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Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Committee: Personnel Committee
Date: Wednesday 18 September 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 - 8)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 July 2024.

6. **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive communications from the Chairman.

7. **Policy Review Updates** (Pages 9 - 32)

Report of Assistant Director 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:

- a. Travel and Subsistence Policy (incorporates and therefore supersedes Car User Policy)
- b. Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy

8. **Workforce Profile Statistics - Quarter 1 of 2024/25** (Pages 33 - 58)

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 are resolves:

1.1 to review and note the workforce data for quarter 1 of 2024/25 provided in appendix one, devised to provide insight that will enable officers of CDC to address challenges and efficiencies in the workforce more efficiently

9. **Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group**

In autumn 2022, a joint Equalities Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group was established comprising members of the Personnel Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Working Group is informal and supported by officers from the Performance and Insight Team. Its role is to help shape and oversee the work the Council is doing to deliver on its equality, diversity and inclusion commitments which are set out in the Council's Equalities Framework 'Including Everyone'. Once appointed, the Working Group will review its Terms of Reference to focus on monitoring progress against the three Action Plans agreed by Executive in April 2024.

The Personnel Committee is requested to nominate three Personnel Committee members to join the EDI Working Group. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) will nominate three OSC members to the EDI Working Group at its 10 September meeting.

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.

Evacuation Procedure

When the continuous alarm sounds you must evacuate the building by the nearest available fire exit. Members and visitors should proceed to the car park as directed by Democratic Services staff and await further instructions.

Access to Meetings

If you have any special requirements, such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities to view a meeting online or attend a meeting in person, please contact the officer named below, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting

Mobile Phones

Please ensure that any device is switched to silent operation or switched off.

Webcasting and Broadcasting Notice

The meeting will be recorded by the council for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the council's website. The whole of the meeting will be recorded, except when confidential or exempt items are being considered. The webcast will be retained on the website for 6 months.

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.

The council is obliged, by law, to allow members of the public to take photographs, film, audio-record, and report on proceedings. The council will only seek to prevent this should it be undertaken in a disruptive or otherwise inappropriate manner.

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 10 September 2024

Cherwell District Council

Personnel Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 9 July 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

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

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Fiona Mawson

Officers:

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

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

4 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

5 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

6 Minutes

Subject to a correction to the 22 May 2024 minutes, resolution to Minute 1 to read "That Councillor Amanada Watkins be appointed Chairman of the Personnel Committee for the municipal year 2024/2025, the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 7 February 2024 and 22 May 2024 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman. .

7 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

8 **Policy Review Updates**

The Assistant Director Human Resources submitted a report to seek approval from the Personnel Committee on proposed changes to four existing HR policies: Flexible Working Request Policy; Domestic Abuse Policy; Flexi scheme Policy; and, Employers LGPS Discretions Policy.

In response to Members' questions regarding the refusal of flexible working requests, the Assistant Director Human Resources explained that the policy sets out the acceptable grounds and that line manager should liaise with their HR Business Partner.

In response to Members' questions in relation to raising staff awareness of the Domestic Abuse Policy and support available, the Assistant Director Human Resources explained that she would be advising staff of the Policy at the monthly staff briefing as well as raising awareness of all updated policies via the weekly staff communications. New employees were made aware of all HR policies as part of their induction. Staff (and Members) had access to free support through the council's employee assistance programme.

In considering the Flexi Scheme Policy, Members raised questions about the permitted flexi banking amount and professional training for staff commenting the council should be proactive rather than reactive, the Assistant Director Human Resources explained that the hours related to three standard full time-working days (7 hours 24 minutes) and was pro-rata to hours worked for part time employees (60% of weekly contractual hours). With regards professional training, the Assistant Director Human Resources advised that training in skill sets the council was short of was encouraged and highlighted the pathways to planning.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the following policies be approved for implementation:
 - Flexible Working Request Policy
 - Domestic Abuse Policy
 - Flexi scheme Policy
 - Employers LGPS Discretions Policy

9

Workforce Profile Statistics - Quarter 4 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 are taking to address any issues.

In response to Members' questions regarding the use of temporary agency staff, the Assistant Director Human Resources explained that some services were unable to recruit permanent staff. Agency staff were also used in some services, such as Environmental Services, to cover sickness or peaks in leave.

Resolved

- (1) That the workforce data for quarter 4 of 2023/24 (financial year dates) be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.05 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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This report is public	
Policy Review Updates	
Committee	Personnel Committee
Date of Committee	18 September 2024
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	6 September 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:
 - a. Travel and Subsistence Policy (incorporates and therefore supersedes Car User Policy)
 - b. Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination 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, 27 August 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. Alison Coles, Legal Services Operations Manager, 28 August, 2024

Risk	The policies being put forward mitigate the risk of not being compliant with changes in employment law. There are no risk implications arising directly from this report. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 28 August 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, 28 August 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, 27 August 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.
- 4.3 The table in Appendix 1 gives an overview of all the proposed changes for each policy.
- 4.4 The Travel and Subsistence policy provides updated costs for breakfast, lunch, tea and evening meal that are more favourable to employees as these rates have not been reviewed for at least 5 years. Comparisons were made with other Councils and table 1 outlines the current and proposed rates for information.

Table 1

Subsistence type	Current	Proposed	Increase
Breakfast	£6.66	£7.50	£0.84
Lunch	£9.30	£10.50	£1.20
Tea/coffee	£2.43	£4.00	£1.57
Evening meal	£11.54	£12.50	£0.96

4.5 If employees are to submit claims for the expenses outlined in table 1, receipts must be produced, and for amounts lower than the rates outlined, actuals will be paid. For context, CDC's subsistence expenses bill for the last rolling 12 months has been just over £1,800. The updated Travel and Subsistence policy stipulates that breakfast and lunch should only be claimed following overnight stays due to business requirements, so costs are not expected to significantly increase, despite the more favourable rates.

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 do 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	Travel and Subsistence Policy
Appendix 3	Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy

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

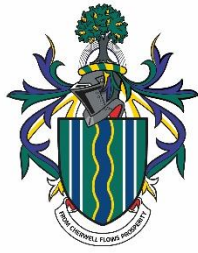
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Appendix 1

Changes to Policies

Policy	Changes
Travel and Subsistence	The car user policy and this policy have been merged. Research was carried out on other councils in the county to ensure our subsistence rates are in line/or more favourable to them.
Bullying, harassment and discrimination Policy	This policy was due a review and has been updated and tidied up. The policy was previously called Anti-bullying, harassment and discrimination policy however this was not in line with other councils.

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Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Travel & Subsistence Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Travel & Subsistence Policy
Owner	Human Resources
Version	1.0
Date of implementation	1 October 2024

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

This document requires the following committee approvals:

Committee	Date of meeting pending approval
Personnel Committee	18 September 2024

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District

DATE FOR REVIEW

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

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision date	Summary of revision

CONTENTS

1	Introduction	4
2	Eligibility to claim	4
3	Mileage rates	5
4	Using a bicycle	5
5	Claim submission timescales	5
6	Breakfast, lunch, tea and evening meal	5
7	Tolls and congestion charges	6
8	Overnight accommodation	6

1. Introduction

- 1.2 This policy aims to help all Council employees understand the procedures they need to follow to be reimbursed for the legitimate expenses they may incur when travelling as part of their work.
- 1.3 This policy applies to all employees of Cherwell District Council. It does not apply to consultants or self-employed contractors.
- 1.4 This policy does not form part of any contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time following consultation with trade union and subject to agreement from the Personnel Committee.
- 1.5 The central principles underpinning this policy are:
- the need to ensure employees are safe and supported when travelling as part of their work;
 - there are clear ways for these employees to minimise the personal expenses they incur when they travel; and
 - there are fair, consistent, and efficient procedures in place to reimburse any expenses.
- 1.6 The policy is also intended to ensure Council employees, comply with all relevant taxation rules and guidelines.
- 1.7 Employees will be expected to incur the minimal business costs wherever possible, for example, first class travel on public transport would not be considered reasonable if the same journey could be made on a standard, 2nd class or economy ticket.

2. Eligibility to claim

- 2.1 Employees are allowed to claim only when their duties require them to incur additional personal expenditure and where their manager has pre-authorized the spend.
- 2.2 The reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses incurred is not an automatic entitlement. Invoices and receipts must be submitted with all claims as evidence of actual cost incurred. Claims submitted without valid receipts will not be processed.
- 2.3 If an employee uses their own private vehicle to undertake official travel, the Council will reimburse them for the expenses incurred through the payment of mileage allowances at the appropriate HMRC rate per mile.
- 2.4 Mileage allowances will **not** be paid for home to office / permanent workplace travel.
- 2.5 Vehicle insurance must cover business use, including for carrying colleagues if appropriate. If it does not, no claim for mileage is permitted. The line manager should satisfy themselves they have seen the employee's car insurance.
- 2.6 Taxis will only be reimbursed where there is a genuine reason for their use e.g., where an employee is potentially put at risk due to early morning or late-night travel following attendance at a course; where no public transport is available; or where there are accessibility issues and reasonable adjustments have been agreed.

3. **Mileage rates**

3.1 As at 1 April 2024 the HMRC approved business mileage rates are as follows:

Vehicle	First 10,000 miles	Above 10,000 miles
Car or van	45p	25p
EV	45p	25p
Motorcycle	24p	24p
Bicycle	20p	20p

3.2 The Council encourages you to share transport where possible. The driver of the vehicle can claim an additional passenger rate of 5p per mile.

3.3 Business mileage rates are for the shortest reasonable route. Claims for excessive mileage will not be authorised without sufficient explanation.

4. **Using a bicycle**

4.1 If an employee chooses to cycle to Council meetings or on Council business the bicycle must be roadworthy. In addition to this it is expected that the employee will wear appropriate high visibility clothing and a helmet. Distances travelled should be reasonable in terms of time and cost.

5. **Claim submission timescales**

5.1 All claims must be submitted by the 10th of each month (or the next normal working day where the 10th falls on a weekend or Bank Holiday) to ensure payment in the next available salary. Claims for subsistence must be submitted via employee self-service in iTrent for manager authorisation.

5.2 All claims must be submitted within three months from the date of spend, any claim received after this period will be returned unpaid.

5.3 Where exceptional circumstances (such as long-term absence) have prevented the claim from being submitted within the three-month window, the employee should contact Payroll with a detailed explanation that has been supported by their Line Manager.

6. **Breakfast, Lunch, Tea, and Evening Meal**

6.1 Employees may claim reasonable costs of meals eaten while on council business away from their normal place of work of at least 10 miles and 5 hours.

Breakfast	£7.50*
Lunch	£10.50*
Tea/coffee	£4.00
Evening Meal	£12.50

There will be no reimbursement for alcoholic drinks.

**payment will be made only after an overnight stay due to council business.*

6.3 Detailed/itemised receipts must be provided. Credit card receipts and copies of credit card statements can be accepted as proof of purchase but **MUST** be accompanied by an itemised receipt/invoice giving details of the items purchased. In exceptional circumstances, where itemised receipts are not available, debit or credit card receipts/statements will be allowed if the place of purchase and a brief description of goods/services are shown. In these circumstances, reimbursement may be through payroll with tax deducted.

6.4 If payment is made via contactless, in some circumstances, a receipt is only provided if requested. The employee must ensure that they obtain a receipt to support the expense.

7. **Toll Fees and Congestion Charges**

7.1 Where the employee is required to pay a toll and/or a congestion charge fee, these can be claimed in the usual way, but the claim must be supported by an itemised receipt.

8. **Overnight Accommodation**

8.1 Employees who stay away overnight while travelling on business, or attending work-related training, may be reimbursed the actual cost of legitimate general expenses incurred so long as the actual cost is reasonable and not excessive, and valid VAT receipts or invoices are submitted. It will be the employee's responsibility to arrange the overnight accommodation however this **must** be pre-authorised by the line manager.

