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Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Committee: Personnel Committee
Date: Wednesday 17 September 2025
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue 39 Castle Quay, Banbury, OX16 5FD

Membership

Councillor Amanda Watkins (Chair)

Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor Besmira Brasha

Councillor Gemma Coton (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Chris Brant
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Barry Wood

Substitutes Any member of the relevant political group, except members of the Appeals Panel

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. Urgent Business

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

4. Minutes (Pages 5 - 8)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25 June 2025.

5. Chair's Announcements

To receive communications from the Chair.

6. Requests to Address the Meeting

The Chair to report on any requests to address the meeting.

7. Workforce Profile Statistics - Quarter 1 of 2025/26 (Pages 9 - 36)

Report of Assistant Director Human Resources

Purpose of report

To provide the Personnel Committee with an update on Cherwell District Council'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 1 of 2025/26 provided in appendix one, devised to provide insight that will enable officers of CDC to address challenges and efficiencies in the workforce more efficiently.

Councillors are requested to collect any post from their pigeon hole in the Members' Lounge 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.

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Queries Regarding this Agenda

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

Shiraz Sheikh
Monitoring Officer

Published on Tuesday 9 September 2025

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Cherwell District Council

Personnel Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held at 39 Castle Quay, Banbury, OX16 5FD, on 25 June 2025 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Amanda Watkins (Chair)
Councillor Gemma Coton (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Chris Brant
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor Barry Wood

Substitute Members:

Councillor Mark Cherry (In place of Councillor Lynne Parsons)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Lynne Parsons

Officers:

Claire Cox, Assistant Director Human Resources
Susan Blunsden, HR Manager
Carly Richardson, HR Assistant
Martyn Surfleet, Democratic and Elections Officer

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

4 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

5 Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 26 March and 21 May 2025 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chair.

6 Chair's Announcements

There were no Chair's announcements.

7 Requests to Address the Meeting

There were no requests to address the meeting.

8 Workforce Profile Statistics - Quarter 4 of 2024-25

The Assistant Director Human Resources submitted a report to update the Committee on Cherwell District Council's (CDC) workforce as at the end of quarter 4 of 2024/25, including measuring staff well-being and highlighting the actions officers were taking to address any issues.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Brant advised that there were no issues, risks or concerns to highlight.

In response to a question regarding the use of agency staff and whether solutions to recruit and maintain staff to mitigate this were being looked at, the Assistant Director Human Resources explained that the use of agency staff varied by department, and the purpose of using agency staff was to ensure services were maintained. The shortages impacting some departments, including planning, were a national issue, CDC was mitigating by targeted recruitment as well as graduate schemes.

In response to a question regarding information on how many applicants per ethnic group went on to successfully secure a position at the Council, the Assistant Director Human Resources advised that in its current format this was not captured in the report, but she would seek to include in future reports.

Resolved

- (1) That the workforce profile statistics for quarter 4 of 2024/25 (financial year dates) be noted.

9 Policy Review Updates

The Assistant Director Human Resources submitted a report to seek approval from the Personnel Committee on proposed changes to two HR policies: Neonatal Leave and Pay Policy and Induction Policy.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Brant, explained that the Induction Policy had been reviewed and updated following feedback from new starters to ensure that, whilst there would be individual service requirements by way of induction, corporate

information provided to new starters would be standardised, and that the reworked process would provide clarity to managers on the requirements within induction. The Neonatal Policy was a new policy brought forward following new legislation in April 2025 to support employees whose newborn child required neonatal care following birth.

In response to a suggestion to include workplace adjustments and accommodations for new starters being discussed and agreed as part of the onboarding and induction process in the Induction Policy, the Assistant Director Human Resources agreed that revisions to the policy would be made to include these suggestions.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the Neonatal Leave and Pay Policy be approved for implementation.
- (2) That, having given due consideration, subject to the inclusion of provisions for any workplace adjustments or accommodations to be agreed with a new starter as part of their induction, the Induction Policy be approved for implementation.

The meeting ended at 7.15 pm

Chair:

Date:

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This report is public	
Workforce Profile Statistics – Quarter 1 of 2025-26	
Committee	Personnel Committee
Date of Committee	17 September 2025
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	1 September 2025
Report of	Assistant Director of Human Resources, Claire Cox

Purpose of report

To provide the Personnel Committee with an update on Cherwell District Council'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 to:

- 1.1 Review and note the workforce data for quarter 1 of 2025/26 provided in appendix one, devised to provide insight that will enable officers of CDC to address challenges and efficiencies in the workforce more efficiently.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report outlines statistical data in relation to CDC's workforce at the end of quarter 1 of 2025/26 for information. There are no issues, risks or concerns to highlight this quarter.
- 2.2 Appendix 1 provides the following highlights in CDC's workforce statistics for quarter 1 as follows:
 - 21 leavers and 21 new starters
 - As at the end of quarter 1, headcount increased by 6 to 632. Of the 632, 15 employees are multiple role holders
 - FTE increased by 4.62, to 519.89, as at quarter end.
 - Minimal shift in employment basis and role basis

- No change to the number of agency workers at the end of quarter 1, compared to the previous quarter. Remained at 35.
- A quarterly turnover rate of 3.35%, 0.14% lower than the previous quarter
- Resignation was the main reason for leavers, accounting for 61.90% of all leavers.
- 38% of leavers completed exit interviews, Comments received within the interviews that took place were mixed with some relating to personal circumstances, pace of work too slow in their team, travel is too much, workload has increased significantly, very positive experience at the council and very sad to be leaving. Most were very positive about the colleagues they had worked with.
- 160 sickness absence incidents were recorded, 2 less than the same quarter in the previous year.
- Absence rate at the end of quarter 1 was 0.69 which has reduced slightly compared to the end of the last quarter.
- Minimal shift in age, gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation profile
- Recruitment data has been provided for the last 12 months, and shows applicants are representative of the district.
- 25 apprenticeships currently underway across a diverse range of subject areas. Of the 25, 5 are being completed by apprentices, and 20 are being undertaken by staff.

2.3 As advised in previous reports, the Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer and Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson announced a new growth and skills levy which will replace the existing apprenticeship levy and is to include new foundation apprenticeships. These new apprenticeships will give young people a route in to careers in critical sectors, enabling them to earn a wage whilst developing vital skills. This situation is being monitored, and further updates will be provided once available.

2.4 In February the government highlighted several changes to how apprenticeships will operate in the future, in response to employers' calls for more flexibility. This will include introduction of shorter apprenticeships from August 2025 (subject to the parliamentary timetable), with the minimum length reduced from 12 to 8 months. The new development will allow training to be delivered and completed faster where that makes sense for a given industry, or an individual has significant prior learning. Further update on the impact and take up of these shorter apprenticeships will be provided in future reports.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
Finance	This is an information report with no financial implications. Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 04 September 2025
Legal	There are no legal implications within this report as it is for information only.

	Denzil – John Turbervill, Head of Legal Services, 4 September 2025			
Risk	There are no risks arising directly from this report. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 8 September 2025			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact		X		There are no equalities implications directly related to this report. However, this report provides the council with valuable data which will help us support and promote equality, diversity, and inclusion within our workforce. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 8 September 2025
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, 27 August 2025
Property	N/A
Consultation & Engagement	The Corporate Leadership Team have reviewed the workforce statistics prior to submission to Personnel Committee.

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 Workforce Data for Quarter 1 of 2025/26 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 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 1 of 2025/26, 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

- Recruitment data relating to personal attributes for the purposes of inclusion
 - Apprenticeship information
- 4.3 Our collection of data relating to protected characteristics 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. Applicant data shows that communities are being reached and applicant pools are reflective. This will continue to be monitored.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

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

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 1, 2025/26
Background Papers	N/A
Reference Papers	N/A
Report Author	Assistant Director of Human Resources, Claire Cox
Report Author contact details	Claire.cox@cherwell-dc.gov.uk , 01295 221549
Corporate Director Approval (unless Corporate Director or Statutory Officer report)	Corporate Director for Resources and Transformation

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 the end of quarter 4 of 2024/25 and the end of quarter 1 of 2025/26. Within the headcount of 632, 15 employees have 2 roles, and have therefore been counted twice, meaning we have 617 employees.

Quarter 1 of 2025/26 has seen adjustments of 21 leavers and 21 new starters across the organisation.

Chart 1

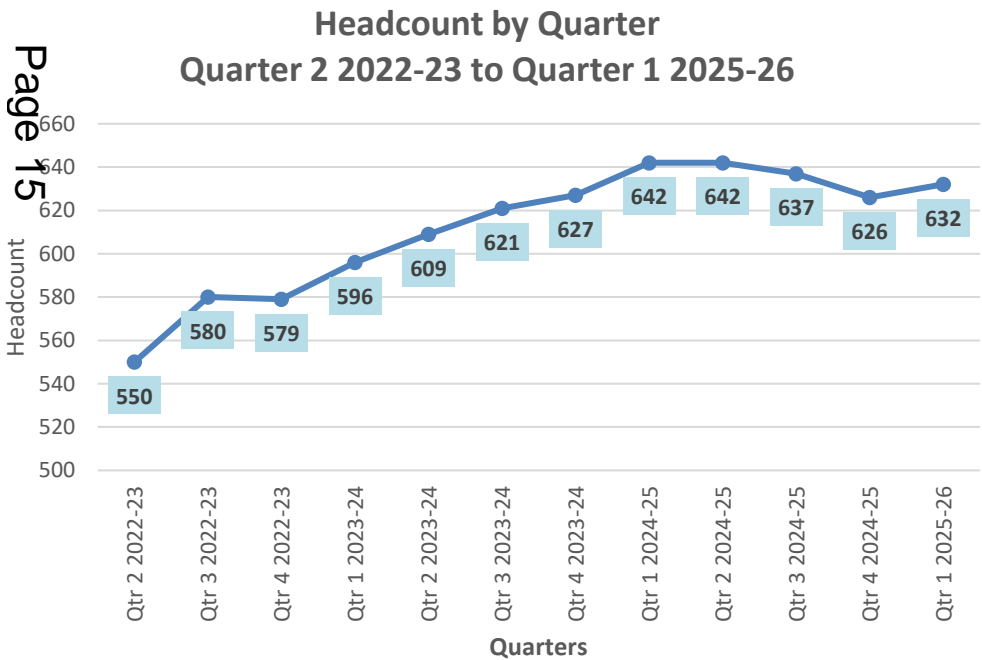


Chart 2 details the distribution of headcount across our departments and directorates as at the end of quarter 1 of 2025/26. Wellbeing and Environmental Services continue to show the highest headcount. CDC are host employer to the District Councils Network (DCN) and these employees are included in the HR, OD, and Payroll directorate.

