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Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Committee: Personnel Committee
Date: Wednesday 4 March 2026
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: 39 Castle Quay, Banbury, OX16 5FD

Membership

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 Lynne Parsons	Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Chris Pruden	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. Minutes (Pages 5 - 12)**

To confirm as correct records the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 21 November, 3 December and 10 December 2025.

- 4. Chair's Announcements**

To receive communications from the Chair.

5. Requests to Address the Meeting

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

6. Urgent Business

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

7. Policy Review Updates (Pages 13 - 90)

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. Parental Leave Policy
- b. Paternity Leave Policy
- c. Probation Policy
- d. Compassionate Leave Policy
- e. Annual Leave and Bank Holiday Policy
- f. Court Attendance Policy
- g. Honorarium Policy
- h. Health and Safety Policy

8. Workforce Profile Statistics - Quarter 3 of 2025-26 (Pages 91 - 120)

Report of Assistant Director of 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 3 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.

9. **Gender Pay Gap Report** (Pages 121 - 134)

Report of Assistant Director of Human Resources

Purpose of report

To provide the Personnel Committee (PC) with the latest Gender Pay Gap report for information.

Recommendations

The Personnel Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To review and note the Gender Pay Gap Report, which is submitted for information

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 24 February 2026

Cherwell District Council

Personnel Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held at 39 Castle Quay, Banbury, OX16 5FD, on 21 November 2025 at 9.30 am

Present:

Councillor Amanda Watkins (Chair)

Councillor Chris Brant
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Chris Pruden

Apologies for absence:

Group Leaders had agreed to reduced attendance for this Special Personnel Committee meeting. Attendees as set out above with apologies as set out below:

Councillor Gemma Coton
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Barry Wood

Officers:

Gordon Stewart, Chief Executive
Claire Cox, Assistant Director Human Resources
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

16 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interests.

17 **Chair's Announcements**

There were no Chair's announcements.

18 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

Resolved

That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

(The Governance and Elections Manager let the meeting at the conclusion of this item)

19 **Interviews for Post of Executive Director Neighbourhood Services**

The Committee saw each of the short listed applicants for the post of Executive Director Neighbourhood Services in turn and asked them a number of questions.

The Committee was supported by the Chief Executive and the Assistant Director Human Resources.

Following the interviews the Committee evaluated the applications and considered the supporting information from the external recruitment company in reaching their recommendation on appointment.

Resolved

- (1) That an appointment to the post of Executive Director Neighbourhood Services be made subject to all necessary procedural steps having been complied with.

The meeting ended at 2.15 pm

Chair:

Date:

Cherwell District Council

Personnel Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held at 39 Castle Quay, Banbury, OX16 5FD, on 3 December 2025 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Amanda Watkins (Chair)
Councillor Gemma Coton (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Chris Brant
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor Barry Wood

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Rob Pattenden

Officers:

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

20 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interests.

21 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 September 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

22 **Chair's Announcements**

There were no Chair's announcements.

23 **Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no requests to address the meeting.

24 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of Urgent Business.

25 **Policy Review Updates**

The Assistant Director Human Resources submitted a report to seek approval from the Personnel Committee on proposed changes to eight HR policies: Grievance Policy; Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure; Maternity Leave Policy; Adoption Leave Policy; Parental Leave Policy; Shared Parental Leave Policy; Time off for Dependants; and Domestic Abuse Policy.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, explained that the Policies were part of a rolling programme of updates that aimed to review policies on a 3-year cycle to ensure that they remained compliant and reflected current practices.

Members were advised that the following updates had been made The Grievance Policy now included protection for third party harassment providing clear protection and a strong framework for protection; the Sickness Absence Policy had been updated to include support for Neurodivergent staff, enabling an inclusive and supportive environment through reasonable adjustments; the Maternity, Adoption and Parental Leave Policies were updated to reflect changes to the EV Salary Sacrifice Scheme; The Domestic Abuse Policy had been updated following details and feedback from the Councils Lived Experiences Group.

No significant changes had been made to the Shared Parental Leave Policy and the Time off for Dependants Policy.

Resolved

- (1) That, having given due consideration, the following policies be approved for implementation: Grievance Policy; Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure; Maternity Leave Policy; Adoption Leave Policy; Parental Leave Policy; Shared Parental Leave Policy; Time off for Dependants; and Domestic Abuse Policy.

26 **Workforce Profile Statistics - Quarter 2 of 2025-26**

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 2 of 2025/26, 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, advised that there were no issues, risks or concerns to highlight.

In response to a question regarding the upward trend of staff sickness within quarter 2 and whether measures were in place to address this increase, the Assistant Director Human Resources explained that a similar trend was reflected within the same quarter of the previous year. Measures were in place to assess members of staff that may need ongoing support to ensure that they were able to return to work as soon as practicable.

In response to a question regarding Covid-19 related staff sickness and whether staff were still reporting that as a reason for absence, the Assistant Director Human Resources explained that as testing for Covid-19 was no longer mandatory, it was hard to pinpoint individual cases, and that due to similar symptoms instances may be reported as cold and flu.

In response to a question regarding changes to Government Levy funding for apprenticeships and the impact on apprenticeship opportunities for staff, the Assistant Director Human Resources explained that officers had been aware of the proposed changes to apprenticeship funding and had been monitoring the budgets to ensure that sufficient funding was available.

Resolved

- (1) That the workforce profile statistics for quarter 2 of 2025/26 (financial year dates) be noted.

The meeting ended at 6.59 pm

Chair:

Date:

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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 10 December 2025 at 9.30 am

Present:

Councillor Amanda Watkins (Chair)
Councillor Gemma Coton (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Barry Wood

Apologies for absence:

Group Leaders had agreed to reduced attendance for this Special Personnel Committee meeting. Attendees as set out above with apologies as set out below:

Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Chris Brant
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Fiona Mawson
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Chris Pruden

Officers:

Gordon Stewart, Chief Executive
Stephen Hinds, Executive Director Resources
Claire Cox, Assistant Director Human Resources
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

27 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

28 Chair's Announcements

There were no Chair's announcements.

29 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

Resolved

That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

(The Governance and Elections Manager let the meeting at the conclusion of this item)

30 **Interviews for Post of Director of Transformation (Cherwell Futures)**

The Committee saw each of the short listed applicants for the post of Director of Transformation (Cherwell Futures) and asked them a number of questions.

The Committee was supported by the Chief Executive, Executive Director Resources and the Assistant Director Human Resources.

Following the interviews the Committee evaluated the applications and considered the supporting information from the external recruitment company in reaching their recommendation on appointment.

Resolved

- (1) That an appointment to the post of Director of Transformation (Cherwell Futures) be made subject to all necessary procedural steps having been complied with.

The meeting ended at 5.00 pm

Chair:

Date:

This report is public	
Policy Review Updates	
Committee	Personnel Committee
Date of Committee	4 March 2026
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	19 February 2026
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. Parental Leave Policy
- b. Paternity Leave Policy
- c. Probation Policy
- d. Compassionate Leave Policy
- e. Annual Leave and Bank Holiday Policy
- f. Court Attendance Policy
- g. Honorarium Policy
- h. Health and Safety 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	<p>This is an information report recommending Committee to approve the reviewed and revised policies itemed above. Therefore, there are no financial implications associated with this report.</p> <p>Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 5 February 2026</p>			
Legal	<p>Having policies in place to ensure that all new starters receive a consistent level of support and training will help to ensure that the Council inducts all of its new staff in a manner which will allow them to carry out their roles effectively going forward and support the Council's core values.</p> <p>Denzil John Turbervill, Head of Legal Services, 17 February 2026</p>			
Risk	<p>There are no risks arising directly from this report. Having up-to-date and fit for purpose policies mitigates risks such falling behind our peers regarding staff health and wellbeing policies, or new starters falling behind due to lack of support and training.</p> <p>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 3 February 2026</p>			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact		X		<p>There are no Equalities impacts arising directly from this report. Our policies are developed/reviewed according to the council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework, and in line with the Equalities Act 2010. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 3 February 2026</p>
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		X		

protected characteristics, including employees and service users?				
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, 3 February 2026			
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.

