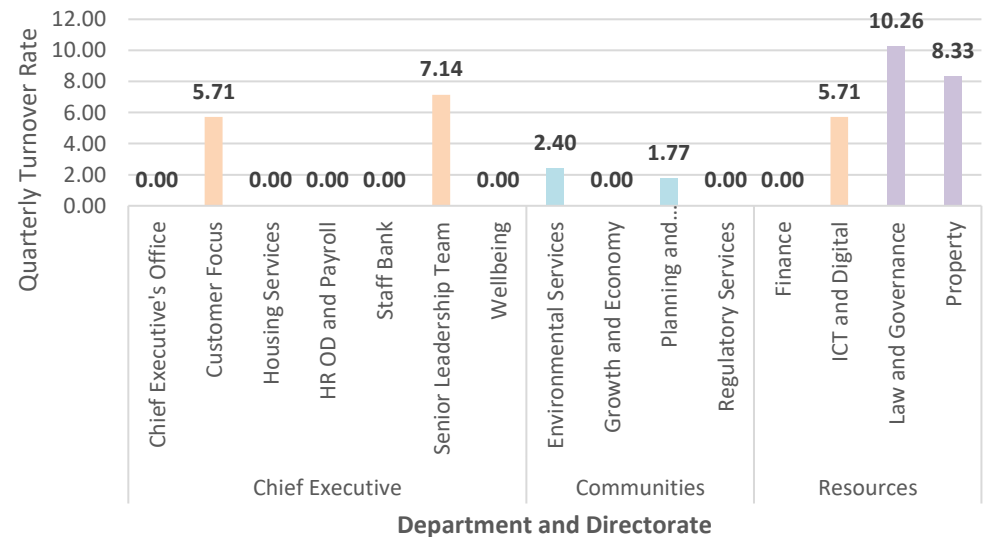
LGA statistics for 2022-23 and Labour turnover comparative data is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Quarter	Mean for All English authorities	CDC
Qtr 1 2022-23	4.1%	6.06%
Qtr 2 2022-23	4.3%	4.05%
Qtr 3 2022-23	3.3%	2.66%
Qtr 4 2022-23	3.5%	1.90%
Qtr 1 2023-24	Not yet published	3.75%
Qtr 2 2023-24	Not yet published	2.99%
Qtr 3 2023-24	Not yet published	2.44%
Qtr 4 2023-24	Note yet published	2.08%

Chart 9 provides further insight into this quarters turnover by department.

Chart 9
Quarterly Turnover Rate by Department
as at
31 March 2024



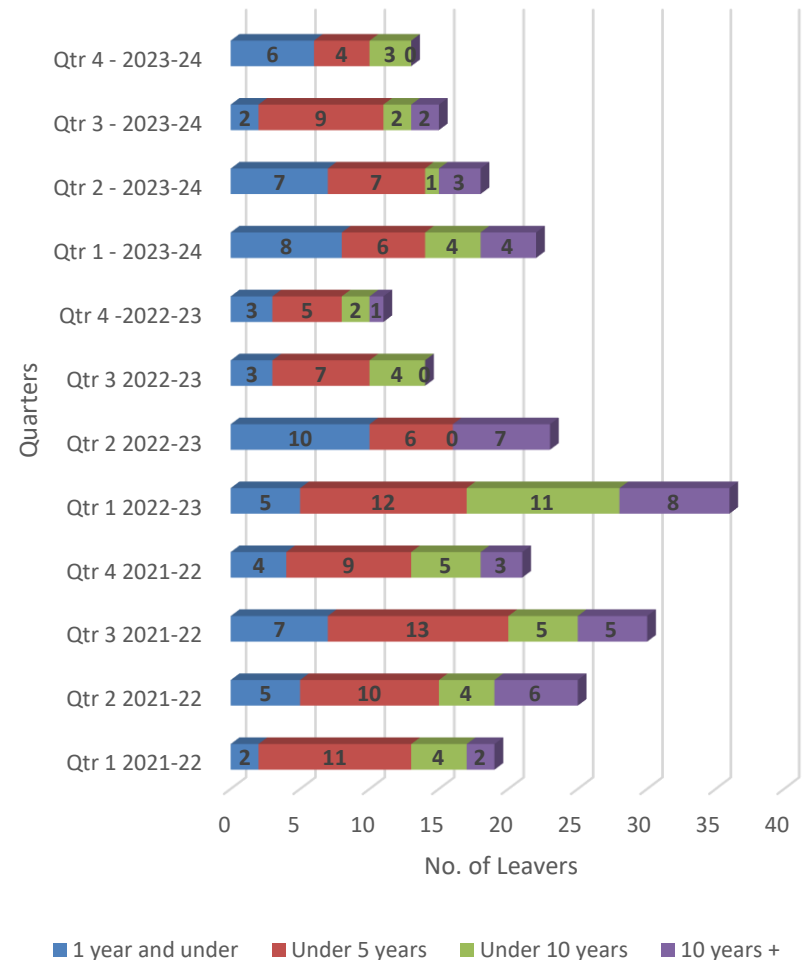
Whilst its useful to review labour turnover on a quarterly basis throughout the year; turnover can also be measured at an annual rate. Table 2 outlines the labour turnover rate at CDC an annual basis comparatively for the last 3 years. In 2023/24, CDC had 69 leavers in total, which is 16 less than the previous year. The turnover rate saw a reduction of 11.45% in the last year.

Table 2

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Headcount at 01/04	566	605	578
Headcount at 31/03	613	579	627
Average no. of employees	589.5	592	602.5
No. of leavers	95	85	68
Turnover rate (%)	16.12	14.36	11.29

Chart 11 outlines leavers by length of service across the last 12 quarters. In quarter 4 of 2023/24, 6 leavers had less than a year's service, 4 had under 5 years' service and 3 had less than 10 years.

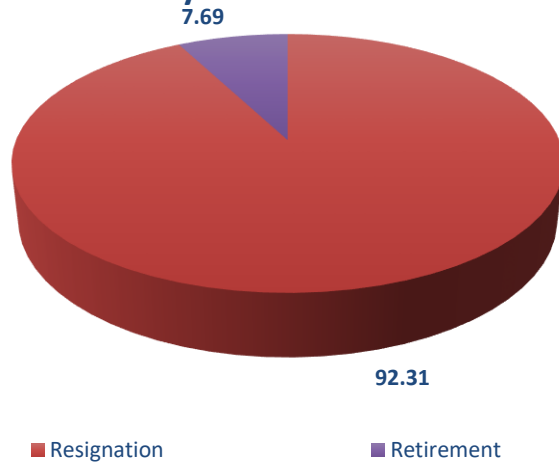
Chart 11 Leavers by Length of Service
1 April 2021- 31 March 2024



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Chart 10 outlines leavers by reason for quarter 4 of 2023/24. Of the 13 leavers recorded in quarter 4, resignation is the highest reason for leaving, accounting for 92.31%. 7.69% of leavers are due to retirement.

Chart 10 % of Leavers by reason
1 January to 31 March 2024



When a resignation is received within HR, employees are provided with an electronic exit questionnaire to complete via our HR/Payroll system and invited to attend a meeting with a member of the HR team to ascertain why they are leaving and whether they have any advice or comments on lessons learned or improvements that could be made.