Environmental Services has had the biggest reduction in headcount with 3 since quarter 4 of 2024/25. Housing Services' headcount has increased by 6 and Customer Focus and Property each by 2 in the last quarter.

Chart 2

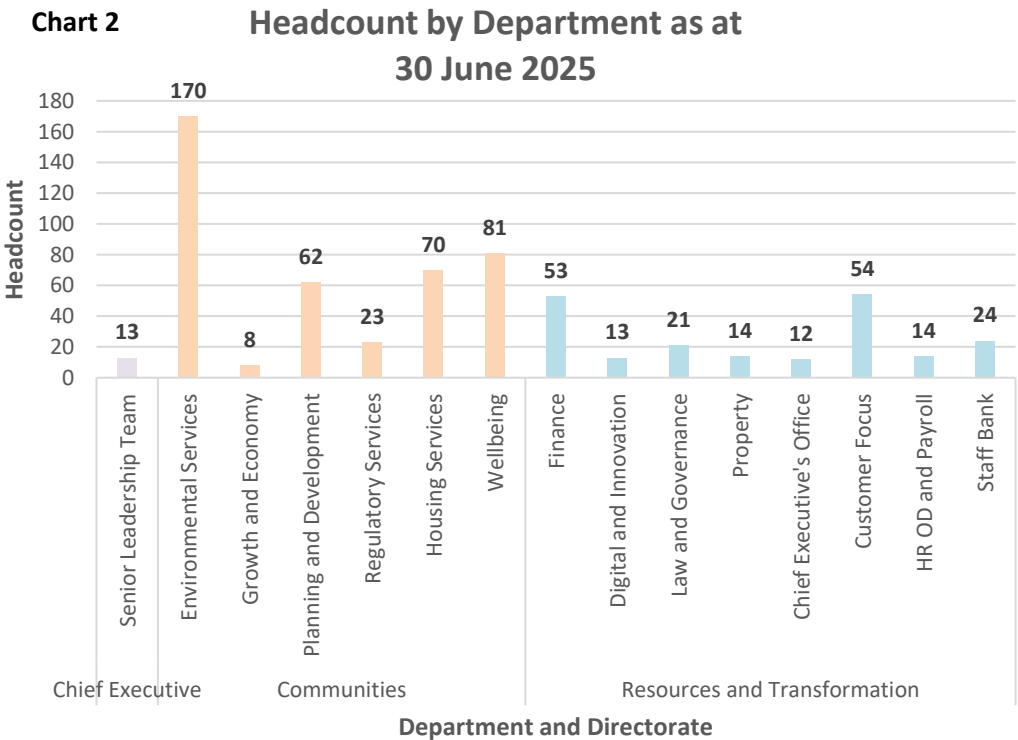


Chart 3 outlines the fluctuation of FTE which has increased by 4.62 between quarter 4 of 2024/25 and quarter 1 of 2025/26.

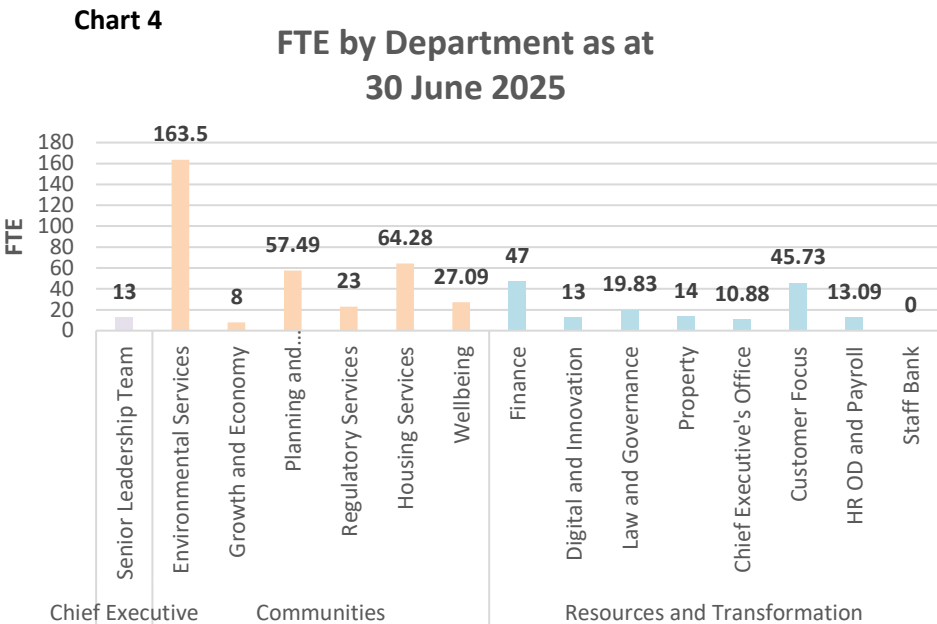
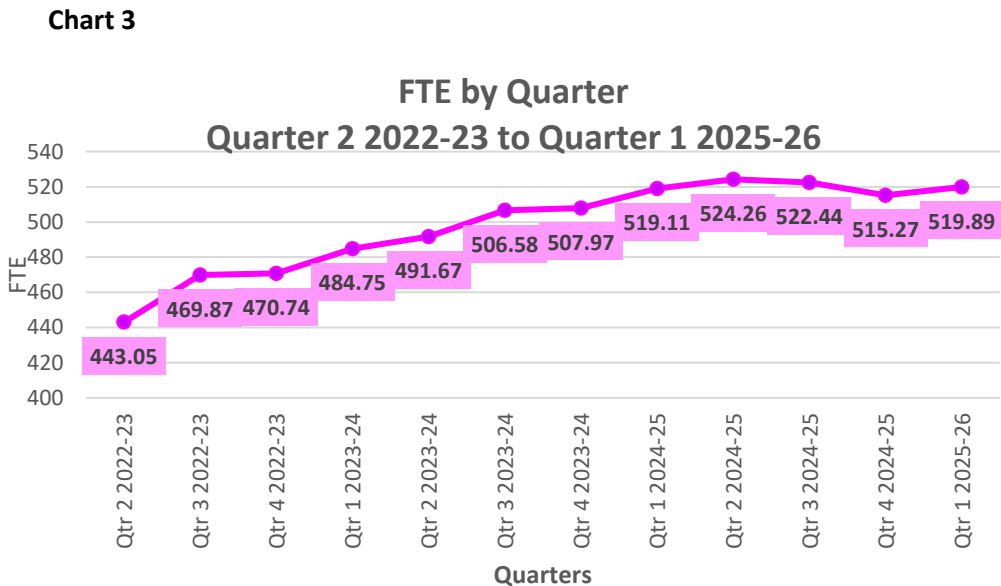


Chart 5

% Breakdown of Role Basis as at 30 June 2025

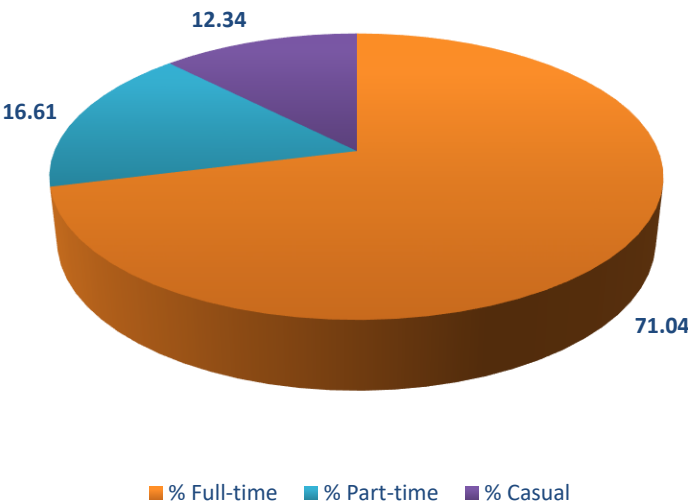


Chart 4 outlines the distribution of FTE across the departments and directorates as at the end of quarter 1 of 2025/26.

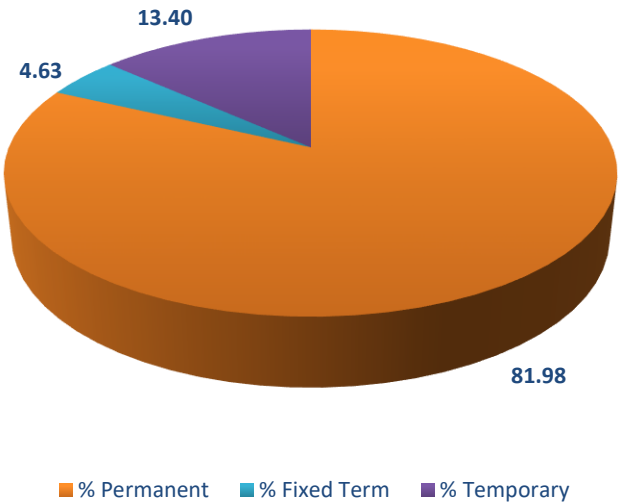
Since quarter 4 of 2024/25; Housing Services have increased by 5.53 FTE. Environmental Services' FTE has reduced by 2.5 and Chief Executive's Office reduced by 2.

Charts 5 shows the breakdown of basis of hours across our workforce as of 30 June 2025. Since quarter 4 of 2024/25 there has been minimal change to the make-up of role-basis with our full-time reducing by 0.53% and part-time increasing by 0.64% and our casual workforce reducing by 0.12%.

Chart 6 outlines the employment basis of those directly employed by CDC shows that 81.98% of our workforce are in permanent roles. This has slightly increased, by 0.51% since Quarter 4 of 2024/25. There has been minimal fluctuation of employment basis since the last quarter.