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: 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	Changes to Policies
Appendix 2	2026 Parental Leave Policy
Appendix 3	2026 Paternity Leave Policy
Appendix 4	2026 Probation Policy

Appendix 5	2026 Compassionate Leave Policy
Appendix 6	2026 Annual Leave and Bank Holiday Policy
Appendix 7	2026 Court Attendance Policy
Appendix 8	2026 Honorarium Policy
Appendix 9	2026 Health and Safety Policy
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
Report Author	Assistant Director of Human Resources, Claire Cox
Report Author contact details	Claire.cox@cherwell-dc.gov.uk
Executive Director Approval (unless Executive Director or Statutory Officer report)	Executive Director for Resources

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Appendix 1

Changes to Policies

Policy	Changes
Parental Leave Policy	Changed in line with legislation that will take effect 6 April. Day one entitlement.
Paternity Leave Policy	Changed in line with legislation that will take effect 6 April. Day one entitlement
Probation Policy	Updated in line with 3 yearly review, grammatical alterations and general updates in relation to equality and inclusion and making reasonable adjustments for disabilities and added a section in the appendix about data protection and GDPR. Removed the ability to extend the probation period due to the updates within the Employment Right Bill 2025. Weaved in reference to CDC Values.
Compassionate Leave Policy	Policy reviewed and updated in line with the 3-year review cycle. Most sections reworded to adopt a softer, more approachable tone. Added standard wording to Section 1 to align with other policies.
Annual Leave and Bank Holiday Policy	Policy reviewed and updated in line with the 3-year review cycle. Added standard wording to Section 1 to align with other policies.
Court Attendance Policy	Grammatical tweaks to aid clarity. Added an introduction to be consistent with other policies. Updated Section 3 in line with the latest guidance on jury service. Amended the defendant attendance section to be clear that employees are responsible for covering any absence.
Honorarium Policy	Grammatical tweaks to aid clarity. Calculation examples updated to reflect current pay structure. Confirmed payments are monthly, and pro-rated for part time colleagues.
Health and Safety Policy	Policy reviewed and updated in line with the 3-year review cycle.

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Parental Leave Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Parental Leave Policy
Owner	Human Resources
Version	3.0
Date of implementation	5 March 2026

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

This document requires the following committee approvals:

Committee	Date of meeting pending approval
CDC Personnel Committee	17 October 2022 (16:00)
Personnel Committee	3 December 2025
Personnel Committee	4 March 2026

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District

DATE FOR REVIEW

No later than 1st March 2029 but sooner if impacted by legislative changes.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision date	Summary of revision
2.0	3 Dec 2025	This policy is reviewed on a three-year cycle to ensure continued relevance and compliance
3.0	4 March 2026	Legislation changed making parental leave a day one entitlement

1	Entitlement to parental leave	4
2	Notification requirements	4
3	Exceptions to the parental leave provisions for parents with disabled children	4
4	Definition of a week	5
5	Request for evidence	5
6	Postponement of leave period	5
7	Right during and after parental leave	5
8	Standby and on call duty	5
9	Local government pension scheme	6
10	Multiple contracts	6
	Appendix 1 - Parental Leave Application Form	7

1 Entitlement to parental leave

1.1 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and the Council may amend it at any time.

1.2 This policy applies to employees only. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants, self-employed contractors, volunteers or interns.

1.3 Parental leave is unpaid, and the principles are as follows:

- Employees are entitled to take up to 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave in respect of each child.
- The leave must be taken before the child's 18th birthday.
- The leave is in respect of each child for whom the employee has responsibility. An employee has responsibility for a child if they are the child's biological mother or father (whether or not they are living with the child); the child's adoptive parent; or otherwise have legal parental responsibility for the child, for example, if they are the child's guardian, or a step-parent who has a parental responsibility agreement or parental responsibility order.
- The leave can be for any purpose connected with spending time with or otherwise caring for the child.
- No more than four weeks parental leave can be taken in any one year in relation to each child. A year for this purpose begins on the date when the employee became entitled to take parental leave in relation to the child in question.
- In default of any agreement to the contrary parental leave may only be taken in blocks of one week or multiples of a week unless the leave is to be taken in respect of a disabled child.

2. Notification requirements

2.2 The employee must give their line manager at least 21 days' notice of the intention to take parental leave, and of when the leave begins and ends by using the parental leave application form (Appendix A).

2.3 If the employee wishes to start parental leave immediately on the birth of a child, they must give notice at least 21 days before the expected week of childbirth.

2.4 If they wish to start parental leave immediately on having a child placed with them for adoption, they should give notice at least 21 days before the expected week of placement, or if this is not possible, give as much notice as they can.

3 Exceptions to the parental leave provisions for parents with disabled children

3.1 Special rules apply to parents of disabled children (for these purposes disability means being entitled to disability living allowance, armed forces independence allowance or personal independence payment). They are not required to take leave in respect of that child in blocks of full weeks. However, there is still a limit of four weeks a year for each child and 18 weeks in total for each child.

4 Definition of a week

- 4.1 Where an employee's working pattern does not vary, under the contract of employment, a week is the period the employee normally works.
- 4.2 Where the working pattern normally varies from week to week or over a longer period, or if the employee is normally required to work in some weeks and not other weeks, then a week is the total of all periods worked over one year divided by 52.

5 Request for evidence

- 5.1 On applying for parental leave, the employee must provide evidence of the child's date of birth or date of adoption placement, the employee's responsibility or expected responsibility of the child (for example, a birth certificate, adoption or matching certificate parental responsibility agreement or court order), and if applicable the child's entitlement to a disability living allowance. This evidence should be attached to the parental leave application form.

6 Postponement of leave period

- 6.1 Although we will try to accommodate any request for parental leave, an employer can postpone leave if business operation would be unduly disrupted by the leave being taken. This postponement will be done, in writing, within seven days of receiving the request for parental leave, stating the reason for the postponement, and specifying the new dates the leave may be taken with the agreement of the employee.
- 6.2 If the employer and employee cannot agree on new dates then the employer must determine the most appropriate dates. Parental leave cannot be postponed if it is to be taken immediately after the child is born or placed for adoption. Parental leave also cannot be postponed for more than six months or beyond the child's 18th birthday (if sooner).

7 Rights during and after parental leave

- 7.1 leave under this policy is unpaid. The employee's contractual provisions relating to pay and benefits are suspended during parental leave.
- 7.2 However, annual leave entitlement and continuous services are unaffected during parental leave. The employee will remain bound by their duties of good faith and confidentiality, and any contractual restrictions on accepting gifts and benefits, or working for another business.
- 7.3 If an employee has an electrical vehicle on the salary sacrifice scheme, they must contact their HR Business Partner for more information on how parental leave may impact their payments.

8 Standby and on call duty

- 8.1 During the period of parental leave the employee will not be required to undertake standby or on call duty and therefore will not receive payment for these tasks.

9 Local government pension scheme

- 9.1 Any absence, which is unpaid, will be treated as a break in service for occupational pension purposes unless you choose to pay voluntary contributions.
- 9.2 You must write to Payroll and state your intention to pay voluntary contributions no later than 30 days after your return to work. You may pay these contributions as a lump sum or in instalments. For further advice, please contact Payroll.