8.2 Further information on work-related training expenses can be found under the Learning and Development Policy.

8.3 The following expenses may be paid:

- Hotel overnight accommodation
- Breakfast, lunch and evening meals if these are not already included in the cost of the hotel stay
- Car parking charges
- Toll charges
- Public transport fares
- Other necessary out of pocket/general business expenses

8.4 In accordance with HMRC rules, the above expenses will be free of tax and NI contributions as long as valid receipts covering the full costs incurred are submitted.



Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy
Owner	Human Resources
Version	1.0
Date of implementation	19 September 2024

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

This document requires the following committee approvals:

Committee	Date of meeting pending approval
Personnel Committee	18 September 2024

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District

DATE FOR REVIEW

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

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision date	Summary of revision

CONTENTS

1	Introduction	4
2	Policy breach	4
3	The Law and definitions of bullying, harassment and discrimination	4
4	Behaviours that could be regarded as bullying, harassment or discrimination	6
5	Examples of unacceptable behaviour	6
6	Management responsibilities	6
7	Raising a concern	7
8	Informal approach	7
9	Mediation	8
10	Formal approach	8
11	Confidentiality	8
12	Bullying, harassment or discrimination by members of the public or others	8
13	Councillor conduct	9
14	Support for employees	9
15	Other sources of information and advice	9
	Annex A – Definitions of unlawful discrimination.	10

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, healthy and productive working environment, free from bullying, harassment, discrimination and any behaviour that makes people feel excluded, offended, humiliated or intimidated. This policy will enable employees/workers to be treated with dignity and respect and to be encouraged to meet their full potential.
- 1.2 The Council does not tolerate any form of bullying, harassment or discrimination under any circumstances. While implementing and upholding the policy it is the duty of all Councillors and employees/workers to take full responsibility for ensuring that bullying, harassment and discrimination does not occur in the Council.
- 1.3 This policy applies to everyone working for the Council including workers classed as casual staff, agency staff and consultants, whether working from Council premises or from other locations. It also covers design of, and attendance at, work-related social events.
- 1.4 Every employee and worker must:
- uphold the Council's values;
 - treat colleagues, Councillors and customers with dignity and respect;
 - be aware of the effect that their own behaviour can have on others;
 - create a work environment where bullying, harassment and discrimination is not tolerated;
 - support colleagues if they experience bullying, harassment or singling out;
 - challenge inappropriate behaviour and if this is difficult speak to a manager, a HR Business Partner, or a union representative;
 - set a positive example to others;
 - consider language and attitudes and think before making personal comments to or about others;
 - co-operate with any investigation undertaken by the Council regarding allegations of bullying, harassment or discrimination;
 - take personal responsibility for ensuring their knowledge and skills on equality and diversity issues are kept up to date;
 - inform their line manager if they suspect that unfair discrimination, harassment or victimisation is taking place within the organisation.
- 1.5 This procedure 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.

2. Policy Breach

- 2.1 Where bullying, harassment or discrimination is found to have taken place, disciplinary action may be taken, the outcome of which may include dismissal or termination of contract. The Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure cites harassment and other offences against human dignity such as assault and threatening behaviour at work as examples of behaviour which may constitute misconduct or gross misconduct.

3. The law and definitions of bullying, harassment and discrimination

- 3.1 Bullying and harassment are terms used interchangeably and cover a range of behaviours that undermine the right of others to be treated with dignity. Both the Council and individual employees / workers can be held liable for unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying.

- 3.2 **Bullying** is: *'offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient'*. Source: Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)
- 3.3 **Harassment** is: *'unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual'*. Source: Equality Act 2010.
- 3.4 Sexual harassment is also unlawful under the Equality Act 2010. Sexual Harassment occurs when a person engages in unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. This includes verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct including unwelcome sexual advances, touching, forms of sexual assault, sexual jokes, displaying pornographic photographs or drawings or sending emails with material of a sexual nature.
- 3.5 Another type of harassment occurs when an employee/worker is treated less favourably because that employee/worker submitted to, or rejected unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, or unwanted conduct which is related to sex or to gender identity, and the unwanted conduct creates for them any of the circumstances defined in paragraph 3.3.
- 3.6 There is also legal protection against harassment on the basis of an individual's membership or non-membership of a trade union.
- 3.7 **Discrimination is:** *'treating a person unfairly because of who they are or because they possess certain characteristics.'* Source: EOC.org.uk
- 3.8 There are nine protected characteristics stated in the Equality Act 2010:
- i. age
 - ii. disability
 - iii. race
 - iv. religion and belief
 - v. gender reassignment*
 - vi. sex
 - vii. sexual orientation
 - viii. pregnancy and maternity
 - ix. marriage and civil partnership.

*Although the legislation refers to gender reassignment, the council recognises it is considered best practice to use the terms gender identity and gender expression.

- 3.9 Discrimination is to show favour, prejudice or bias for or against a person on any arbitrary grounds, for example on the basis of race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, family responsibility, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age disability, religion, HIV status, conscience, beliefs, political persuasion. It can take the form of exclusion from recruitment, promotion or training opportunities, less favourable working conditions or terms of employment e.g. less overtime or shift work and even unlawful contract termination.
- 3.10 Annex A sets out the definitions of the different types of discrimination.
- 3.11 **Victimisation** is where an employee is subject to a detriment because they have brought proceedings, given evidence or information in connection with proceedings or made an allegation (whether or not express) that another person has done something in breach of the Equality Act.

4. Behaviours that could be regarded as bullying, harassment or discrimination

- 4.1 Bullying, harassment and discrimination are not always verbal and face to face, but can involve written communications or visual images, such as pictures of a sexual nature or embarrassing photographs sent by text, instant messaging, email or posts on social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram).
- 4.2 Bullying and harassment may involve single or repeated incidents, ranging from extreme forms of intimidating behaviour, such as physical violence, to more subtle forms such as ignoring someone. It can occur with or without witnesses.

5. Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour

- 5.1 The following list includes examples of unacceptable behaviour from an employee, but is not exhaustive:
- personal insults to, or about, colleagues, customers or service users (particularly on the grounds of age, race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and religion or belief);
 - physical aggression, violence or intimidation;
 - practical jokes which embarrass or humiliate;
 - engaging in banter or making jokes which are degrading, patronising or make people feel excluded,
 - verbal abuse including personal insults, inappropriate stereotyping, offensive comments, taunts, threats, malicious gossip or innuendo;
 - making racist threats or insinuations;
 - making homophobic, biphobic or transphobic insults and threats;
 - outing an individual as LGBT+ (Lesbian Gay Bisexual or Trans) without their consent;
 - gossip or speculation about someone's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression;
 - making unnecessary and/or degrading references to an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity;
 - repeatedly refusing to address a trans person by their name and correct gender pronoun;
 - abuse of an individual's right to personal privacy, for example, intrusion into another employee's personal property or into their private life (this may also be a breach of the General Data Protection Regulations);
 - deliberate isolation or non-cooperation and exclusion from normal social or professional contact in the workplace;
 - sexual advances – assault, unwanted physical contact, standing too close, sexually suggestive comments or gestures, the display of offensive materials, making decisions on the basis of sexual advances being accepted or rejected;
 - personal intrusion from pestering, spying and stalking.
 - Undermining professional ability – such as unreasonable over-scrutiny of work, undue criticism, undervaluing contribution, preventing fair access to opportunities, withholding relevant information.

6. Management Responsibilities

- 6.1 It is the responsibility of all managers to behave in accordance with this policy and set an example to others.
- 6.2 Managers must encourage an inclusive atmosphere whereby staff feel able to talk to them about problems or concerns; where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and where any form of bullying, harassment or discrimination is not tolerated. Managers must prevent bullying, harassment and discrimination wherever possible and take immediate action once

it is identified. Where managers receive a report of unacceptable behaviour or observe it first-hand, they have a responsibility to take immediate steps to address the matter, whether or not a formal complaint has been made.

6.3 Managers must also:

- provide a good example of appropriate behaviour;
- be alert to the possibility of bullying, harassment or discrimination;
- attend mandatory management training on equality and diversity issues;
- act promptly to correct behaviour which could cause offence or be seen to contravene this policy;
- make sure all new employees and workers are aware of expected standards of behaviour and reinforce this at regular intervals e.g. at team meetings and one to ones;
- make sure new starters and all employees take up learning and development opportunities to refresh their understanding of equality and diversity issues;
- record any incidents of bullying, harassment or discrimination and the outcomes of any action or investigations;
- treat all cases of bullying, harassment and discrimination sensitively and with appropriate confidentiality and seek advice from Human Resources where appropriate.

7. Raising a Concern

7.1 It is hoped that most issues and concerns can be resolved at an informal stage. However, this is not always possible, so a formal approach is also outlined in this policy.

8. Informal Approach

8.1 Sometimes people make genuine mistakes and/or might not be aware their behaviour is unwelcome or offensive. In the first instance, if the employee/worker feels able to speak to the individual(s) at the time of the incident they should make it clear that they find their behaviour offensive and unwelcome and ask for it to stop.

8.2 Letting the individual(s) know their behaviour is unwelcome or offensive, either directly or with the help of a third party, will not only give them the opportunity to stop but to become more aware of any unconscious bias or prejudices they may have.

8.3 If the employee/worker finds it difficult to speak to the individual(s) directly, they could approach them in conjunction with the support of their line manager, a HR Business Partner, or a trade union representative.

8.4 The employee/worker may find it helpful to keep a diary of all incidents, a record of dates and times and the names of any witnesses etc. in order to facilitate early discussions.

8.5 Where the complaint is about the line manager of the employee/worker or the employee/worker does not believe it is appropriate for the line manager to deal with the complaint, then the matter should be raised with a HR Business Partner for support and guidance.

8.6 At any part of the informal approach an employee/worker can speak confidentially to a HR Business Partner about their concerns or any of the following people to discuss the options available to resolve the matter:

- line manager;
- any manager in the Council;
- a trade union representative;
- the Employee Assistance Programme.

- 8.7 In some cases, the offensive behaviour or comments may not be directed personally to an employee/worker, but they may still find them offensive. For example, they may overhear a team member make derogatory or discriminatory comments to or about someone else. In such instances the employee should speak to the individual(s) if they feel able to or raise their concern with their line manager.
- 8.8 If the particular case is concerning wider council practices and is in the public interest this should be raised under the Whistleblowing Policy.

9. Mediation

- 9.1 In some cases, a trained, impartial mediator may be able to help parties talk through the issues and agree a way of resolving the matter and restoring working relations. This can help avoid the need for more formal procedures.
- 9.2 Mediators do not make judgments or determine outcomes - they ask questions that help uncover underlying problems, assist the parties to understand each other's point of view and help them look at options for resolving their dispute.
- 9.3 Trained mediators can be accessed through a HR Business Partner.

10. Formal Approach

- 10.1 Should the informal approach fail to stop the bullying, harassment or discrimination, or if you believe the situation is still unresolved, or so serious as to warrant immediate formal action, an employee/worker can make a formal complaint using the Council's Grievance Procedure.
- 10.2 Where the complaint is about the line manager of the employee/worker or the employee/worker does not believe it is appropriate for the line manager to deal with the complaint, then the grievance form should be returned directly to a HR Business Partner.
- 10.3 In all the above matters further help and guidance can also be sought from a trade union representative or a HR Business Partner.