Chart 6

% Breakdown of Employment Basis as at 30 June 2025



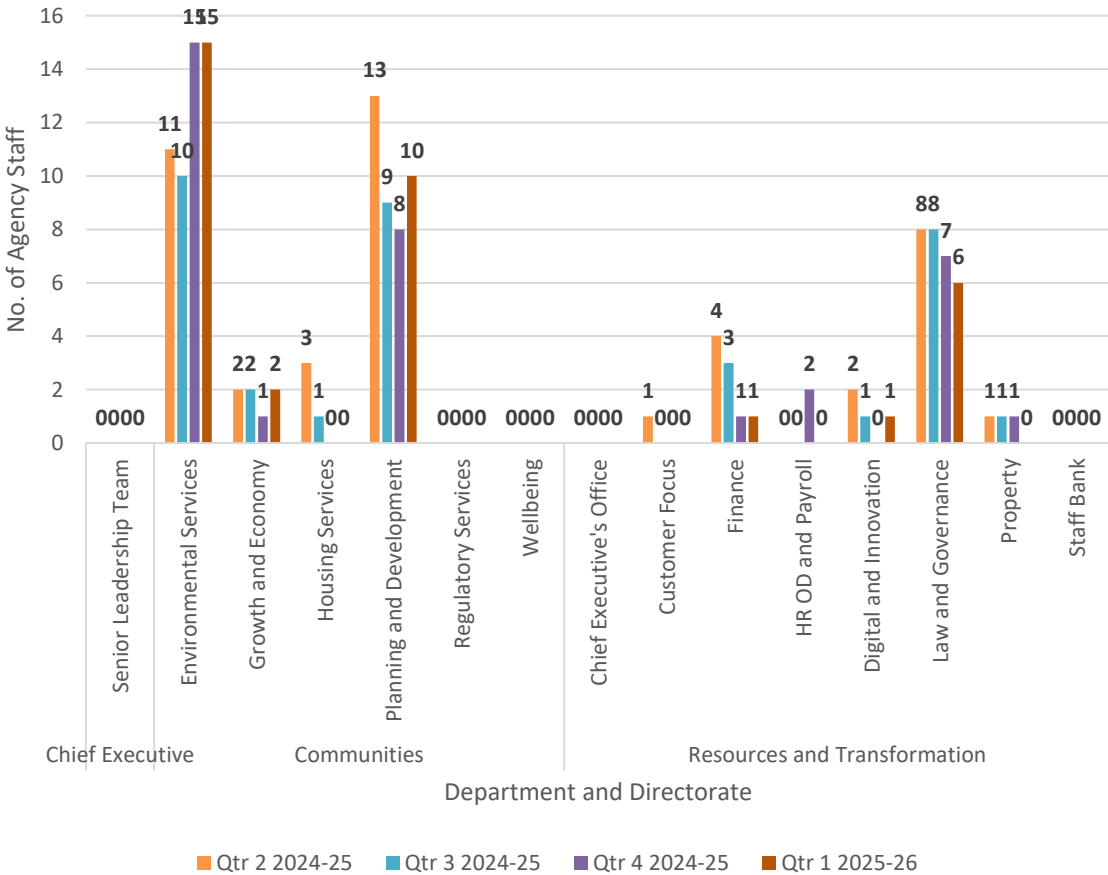
In addition to employing staff directly, CDC also utilise Agency Workers, either for interim or short-term usage for specific posts and projects.

Chart 7 outlines agency usage as at the end of each quarter for the last rolling year by department. A total of 35 Agency workers were engaged with CDC at the end of quarter 1 of 2025/26. This has remained the same since quarter 4 of 2024/25 but has reduced by 10 in the last 12 months.

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 remained the same for the last 2 quarters.

Planning and Development have increased agency usage by 2 in the last quarter Growth and Economy by 1. Law and Governance has reduced by 1 in quarter 1 of 2025/26.

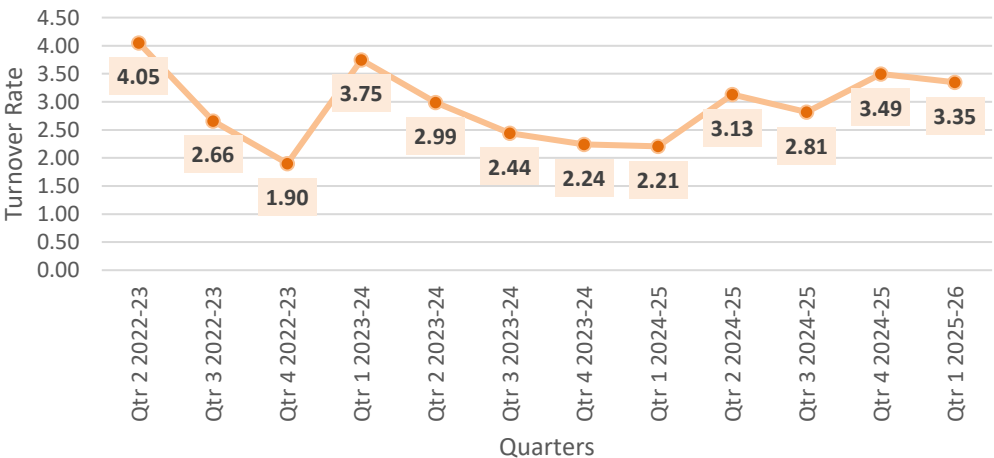
Chart 7 Agency Usage as at Quarter End for the last rolling 12 months



Turnover rates and Leaver information

Chart 8 tracks the turnover rate per quarter over a 3-year period, from July 2022 to June 2025. 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 2 2022-23 to Quarter 1 2025-26



The turnover for quarter 1 of 2025/26 shows a reduction of 0.14% in the turnover rate since quarter 4 of 2024/25.

Chart 9 details the quarterly turnover rate by department for quarter 1.

Chart 10 outlines leavers by reason for quarter 1 of 2025/26. Of the 21 leavers recorded in quarter 1, resignation is the highest reason for leaving, accounting for 61.90%. 9.52% of leavers are due to Retirement, 9.52% are due to redundancy and 9.52% are due to dismissal – capability. End of fixed term contract and Retirement – ill-health each accounted for 4.76%.

Chart 9
Quarterly Turnover Rate by Department
as at
30 June 2025

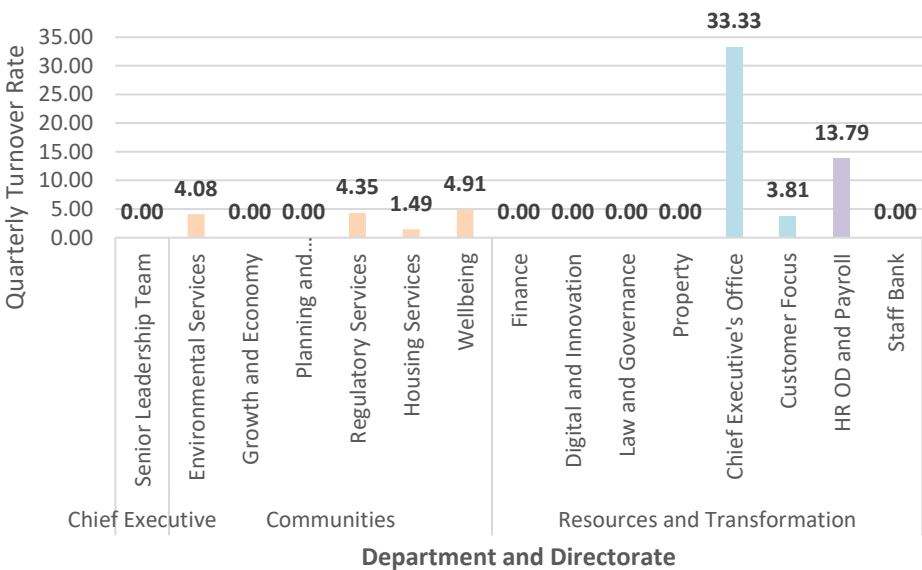


Chart 10
% of Leavers by reason
1 April to 30 June 2025

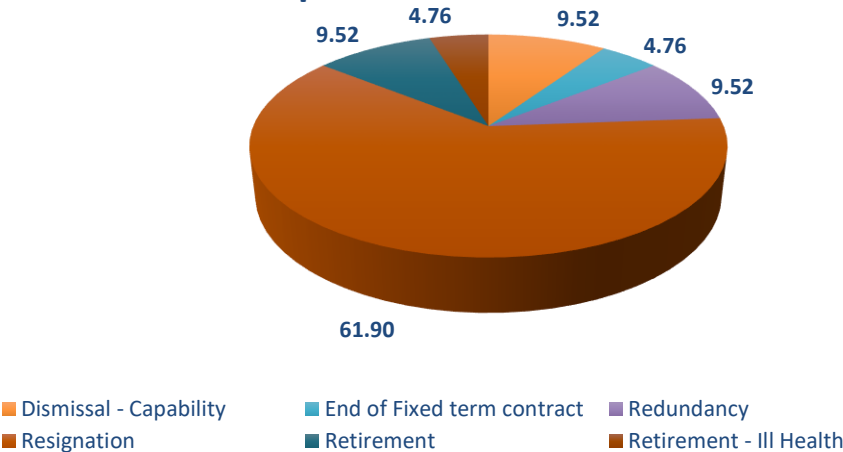
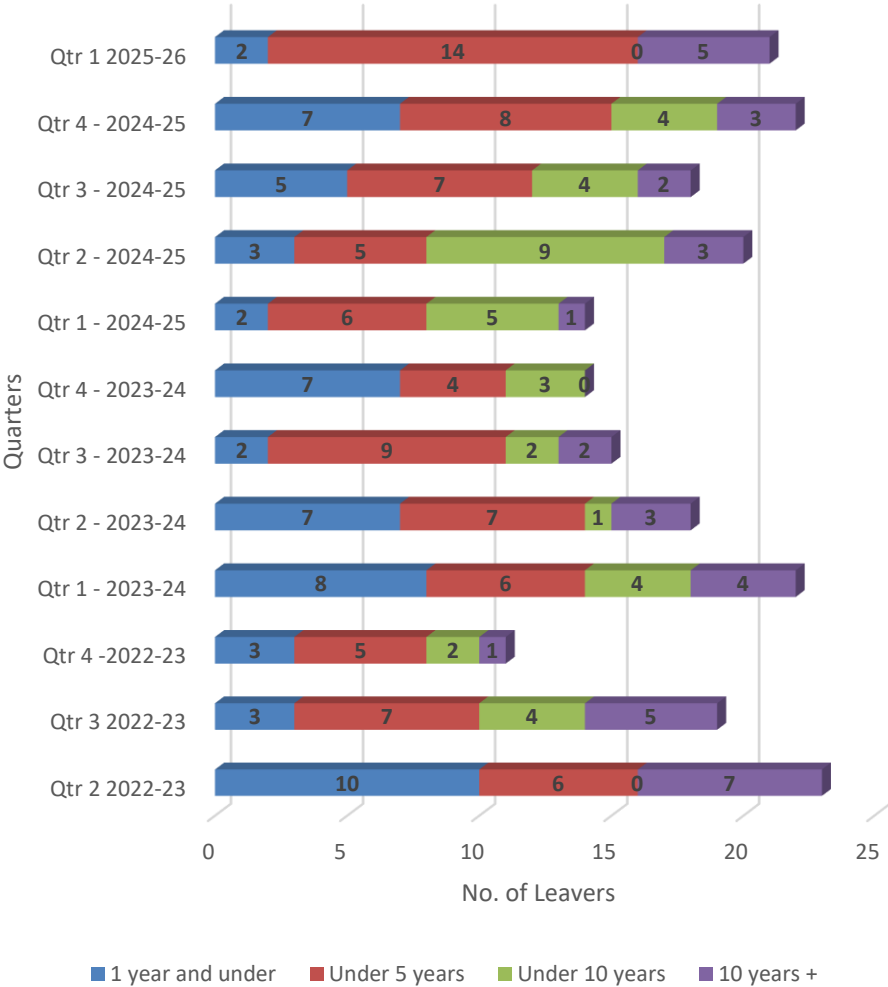