Of the 13 leavers in quarter 4, all were offered the opportunity to partake in an exit interview. 6 completed the exit interview questionnaire and attended meetings with a member of the HR Team. This is a 46% completion rate, which is an increase from the last quarter that recorded a 6.66% completion rate. We cannot force employees to provide this data to us or attend a meeting with HR but we will continue to encourage engagement in this process in order to embed this.

Comments received within the interviews that took place were generally very positive around the teams worked with, with mixed reviews around workloads and management across different areas.

Data will continue to be gathered and shared with the relevant managers in a bid to act on any advice received in order to make improvements, where possible, for existing employees, thus aiding retention.

Sickness Absence reasons and rates

Chart 12 shows the number of sickness absence incidents by reason over the last 8 quarters, back to April 2022.

Stomach/Liver/Kidney and Digestion has seen the most incidents across this period, with 164 across the period. This is closely followed by Chest and Respiratory which had 159 incidents.

For Quarter 4, chest and respiratory was the highest recorded reason for sickness absence, accounting for 21% of all incidents in the last quarter. This is closely followed by not advised, meaning employees have opted not to disclose their reason, which accounts for 15% of all incidents in the last quarter. The third highest reason this quarter was stomach/liver/kidney and digestion, accounting for 13% of all incidents.

There were 189 incidents of sickness absence recorded in Quarter 4 of 2023/24, this is 15 more incidents than the same quarter of 2022/23.

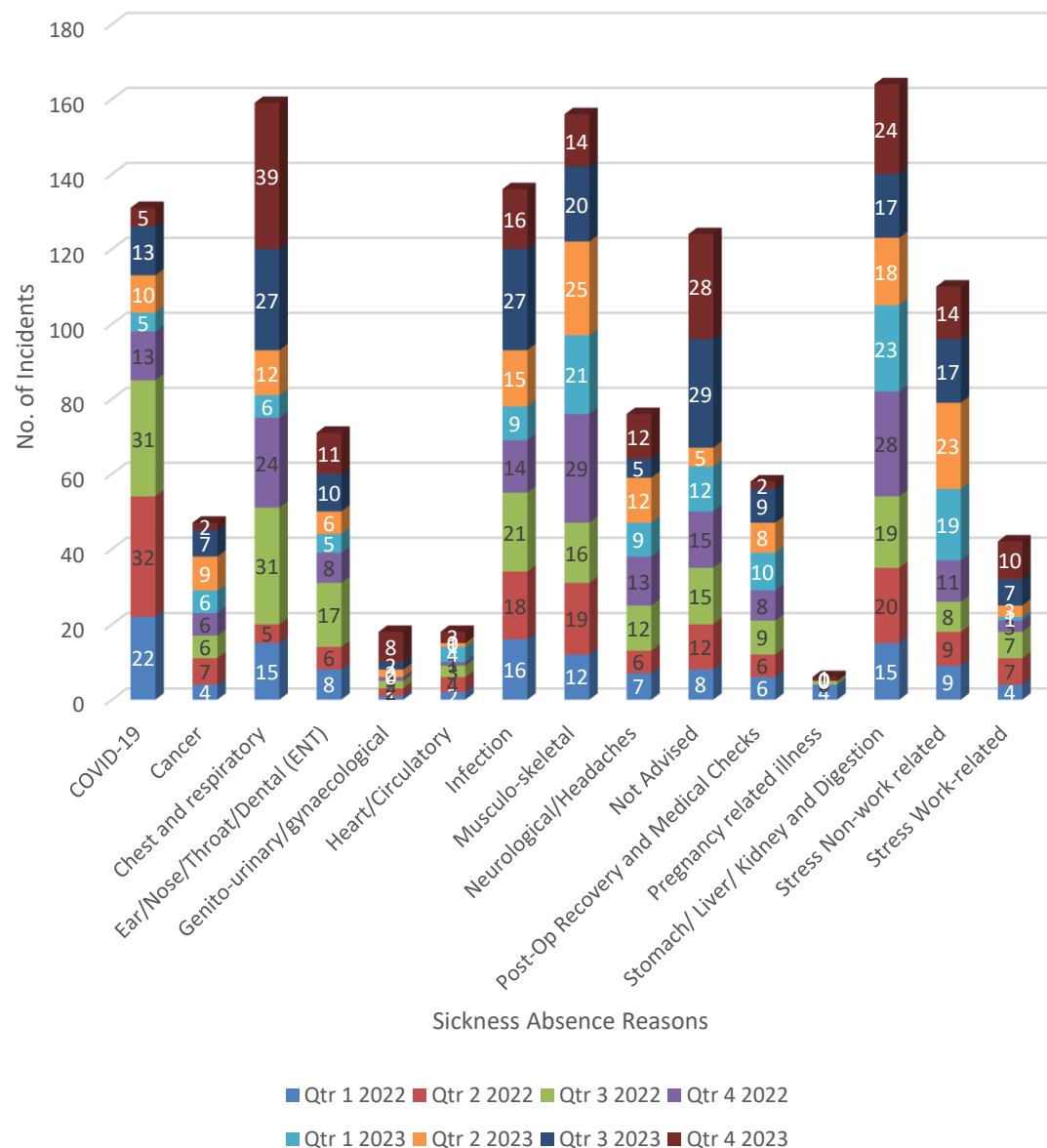
The highest reason for sickness absence across the last rolling 12 months was chest and respiratory, with 84 incidents recorded and accounting for 12.77% of all incidents.

The second highest reason for sickness absence in the last 12 months is Stomach/Liver/Kidney and Digestion, with 82 incidents reported which equates to 12.46% of all incidents.

Musculo-skeletal is the third highest reason in the last 12 months, recording 80 incidents and accounting for 12.16% of all incidents.