10 Multiple Contracts

- 10.1 Where an employee works in more than one department of the Council this will not affect the total leave entitlement. If the manager of one of the jobs wishes to postpone leave this will have the effect of postponing leave for both jobs. It is up to the line managers and the employee concerned to agree a convenient time for parental leave to be taken, as long as this is within six months of the original request.

PARENTAL LEAVE APPLICATION FORM
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Surname			
First Name(s)			
Job Title			
Department			
I have		Child(ren) who is/are under the age of eighteen years (enter number of children) in respect of whom you are applying for parental leave or	
I have		Disabled child(ren) who is/are under the age of eighteen years (enter number of children) in respect of whom you are applying for parental leave	
<p>Please attach a copy of the child's/children's birth certificate(s), adoption or matching certificate, parental responsibility agreement or court order to this form.</p> <p>If your child is in receipt of disability living allowance proof should also be attached.</p>			

Date parental leave requested to start from:		Date parental leave requested to end on:	
If your hours of work do not vary each week: total hours that would be worked each week			
If your hours of work vary each week: please specify the arrangement regarding your working hours			
I have taken		weeks parental leave with previous/current employers in relation to this child/children	

<p>I confirm that my purpose in requesting unpaid parental leave is for caring for my child(ren) and I understand that any false information that I give on this form may result in disciplinary proceedings being taken against me.</p>
--

Signed Employee:		Date:	
Signed Assistant Director:		Date:	
This form should be returned to Human Resources			



Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Paternity Leave Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Paternity Leave Policy
Owner	Human Resources
Version	4.0
Date of implementation	5 March 2026

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

This document requires the following committee approvals:

Committee	Date of meeting pending approval
CDC Personnel Committee	27 November 2024
Personnel Committee	4 March 2026

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District

DATE FOR REVIEW

No later than 1st March 2029 but sooner if impacted by legislative changes.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision date	Summary of revision
V3	October 2024	Legislation update
V4	March 2026	Legislation change, day one entitlement

This policy covers:

1	Who the scheme applies to	4
2	Entitlement to paternity leave	4
3	Notification requirements	5
4	The contract of employment during paternity leave	5
5	Pay	5
6	Annual leave	6
7	Local Government Pension Scheme	6
	Appendix 1 – Paternity Leave Application Form	7

1 Who the scheme applies to

- 1.2** Cherwell District Council's paternity leave scheme applies to employees only. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants, self-employed contractors, volunteers or interns.
- 1.3** This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or other contract to provide services, and the Council may amend it at any time

2 Entitlement to paternity leave

2.1 Paternity leave is available to employees of either gender for the purpose of caring for a child, or supporting the child's other parent, in the following cases:

(a) on the birth of a child you are the:

- baby's biological father, and you expect to have some responsibility for the child's upbringing; or
- partner (that is, spouse, civil partner or someone (of either sex) with whom you live in an enduring family relationship, but who is not your parent, grandparent, sister, brother, aunt or uncle) of the mother and will have the main responsibility with the mother for the child's upbringing.

(b) on the birth of a child to a surrogate mother where you are, or your partner is, one of the child's biological parents, and you expect to obtain a parental order giving you and your partner responsibility for the child.

(c) Where an adoption agency places a child with you and/or your partner for adoption and you expect to have main responsibility (with your partner) for the child's upbringing.

(d) Where a local authority places a child with you and/or your partner under a fostering for adoption arrangement and you expect to have main responsibility (with your partner) for the child's upbringing.

- 2.2** In adoption, fostering for adoption or surrogacy cases you may be entitled to take adoption leave instead. However, adoption leave may only be taken by one parent. Paternity leave is available to the other parent (of either sex).
- 2.3** You cannot take paternity leave if you have already taken shared parental leave in respect of the same child. You may be eligible to take shared parental leave after paternity leave.
- 2.4** Please contact Human Resources if you require further clarification regarding your eligibility.

2.5 All employees who meet the eligibility criteria can chose to take either 1 or 2 weeks' paternity leave.

They can take the leave as either:

- 2 weeks together
- 2 separate blocks of 1 week

2.6 An employee can take their paternity leave at any time in the first 52 weeks after the birth or placement of a child.

3 Notification Requirements

3.1 The employee has an obligation to inform their line manager of the intention to take paternity leave by the end of the 15th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth (or no more than seven days after the adoption agency notified you of being matched with a child), or as soon as the employee reasonably can.

3.2 The paternity leave notification form (Appendix 1) should confirm the following details:

- the Expected Week of Childbirth
- the start date(s) of the leave to be taken
- the duration of leave to be taken (one or two weeks).

3.3 You can change the intended start date(s) by giving us 28 days' notice or, if this is not possible, as much notice as you can.

3.4 You cannot commence paternity leave or receive paternity pay before the baby is born. Therefore, if the baby is not born by the approved date on the paternity leave application form then the date has to be changed to a new agreed date either after or on the date of the child's birth. Please confirm your paternity leave commencement date to Payroll as soon as reasonably practical.

4 The contract of employment during paternity leave

4.1 All the usual terms and conditions of your employment remain in force during paternity leave.

5 Pay

5.1 All employees who meet the eligibility criteria are entitled to 2 week's paternity leave. Paternity pay will be paid at a normal week's pay rate.

5.2 An employee can take their paternity leave at any time in the first 52 weeks after the birth or placement of a child.

6 Annual leave

6.1 Holiday entitlement will continue to accrue during paternity leave. If your paternity leave continues into the next holiday year, any remaining holiday that cannot reasonably be taken before your paternity leave can be carried over to the next holiday year but must be taken within three months of returning to work unless your manager agrees otherwise. You should try to limit carry over to one week or less wherever possible.

6.2 This includes the accrual of bank and public holidays.

7 Local Government Pension Scheme

Pension contributions will be deducted in the normal way from any payment you receive during your paternity pay period. Any employee contributions you make will be based on the amount of any paternity pay you are receiving.

PATERNITY LEAVE APPLICATION FORM

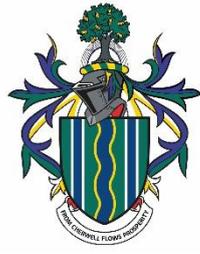
DECLARATION	
Surname	
First Name(s)	
Job Title	
Department	

I declare that:-	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>I am the baby's biological father, or</p> <p>I am the partner of the mother and will have the main responsibility with the mother for the child's upbringing; or</p> <p>I expect to obtain a parental order giving me and my partner responsibility for a child born to a surrogate mother where I or my partner are the child's biological parent; or</p> <p>I expect to have main responsibility (with my partner) for the child's upbringing who was placed with me and/or my partner for adoption by an adoption agency or where a local authority placed a child with me and/or my partner under a fostering for adoption arrangement.</p> <p>*Partner means spouse, civil partner or someone (of either sex) with whom you live in an enduring family relationship, but who is not your parent, grandparent, sister, brother, aunt or uncle.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	I will take time off work to support the child's other parent or to care for the child

DATES FOR PAY AND LEAVE		
The baby is due on, or The child is expected to start living with us on:		
I want to be away from work for one <input type="checkbox"/> / two <input type="checkbox"/> weeks and I would like my paternity leave and pay to commence on:	Week 1:	
	Week 2:	
Signed Employee:		

Signed Assistant Director		
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This form should be returned to Human Resources together with a copy of the MatB1 Certificate or Adoption Matching Certificate



Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Probation Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Probation Policy
Owner	Human Resources
Version	3.0
Date of implementation	5 March 2026

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

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Committee	Date of meeting pending approval
Personnel Committee	4 March 2026
Personnel Committee	15 March 2023

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District

DATE FOR REVIEW

No later than 1st March 2029 but sooner if impacted by legislative changes.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision date	Summary of revision
3	30 December 2025	Reviewed as part of 3-year policy review cycle

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4	Extension of Probation Period	6
5	Confirmation of appointment	6
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Appendix 1 – How to access probation forms on iTrent

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or other contract to provide services, and it may be amended at any time following consultation with trade union and subject to agreement from the Personnel Committee.
- 1.2 This policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect legislative changes.
- 1.3 This policy applies to all employees of Cherwell District Council, it does not apply to agency workers, consultants, self-employed contractors, volunteers or interns.
- 1.4 The council is committed to ensuring that all newly appointed staff receive the best possible support during their probation period to demonstrate their suitability to undertake the full range of duties to their post.
- 1.5 The Council is committed to equality and inclusion and will make reasonable adjustments during the probation period to support employees with disabilities or other specific needs, ensuring they have equal opportunity to demonstrate their suitability for the role.
- 1.6 The standard probation period is six months. In exceptional circumstances, this may be extended by up to three months. If a contract is shorter than the length of the probation period, the probation period will be for the length of time the employee is employed.
- 1.7 During the probation period meetings will be set up by the line manager to ensure regular two-way communication between the line manager and the employee, to discuss progress and to allow timely remedial action to be taken if required.
- 1.8 Confirmation of appointment is dependent upon the satisfactory completion of the probation period. In addition to successful probationary reviews, the probation period is only deemed to be complete once the new employee has completed all induction forms, mandatory training and the probation forms have been completed on the HR/Payroll system.
- 1.9 Any issues that arise will be dealt with immediately and not left until a formal review.
- 1.10 If, at any time during the probation period, the probationers conduct, performance, attendance or timekeeping is not satisfactory, and it is evident that the required standard will not be reached before the end of the probation period the council has the right to dismiss the employee with one week's written notice.
- 1.11 Minor disciplinary matters will be dealt with under the probation procedure. However, the formal disciplinary procedure may be invoked in cases of alleged serious or gross misconduct.

1.12 Probation is a two-way process, and the new employee has a duty to ensure they raise issues and seek to get action taken to resolve issues. The new employee should actively ensure review meetings are undertaken and recorded.

1.13 If at any time during the probation period the employee feels they are not suitable for the role, they must give the Council one week's notice to terminate their employment.

2. **Purpose**

2.1 A probation period provides:

- a) Time during which an employee can demonstrate, through performance, conduct, timekeeping and attendance, their suitability for the role.
- b) An opportunity to assess the employee's capability, reliability and suitability before deciding whether to confirm their appointment.
- c) Through regular reviews, opportunities to identify the employee's training needs and provide appropriate timely development activities, guidance and encouragement, to assist in meeting the required standards.

2.2 During the probation period the line manager will ensure that all employees receive the help and support they need to develop the appropriate skills, performance and attitudes to enable them to satisfactorily complete their probation period. The line manager will;

- a) Provide a thorough induction programme.
- b) Ensure that the employee fully understands the standards expected in the role.
- c) Provide guidance, training and encouragement to help the employee adapt to the new work environment.
- d) Conduct regular reviews of the employee's progress through the probationary period.
- e) Issue warnings at the earliest opportunity if the necessary standards are not being met, stating clearly what improvement is necessary.
- f) Give the employee the opportunity to improve before deciding whether or not to confirm their appointment, except in cases of gross misconduct.

3. **Probation Meetings**

3.1 Probation meetings are intended to be a positive way of supporting and guiding an employee through their probation period. The line manager will meet with the employee on a regular basis to discuss the employee's progress and give advice, guidance, and support where improvements are required. The emphasis is on a two-way communication between the employee and line manager allowing timely action to be taken in the early stages of appointment.

3.2 Formal probation review meetings will take place at 3 months and within the final month of the probation period but no later than 6 months.

- 3.3 Employees should be proactive in seeking support if they have any concerns about the requirements of the role or their capability to perform the role.
- 3.4 Probation meetings should take place in an uninterrupted environment allowing sufficient time in the meeting for both parties to contribute constructively to the discussion.
- 3.5 In line with our values of working collaboratively, acting with integrity, demonstrating accountability, being innovative and thinking sustainably, line managers should:
- Provide constructive, balanced feedback on performance and achievements to date against the objectives set at induction, recognising successes and contributions while being honest and respectful about areas for development.
 - Review timekeeping and attendance, including sickness absence, in a supportive and consistent way, seeking to understand any underlying issues and working collaboratively with the employee to identify appropriate solutions or adjustments where needed.
 - Review and agree training and development needs, encouraging continuous learning and identifying opportunities for growth that support both the individual's development and the longer-term needs of the service.
 - Identify any aspects of performance or conduct that require improvement, clearly setting out expectations and agreed actions, while acting with integrity and fairness and ensuring the employee understands their responsibilities and accountability.
 - Explore any problems or barriers the employee has encountered in their role, creating a safe and inclusive space for open discussion and working together to find practical, innovative and sustainable ways forward.
 - Provide appropriate guidance and support, including signposting to relevant resources or colleagues, and fostering a sense of shared responsibility for achieving positive outcomes.
 - Introduce and agree any changes to objectives, ensuring they remain realistic, achievable and aligned with Council priorities, and that ownership and timescales are clearly understood.
 - Set the next review meeting, confirming actions, responsibilities and timescales to support ongoing progress and accountability.
- 3.6 A copy of the probation meeting documentation should be recorded electronically in within the council's current HR/Payroll system.
- 3.7 It is the line manager's responsibility to ensure that reviews are conducted within the timescales described in this policy.
- 3.8 In between reviews the line manager should keep brief notes of the probationer's achievements, development points, training requirements and any advice or warnings given, to be used at the next review meeting.

4. **Extension of probation period**

- 4.1 The line manager, may, after discussion with their Human Resources Business Partner, seek to extend an employee's probationary period where performance, actions and/or conduct have been identified as not quite meeting the required standards. Extensions to the probation period should be on a month-by-month basis

and will not exceed 3 months in total. Managers will need to complete regular reviews during the extension.

- 4.2 Employees will be formally notified in writing of an extension to their probationary period by Human Resources and will be provided with a clear outline of areas where improvement and/or action is required within an agreed timeframe.

5. **Confirmation of appointment**

- 5.1 If the employee's performance, conduct, timekeeping, and attendance have been satisfactory and fully meet the council's expected standards for the role the line manager will complete the final probationary review and form on the HR/Payroll system.
- 5.2 Employees will be advised in writing of the successful completion of their probation period.
- 5.3 Employees will not be deemed to have passed their probationary period of employment unless they have received written confirmation from Human Resources

6. **Terminating Employment**

- 6.1 Probation periods will usually be confirmed as successful at the end of the period however, where performance or required actions have failed to reach the standards required by the line manager, and where reasonably considered there is very little likelihood of the employee being able to reach the required standards within reasonable timeframes, despite additional support and/or training, the line manager should advise the employee that they may not be confirmed in post.
- 6.2 If this is the case, the line manager will arrange a meeting with both their Human Resources Business Partner and the employee. The employee has the right to be accompanied at this meeting by either a workplace colleague or Union Representative.
- 6.3 The purpose of the meeting is to enable the line manager to review the case for termination of employment and to consider any views expressed by the employee before a decision is made.
- 6.4 After a brief adjournment the line manager will state the outcome of the meeting.
- 6.5 The decision will be confirmed in writing to the employee as soon as reasonably practical and normally within 5 working days of the meeting.
- 6.6 Should the outcome of the meeting be dismissal; the employee will be provided with one weeks' notice. For cases of gross misconduct, summary dismissal may be considered.