Chart 11 outlines leavers by length of service across the last 12 quarters. In quarter 1 of 2025/26, 2 leavers had less than a year’s service, 14 had under 5 years’ service, none had less than 10 years’ service and 5 had over 10 years.

Chart 11

Leavers by Length of Service
1 July 2022- 30 June 2025



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 21 leavers in quarter 1, all were offered the opportunity to partake in an exit interview. 8 completed the exit interview questionnaire and attended meetings with a member of the HR Team. This is a 38% completion rate, which is a reduction from the last quarter that recorded a 64% 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.

When asked where they were going next, 25% were moving to another local authority, 25% were retiring, 25% had no other employment to move to at the point of leaving, 12.5% had got a job in a private company and 12.5% were going self-employed.

Comments received within the interviews that took place were mixed with some relating to personal circumstances, pace of work too slow in their team, travel is too much, workload has increased significantly, very positive experience at the council and very sad to be leaving. Most were very positive about the colleagues they had worked with.

HR Business Partners review exit interview data in order to pick up any trends and discuss content with relevant managers. 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 July 2022. Musculo-skeletal has seen the most incidents across this period, with 207 across the period. This is closely followed by Stomach/liver/kidney and digestion which had 204 incidents.

There were 160 incidents of sickness absence recorded in Quarter 1 of 2025/26, this is 2 less incidents than the same quarter of 2024/25.

For Quarter 1 of 2025/26, stress – non-work related was the highest recorded reason for sickness absence, accounting for 20% of all incidents in the last quarter. This is followed by Musculo-skeletal, which accounts for 16.88% of all incidents in the last quarter. The third highest reasons this quarter were cold and flu symptoms and post-op recovery and medical checks, each accounting for 11.25% of all incidents.

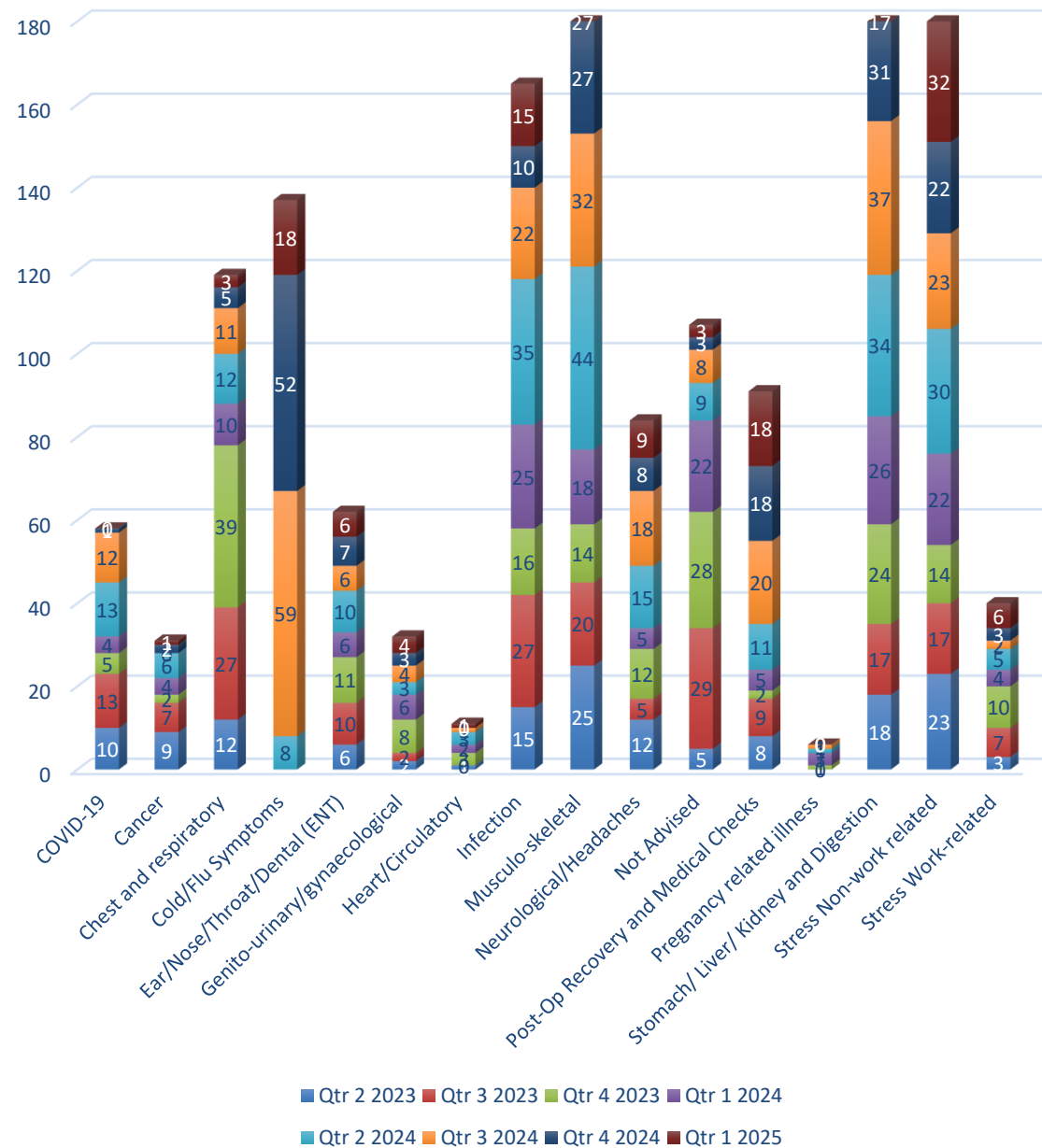
The highest reason for sickness absence across the last rolling 12 months was cold and flu symptoms, with 137 incidents recorded and accounting for 16.17% of all incidents.

The second highest reason for sickness absence in the last 12 months is Musculo-skeletal, with 130 incidents reported which equates to 15.35% of all incidents.

Stomach, liver, kidney and digestion is the third highest reason in the last 12 months, recording 119 incidents and accounting for 14.05% of all incidents.

Chart 12

Sickness Absence Incidents by Reason
July 2023 to June 2025



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.

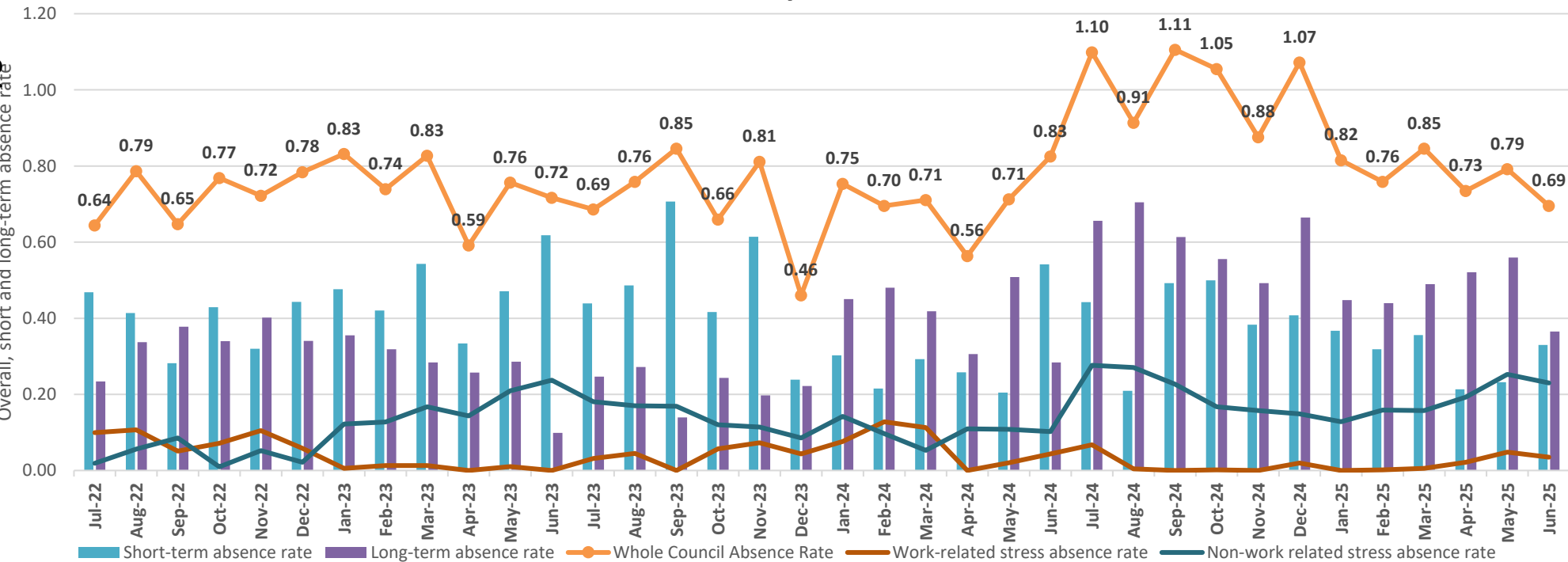
Chart 13 tracks the absence rate per month, which is effectively the percentage of working time lost, from July 2022 to June 2025 and shows a decrease in sickness absence rates since quarter 4 of 2024/25. The absence rate is calculated by dividing the hours lost due to sickness absence by the available working hours for the period. September 2024 records the highest rate of absence at 1.11% of working time lost.