Chart 12

**Sickness Absence Incidents by Reason
April 2022 to March 2024**



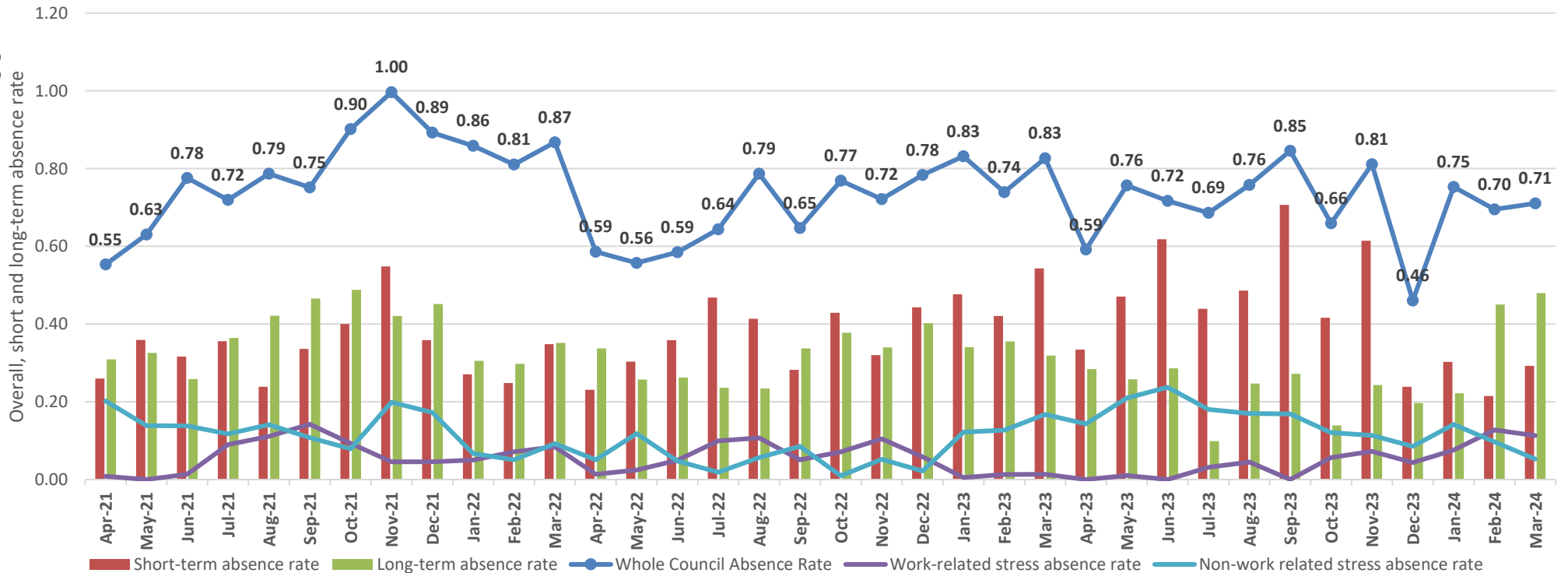
For the purposes of sickness absence reporting, short term absence is recorded as any incident that is less than 28 days, and a GP fit note is required after an employee has been absent for 7 calendar days. Long-term sickness is recorded as any absence spanning 28 days or more. HR work with managers and employees, where employees are off on long-term sick to engage with Cordell Health, CDC's Occupational Health Provider and ensure effective absence management.

Chart 13 tracks the absence rate per month, which is effectively the percentage of working time lost, from April 2021 to March 2024 and shows that CDC are consistently below 1% of working time lost due to sickness absence. The absence rate is calculated by dividing the hours lost due to sickness absence by the available working hours for the period. The highest rate of absence, recording 1% of working time lost; is in November 2021.

Chart 13 also captures the absence rate of short and long-term instances, In the last 12 months. September 2023 has the highest rate of short-term absence, recording a rate of 0.71 days lost. February 2024 had the highest rate of long-term absence in the last 12 months, with 0.48 days lost.

Chart 13

Council Absence Rates by Month
Overall and broken down into short-term, long-term and stress
April 2021 to March 2024



The absence rate attributed to stress is also displayed in Chart 13 and whilst a slight increase in work-related stress was recorded in the last quarter, with a rate of 0.13 in February 2024, this has since slightly declined, ending the quarter on 0.11. Work-related stress accounted for 5.29% of incidents in quarter 4 of 2023/24 and 3.19% of all incidents occurring in the last rolling 12 months.

The non-work-related stress absence rate has increased and then reduced over the last quarter. It has increased from 0.09 at the end of quarter 3 to 0.14 at the start of quarter 4, and then ended the quarter on 0.05. Non-work-related stress incidents accounted for 7.41% of all incidents in quarter 4 of 2023/24 and 11.09% of all incidents across the last year.

Chart 14

% Working Time Lost due to Short Term Sickness Absence
1 January to 31 March 2024

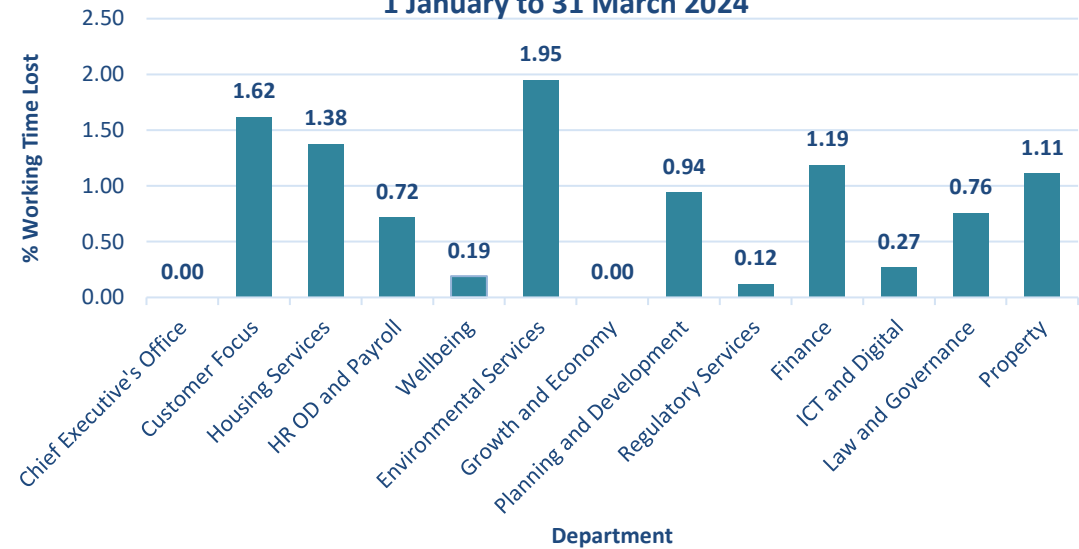
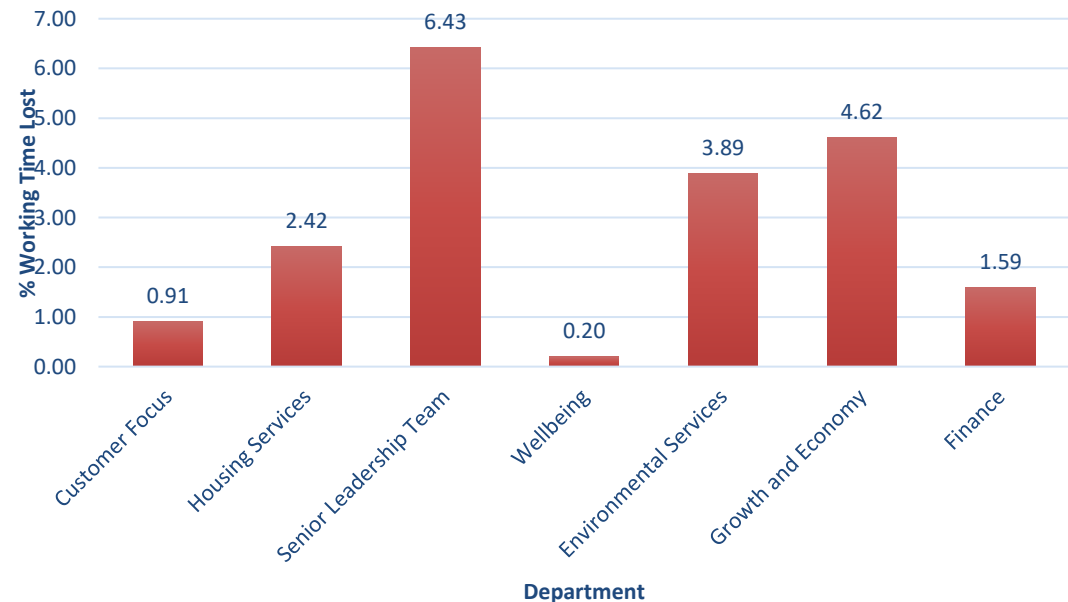


Chart 15

% Working Time Lost due to Long Term Absence
1 January to 31 March 2024



HR continue to ensure that Occupational Health support is accessed at the point that employee sickness is classified as long-term unless there are benefits to instigate this sooner. If an employee reports that they are absent due to stress, then an immediate referral to Occupational Health is made to ensure that support mechanisms can be put in place as soon as possible. Employees are also asked to complete a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Stress Questionnaire as this provides information on the causes of stress which aids the organisation in supporting employees to deal with these issues where possible.