Appendix 1

Probation review forms are accessible on the Manager Self Service (MSS) iTrent portal

This form will be made available against the person when they start at the organisation and can be accessed in MSS as follows:

- Select the person, whose form needs to be completed
- Click on Questionnaires and Forms under the links section
- Click on Review Questionnaires and Forms
- Click on the Probation Form on the right-hand side of the screen and follow the instructions detailed within the form

Once the manager has completed the form and saved it, the employee will have an opportunity to comment.

All probation documentation stored within the HR/Payroll system will be handled in accordance with data protection legislation, including GDPR, to ensure confidentiality and secure processing of personal information.

Should managers or employees have any queries about the form, please contact:
humanresources@cherwell-dc.gov.uk



Compassionate Leave Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Compassionate Leave Policy
Owner	Human Resources
Version	2.0
Date of implementation	5 March 2026

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

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Committee	Date of meeting pending approval
Personnel Committee	4 March 2026

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District

DATE FOR REVIEW

No later than 5 March 2029 but sooner if impacted by legislative changes.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision date	Summary of revision
2.0	04/03/2026	Three year scheduled review.

This policy covers:

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2	Compassionate leave	4
3	Entitlement	4
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10	Length of Notice requirements	6/7
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1. Who the scheme applies to

- 1.1 Cherwell District Council's compassionate leave scheme applies to employees only. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants, self-employed contractors, volunteers or interns.
- 1.2 This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or other contract to provide services, and the Council may amend it at any time.

2. Compassionate leave

- 2.1 The Council recognise that adopting a compassionate leave policy supports employees who are going through bereavement and grief following the death of a close family member. The Council is sympathetic to any employee when they lose a close member of their family and are committed to treating the individual with sensitivity and compassion.
- 2.2 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that compassionate leave is granted in a fair and equitable manner whilst, at the same time, recognising that compassionate leave arrangements need to be flexible in individual circumstances. The aim is to set down clear guidance in the use of and application of compassionate leave.
The compassionate leave policy should not be confused with the statutory right to time off for dependants which is covered in the family friendly policy.
- 2.3 In circumstances where an employee is required to care for a critically or terminally ill family member the councils will be as flexible as possible. Examples of this may include granting short notice annual leave or flexi time, allowing the employee to work from home or authorising a period of unpaid leave.

3 Entitlement

- 3.1 Employees are entitled to request compassionate leave regardless of their length of service.
- 3.2 Up to ten days paid compassionate leave will usually be granted in the event of the death of an employee's:
 - Spouse or partner
 - Child (under the age of 18)*
 - Daughter / Son (including step-children)*
 - Parent (including step-parent)
 - Parent-in law
 - Sibling (including step-sibling)
 - Grandparent
 - Grandchild

*Please see Parental Bereavement Leave at point 6 (below)

This list is not exhaustive and will be reviewed in individual circumstances where Senior Management has discretion, in consultation with the HR Business Partner.

- 3.3 An employee must request compassionate leave as soon as is practicably possible given the circumstances of the situation; this may, however, be after the employee has returned to work.
- 3.4 Where a manager approves compassionate leave (up to ten days), the employee should record this on the HR/Payroll system as paid leave.
- 3.5 Managers must consider requests sympathetically, reasonably, confidentially, and in consultation with HR Business Partner, and should approve leave promptly. If ten days is insufficient, other options such as annual leave, flexitime, parental leave, or time off for dependants should be considered.
- 3.6 Further compassionate leave may be granted at the discretion of a member of Senior Management.

4 Refusing a request

- 4.1 A manager will not unreasonably refuse a request for compassionate leave. If the manager feels they are unable to grant a request, they must seek guidance from their HR Business Partner.

5 Ongoing support

- 5.1 Managers are encouraged to discuss on-going additional support whilst the employee is taking compassionate leave and upon their return to work. Such consideration could include short-term flexibility in working arrangements and a referral to Occupational Health for counselling or other well-being advice.
- 5.2 It is important for managers to remember those special or significant days such as the inquest, anniversary of the death or the birthday of the person who has died can also be particularly difficult times for employees.
- 5.3 Grief does not have predicted stages and phases. Everyone reacts differently to bereavement, and this should be understood and respected by both managers and colleagues.

6. Parental Bereavement Leave

- 6.1 The Parental Bereavement Leave Regulations 2020, introduce statutory parental bereavement leave and pay for parents in respect of the unfortunate death of a child.
- 6.2 The primary beneficiaries of statutory parental leave are employees who are the parents of a deceased child under the age of 18 years. This includes adoptive parents, foster parents and guardians, and intended parents under a surrogacy agreement as well as more informal groups such as close relatives or family friends who have taken responsibility for the child's care in the absence of parents for a continuous period or at least 4 weeks before the death.

7. Eligibility for Leave

- 7.1 Parental bereavement leave is a day-one right, meaning employees do not need any minimum service to qualify. It applies to parents and anyone who had been living with the child for at least four weeks and had day-to-day caring

responsibility before the child's death. Parents who experience a stillbirth at 24 weeks or more are also entitled to this leave.

8. Taking Parental Bereavement leave

- 8.1 Parental bereavement leave can be taken at any time within 56 weeks of a child's death, giving parents the flexibility to take time when they need it most.
- 8.2 The statutory entitlement is two weeks of leave, which must be taken in full weeks rather than individual days. Parents may choose to take this as:
 - One block of two weeks, or
 - Two separate one-week blocks, taken at different times.
- 8.3 There is no requirement for the weeks to be consecutive, allowing parents to use the leave when it best supports their wellbeing.
- 8.4 If more than one child sadly dies, parents are entitled to two weeks of parental bereavement leave for each child.
- 8.5 For parents already on maternity leave, parental bereavement leave can be added to the end of their maternity leave, taken as one continuous period, ensuring they are fully supported during an incredibly difficult time.

9. Notification

- 9.1 When an employee needs to take parental bereavement leave, they must let their HR Department or the line manager know when they wish to take this leave and provide the following information:
 - The date of the child's death
 - Their relationship to the child, confirming entitlement to parental bereavement leave
 - When they would like their leave to begin
 - Whether they plan to take one week or two weeks of leave

It is understood that this is a deeply sensitive time, and no further information will be requested. Employees are encouraged to share these details in the way that feels most comfortable for them.

10. Length of Notice requirements

- 10.1 If the employee is taking leave within 56 days of the child's death then they are able to take the leave straightaway without having to give a period of notice.
- 10.2 If they wish to cancel a week of leave during this period, they only need to let us know by the time they would have started work on the first day of that week. If the employee is taking leave more than 56 days after the child's death, then at least one week's notice of their intention to take parental bereavement leave is required.
- 10.3 To cancel a planned week of leave in this situation, the employee should let their line manager know at least one week before that week is due to begin.

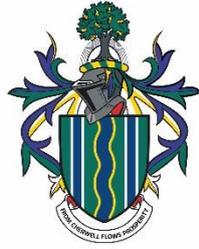
10.4 An employee may not cancel any week of parental bereavement leave which has already commenced.

11. Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay

11.1 To be eligible for statutory parental bereavement pay, employees who are on parental bereavement leave are required to have:

- At least 26 weeks' continuous employment with their employer ending with the week before the week in which their child dies and still be employed by that employer on the day on which their child dies; and
- Normal weekly earnings in the eight weeks up to the week before the child's death that are no less than the lower earnings limit for national insurance contribution purposes.