Chart 13 also captures the absence rate of short and long-term instances, In the last 12 months. October 2024 has the highest rate of short-term absence, recording a rate of 0.50 days lost. August 2024 had the highest rate of long-term absence in the last 12 months, with 0.70 days lost.

Chart 13

Council Absence Rates by Month
Overall and broken down into short-term, long-term and stress
July 2022 to June 2025

Page 27



The absence rate attributed to stress is also displayed in Chart 13 and a slight increase in work-related stress was recorded in the last quarter, with a rate of 0.03 days lost in June 2025 compared to 0.01 days lost in March 2025. Work-related stress incidents accounted for 3.75% of incidents in quarter 1 of 2025/26 and 1.89% of incidents in the last rolling 12 months.

The non-work-related stress absence rate has increased slightly over the last quarter, from 0.16 at the end of quarter 4 of 2024/25 to 0.23 at the end of quarter 1 of 2025/26. Non-work-related stress accounted for 20% of incidents in quarter 1 of 2025/26 and 12.63% of incidents in the last rolling 12 months.

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.

Chart 14 % Working Time Lost due to Short Term Sickness Absence 1 April to 30 June 2025

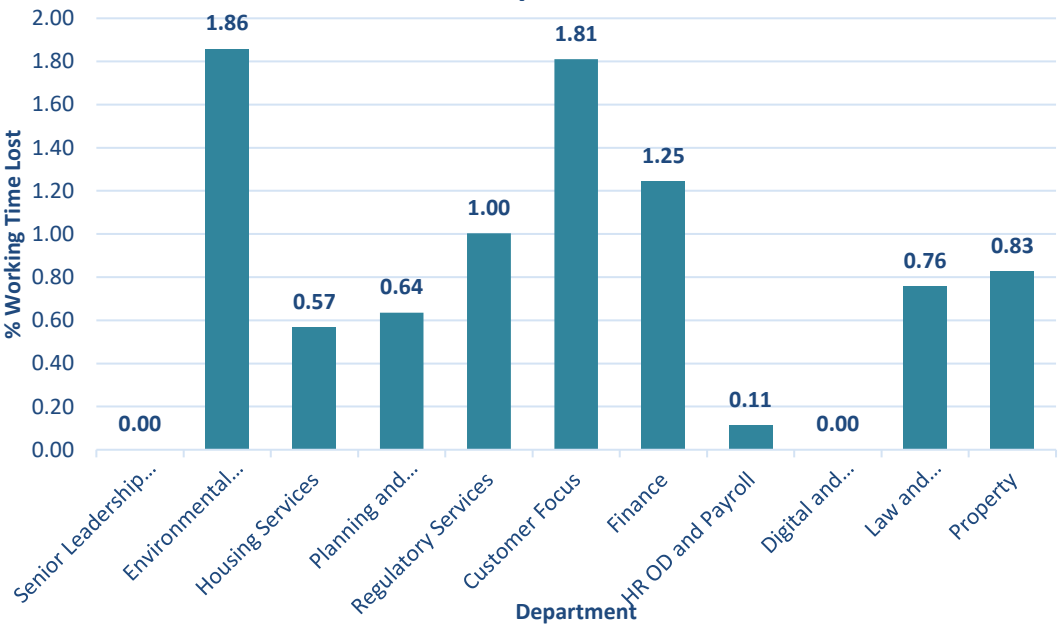
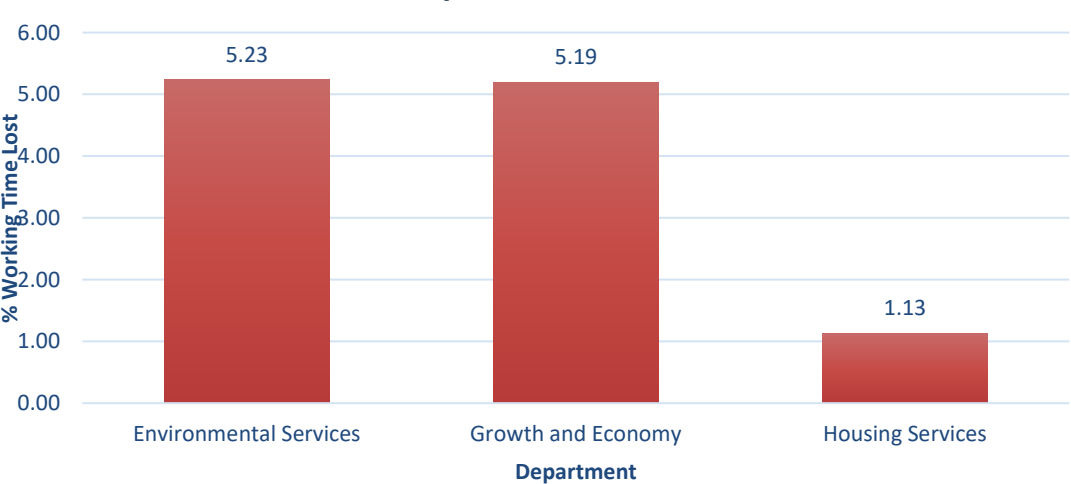


Chart 15 % Working Time Lost due to Long Term Absence 1 April to 30 June 2025



Age, Gender, Ethnicity, Disability and LGBTQ+ Workforce Profile as at 30 June 2025

Chart 16 shows a breakdown by age of the CDC workforce, expressed in percentage. 14% of CDC employees are over 60. 28% 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 18% aged 30 and under. There has been minimal change to the age profile within the last quarter.

Chart 16

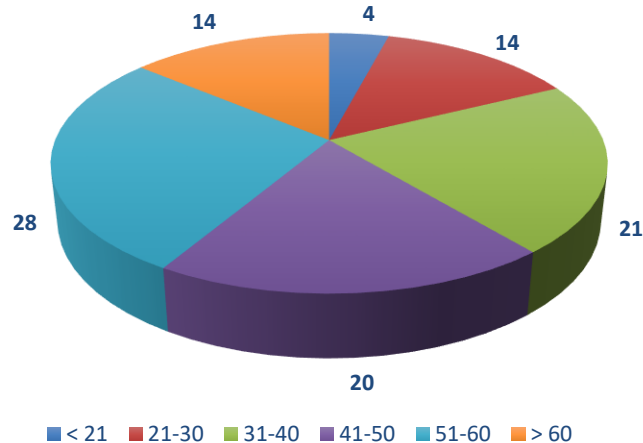
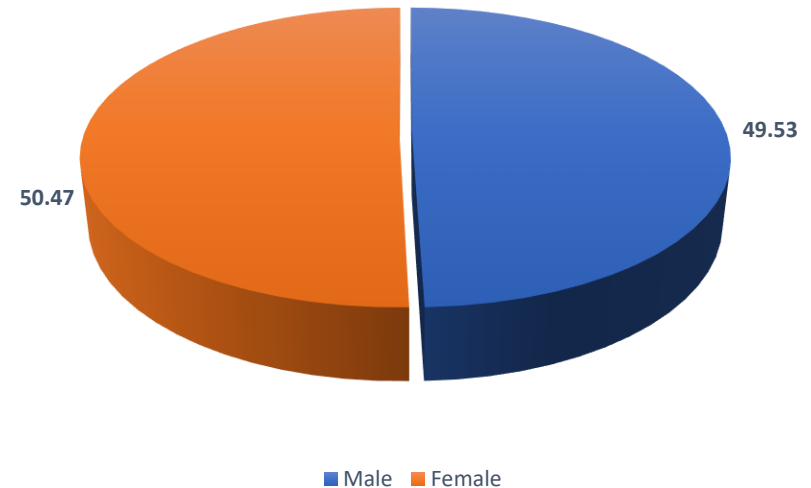
**Age Profile Percentage as at
30 June 2025**

Chart 17

**Gender Profile Percentage as at
30 June 2025**

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, 49.53% of our workforce are male and 50.47% are female meaning it is representative of the district.

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.

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 1 of 2025/26, 84.02% of employees have recorded this information, with 4.75% 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 30 June 2025

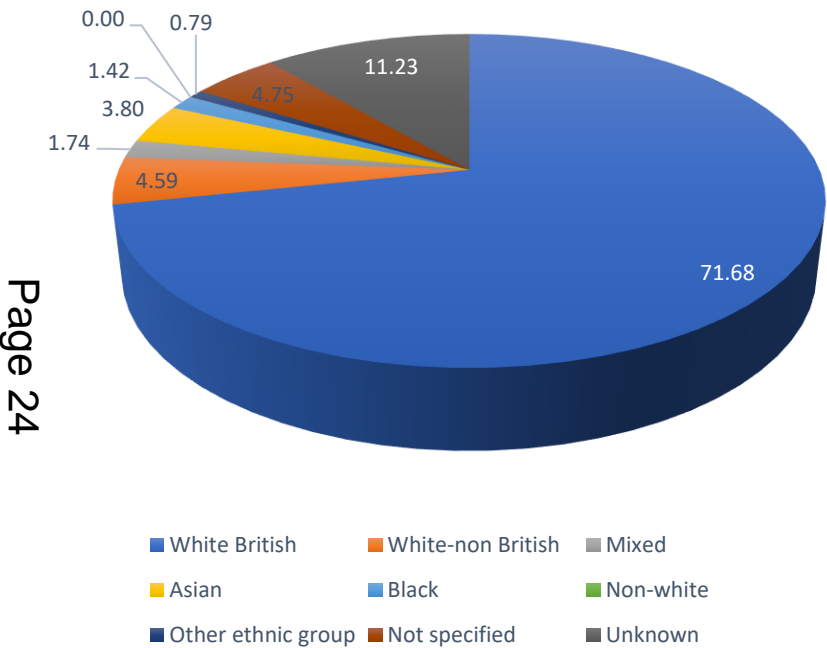


Table 3

Ethnic Group	England average (%)	Cherwell District (%)	CDC (%) Qtr 2 24/25	CDC (%) Qtr 3 24/25	CDC (%) Qtr 4 24/25	CDC (%) Qtr 1 25/26
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	9.3	6.0	4.21	4.08	3.98	3.80
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	4.0	1.8	1.87	1.88	1.59	1.42
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	2.9	2.9	1.72	1.88	1.91	1.74
White	81.7	88.1	74.26	70.02	74.84	76.27
Other ethnic group	2.1	1.3	0.78	0.78	0.80	0.79
Prefer not to say	N/A	N/A	5.30	5.18	5.10	4.75
Unknown	N/A	N/A	11.86	11.62	11.78	11.23

CDC’s workforce is predominantly white British with 71.68% 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 increased in the last quarter by 1.43% but at the end of quarter 1 was 11.83% 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 4 of 2024/25 and 1 of 2025/26.