11. Confidentiality

- 11.1 Complaints must be treated confidentially and not discussed with anyone who is not involved in the procedures. Steps should be taken to ensure confidentiality and fairness to all parties. No-one will be victimised as a result of making a complaint or being subject to a complaint of bullying, harassment or discrimination. Any employee who fails to adhere to confidentiality or who victimises another individual will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

12. Bullying, harassment or discrimination by members of the public or others

- 12.1 The Council has a duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees/workers and will not tolerate bullying, harassment or discrimination towards employees or workers from members of the public.
- 12.2 Employees/workers must speak to their line manager immediately if they experience offensive or unwelcome behaviour from anyone they are required to deal with as a result of carrying out their role on behalf of the Council.

12.3 All incidents will be investigated in line with the Violence and Aggression to Employees at Work (CA05) policy. Advice can also be sought from a HR Business Partner or the Health and Safety Manager.

13. Councillor conduct

13.1 Employees may regularly come into contact with councillors, who may be members of the district, parish or town, or county councils.

13.2 The Constitution gives guidance on the Officer and Member protocol, regarding the respective roles of officers and councillors, which can be found here: [Conventions for the Management of Council Business and a protocol on Member/Officer Relations](#). Councillors are also required to comply with their Code of Conduct, which can be found here: [Councillor Code of Conduct](#).

13.3 If an employee is concerned that a councillor's conduct falls short of what is required, they should discuss this with their line manager and the Monitoring Officer, who can give advice.

14. Support for Employees

14.1 Allegations of bullying, harassment or discrimination can be upsetting for all parties and management have a responsibility for making sure everyone receives appropriate support.

14.2 Guidance and counselling can be offered by the [Employee Assistance Programme](#) to people whose behaviour is unacceptable, as well as those affected by the unacceptable behaviour.

14.3 Employees/workers who are a member of a trade union may wish to contact their representative for support

15. Other sources of information and advice

- [Unison](#) Email: unison@oxfordshire.gov.uk phone 01865 815990
- [National bullying helpline](#) Tel: 0300 323 0169
- [Citizens Advice](#)
- [ACAS](#) (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)
- [Equal Opportunities Commission](#)
- [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Stonewall](#)

Annex A - Definitions of unlawful discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when a person treats another less favourably than they treat or would treat others because of a protected characteristic. For example, in recruitment, promotion or advancement decisions, access to training, selection for redundancy.

This includes discrimination by **perception** when an individual is treated less favourably because others mistakenly think they possess one of the protected characteristics.

It also includes '**Associative**' discrimination where someone is treated less favourably because they associate with another person who possesses one of the protected characteristics.

Indirect discrimination may occur when a working condition, practice or rule is applied which puts workers sharing a protected characteristic at a disadvantage. Conditions disadvantaging particular groups will be unlawful, unless they can be objectively justified for business reasons and there is no other practical way of achieving it.

Positive action is not the same as positive discrimination which is unlawful.

Positive action is permitted under the law, allowing employers to take certain steps to improve work opportunities for people who share a protected characteristic.

The council monitor the composition of the local labour market and our workforce, and where there is evidence for the need to improve equality of opportunity for certain groups sharing a protected characteristic, we may decide to take positive steps to address this in accordance with the legal criteria.

This report is public	
Workforce Profile Statistics – Quarter 1 of 2024-25	
Committee	Personnel Committee
Date of Committee	18 September 2024
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	4 September 2024
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 are resolves:

- 1.1 to review and note the workforce data for quarter 1 of 2024/25 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 2024/25 for information.

- 2.2 Appendix 1 provides the following highlights in CDC's workforce statistics for quarter 1 as follows:

- 14 leavers and 29 new starters
- Headcount increase of 15
- FTE increase of 11.14
- Minimal shift in employment basis
- A reduction of 5 agency workers at quarter end.
- A quarterly turnover rate of 2.21%, 0.03% lower than the previous quarter
- Resignation was the main reason for leavers, accounting for 64.29%
- 43% of leavers completed exit interviews
- 162 sickness absence incidents were recorded, 34 than the same quarter in the previous year.

- Absence rate remains below 1% of working time lost
- Minimal shift in age, gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation profile
- Recruitment data is continuing to build following it addition to the statistics since October 2023, and shows applicants are representative of the district
- 20 apprenticeships currently underway across a diverse range of subject areas

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, 27 August 2024				
Legal	There are no legal implications within this report as it is for information only. Alison Coles, Legal Services Operations Manager, 28 August, 2024				
Risk	There are no risks arising directly from this report. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 28 August 2024				
Impact Assessments		Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact			X		Theres no direct 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, 28 August 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	<p>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.</p> <p>Claire Cox, Assistant Director of Human Resources, 22 August 2024</p>			
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 2024/25 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 1 of 2024/25, 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 1, 2024/25
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

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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 15 between quarter 4 of 2023/24 and quarter 1 of 2024/25.

Quarter 1 of 2024/25 has seen adjustments of 14 leavers and 29 new starters across the organisation.

Chart 1

**Headcount by Quarter
Quarter 2 2021-22 to Quarter 1 2024-25**

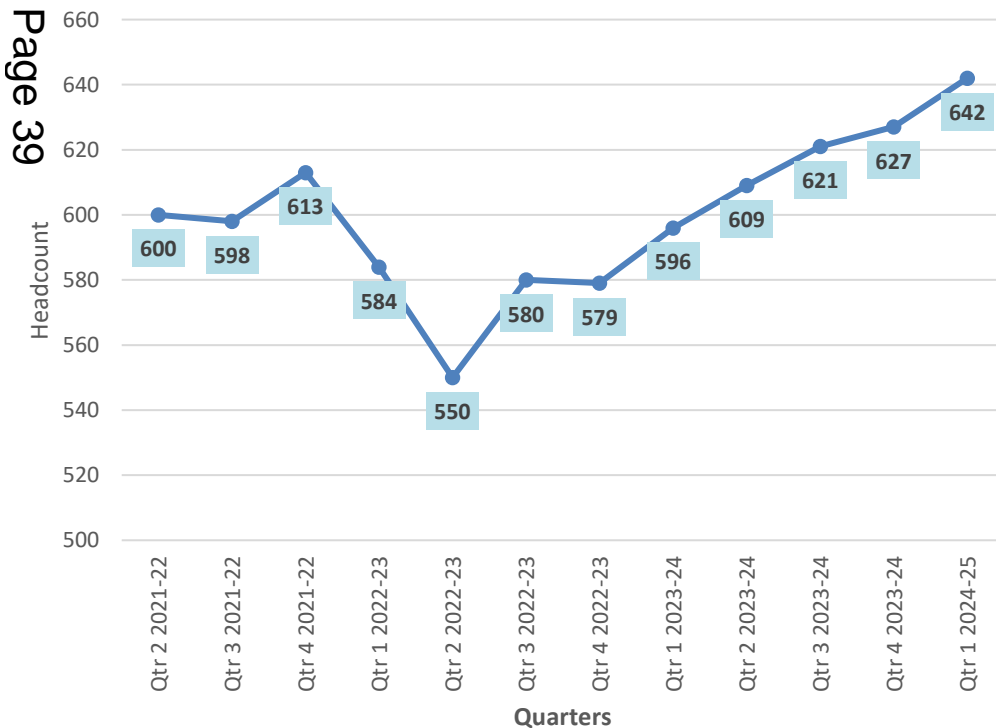


Chart 2 details the distribution of headcount across our departments and directorates as at the end of quarter 1 in 2024/25. Wellbeing and Environmental Services continue to show the highest headcount. The department of Chief Executive’s Office incorporates executive support and employees attributed 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.

Environmental Services has had the biggest increase in headcount with 6 new since quarter 4 of 2023/24, and Wellbeing has increased by 3. These departments both showed reductions in numbers in quarter 4 of 2023/24.

**Chart 2
Headcount by Department as at
30 June 2024**

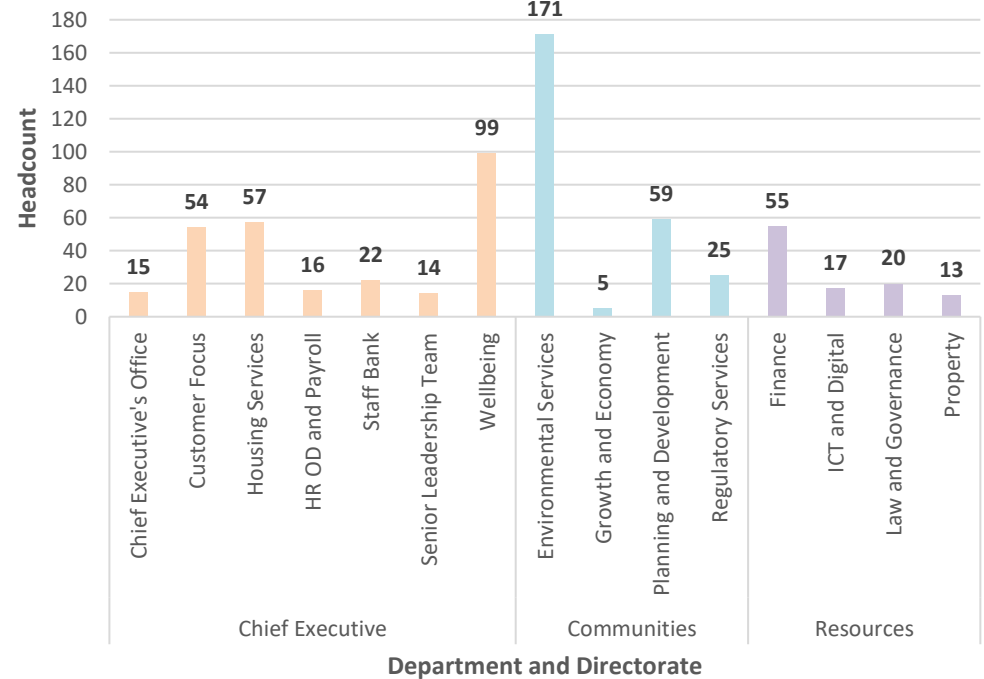


Chart 3 outlines the fluctuation of FTE which has increased by 11.14 between quarter 4 of 2023/24 and quarter 1 of 2024/25.