Employees also continue to have access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which is provided by Health Assured and offers access to counselling, legal and financial advice, and wellbeing resources. The service is confidential and whilst statistics on usage are reported through to CDC; details of which employees have made contact is withheld.

Charts 14 and 15 provide a breakdown of the percentage of working time lost by department for both short term and long-term sickness absence.

Whilst data for sickness absence is analysed on a quarterly basis for the purpose of these statistics, it is helpful to reflect on this data on an annual basis and Table 3 provides details of CDC's annual absence rate, which is the percentage of working time lost due to sickness absence per year, for the past 3 years.

Table 3

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Average FTE	464.54	460.72	484.94
Available Working Hours	896224.80	888864.56	935583.95
Hours Lost	29309.83	28773.3	30260.23
Absence Rate (%)	3.27	3.24	3.23
Hours lost due to short term absence	13883.98	16007.05	18307.73
Short term absence rate (%)	1.55	1.80	1.96
Hours lost due to long term absence	15425.85	12766.25	11952.5
Long term absence rate (%)	1.72	1.44	1.28
Hours lost due to work-related stress	2604.80	2064.6	2111.9
Work-related stress absence rate (%)	0.29	0.23	0.23
Hours lost due to non-work related stress	5155.53	3005.95	6117.25
Non-work related stress absence rate (%)	0.58	0.34	0.65

In 2023-24, 3.23% of working time was lost due to sickness, this is 0.1% less than the previous year.

The short-term absence rate increased by 0.14% but the long-term absence rate reduced by 0.16% in 2023/24.

The absence rate for work related stress has remained the same across the last 2 years at 0.23 but the absence rate for non-work-related stress has increased by 0.31. As previously stated, occupational health support is provided at the earliest opportunity for all employees who report they are suffering with stress.

Comparative sector data for sickness absence rates has been sought from the Local Government Association (LGA) and is displayed alongside data for CDC in Table 4.

LGA Sickness data for quarter 1, 2 or 3 of 2023/24 are not yet available but will be added into a later edition of these statistics. The LGA calculate the mean sickness absence rate across all English authorities as 2.5 days per full time equivalent (FTE) employee in quarter 4 of 2022/23. Comparative data for 2023/24 will be provided in a later version of these statistics once available. CDC records a rate of 2.04 days in quarter 1 of 2023/24, 1.97 in quarter 2, 1.93 in quarter 3 and 2.12 in quarter 4.

Table 4

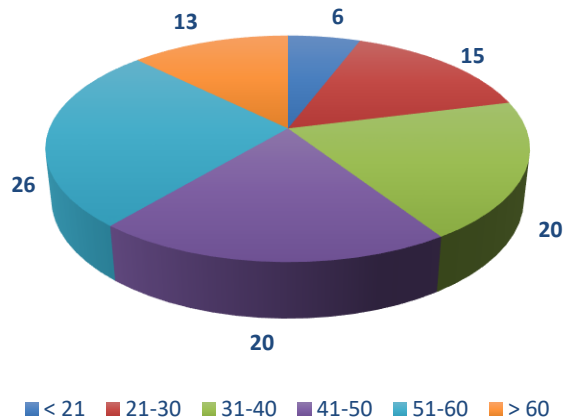
Metric Type	Value Type	QUARTER 1 22/23 Mean for All English authorities	CDC Qtr 1 22/23	QUARTER 2 22/23 Mean for All English authorities	CDC Qtr 2 22/23	QUARTER 3 22/23 Mean for All English authorities	CDC Qtr 3 22/23	QUARTER 4 22/23 Mean for All English authorities	CDC Qtr 4 22/23	CDC Qtr 1 23/24	CDC Qtr 2 23/24	CDC Qtr 3 23/24	CDC Qtr 4 23/24
Sickness absence rate	Days per FTE	2.8	1.65	2.3	2.11	2.6	2.27	2.5	2.4	2.04	1.97	1.93	2.12
Days lost through sickness, short term	%	11.6	1.37	5.5	1.79	1.9	1.19	1.6	2.22	2.16	2.20	1.95	1.22
Sickness absence, short term (FTE)	Days per FTE	1.2	0.89	0.9	1.17	1.1	1.24	1.0	1.44	1.41	1.63	1.26	0.79
Days lost through sickness, long term	%	11.1	1.16	4.2	1.46	2.3	1.08	2.2	1.48	0.98	0.83	1.02	2.04
Sickness absence, long term (FTE)	Days per FTE	1.5	0.76	1.3	0.94	1.4	1.13	1.4	0.96	0.63	0.54	0.66	1.32

Age, Gender, Ethnicity, Disability and LGBTQ+ Workforce Profile as at 31 March 2024

Chart 16 shows a breakdown by age of the CDC workforce, expressed in percentage. 13% of CDC employees are over 60. 26% are aged between 51 and 60. 20% of CDC employees are aged between 41 and 50. 20% of the workforce are aged between 31 and 40 and 21% aged 30 and under. The over 60 category has increased by 2% from the end of quarter 3 to 4, and the 51-60 category has reduced by 2% between quarters. None of the other categories have had more than a 1% shift.

Chart 16

Age Profile Percentage as at 31 March 2024



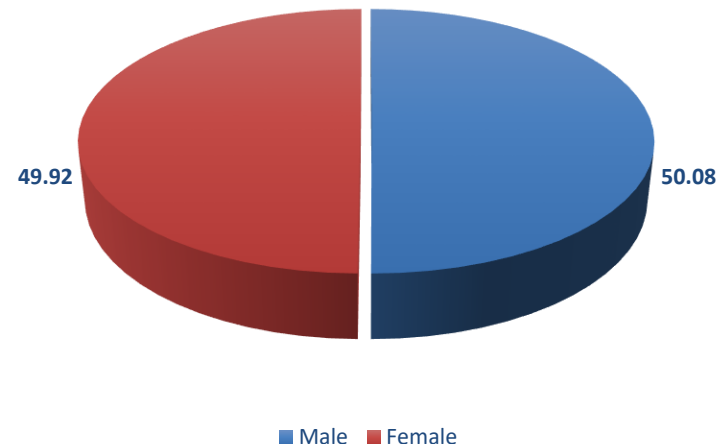
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Chart 17 breaks down the gender of the CDC workforce and shows that CDC is almost a 50% split.