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.

We have requested disability information be provided by employees. At the end of quarter 1 of 2024/25, 43% of the workforce had not provided this data, however at the end of quarter 1 of 2025/26 this is down to 13%, as illustrated in Chart 20. The HR Team are committed to completing further follow-up to improve the data collection within this area. Chart 21 shows a breakdown of data relating to disability by grade band.

Chart 19 Ethnic Group Percentage by Grade Band as at 30 June 2025

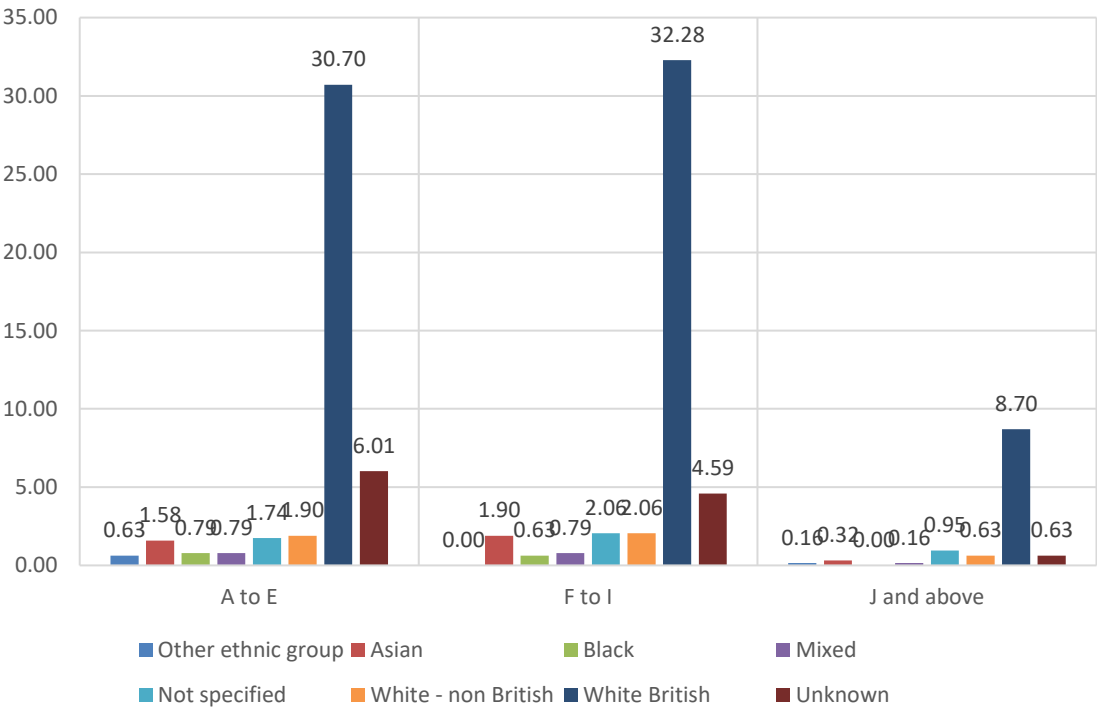


Chart 20 Disability Percentage Profile as at 30 June 2025

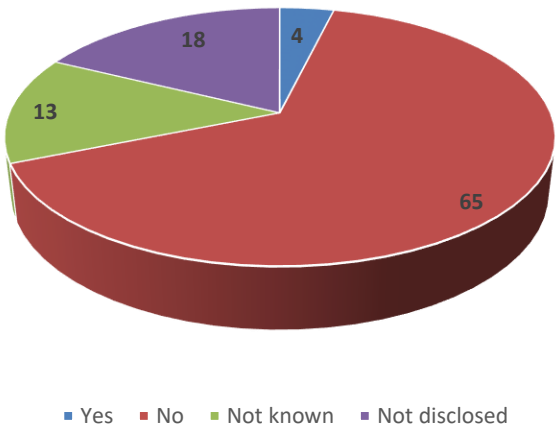
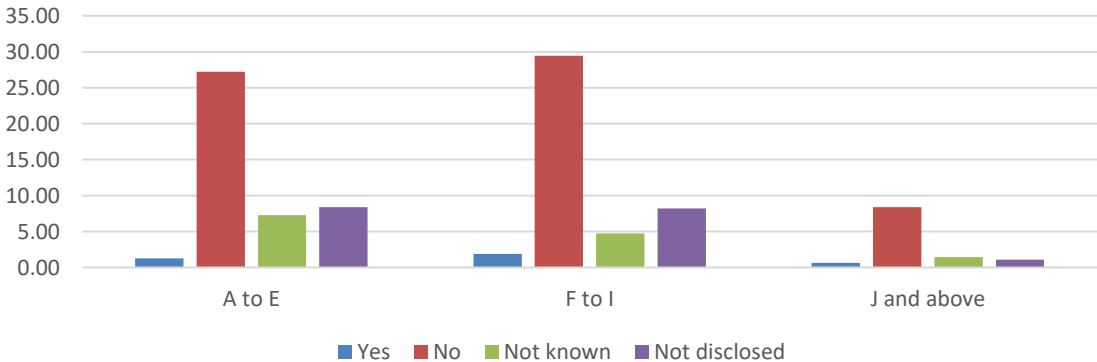


Chart 21 Disability Percentage by Grade Band as at 30 June 2025



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, 12.18% of the workforce have declined to specify and 12.5% have not completed this data.

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.

Chart 22

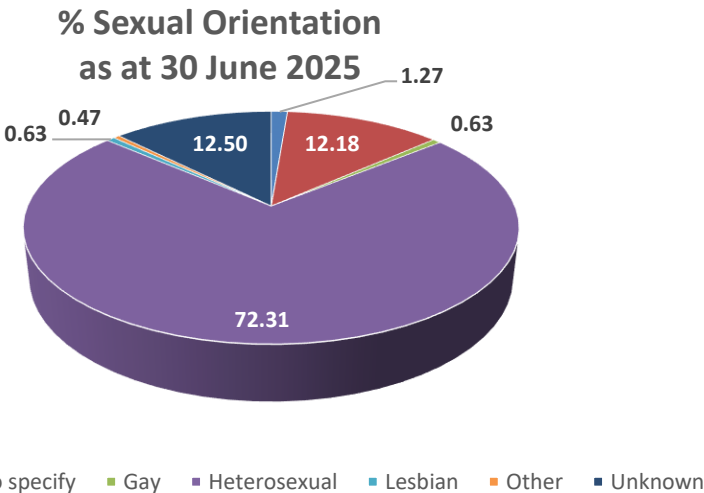
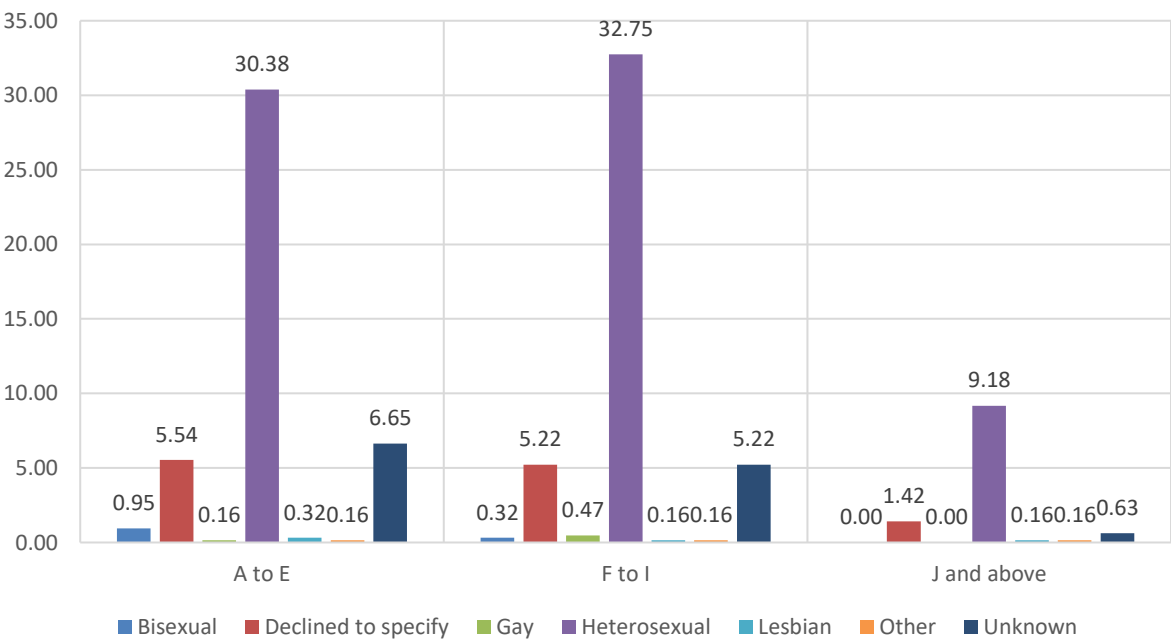


Chart 23

Sexual Orientation Percentage by Grade Band as at 30 June 2025



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. The data presented in this report is representative of the last 12 months from July 2024 to June 2025. There have been 97 recruitment campaigns during this period to which 1332 applications were received and 91 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. At the request of Personnel Committee, the age ranges of applicants have been updated to match the district census data. The highest number of applicants were between ages 35 and 49, followed by 25 to 34, these 2 groups account for 68.46% of all applications. Table 4 provides district data on age bands. When comparing the data of applicants by age to district census data, it shows that applicants in the 25-34 age range are significantly higher than the district percentage and other categories broadly align.