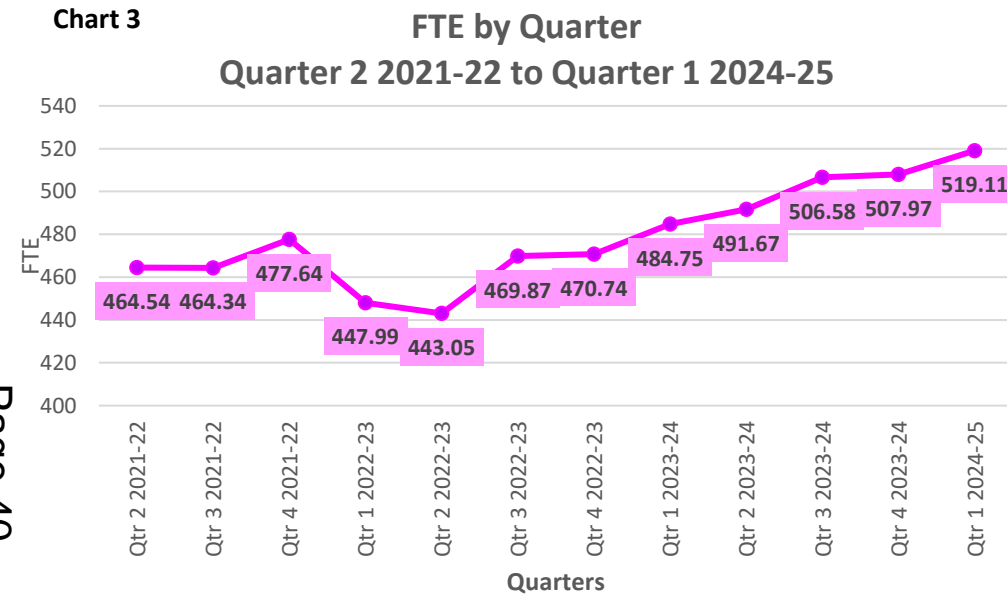


Chart 4: FTE by Department as at 30 June 2024

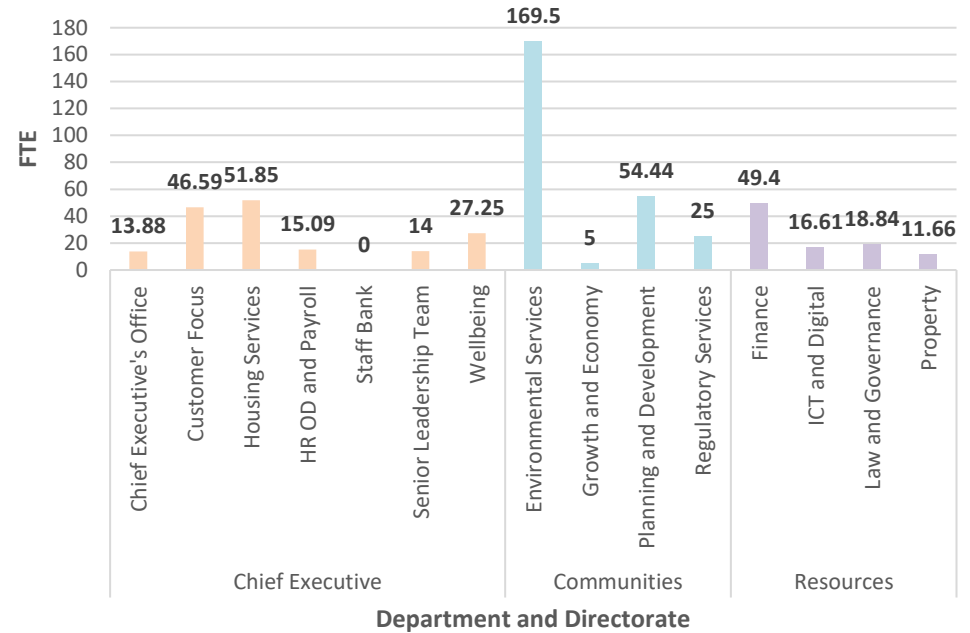


Chart 5: % Breakdown of Role Basis as at 30 June 2024

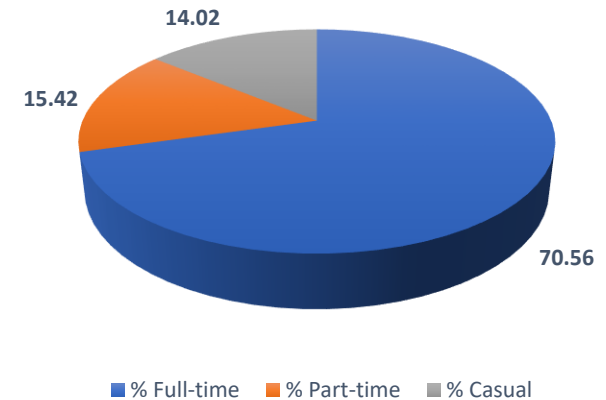


Chart 4 outlines the distribution of FTE across the departments and directorates as at the end of quarter 1 of 2024/25.

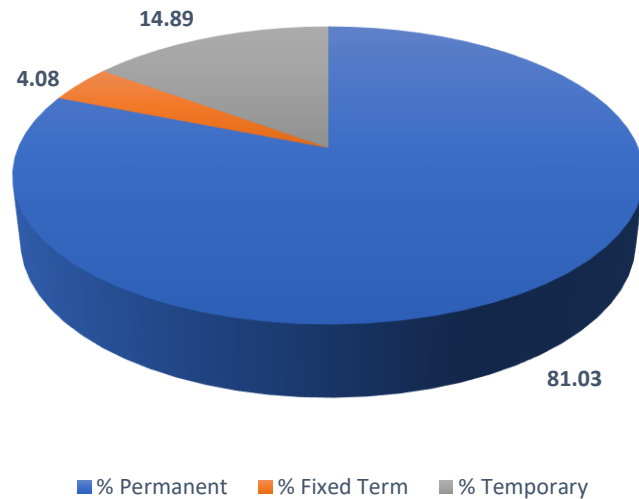
Since quarter 4 of 2023/24; Environmental Services has seen an increase of 6.6 FTE, and Customer Focus has increased by 1.81.

Charts 5 shows the breakdown of basis of hours across our workforce as of 30 June 2024. Since quarter 4 of 2023/24 there has been minimal change to the make-up of role-basis with our full-time increasing by 0.06% and part-time reducing by 0.53%. Our casual workforce has increased by 0.46%.

Chart 6 outlines the employment basis of those directly employed by CDC shows that 81.03% of our workforce are in permanent roles. This has slightly reduced by 0.83% since Quarter 4 of 2023/24. The percentage employed on a temporary basis has increased by 0.76%.

Chart 6

% Breakdown of Employment Basis as at 30 June 2024



Page 41

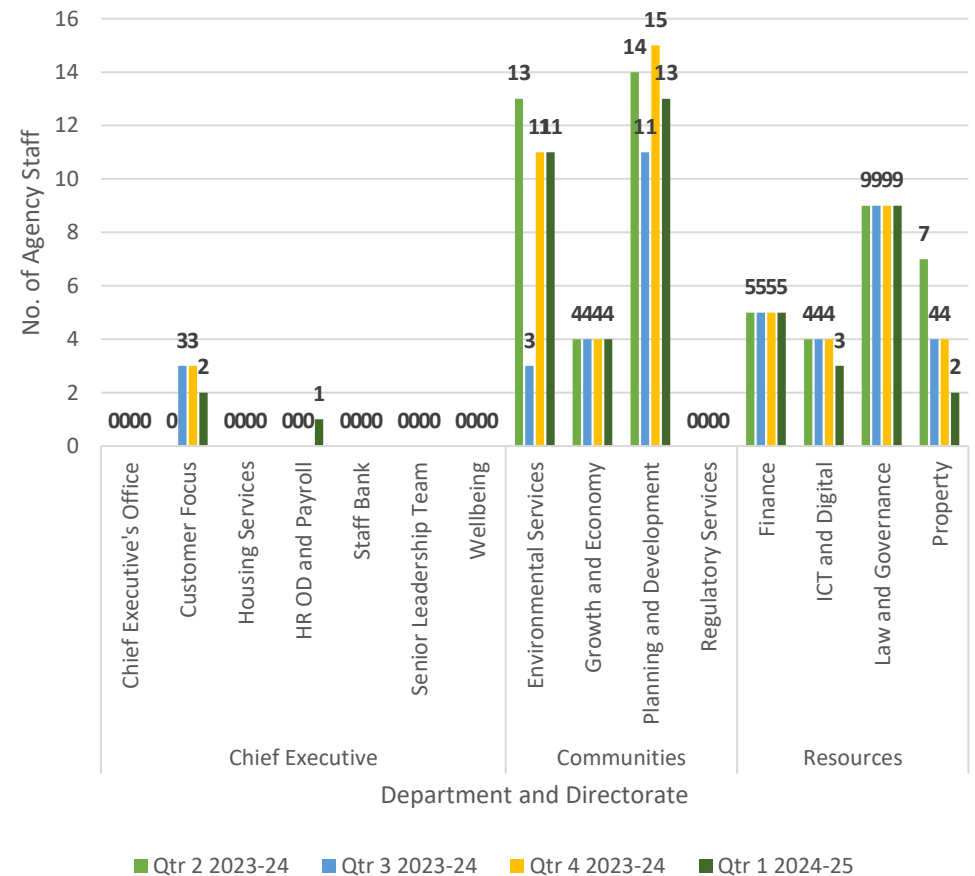
In addition to employing staff directly, CDC also utilise Agency Workers, either for interim or short-term usage for specific posts and projects.

Chart 7 outlines agency usage as at the end of each quarter for the last rolling year by department. A total of 50 Agency workers were engaged with CDC at the end of quarter 1 of 2024/25. This is a reduction of 5 since the end of quarter 4 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 remained at 11 for the last 2 quarters.

Planning and Development have reduced agency usage by 2 in quarter 1. Property have also reduced agency usage by 2. Customer Focus have reduced agency usage by 1 in the last quarter.

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



3

Turnover rates and Leaver information

Chart 8 tracks the turnover rate per quarter over a 3-year period, from July 2021 to June 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.



The turnover for quarter 1 shows a reduction of 0.03% in the turnover rate since quarter 4 of 2023/24.

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. Data for 2023/24 and quarter 1 of 2024/25 has not been published yet but will be updated in future reports.

LGA statistics for quarters 2 to 4 of 2022-23 and Labour turnover comparative data is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Quarter	Mean for All English authorities	CDC
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	Not yet published	2.24%
Qtr 1 2024-25	Not yet published	2.21%

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

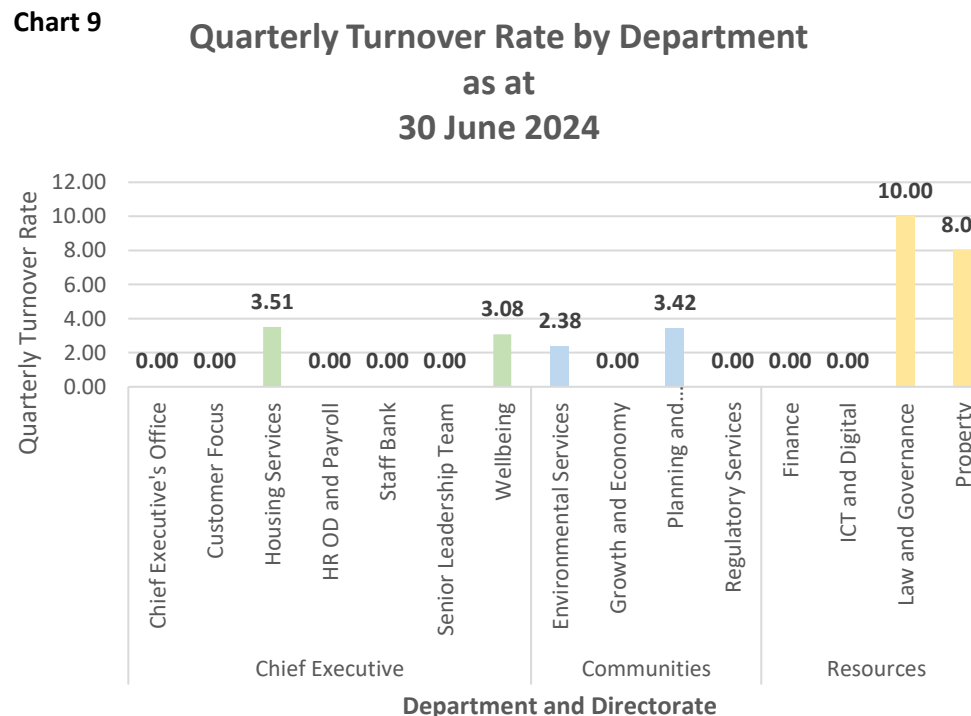


Chart 10 outlines leavers by reason for quarter 1 of 2024/25. Of the 14 leavers recorded in quarter 1, Resignation is the highest reason for leaving, accounting for 64.29% of all leavers. 14.29% of leavers are due to retirement.