CDC record statistics on employee equalities data in order to ensure that our workforce is representative of the district we support and serve. Where we are under-represented, we need to review what we can do to ensure these groups are aware of the employment opportunities we have available. Local Insight data in relation to gender and ethnicity within the Cherwell District has been used to compare against the make-up of our workforce.

Chart 17

Gender Profile Percentage as at 31 March 2024



Out of a population of 161,837 within the Cherwell District, the latest census data records that 49.6% are male and 50.4% are female. At CDC, 50.08% of our workforce are male and 49.92% are female meaning it is representative of the district.

CDC employees continue to be encouraged to share their equalities data. In relation to employee ethnicity data, in quarter 1 of 2022/23 51% of employees had not provided this. At the end of quarter 4 of 2023/24, 84% of employees have recorded this information, with 5.74% preferring not to specify.

Chart 18 shows a breakdown of ethnicity within CDC. Comparative data has been sought both nationally and from the district and is presented in Table 5.

Chart 18 Ethnicity Profile Percentage as at 31 March 2024

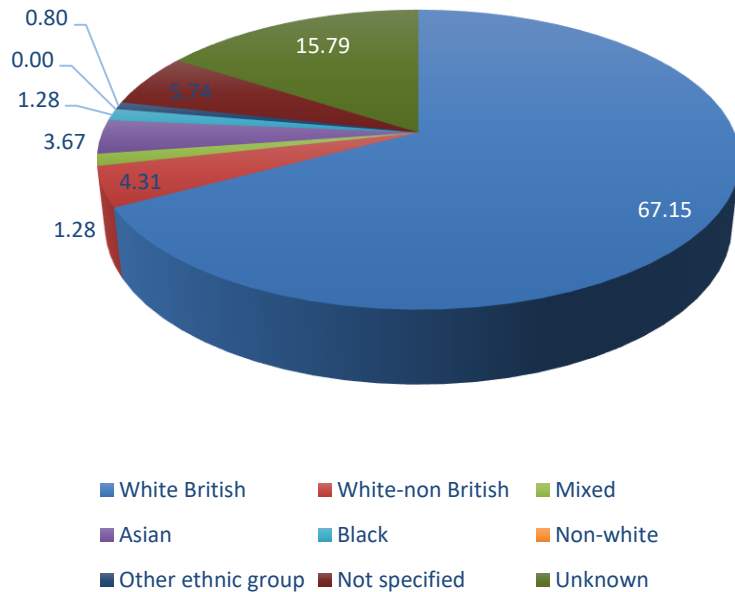


Table 5

Ethnic Group	England average (%)	Cherwell District (%)	CDC (%) Qtr 1 23/24	CDC (%) Qtr 2 23/24	CDC (%) Qtr 3 23/24	CDC (%) Qtr 4 23/24
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	9.3	6.0	3.69	3.94	3.86	3.67
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	4.0	1.8	0.84	0.99	1.13	1.28
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	2.9	2.9	1.34	1.15	1.13	1.28
White	81.7	88.1	70.81	71.92	71.82	71.45
Other ethnic group	2.1	1.3	0.84	0.82	0.81	0.80
Not specified	N/A	N/A	5.20	5.58	5.96	5.74
Unknown	N/A	N/A	17.28	15.60	15.30	15.79

CDC’s workforce is predominantly white British with 67.15% of the workforce recording their ethnicity in this category.

Table 3 compares the make-up of ethnic groups across the UK and the Cherwell District and then compares this with the make-up of our workforce. The Cherwell District has a higher percentage of residents in the *White* ethnic group than the average across the UK. Of the workforce data recorded, the *White* category for the workforce, this reduced slightly in the last quarter, and at the end of quarter 4 was 16.65% less than the Cherwell District.

The CDC workforce is slightly under-represented in all the ethnic groups in comparison to the district, and there has been no significant change in any ethnic group between quarters 3 and 4 of 2023/24.

The Personnel Committee requested further information on ethnicity by grade across the organisation. The grade bands have been split into 3 categories; A to E who generally have no supervisory or line management responsibilities, F to I; who are typically team leader and supervisory level roles and then J and above which are management grades.

Chart 19 outlines the percentage of employees by ethnic group and grade band.

Whilst we have requested disability information be completed by employees, 44% of the workforce are yet to provide this data, as illustrated in Chart 20. This data is all collected from the same place so the HR Team are committed to completing further follow-up on this in a bid to improve the data collection within this category. Chart 21 shows a breakdown of data relating to disability by grade band.