Chart 24

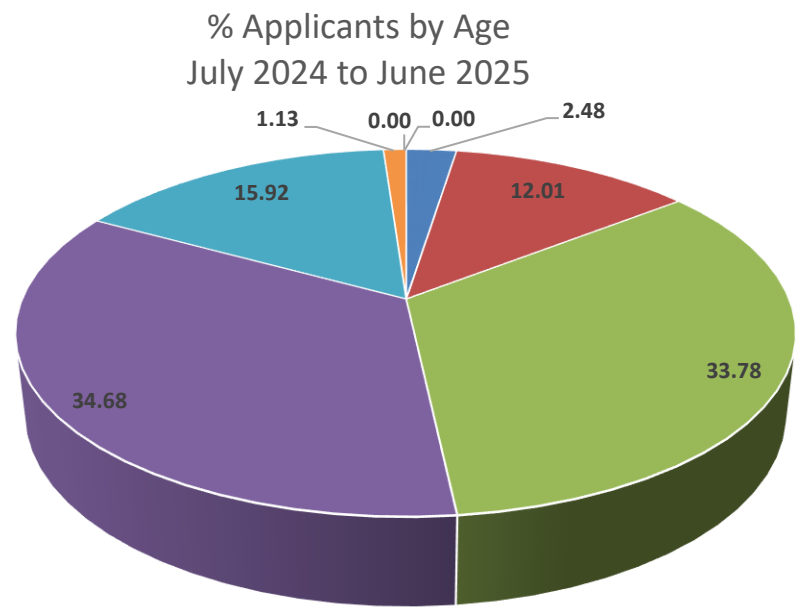


Table 4

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

■ 16 - 19 ■ 20 - 24 ■ 25 - 34 ■ 35 - 49 ■ 50 - 64 ■ 65 - 74 ■ 75 + ■ Unspecified

Chart 25 outlines the percentage of applicants per ethnic group and Table 5 shows the make-up of the District.

Chart 25

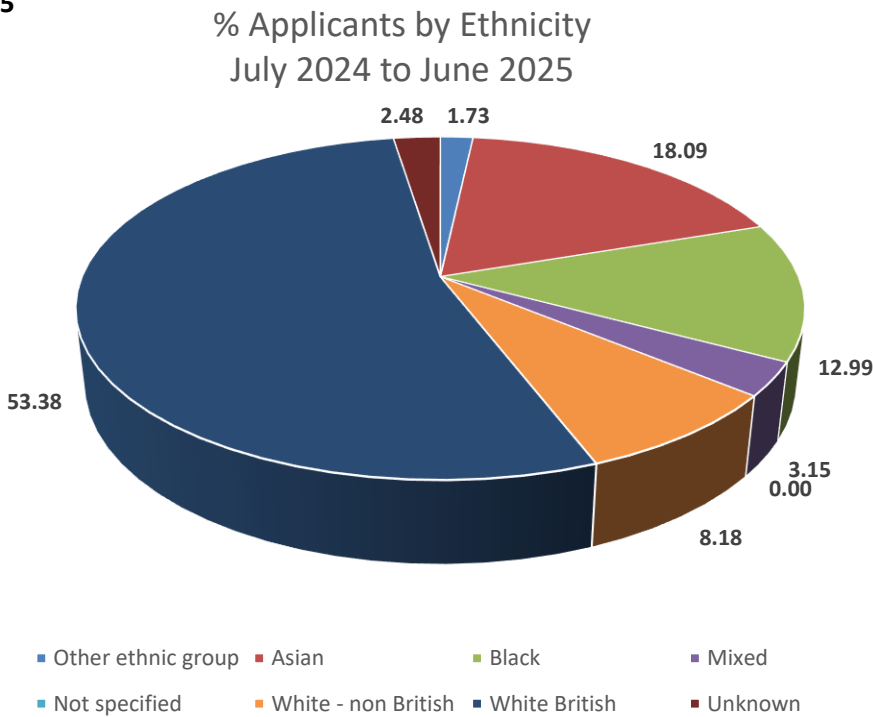


Table 5

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

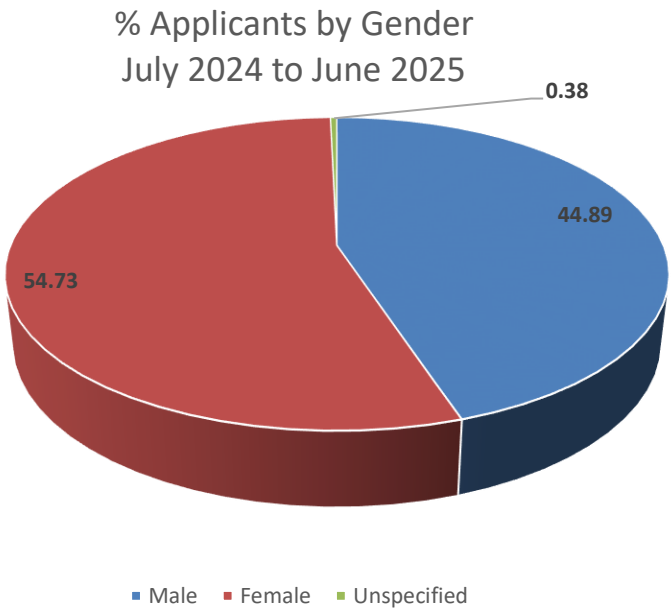


Chart 26 shows the percentage of applicants by gender, which is an almost 50/50 split across male and female, which is both reflective of our current workforce and district data covered earlier in this report.

Chart 27

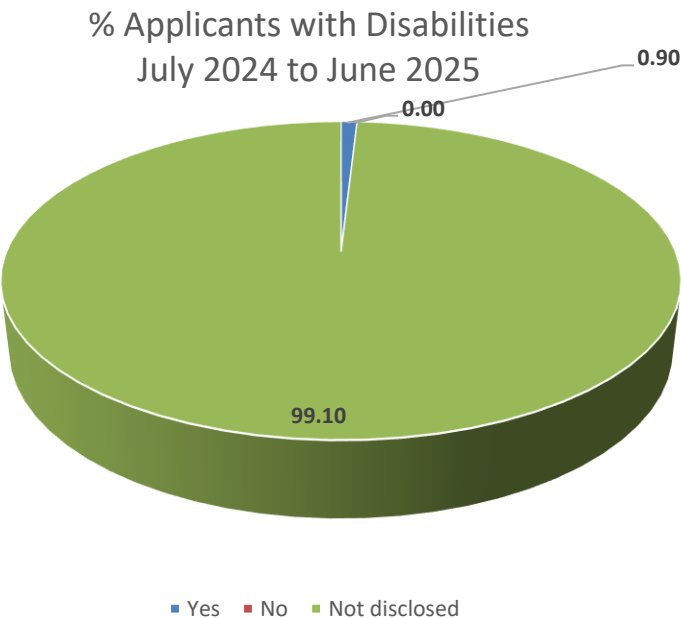


Chart 28 shows the percentage of applicants by sexual orientation. Oxfordshire County Council confirms from census 2021 information that 89.4% of the county identify as straight or heterosexual, with 3.4% not identifying as straight or heterosexual and 7.9% preferring not to say. CDC’s applicant data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

Chart 28

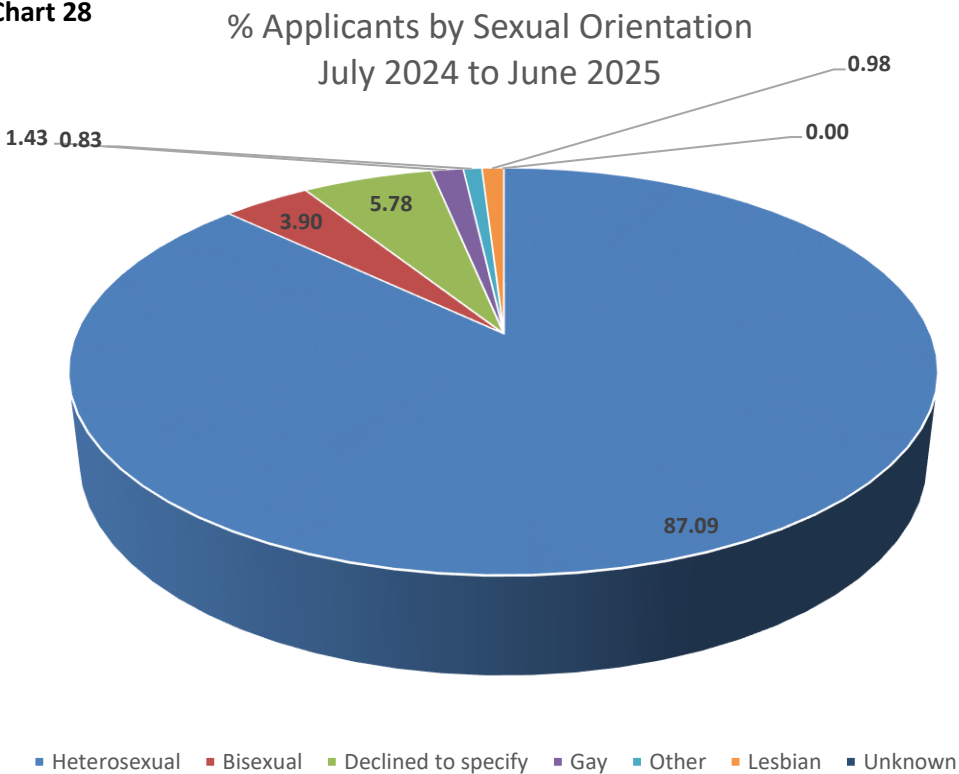


Chart 27 shows the percentage of applicants by disability. 99.10% of applicants have not disclosed this at applicant stage. It is hoped that applicants would provide this information should they have disabilities as we have a guaranteed interview scheme if they meet the essential criteria for a role, as part of being a disability confident employer.