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Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Annual Leave and Bank Holiday Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Annual leave and bank holiday Policy
Owner	Human Resources
Version	3.0
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Personnel Committee	04 March 2026

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District

DATE FOR REVIEW

No later than 05 March 2029 but sooner if impacted by legislative changes.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision date	Summary of revision
2	01/04/2024	Leave entitlement change
3	04/03/2026	Three year scheduled review

Contents	Page
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Introduction	4
Entitlement	4/5
Carry over	5
New employees	5
Leaving the authority	5
Sickness during a period of annual leave	5
Accrual during maternity and adoption leave	5

1. Scope

- 1.1 This policy applies to all employees of Cherwell District Council. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, or interns.
- 1.2 This policy does not form part of any contract of employment, and the Council may amend it at any time.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The annual leave period is from 1 April to 31 March.
- 2.2 The timing of annual leave is at the discretion of the line manager and must be planned within the requirements of the service. All employees must obtain prior authorisation for leave from their line manager.
- 2.3 All annual leave and bank holidays are present in hours within the HR/Payroll system under the Employee Self Service (ESS).

3. Entitlement

- 3.1 In addition to the national bank holidays and one locally agreed concessionary day, employees have a minimum annual leave entitlement of:

Grade A to I - 27 working days / 199.8 hours, rising to 30 days / 222 hours after 5 years continuous service. The increase is effective from the 5th anniversary of the continuous service date.

Grade J and above – 35 working days / 259 hours.

These entitlements are pro-rated for part-time employees.

- 3.2 Bank holidays recognised on an annual basis and the locally agreed concessionary day are as follows:

Bank Holidays	Locally Agreed Concessionary Day
New Year's Day Good Friday Easter Monday The first Monday in May (May Day) Spring Bank Holiday Monday Summer Bank Holiday Monday Christmas Day Boxing Day	One concessionary day decided annually – usually Christmas Eve or between Christmas and New Year.

3.3 All employees who work part time hours or have a working pattern where the number of hours worked each day are different, benefit from a pro rata entitlement to bank holidays and the concessionary day.

3.4 There is a “holiday calculation guide” available on the HR/Payroll system under your ESS.

4. Carry-Over

4.1 A maximum of the employees working week may be carried forward into the new leave year. Additional carry-over may be agreed only in exceptional circumstances with the advance agreement of the Assistant Director - HR.

5. New Employees

5.1 For the current leave year new employees are entitled to an amount of leave proportionate to completed **weeks** of service during the leave year.

5.2 By prior arrangement an employee transferring from the service of one authority to another may transfer their balance of outstanding annual leave provided there is no break in service.

6. Leaving the Authority

6.1 An employee who leaves local government service during the leave year shall be allowed a pro rata entitlement to annual leave and bank holidays based on the number of **weeks** completed service in the current leave year.

6.2 Employees who leave CDC to join another local authority within the leave year are entitled to transfer any outstanding leave to that authority. In such circumstances a statement of annual leave should be requested from Human Resources.

6.3 Employees who leave within the leave year having taken more than their proportionate entitlement will be required to repay the Council, normally by deduction from their final salary.

6.4 Employees who have not taken their proportionate entitlement in the leave year when they tender their resignation will be required to take their outstanding leave during their notice period. However, in exceptional circumstances the Assistant Director or Executive Director may agree to payment in lieu of outstanding leave.

7. Sickness during a period of annual leave

7.1 In the event an employee falls sick during a period of his or her annual leave, they will be entitled to this annual leave being recredited only upon receipt of a GP fit note.

8. Annual leave accrual during maternity and adoption leave

8.1 Subject to agreement of the employee’s line manager, accrued annual leave should be taken prior to the commencement of maternity leave. Any annual leave entitlement for the year that is not taken or cannot reasonably be taken before starting maternity leave can be carried over to the next annual leave year. This must be taken immediately before returning to work or within three months of returning to work. Please see maternity /adoption leave policy for more information.

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Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Court Attendance

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council
Policy title	Court Attendance
Owner	Human Resources
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DOCUMENT APPROVALS

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Personnel Committee	04 March 2026

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

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DATE FOR REVIEW

No later than 01 March 2029 but sooner if impacted by legislative changes.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision date	Summary of revision
2.0	04/03/2026	Three-year scheduled review.

Contents		Page
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5	Loss of earnings	5
6	Payment from the court	5
7	Witness attendance	5
8	Defendant attendance	5
9	Time recording	6

1 Scope

- 1.1 This policy applies to all employees of Cherwell District Council. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, or interns.
- 1.2 This policy does not form part of any contract of employment, and the Council may amend it at any time.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 Cherwell District Council recognises that employees may be required to attend court for various reasons, such as jury service, acting as a witness, or appearing as a defendant. This policy outlines the Council's approach to supporting employees in fulfilling these legal obligations.

3 Jury Service

- 3.1 Trial by jury is a key part of the UK legal system and our democratic way of life. A jury is made up of twelve members of the public, randomly selected using the electoral register. Jury service usually lasts for ten days, but some trials can take longer. Jurors are usually warned in advance if a trial is expected to last a long time.
- 3.2 If you are selected for jury service, you will be sent a:

a) Jury summons (notice)

- A formal letter from the Jury Central Summoning Bureau detailing:
 - your juror number
 - court location
 - reporting date and time
 - return options (online or postal) and the deadline

b) Reply to summons form

- Requires your confirmation of attendance or request for deferral
- Must be returned within the specified timeframe (typically within 7 days)

c) Juror information booklet

- Containing guidance on:
 - eligibility criteria
 - what to bring to court (e.g. photographic ID)
 - how the jury process works
 - travel, food and other allowances

d) Form for loss of earnings (Form 5223D)

- To be completed by both the employee and employer before taking to court (see section 3)

e) Allowances and expenses information sheet

- Details the amount you can claim for:
 - loss of earnings
 - travel (public transport or mileage)
 - subsistence

3.3 The jury summons (notice) should be shared with your line manager without delay. You will be granted leave of absence unless your absence would have a highly detrimental impact on service delivery in which case you may be asked to request a deferral.

4 Asking to do jury service at a later date

4.1 In some circumstances, you may be able to defer your jury service. If requesting a deferral, you must state a clear and specific reason on the reply to summons form.

4.2 You must also propose three alternative dates when you would be available for jury service within the next 12 months. You can only defer jury service once per summons.

5 Loss of earnings

5.1 When serving as a juror you should claim the allowance for loss of earnings to which you are entitled under the Jurors' Allowances Regulations currently in force. The Council will then arrange for you to be paid your usual salary minus the allowance claimed.

5.2 To claim your loss of earnings you will need to complete the form for loss of earnings (Form 5223D) which confirms your daily rate of pay. Payroll will be able to assist with the completion of this form which should be handed to the court clerk on your first day of jury service.

5.3 You are also able to claim for travel and food expenses from the court. On your first day, the court clerk will explain how to claim your expenses.

6 Payment from the court

6.1 It is essential you keep a record of costs, e.g., car park receipts, and submit these with your expense claim form. This can be handed to the court clerk on your final day or sent afterwards using the court contact details provided on the form.

6.2 If you are unsure what should be submitted with your claim form you should speak to the court clerk.

6.3 You should expect reimbursement, directly into your bank account within seven to ten working days after submitting your claim.

7 Witness attendance

7.1 If you are called to court as a witness, you will need to provide evidence of this to your line manager to confirm the time you need to take away from work.