Chart 19

Ethnic Group Percentage by Grade Band as at 31 March 2024

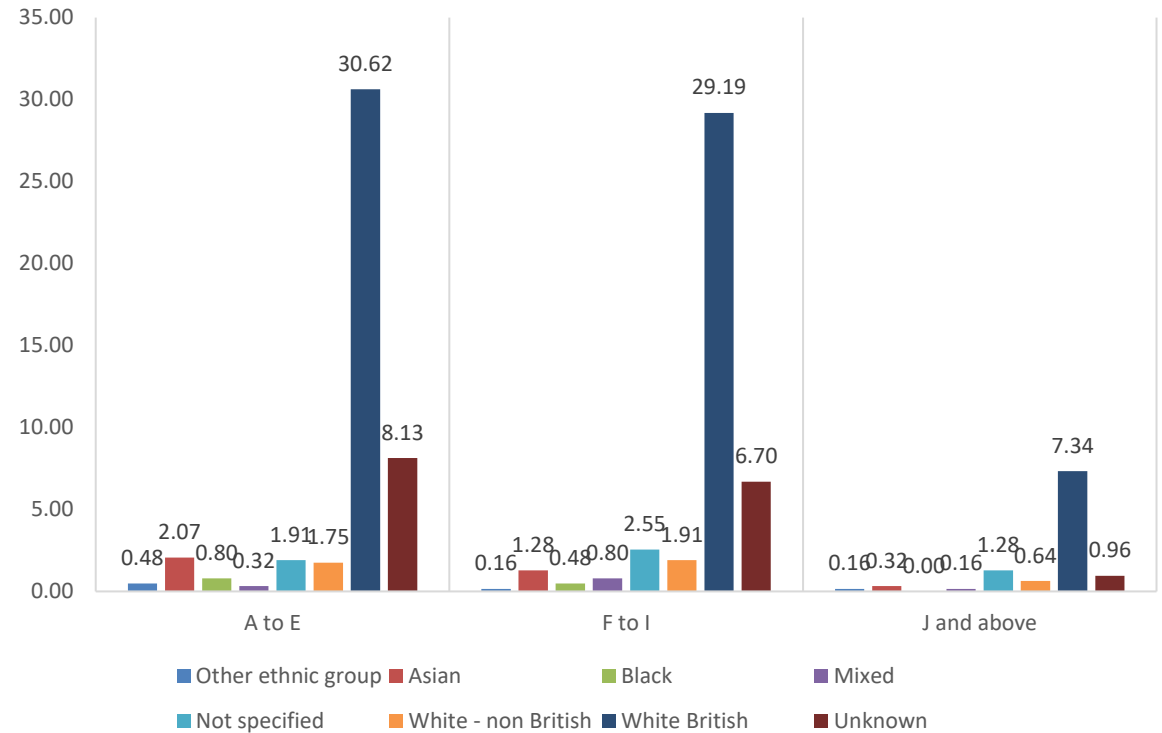


Chart 20

Disability Percentage Profile as at 31 March 2024

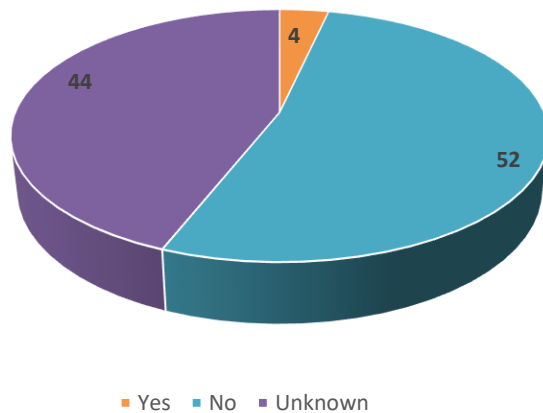
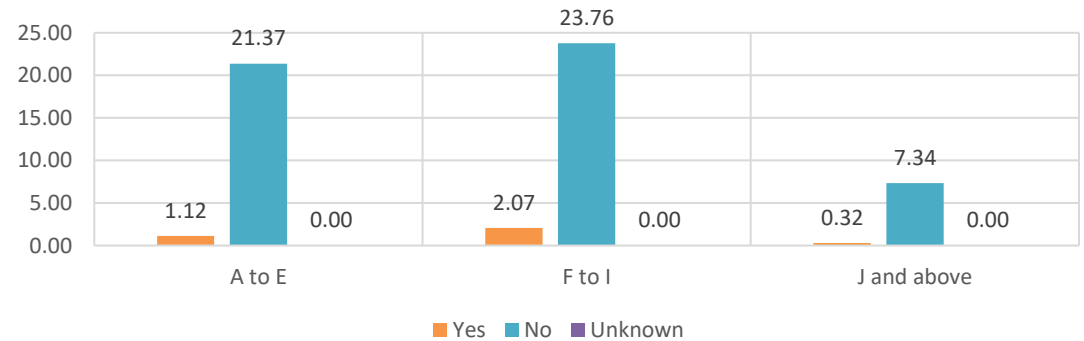


Chart 21

Disability Percentage by Grade Band as at 31 March 2024



Cherwell District Council

CDC is a disability confident employer which means we participate in the Department of Work and Pensions Scheme to guarantee interviews to any disabled candidates who meet the essential criteria for our roles. Where disabilities are identified, management and HR work closely with employees and the council’s occupational health provider to review any reasonable adjustments that could be put in place to assist the employee in their role.

The Personnel Committee also requested data on sexual orientation for our workforce which is provided at Chart 22.

Within this category, 12.44% of the workforce have declined to specify and 17.38% have not completed this data. This data collection has marginally improved in the last quarter.

As with ethnicity information, sexual orientation data has also been broken down into grade bands and this is shown at chart 23.

As part of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity strategy that was published this year, we have a workforce plan with actions to work through. Data around protected characteristics will continue to be tracked whilst the actions are undertaken, and variations will be provided in future iterations of these statistics.

The HR Team will continue to work with the organisation to gather outstanding data and will continue to update on a quarterly basis.

Workforce Profile

Quarter 4 2023-24

Chart 22

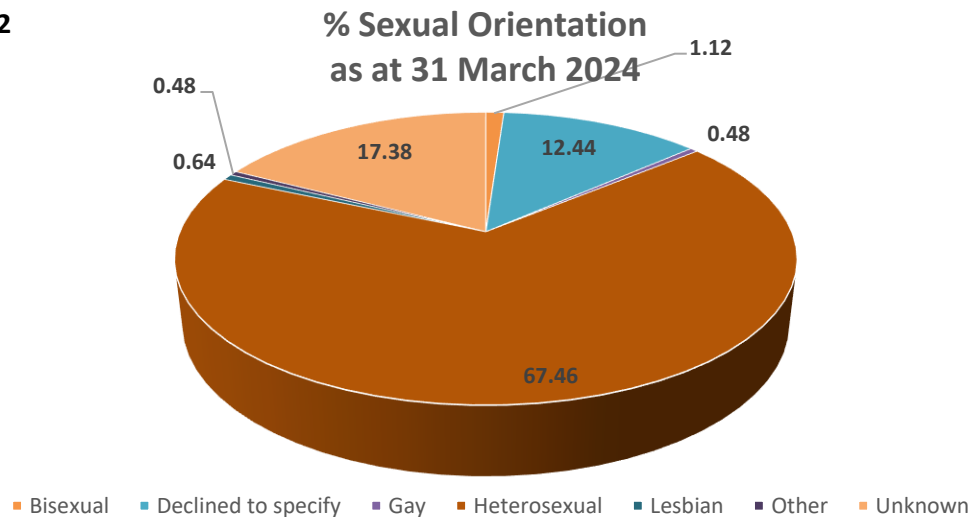
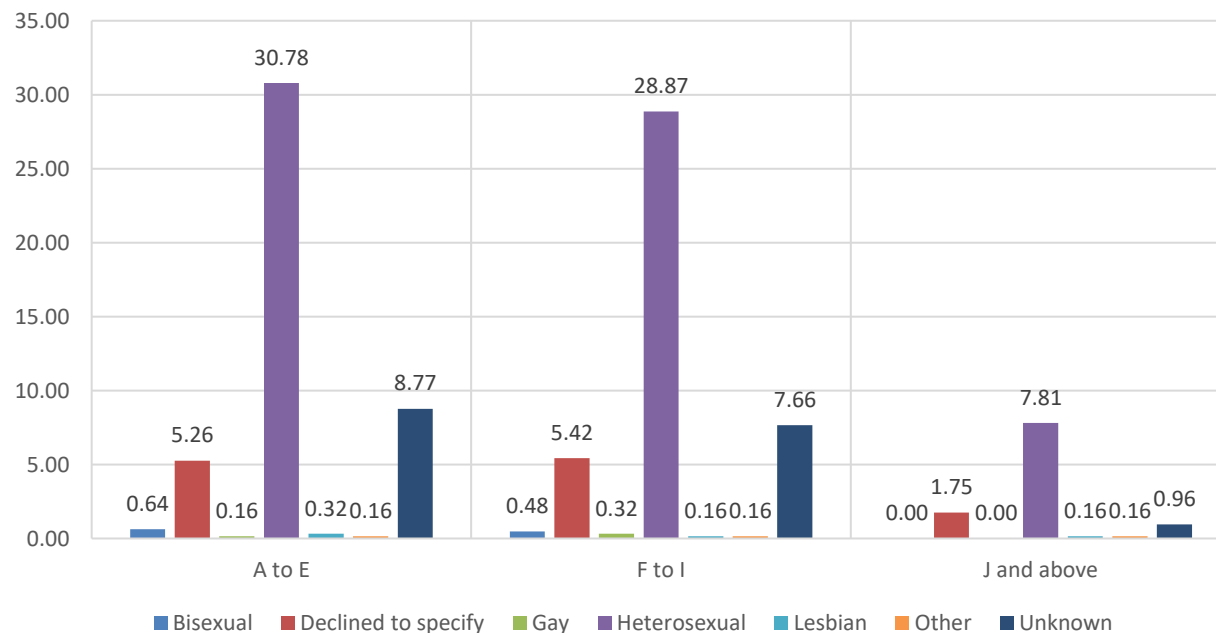