Chart 10

% of Leavers by reason 1 April to 30 June 2024

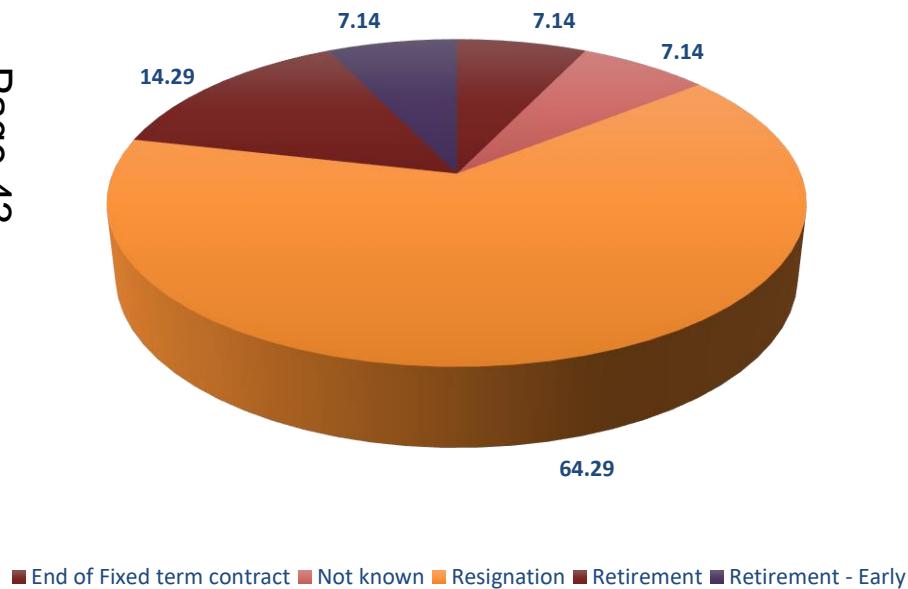


Chart 11

Leavers by Length of Service 1 July 2021- 30 June 2024

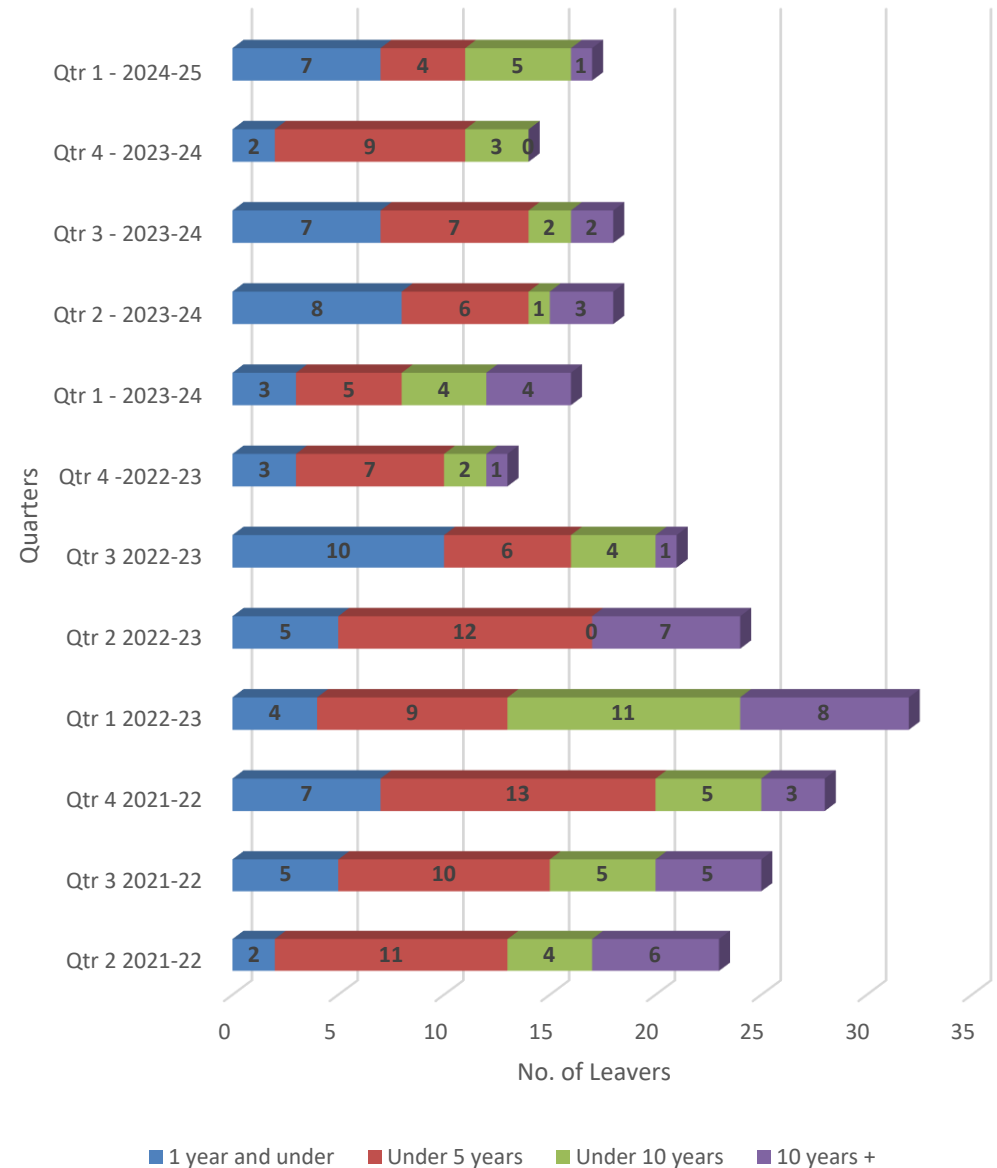


Chart 11 outlines leavers by length of service across the last 12 quarters. In quarter 1 of 2024/25, 7 leavers had less than a year's service, 4 had under 5 years' service and 5 had less than 10 years.

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 14 leavers in quarter 1, 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 43% completion rate, which is a reduction of 3% from the last quarter. 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.

Page 44
Comments received within the interviews that took place were mixed, with some positive comments about colleagues they worked with and work they completed, whilst others outlined feeling the reality of the role did not align to the job description, noted colleagues lacked enthusiasm, struggled to get on with colleagues, and for some it was opportune to retire.

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.

Stomach/Liver/Kidney and Digestion has seen the most incidents across this period, with 136 across the period. This is closely followed by Musculo-skeletal which had 127 incidents.

For Quarter 1 of 2024/25, Stomach/Liver/Kidney and Digestion was the highest recorded reason for sickness absence, accounting for 16% of all incidents in the last quarter. This is closely followed by Infections, which accounts for 15% of all incidents in the last quarter. Not advised, and Stress – non-work related, each accounted for 14% of all incidents.

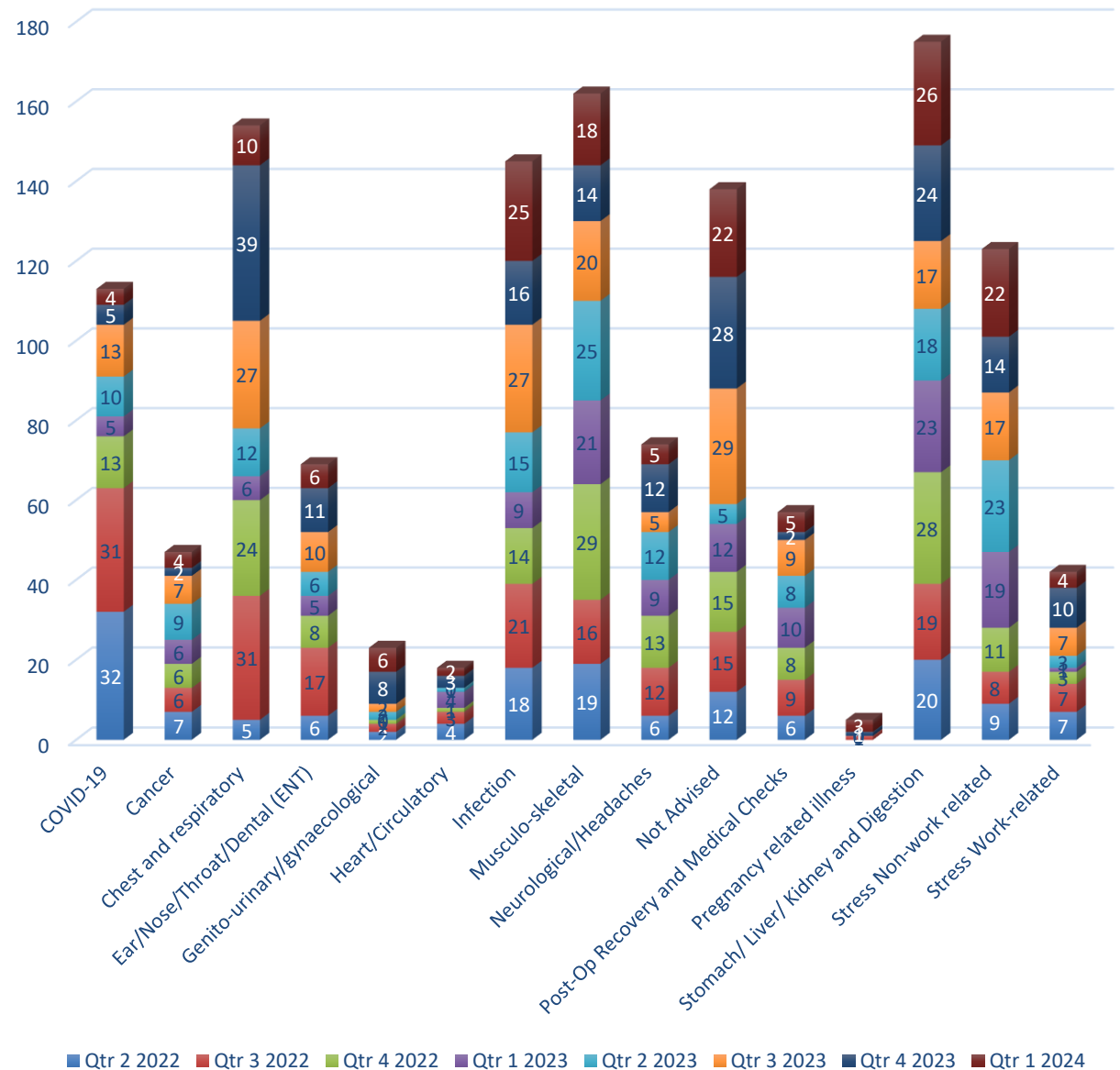
There were 162 incidents of sickness absence recorded in Quarter 1 of 2024/25, this is 32 more incidents than the same quarter of 2023/24.

The highest reason for sickness absence across the last rolling 12 months was chest and respiratory, with 88 incidents recorded and accounting for 12.75% of all incidents.

The second highest reason for sickness absence in the last 12 months is Stomach/Liver/Kidney and Digestion, with 85 incidents reported which equates to 12.31% of all incidents.

Not advised is the third highest reason in the last 12 months, meaning no reason has been provided, recording 84 incidents and accounting for 12.17% of all incidents.