7.2 As with jury service, you are entitled to claim for loss of earnings, and you will be paid your usual salary minus this figure.

8 Defendant attendance

8.1 If you need to attend court as a defendant, you will need to provide evidence of this to your line manager to confirm the time you need to take away from work.

8.2 To attend court as a defendant you will need to use annual leave or request unpaid leave.

8.3 There is no entitlement to claim for loss of earnings from the court.

9 Time recording

9.1 Please ensure any absence is appropriately recorded on iTrent.

9.2 You may find that on arrival at the court you are not required on that day. In such circumstances you should be prepared to return to your usual role at the Council.



Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Honorarium Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
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DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

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

DATE FOR REVIEW

No later than 01 March 2029 but sooner if impacted by legislative changes.

REVISION HISTORY

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1 Scope

- 1.1 This policy applies to all employees of Cherwell District Council. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, or interns.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 There will be situations where employees are asked to temporarily undertake higher-level duties. This may be to cover a colleague's long-term absence or a vacant post. An honorarium is a suitable short-term method of compensating these employees.
- 2.2 An honorarium will only be paid in circumstances where the interim arrangements last for a minimum of 4 weeks.
- 2.3 Ideally the interim arrangements will not exceed twelve months and there should be regular reviews of the business requirement.
- 2.5 The manager should seek advice from their HR Business Partner when considering awarding an honorarium.

3 Selection and formal approval process

- 3.1 To ensure the Council meets its obligations under the equality act, it is essential that managers can demonstrate a fair process has taken place when there is more than one person who could be eligible to receive an honorarium.
- 3.2 An 'acting up' opportunity will, in the majority of cases, be ring-fenced to a specific team within the service depending upon the skills and experience required to complete the work. If the position is not filled following this process, it should be advertised more widely across the Council.
- 3.3 Formal approval of an honorarium must be sought from the relevant Assistant Director.

4 Reallocation of duties – same grade or lower

- 4.1 When an employee is asked to take on duties that differ from their current job description due to changing priorities or the redistribution of work, and those duties are at the same or a lower grade, an honorarium would not be appropriate.

These tasks fall under the expectation to carry out "additional duties commensurate with the grade of the post," as outlined in job descriptions.

- 4.2 In this particular scenario it would be necessary for a discussion to take place between the manager and the employee regarding work priorities in order that the employee is able to work to an agreed level of efficiency within their agreed working hours.
- 4.3 **Part-time workers**
Part-time workers may be agreeable to working additional hours (up to 37 hours per week). In such circumstances, payment for any additional hours would be at normal plain time rate.

5 Awarding an honorarium – acting up to part of a role

5.1 Where an employee is asked to cover some of the duties of a colleague at a higher graded post (determined through the job evaluation process), it may be possible to pay that employee an honorarium in recognition of the work which needs to be undertaken.

5.2 Alternatively, a manager may decide to share the honorarium amongst several employees and apply a percentage rate.

5.3 Determining the honorarium payment

In determining the level of honorarium payment, it is important for the manager to be able to assess what percentage of the total job the employee is being asked to undertake. The calculation of the honorarium should be broadly based on 25%, 50% or 75% of the higher grade.

5.4 Please refer to Appendix 1 for example calculations.

6 Awarding an honorarium – acting up to a full role

6.1 Where an employee is asked to cover the full duties of a colleague at a higher graded post (determined through the job evaluation process), it may be possible to pay that employee an honorarium in recognition of the work which needs to be undertaken.

6.2 The level of honorarium payment would be calculated at 100% of the higher grade.

6.3 Please refer to Appendix 1 for example calculations.

6.4 Alternatively, consideration could be given to offering a secondment if the postholder will not continue to undertake the duties of their substantive post and fully undertake the duties of the higher graded post.

7 Honorarium payments and increments

7.1 Honorarium payments will be agreed between the manager and employee in advance and should be regularly reviewed.

7.2 Honorarium payments are paid monthly. The employee will receive a letter from HR confirming the agreed arrangements.

7.3 Honorarium payments will be pro-rated for part time colleagues.

7.4 Salary progression will be based upon the salary and grade of the employee's substantive post.

7.5 When the honorarium period ceases, the employee will revert to their substantive grade, taking account of any incremental progression. This is calculated by taking their original salary point the day prior to the commencement of the honorarium period and applying an increment (if applicable).

Appendix 1 – Example calculations

The calculation of an honorarium should be broadly based on 25%, 50% or 75% of the higher grade.

The employee should receive no less than the equivalent of one full increment. In some cases, this will involve simply transferring to the grade of the higher post. If this is less than the value of one increment, then one further increment should be awarded.

Example 1: covering 100% of duties

Current salary	=	Grade F point 3	=	£36,111.00
Acting up salary	=	Grade G point 1	=	£38,370.50
Calculation	=	£38,370.50 - £36,111.00	=	£2,259.50
		divided by 12 months	=	£188.29 per month

Example 2: covering 75% of duties

Current salary	=	Grade E point 5	=	£33,527.50
Acting up salary	=	Grade G point 1	=	£38,370.50
Calculation	=	£38,370.50 - £33,527.50	=	£4,843
		£4,843 x 75%	=	£3,632.25
		divided by 12 months	=	£302.69 per month

Example 3: covering 50% of duties

Current salary	=	Grade K point 5	=	£64,541.50
Acting up salary	=	Grade L point 2 *	=	£65,638.00
Calculation	=	£65,638.00 - £64,541.50	=	£1,096.50
		£1,096.50 x 50%	=	£548.25
		divided by 12 months	=	£45.69 per month

* Point 2 awarded to ensure one full increment



Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy March 2026

Document control

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing
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2.0	January 2024	Change of Chief Executive
3.0	June 2024	Change in Leader of the Council
4.0	March 2026	Periodic Review

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Introduction

Providing a healthy and safe workplace is our highest priority. This Policy outlines the framework developed by Cherwell District Council to manage health, safety and wellbeing. The policy is a declaration of the Council's commitment to provide safe and healthy conditions for employees and other people who use or visit the Council's premises, or who may be affected by its activities.

Each directorate will develop more detailed and specific systems and procedures to ensure that health, safety and wellbeing on a day-to-day basis is well managed. The management systems required to manage health, safety and wellbeing should be proportionate to the level of risk within directorates. All of us have a responsibility to ensure that a safe and healthy working environment is maintained for everyone.

Managers too have a key role to play in supporting and implementing the Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy. We expect the Senior Leadership Team to lead by example on the policy and ensure that health, safety and wellbeing is fully integrated into day-to-day decision making, strategic planning and processes as 'business as usual' rather than as a stand-alone concept.

Cherwell District Council will establish and adopt procedures to ensure that health, safety and wellbeing objectives and priorities are monitored and delivered to a high standard and that a pro-active culture to health, safety and wellbeing is maintained throughout.

The policy has been produced as required by Section 2 (3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to clearly identify the responsibilities of Elected Members, the Chief Executive, Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers, and employees. The purpose of the Policy is to demonstrate that the Corporate Leadership Team of Cherwell District Council are totally committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees and persons other than employees that are affected by its activities.

The Chief Executive may delegate responsibilities to Executive Directors, Assistant Directors, and Managers. However, the Chief Executive retains the overall accountability and responsibility.

This Policy is set out in four parts:

Policy Statement

The Chief Executive and Leaders of the Councils corporate declaration of intent on behalf of Cherwell District Council

Organisation

The management system in place and the defining of roles and responsibilities within the organisation.

General Arrangements

The corporate procedures and systems necessary for implementing the policy.

Monitoring and Review

The system for measuring the effectiveness of the arrangements and for reviewing health and safety performance.