Chart 23

Sexual Orientation Percentage by Grade Band as at 31 March 2024



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Diversity in Recruitment

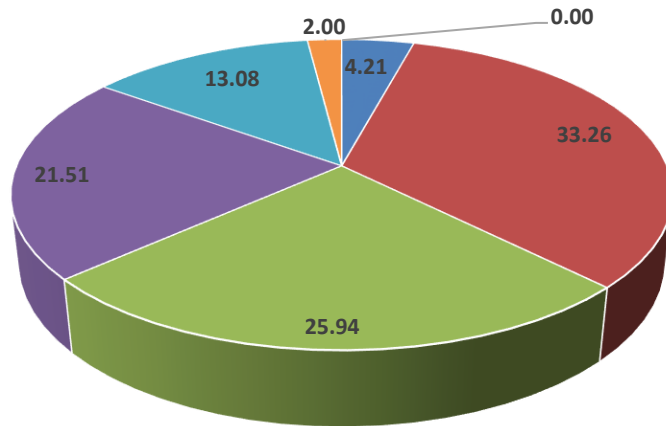
In October 2023, CDC launched a new recruitment module as part of its HR and Payroll system. This has meant that analysis of recruitment data can now be completed. In line with CDC’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity agenda, this data allows insight into whether or not CDC is reaching and is representative of all communities within the district. Recruitment data has been analysed and since going live in October 2023, 41 recruitment campaigns have been completed, to which 451 applications were received and 28 offers of employment made.

The following data provides insight into the application data, and where possible provides comparison to the make-up of the district to aid analysis into representation.

Chart 24 shows a breakdown of applicants by age category. The highest number of applicants were between 21 and 30, followed by 31 to 40, these 2 groups account for 59.2% of all applications. Table 6 provides district data on age bands. Whilst district data does not quite correlate with age groups relevant to the CDC workforce, Chart 26 shows that the distribution of applicants across the age bands is representative of that within the district.

Chart 24

**% Applicants by Age
October 2023 to March 2024**



■ Under 21 ■ 21 - 30 ■ 31 - 40 ■ 41 - 50 ■ 51 - 60 ■ Over 60 ■ No Age

Table 6

Age	% Residents
16 - 19	5.48
20 - 24	6.71
25 - 34	19.45
35 - 49	28.49
50 - 64	26.99
65 - 74	12.88
	100.00

Chart 25 outlines the percentage of applicants per ethnic group and Table 7 shows the make-up of the District.

Chart 25

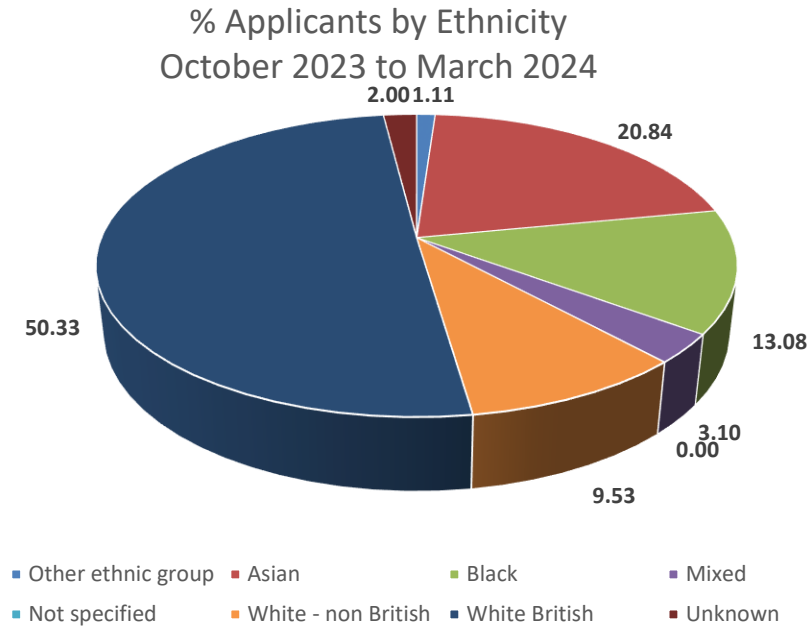


Table 7

Ethnic Group	Cherwell District (%)
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	6.0
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	1.8
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	2.9
White	88.1
Other ethnic group	1.3
Not specified	N/A
Unknown	N/A

This data shows that applicants for CDC jobs are ethnically diverse, with applicant numbers within Asian and Black ethnic groups significantly higher than the district percentages.

Chart 26

**% Applicants by Gender
October 2023 to March 2024**

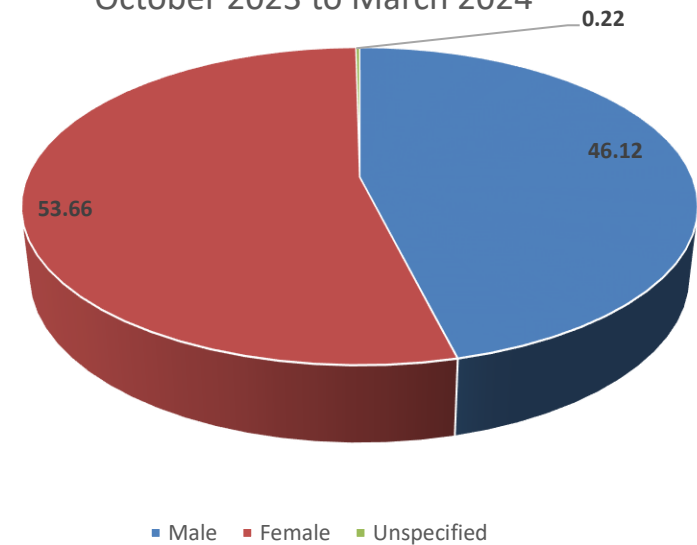


Chart 26 shows the percentage of applicants by gender, which is an almost 50/50 split across male and female, which is both reflective of our current workforce and district data covered earlier in this report.