Chart 12 Sickness Absence Incidents by Reason July 2022 to June 2024



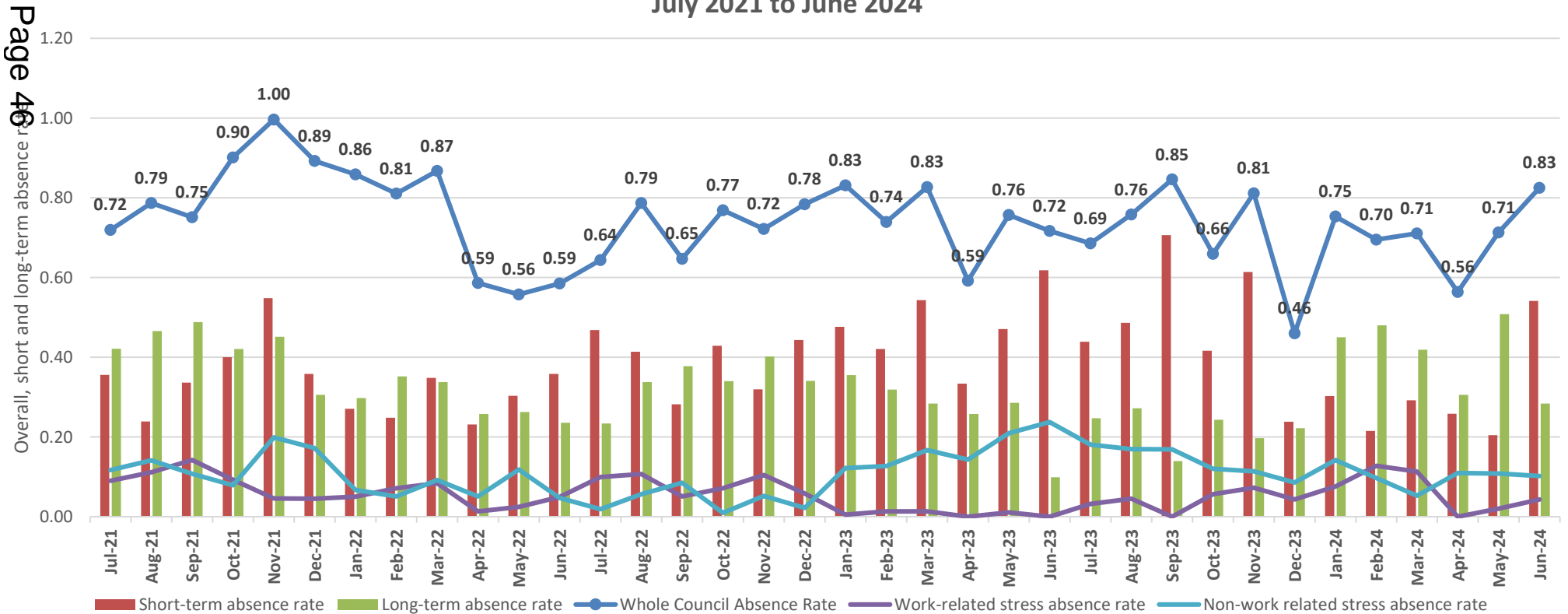
For the purposes of sickness absence reporting, short term absence is recorded as any incident that is less than 28 days, and a GP fit note is required after an employee has been absent for 7 calendar days. Long-term sickness is recorded as any absence spanning 28 days or more. HR work with managers 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 July 2021 to June 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. May 2024 had the highest rate of long-term absence in the last 12 months, with 0.51 days lost.

Chart 13

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



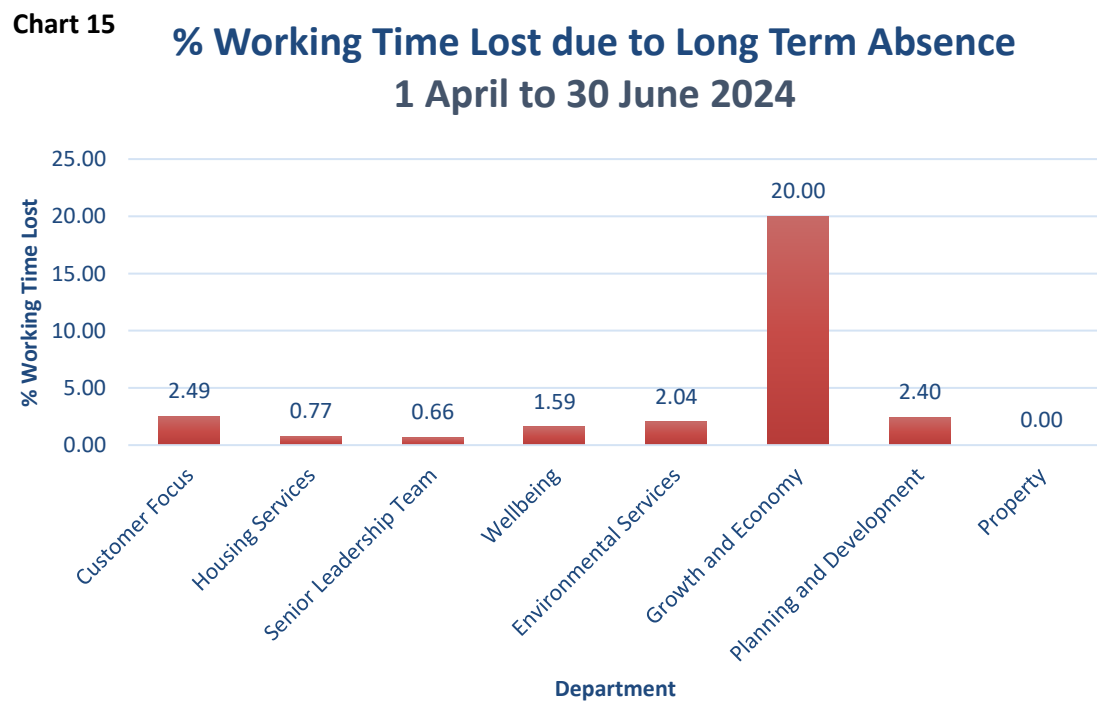
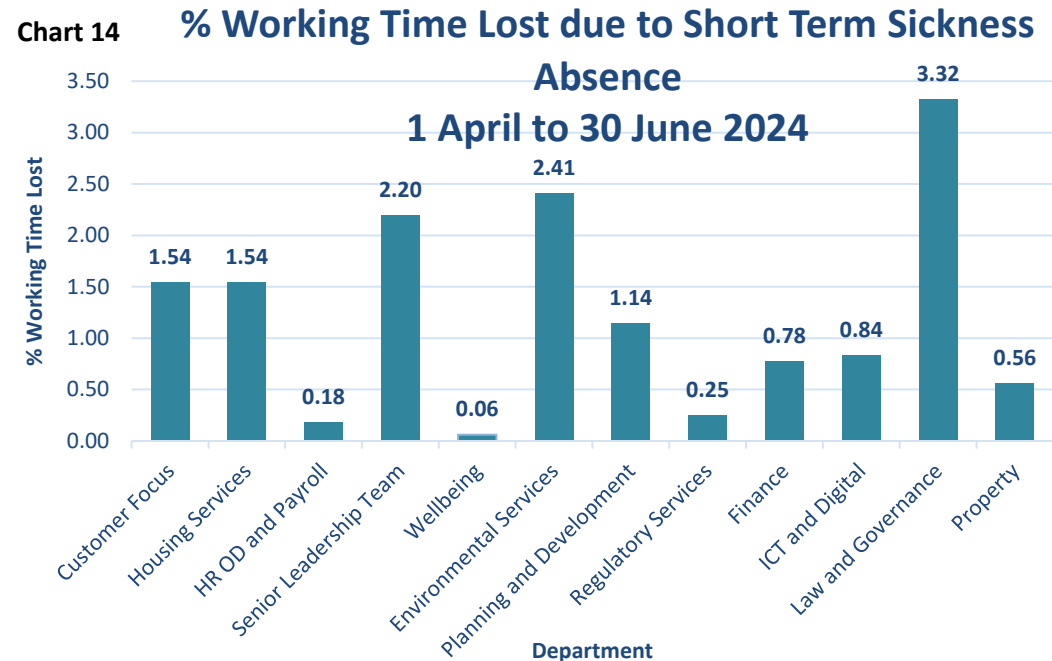
The absence rate attributed to stress is also displayed in Chart 13 and shows work-related stress has reduced in the last quarter, with a rate of 0.04 recorded in June 2024. Work-related stress accounted for 2.46% of incidents in quarter 1 of 2024/25 and 3.47% of all incidents occurring in the last rolling 12 months.

The non-work-related stress absence rate has increased and then reduced over the last quarter. It has increased from 0.05 at the end of quarter 4 of 2023/24 to 0.11 at the start of quarter 41 of 2024/25 and then ended the quarter on 0.10. Non-work-related stress incidents accounted for 13.5% of all incidents in quarter 1 of 2024/25 and 11% of all incidents across the last year.

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.



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 2.

LGA Sickness data for quarters 1-4 in 2023/24 and quarter 1 of 2024/25 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 2.05 days lost per FTE in quarter 1 of 2024/25.

Table 2

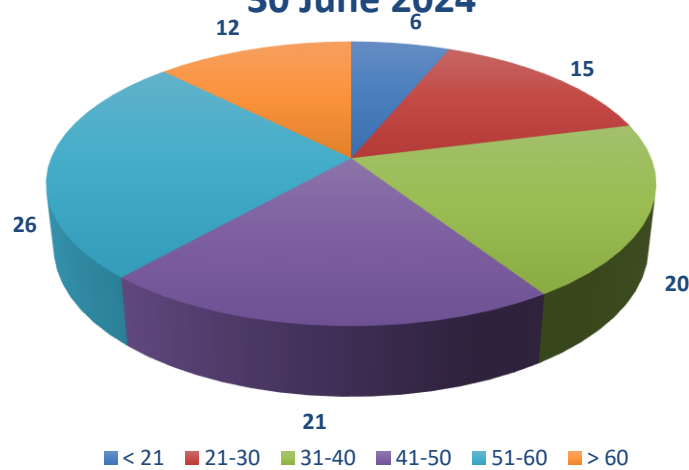
Metric Type	Value Type	QUARTER 4 22/23 Mean for All English authorities	CDC Qtr 4 22/23	CDC Qtr 1 23/24	CDC Qtr 2 23/24	CDC Qtr 3 23/24	CDC Qtr 4 23/24	CDC Qtr 1 24/25
Sickness absence rate	Days per FTE	2.5	2.4	2.04	1.97	1.93	2.12	2.05
Days lost through sickness, short term	%	1.6	2.22	2.16	2.20	1.95	1.22	1.51
Sickness absence, short term (FTE)	Days per FTE	1.0	1.44	1.41	1.63	1.26	0.79	0.98
Days lost through sickness, long term	%	2.2	1.48	0.98	0.83	1.02	2.04	1.64
Sickness absence, long term (FTE)	Days per FTE	1.4	0.96	0.63	0.54	0.66	1.32	1.07

Age, Gender, Ethnicity, Disability and LGBTQ+ Workforce Profile as at 30 June 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. 21% of CDC employees are aged between 41 and 50, this has increased by 1% since quarter 4 of 2023/24. 20% of the workforce are aged between 31 and 40 and 21% aged 30 and under. The over 60 category has reduced by 1% from the end of quarter 4 of 2023/24.

Chart 16

Age Profile Percentage as at 30 June 2024



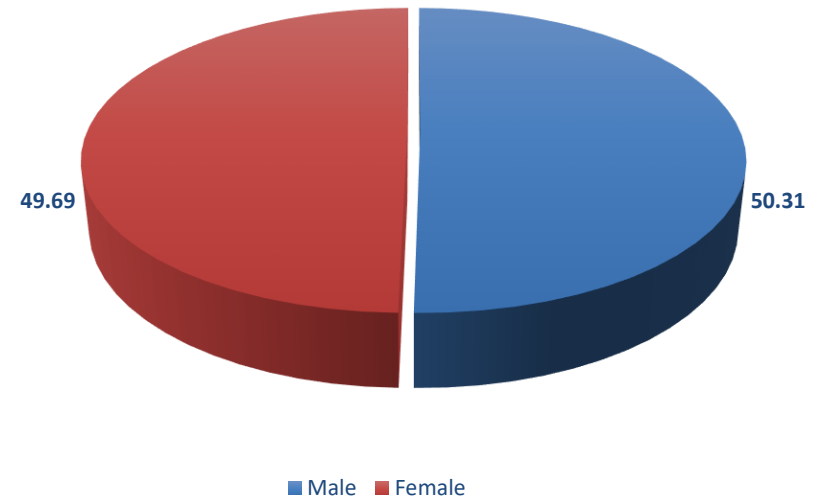
Page 49

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 30 June 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, 50.31% of our workforce are male and 49.69% are female meaning it is representative of the district. These statistics have been minimal change since quarter 4 of 2023/24.