Diversity in Recruitment: A breakdown of applicants to offer by personal attributes for inclusion and grade group

As requested at the Personnel Committee in June 2025, Tables 1-5 below provide a breakdown of applicants and offers of employment made, broken down into grade groups and then by:

- Ethnicity
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Gender
- Disability

Table 1: Number of applicants and offers by ethnicity and grade group

% ETHNICITY	A to E		F to I		J and above		TOTALS	
	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers
Comparator Ethnic Group								
Other ethnic group	1.47	2.50	1.87	0.00	1.87	0.00	1.73	1.10
Asian	15.30	2.50	20.32	6.98	14.95	0.00	18.09	4.40
Black	6.29	7.50	18.72	4.65	2.80	0.00	12.99	5.49
Mixed	4.82	7.50	2.41	6.98	0.93	0.00	3.15	6.59
Not specified	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
White - non-British	7.97	5.00	8.56	6.98	6.54	0.00	8.18	5.49
White British	62.89	75.00	44.79	74.42	71.03	100.00	53.38	76.92
Unknown	1.26	0.00	3.34	0.00	1.87	0.00	2.48	0.00
TOTAL %	100	100.00	100	100.00	100	100.00	100.00	100.00
TOTAL NUMBER	477	40	748	43	107	8	1332	91

Table 2: Number of applicants and offers by sexual orientation and grade group

% LGBTQ+	A to E		F to I		J and above		TOTALS	
Sexual Orientation	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers
Heterosexual	90.78	87.80	84.49	86.96	88.79	87.50	87.09	87.37
Bisexual	2.73	0.00	4.81	0.00	2.80	0.00	3.90	0.00
Declined to specify	3.98	7.32	6.82	6.52	6.54	12.50	5.78	7.37
Gay	0.63	0.00	2.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.43	0.00
Other	0.42	0.00	1.07	0.00	0.93	0.00	0.83	0.00
Lesbian	1.47	2.44	0.67	0.00	0.93	0.00	0.98	1.05
Unknown	0.00	2.44	0.00	6.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.21
TOTAL %	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
TOTAL NUMBER	477	40	748	43	107	8	1332	91

Table 3: Number of applicants and offers by age and grade group

% Age Band	A to E		F to I		J and above		TOTALS	
Age Band	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers
16 - 19	5.87	19.51	0.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.48	8.42
20 - 24	16.56	9.76	9.89	4.35	6.54	0.00	12.01	6.32
25 - 34	28.30	17.07	38.10	32.61	28.04	12.50	33.78	24.21
35 - 49	31.66	34.15	35.83	39.13	40.19	37.50	34.68	36.84
50 - 64	16.14	19.51	14.71	23.91	23.36	50.00	15.92	24.21
65 - 74	1.47	0.00	0.80	0.00	1.87	0.00	1.13	0.00
75 +	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unspecified	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL %	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
TOTAL NUMBER	477	40	748	43	107	8	1332	91

Table 4: Number of applicants and offers by gender and grade group

% Gender	A to E		F to I		J and above		TOTALS	
Gender	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers
Male	46.75	63.41	40.91	34.78	64.49	75.00	44.89	50.53
Female	53.25	36.59	58.42	63.04	35.51	25.00	54.73	48.42
Unspecified	0.00	0.00	0.67	2.17	0.00	0.00	0.38	1.05
TOTAL %	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
TOTAL NUMBER	477	40	748	43	107	8	1332	91

Table 5: Number of applicants and offers by disability and grade group

% Disability	A to E		F to I		J and above		TOTALS	
Disability	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers	No. of applicants	No. of offers
Yes	0.21	0.00	0.94	2.17	3.74	37.50	0.90	4.21
No	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Not disclosed	99.79	100.00	99.06	97.83	96.26	62.50	99.10	95.79
TOTAL	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
TOTAL NUMBER	477	40	748	43	107	8	1332	91

Apprenticeships within Cherwell District Council as at Quarter 1 – 2025/26

Background

As an organisation with an annual pay bill of more than £3 million, we pay 0.5% of our pay bill towards the apprenticeship levy. This levy is then used to support apprentices to study for qualifications from Level 2 – Level 7.

Apprentices are new employees into the organisation, who are employed specifically into an apprenticeship role, or it is also existing staff who are upskilling using the levy.

The organisation has an apprenticeship levy dashboard (DAS) which is supervised by the HR Department.

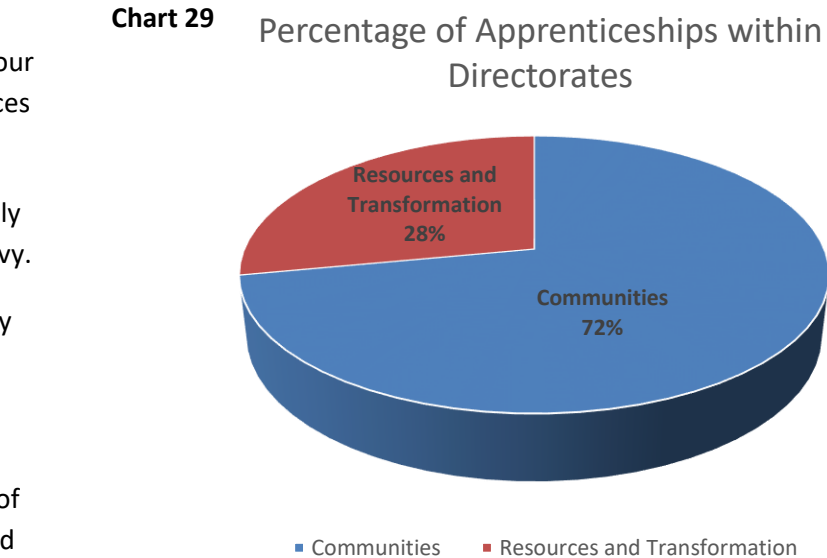
Information on apprentices in the organisation

There are 25 apprenticeships currently running within the Council for this quarter, of which 5 is an apprentice on programme, employed specifically as an apprentice; and the remaining 20 are employees undertaking an apprenticeship as CPD or career progression.

There are currently 18 apprenticeships within the Communities Directorate and 7 within the Resources and Transformation Directorate – please see chart 29.

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:



Apprenticeship Standard	Level of Apprenticeship	Duration of Apprenticeship	Number of employees on apprenticeship	Apprentice or Employee CPD	Team	Directorate	Cost of Apprenticeships (£)
Business Administrator	Level 3	18 months	1	Apprentice	Depot – Thorpe Lane	Communities (1)	5,000

Apprenticeship Standard	Level of Apprenticeship	Duration of Apprenticeship	Number of employees on apprenticeship	Apprentice or Employee CPD	Team	Directorate	Cost of Apprenticeships (£)
Team Leader/Supervisor	Level 3	18 months	3	CPD	Sport and Physical Activities (2) ICT (1)	Resources and Transformation (1) Communities (2)	13,500
Transport and warehouse operations supervisor	Level 3	14 months	1	CPD	Business Support - Depot	Communities (1)	4,700
Motor vehicle service and maintenance technician - light vehicle	Level 3	22 months	1	Apprentice	Fleet Management	Communities (1)	10,669
Sports Coach	Level 4	14 months	1	Apprentice	Wellbeing	Communities (1)	9,000
Data Analyst	Level 4	14 months	1	CPD	Digital Innovation and	Resources and Transformation (1)	14,250
Data Protection and Information Governance Practitioner	Level 4	18 months	1	CPD	Legal Services	Resources and Transformation (1)	10,000
Senior housing and property management	Level 4	22 months	1	CPD	Housing Grants and Standards	Communities (1)	8,933

Apprenticeship Standard	Level of Apprenticeship	Duration of Apprenticeship	Number of employees on apprenticeship	Apprentice or Employee CPD	Team	Directorate	Cost of Apprenticeships (£)
People Professional	Level 5	18 months	2	CPD (1) Apprentice (1)	Human Resources	Resources and Transformation (2)	22,000
Chartered Surveyor	Level 6	66 months	1	Apprentice	Access and Grants	Communities (1)	27,000
Environmental Health Practitioner	Level 6	48 months	1	CPD	Health Protection and Compliance	Communities (1)	22,000
Public Health Practitioner	Level 6	36 months	1	CPD	Health Place Shaping	Communities (1)	22,000
Chartered Town Planner	Level 7	30 months	7	CPD	Planning	Communities (7)	92,450
Accountancy or Taxation Professional	Level 7	38 months	1	CPD	Finance	Resources and Transformation (1)	21,000
Accountancy Professional (CIPFA)	Level 7	36 months	1	CPD	Finance	Resources and Transformation (1)	20,433
Sustainability business specialist	Level 7	24 months	1	CPD	Environment Services	Communities (1)	10,755
			25		Total apprenticeship levy committed		295,190

Current amount in the Levy Account

The Council currently has £174,205 in their levy account. It is estimated that a further £106,244 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.

Expired Funds

No funds expired in Quarter 1 of 2025/26, but the levy account is indicating that the Council will not have any funds expiring until May 2027. 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.

We may have indicated in a previous quarter's stats that funds were due to expire but if apprenticeship details are updated after creating the report this could then mean no funds expired.

Due to the Council actively putting staff onto apprenticeships, expiring funds are now not anticipated until May 2027 and as the Learning and Development Team are currently engaging further employees on to apprenticeships, this expiry date will be pushed further away.

Apprenticeship Reforms under the new Government

As previously reported, the Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer and Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson announced a new growth and skills levy which will replace the existing apprenticeship levy and is to include new foundation apprenticeships.

These new apprenticeships will give young people a route in to careers in critical sectors, enabling them to earn a wage whilst developing vital skills.

In February, the government highlighted several changes to how apprenticeships will operate in the future, in response to employers' calls for more flexibility. This will include introduction of shorter apprenticeships from August 2025 (subject to the parliamentary timetable), with the minimum length reduced from 12 to 8 months. The new development will allow training to be delivered and completed faster where that makes sense for a given industry, or an individual has significant prior learning.

Added to this, employers were given more flexibility over maths and English requirements for apprentices. Businesses will now be able to decide whether adult learners, over the age of 19 when they start their apprenticeship course, will need to complete a level 2 English and maths qualification (equivalent to GCSE) to pass it. This does not mean that apprentices will not be assessed on core English and maths skills needed to demonstrate competency relevant to their occupation, these requirements will remain a fundamental part of the apprenticeship.

Learners aged 16-18 will still be required to achieve English and maths qualifications.

We are closely monitoring the situation and will provide further update once more information is available.