Chart 27

% Applicants with Disabilities
October 2023 to March 2024

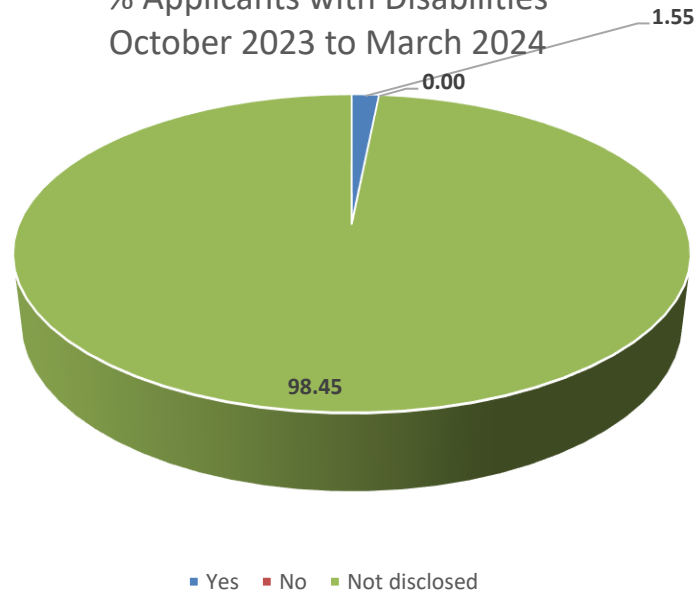
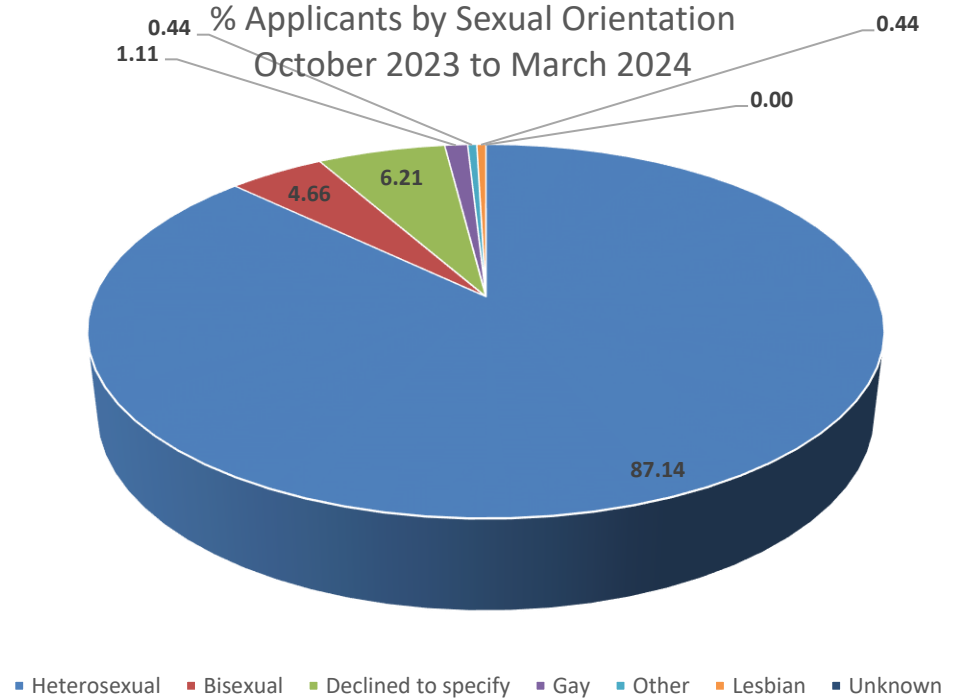


Chart 27 shows the percentage of applicants by disability. 98.45% of applicants have not disclosed this at applicant stage. It is hoped that applicants would provide this information should they have disabilities as we have a guaranteed interview scheme if they meet the essential criteria for a role, as part of being a disability confident employer.

Chart 28 shows the percentage of applicants by sexual orientation. Oxfordshire County Council confirms from census 2021 information that 89.4% of the county identify as straight or heterosexual, with 3.4% not identifying as straight or heterosexual and 7.9% preferring not to say. CDC's applicant data is reflective of these county statistics.

Chart 28

% Applicants by Sexual Orientation
October 2023 to March 2024



Apprenticeships within Cherwell District Council as at Quarter 4 – 2023/24

Information

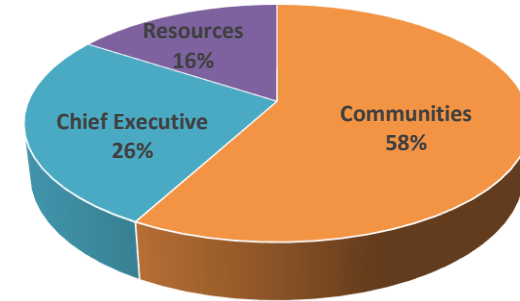
There are 21 apprenticeships currently running within the Council for this quarter, of which 3 is an apprentice on programme, employed specifically as an apprentice; and the remaining 15 are employees undertaking an apprenticeship as CPD or career progression.

There are currently 13 apprenticeships within the Communities Directorate, 5 within the Chief Executive Directorate and 3 within the Resources Directorate – please see chart 31.

Details of the apprenticeships at the organisation are detailed in the table below. The organisation is using its apprenticeship levy predominantly for upskilling existing staff.

Apprenticeships details below:

Chart 29 Percentage of Apprenticeships within Directorates



Communities Chief Executive Resources

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Apprenticeship Standard	Level of Apprenticeship	Duration of Apprenticeship	Number of employees on apprenticeship	Apprentice or Employee CPD	Team	Directorate	Cost of Apprenticeships (£)
Autocare Technician	Level 2	2 ½ Years	1	Apprentice	Fleet Management	Communities (1)	12,000
Business Administrator	Level 3	1 ½ Years	1	Apprentice	Depot – Thorpe Lane	Communities (1)	5,000
HR Support	Level 3	1 ½ Years	1	Apprentice	Human Resources	Chief Executive (1)	4,500
Team Leader/Supervisor	Level 3	1 ½ Years	5	CPD	Sport and Physical Activities (2) Housing Options and Homelessness (1) ICT (1)	Chief Executive (3) Resources (1) Communities (1)	22,500

Apprenticeship Standard	Level of Apprenticeship	Duration of Apprenticeship	Number of employees on apprenticeship	Apprentice or Employee CPD	Team	Directorate	Cost of Apprenticeships (£)
					Environmental Protection & Enforcement (1)		
Improvement Practitioner	Level 4	1 ½ Years	1	CPD	ICT	Resources (1)	12,000
ASB and Community Safety	Level 4	2 Years	1	CPD	Community Safety	Communities (1)	8,000
Building Control Surveyor	Level 6	4 Years	1	CPD	Building Control	Communities (1)	24,000
Chartered Surveyor	Level 6	5 ½ Years	1	Apprentice	Access and Grants	Communities (1)	27,000
Environmental Health Practitioner	Level 6	4 Years	1	CPD	Health Protection and Compliance	Communities (1)	22,000
Public Health Practitioner	Level 6	3 Years	1	CPD	Health Shaping Place	Chief Executive (1)	22,000
Chartered Town Planner	Level 7	2 ½ years	4	CPD	Planning	Communities (4)	53,600
Accountancy Professional (CIPFA)	Level 7	3 Years	1	CPD	Finance	Resources (1)	20,433
			19		Total apprenticeship levy committed		233,033

Current amount in the Levy Account

The Council currently has £163,166 in their levy account. It is estimated that a further £116,189 will be received over the next 12 months, based on funds entering the Council's Apprenticeship service account, including the 10% top up from the government. It is estimated that the Council will spend £40,382 in the next 12 months based on the current apprenticeships within the table above.

Expired Funds

No levy funds expired in Quarter 3 of 2023/24. The levy account is indicating that the Council will have an amount of £1250 in expired funds in April 2024. These indications are estimates made by the apprenticeship dashboard and are based on details available from our last levy payment and apprenticeship arrangements, which may not be up-to-date. Providers are not always timely in providing the details to add new apprenticeships onto the dashboard and so these estimates may change once a new course is added and payments are starting to be taken from the levy pot.

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