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 2024/25, just over 85% of employees have recorded this information, with 5.45% 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 2024

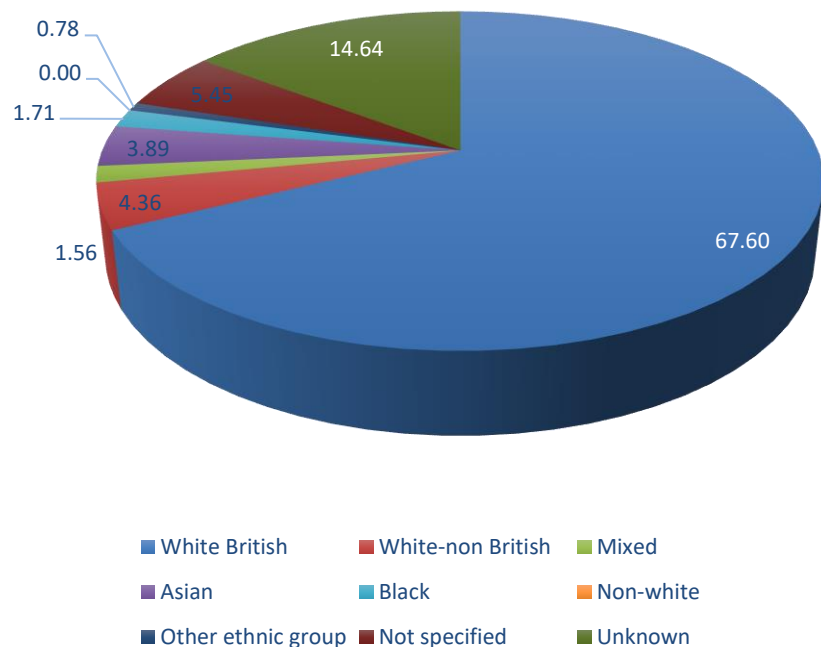


Table 3

Ethnic Group	England average (%)	Cherwell District (%)	CDC (%) Qtr 2 23/24	CDC (%) Qtr 3 23/24	CDC (%) Qtr 4 23/24	CDC (%) Qtr 1 24/25
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	9.3	6.0	3.94	3.86	3.67	3.89
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	4.0	1.8	0.99	1.13	1.28	1.71
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	2.9	2.9	1.15	1.13	1.28	1.56
White	81.7	88.1	71.92	71.82	71.45	71.96
Other ethnic group	2.1	1.3	0.82	0.81	0.80	0.78
Not specified	N/A	N/A	5.58	5.96	5.74	5.45
Unknown	N/A	N/A	15.60	15.30	15.79	14.64

CDC’s workforce is predominantly white British with 67.60% 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 slightly increased in quarter 1 of 2024/25, but all ethnic groups, with the exception of *other ethnic group*, have marginally increased in the last quarter.

The CDC workforce is slightly under-represented in all the ethnic groups in comparison to the district.

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, 43% 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 30 June 2024

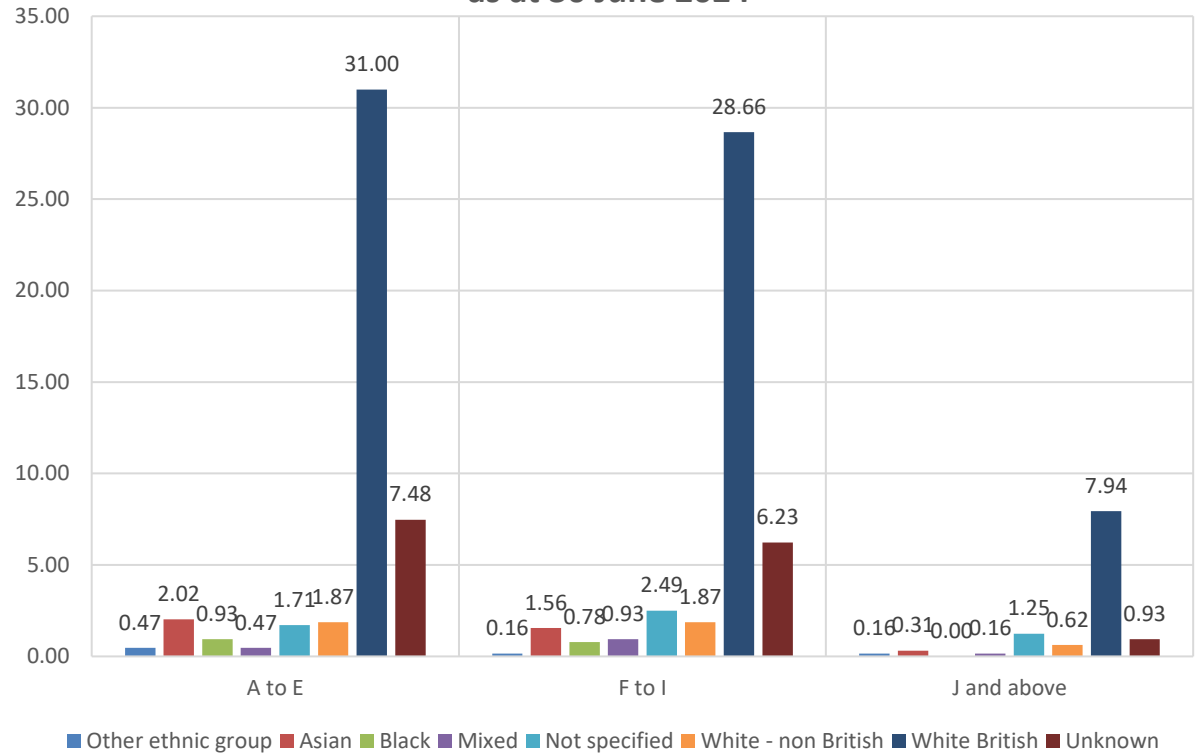


Chart 20 Disability Percentage Profile as at 30 June 2024

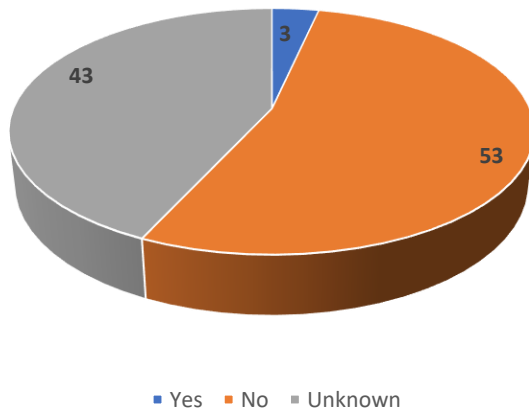
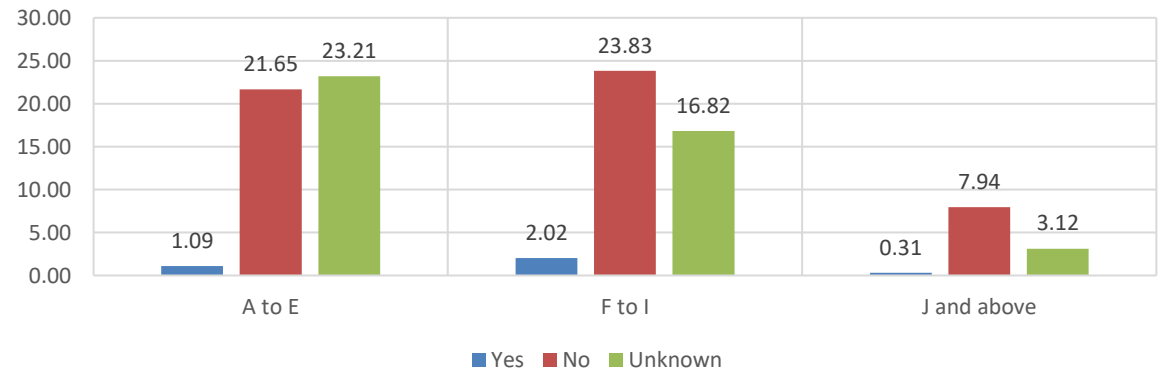


Chart 21 Disability Percentage by Grade Band as at 30 June 2024



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, 12.15% of the workforce have declined to specify and 16.20% 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.

Chart 22

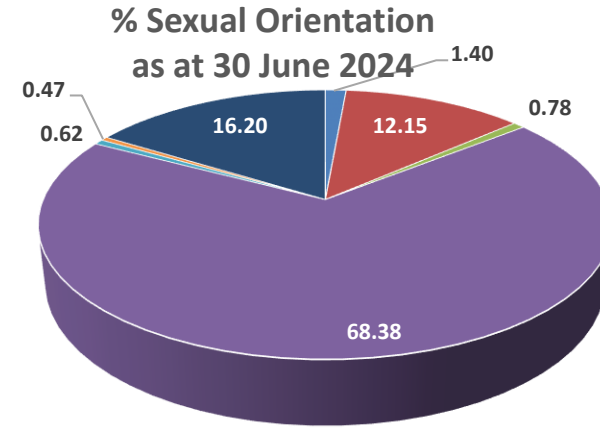
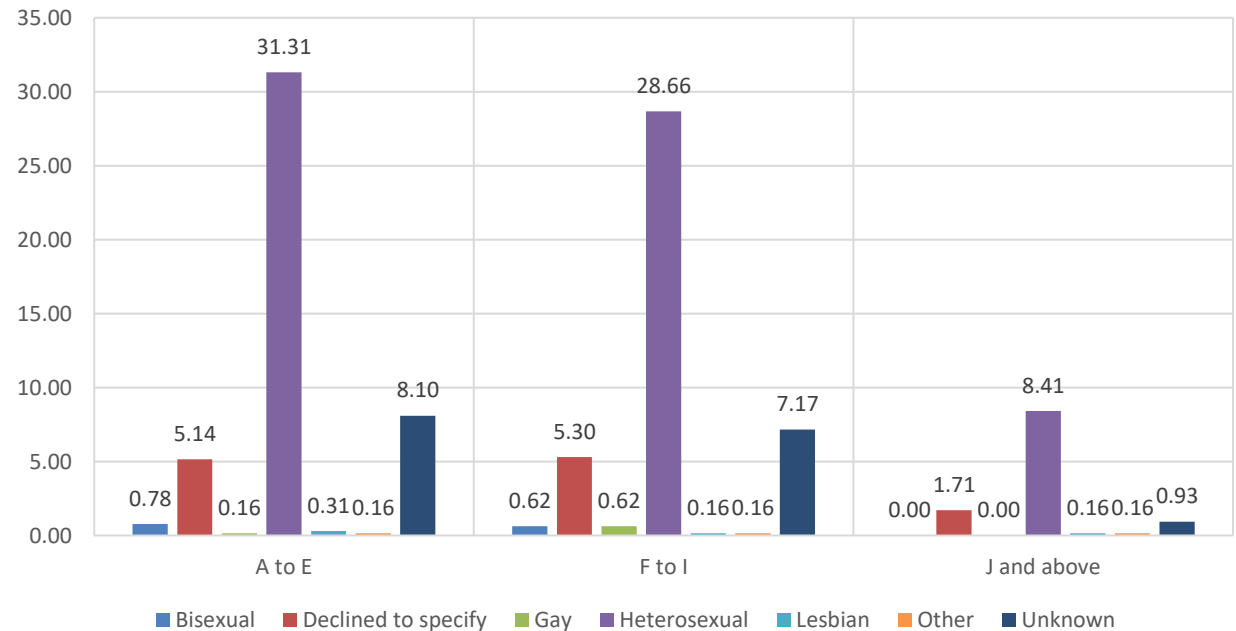


Chart 23

Sexual Orientation Percentage by Grade Band as at 30 June 2024



Page 22

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, 42 recruitment campaigns have been completed, to which 480 applications were received and 32 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 56.04% of all applications. Table 4 provides district data on age bands. Whilst district data does not quite correlate with age groups relevant to the CDC workforce, Chart 24 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 June 2024**

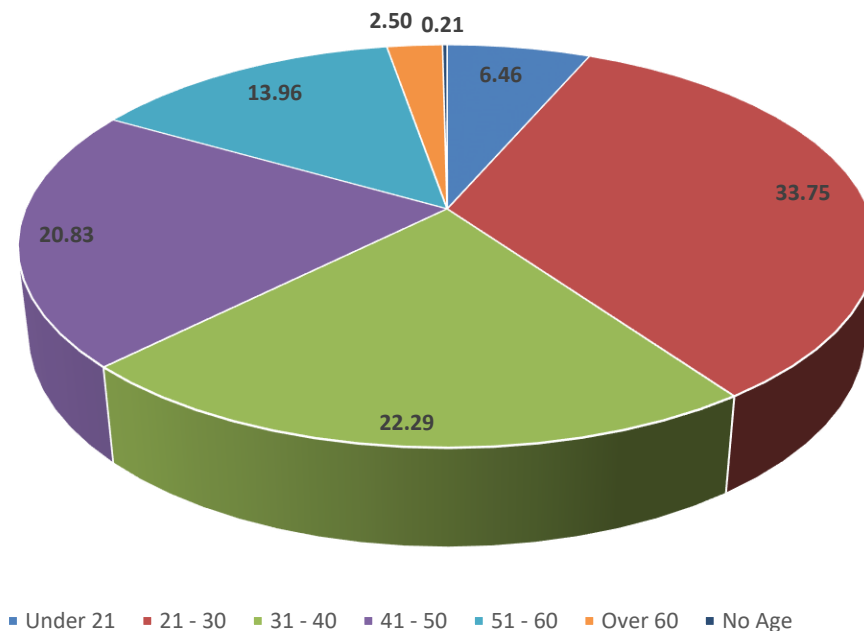


Table 4

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

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

Chart 25

**% Applicants by Ethnicity
October 2023 to June 2024**

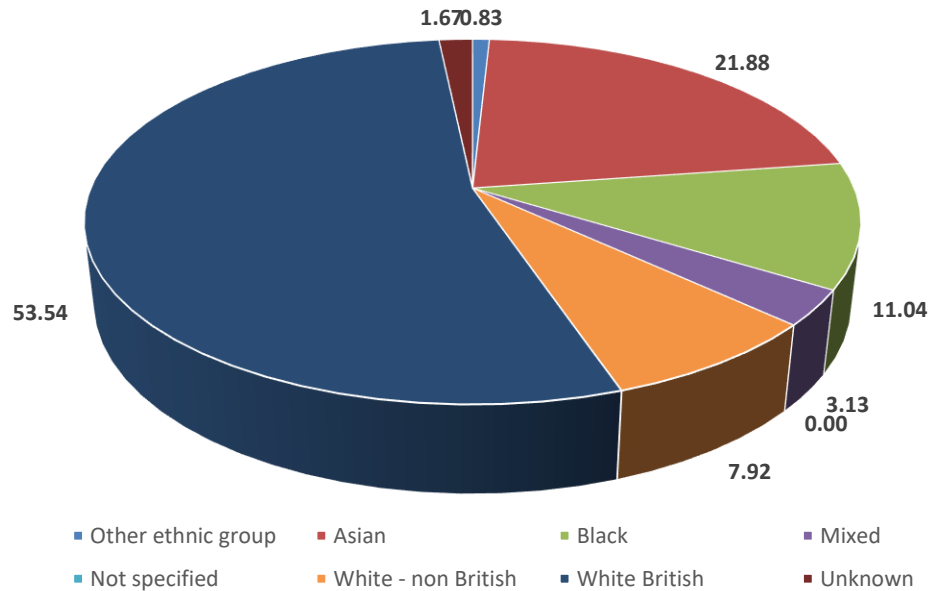


Table 5

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

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

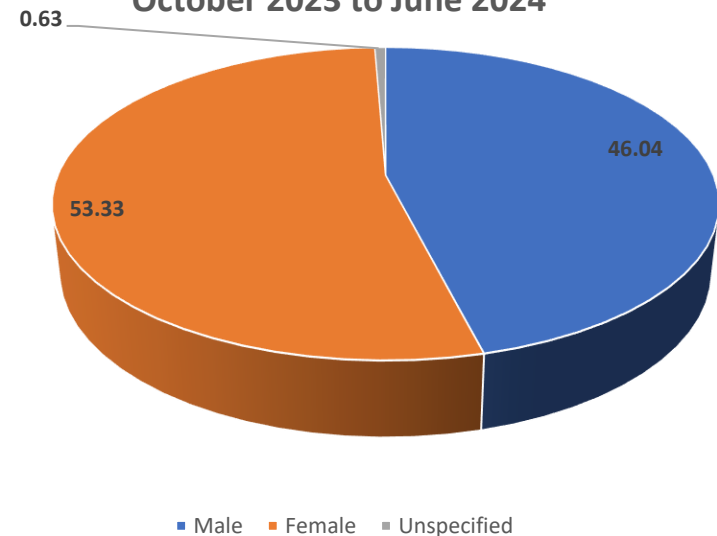
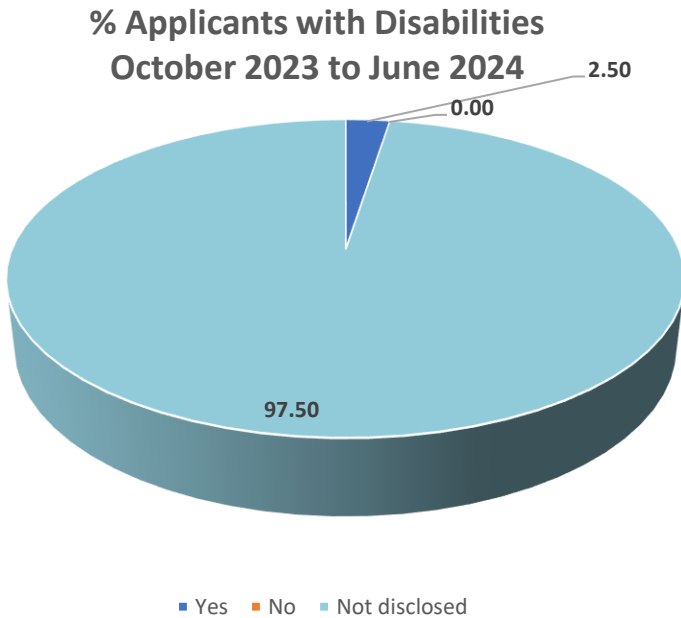


Chart 26 shows the percentage of applicants by gender, which is an almost 50/50 split across male and female, which is both reflective of our current workforce and district data covered earlier in this report.

Chart 27

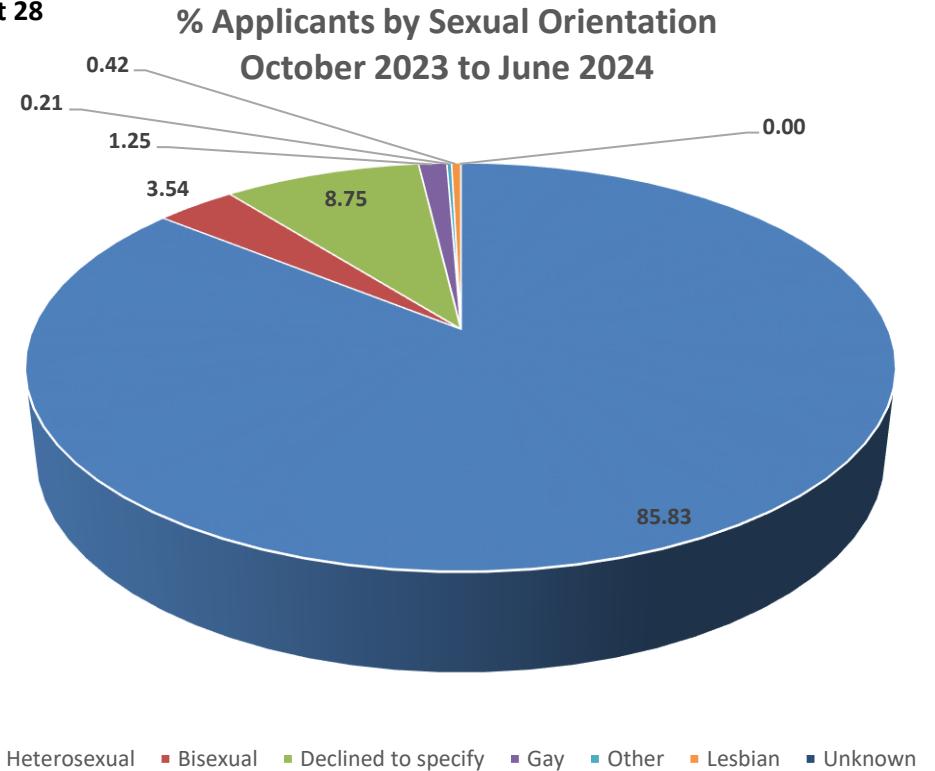


Page 55

Chart 27 shows the percentage of applicants by disability. 97.50% 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



Apprenticeships within Cherwell District Council as at Quarter 1 – 2024/25

Information

There are 20 apprenticeships currently running within the Council for this quarter, of which 4 is an apprentice on programme, employed specifically as an apprentice; and the remaining 16 are employees undertaking an apprenticeship as CPD or career progression.

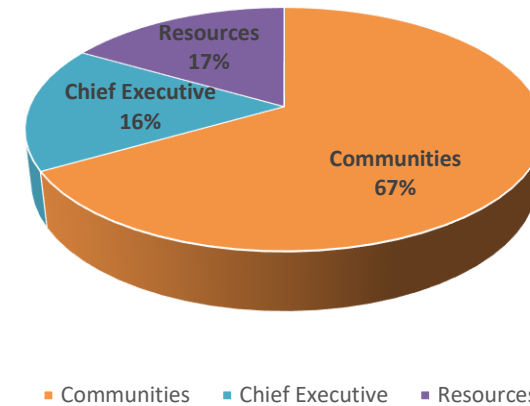
There are currently 12 apprenticeships within the Communities Directorate, 5 within the Chief Executive Directorate and 3 within the Resources Directorate – please see chart 26.

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:

Percentage of Apprenticeships within Directorates



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)	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 (£)
					Housing Options and Homelessness (1) ICT (1) 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 Place Shaping	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

Apprenticeship Standard	Level of Apprenticeship	Duration of Apprenticeship	Number of employees on apprenticeship	Apprentice or Employee CPD	Team	Directorate	Cost of Apprenticeships (£)
Sustainability business specialist	Level 7	2 years	1	CPD	Environment Services	Communities (1)	10,755
			20		Total apprenticeship levy committed		243,788

Current amount in the Levy Account

The Council currently has £178,287 in their levy account. It is estimated that a further £99,479 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 £50,847 in the next 12 months based on the current apprenticeships within the table above.

Expired Funds

Some funds expired in Quarter 1 of 2024/25 amounting to £542.84. The levy account is indicating that the Council will have an amount of £183.74 in expired funds in July 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.