Gordon Stewart
Chief Executive
Cherwell District Council

Health and Safety Policy Statement

Cherwell District Council (CDC) as the employer recognises the importance of effective health and safety management and we are committed to managing health, safety, and wellbeing with equal importance as other core business aims and objectives.

This Policy Statement outlines the framework developed by CDC to manage health, safety, and wellbeing. It is a declaration of the Councils commitment to provide, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and healthy conditions for employees and persons, who use, visit, or may be affected by the Councils activities.

Our aim is to protect all employees and customers from accidents and work-related ill health. This will be achieved by.

- Complying with all relevant health and safety legislation and management standards.
- Committing to the prevention of ill health and injury across the organisation.
- Providing strong and visible leadership and management.
- Ensuring that adequate resources are provided for health, safety and wellbeing.
- Encouraging the implementation of a management system within directorates, to identify and control risk throughout the organisation.
- Identifying significant risks to health, safety and wellbeing and implementing adequate measures to prevent, reduce or protect against those risks.
- By providing a focus on higher risk activities/topics within the organisation such as waste and recycling operations, construction, fire safety, manual handling, personal safety, and work-related stress.
- Ensuring a competent workforce through the provision of information, instruction, training and supervision.
- Providing effective communication, consultation and cooperation with employees and key stakeholders on all relevant health and safety matters.
- Ensuring that appropriate monitoring and reviewing processes are in place, so that the organisation continually improves the way health, safety and wellbeing is managed.
- Continually setting targets to meet the objectives of this policy and continual improvement of the health and safety management system.

This policy will be kept under review and updated as necessary to reflect the needs of the organisation and any future changes to legislative requirements.

Gordon Stewart, Chief Executive

Councillor David Hingley

Organisation for Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Successful health, safety and wellbeing management depends on a systematic approach throughout the organisation, so that health, safety and wellbeing becomes fully integrated with all other aspects of business management. Cherwell District Council will ensure adequate resources are available to implement the principles of its health, safety and wellbeing policy and conform to all relevant health and safety statutory regulations.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System

The Council have adopted the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) "**Managing for Health and Safety**" HSG65 as their health and safety management system. The model applies the principles of other recognised Occupational Health and Safety Management System specifications such as BS ISO 45001.

The concept of 'Plan, Do, Check, Act' can help achieve a balance between the systems and behavioural aspects of management. It treats health and safety management as an integral part of good management generally, rather than a stand-alone system and encourages a commitment to continuous improvement.

Plan

Leadership: Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy, management commitment and engagement, and roles and responsibilities.

Planning: Health and Safety Action Plans (Corporate/Directorate/Service level), Objective Setting.

Do:

Arrangements: Corporate policies, arrangements and guidance, local health and safety procedures

Risk profiling and control: Arrangements for completing risk assessments, implementing controls, Risk Registers. Implementation of action plans to control risks and ensure policy objectives are met.

Communication: Systems in place for the communication of health, safety and wellbeing throughout the organisation.

Consultation and co-operation: Procedures in place for cooperation between employees, managers and Union Representatives through active consultation and involvement.

Competence: Competence of individuals through recruitment, selection, induction, training and development.

Check

Measuring and Monitoring: Measuring performance to assess effectiveness of arrangements in place; inspection and audit, tracking of action plans, statutory equipment checks, investigating causes of accidents, incidents and near misses, health surveillance, sickness absence/ill health data, health and safety quarterly reports to Senior Leadership Team

Act

Reviewing: Reviewing performance, acting on lessons learned; accidents and incidents, ill-health data, revisiting plans, policies, procedures and risk assessments.

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System will be embedded at Corporate, Directorate and Service level in order to achieve the aims and objectives of this policy.

As part of the planning process, priorities and actions will be set within a Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan, in addition to directorate specific health and safety action plans.

Other plans for health, safety and wellbeing will also exist across services/teams as required for their work activities.

The Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan will be used as the framework for leadership health, safety and wellbeing risks highlighted in the Corporate Leadership Risk Register.

Roles and Responsibilities for Health, Safety and Wellbeing

The roles and responsibilities are defined across Cherwell District Council hierarchy as follows:

Elected Members

Elected Members are responsible for carrying out specific functions both individually and collectively and have a responsibility to conduct their business and make decisions in conformity with health and safety legislation and the Council's own policies. Elected Members should ensure that adequate resources are made available to the Chief Executive in order to ensure that successful health, safety and wellbeing management is implemented and embedded across the Council.

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility and accountability throughout Cherwell District Council for implementing and achieving the objectives of the Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy. This includes:

- Having ultimate responsibility for ensuring that significant risks are effectively managed throughout the organisation.
- Ensure that there are sufficient resources to maintain the continued safety and security of all employees, councillors and visitors in all council premises.
- Providing clear and visible health and safety leadership and commitment that encourages employee involvement and champions the importance of sensible health and safety risk management within the organisation.
- Ensuring that all decisions made reflect their health and safety intentions as specified in the Council's health and safety policy statement.
- Integrating health and safety with other core business objectives/management.
- Ensuring that accountabilities and responsibilities for health, safety and wellbeing are properly assigned throughout the leadership structure and hierarchy.
- Ensuring that Directors have arrangements in place for the effective management of health, safety and wellbeing within their directorates.
- Ensuring adequate resources are allocated to all directorates, in consideration of their inherent risks.
- Ensuring that the Council have appointed competent persons to provide health and safety assistance/advice, in order to meet the requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Setting and monitoring health, safety and wellbeing performance in accordance with appropriate Directors and taking appropriate action to overcome any deficiencies.

Executive Directors

Executive Directors are responsible for ensuring that the health and safety management system for Cherwell District Council is implemented within their respective directorates. This will be achieved by:

- Providing clear and visible health and safety leadership and commitment.
- Integrating health, safety and wellbeing into core business objectives, day to day decision making and strategic planning.
- Making sure that accountabilities and responsibilities for health, safety and wellbeing within their directorate are properly assigned, communicated, understood and carried out.
- Making sure that where operational responsibilities are delegated to lower levels of management, that those who have been nominated are competent, and understand and accept their delegated responsibilities.

- Ensuring that Assistant Directors have robust arrangements in place for the effective management of health, safety and wellbeing within their services/teams.
- Ensuring adequate and sufficient resources (time, human and financial) are provided within the directorate to enable management to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Ensuring that health, safety and wellbeing is included in relevant action plans for the directorate to drive continual improvement within services/teams. The content to be kept in proportion to the level of risks within the directorate.
- Setting and monitoring health, safety and wellbeing performance in accordance with Assistant Directors and taking appropriate action to overcome any deficiencies.
- Consulting and seeking advice from the Corporate Health and Safety Manager/ Team on health and safety matters when required.
- Promoting a proactive and positive health and safety culture throughout the directorate.

Corporate Health and Safety Champion (Chief Executive)

The Chief Executive has been appointed as the Corporate Champion for Health and Safety with Claire Cox, Assistant Director for Human Resources as his Deputy. The appointment supports the principles contained in the HSE's 'Leading health and safety at work' in recognition of the strategic importance of health and safety. The Champion will:

- Promote the adequate and proper consideration of health and safety to senior managers, relevant Committee's and more widely within the Council.
- Ensure that the health and safety policy statement reflect current priorities of the Corporate Leadership Team and the Council.
- Ensure that the Council's Scheme of Delegation to Officers reflects health and safety roles and responsibilities within this policy.
- Be kept informed about any significant health and safety failures and the outcome of investigations into their causes.
- Ensure that the lead councillors for occupational health, safety and wellbeing are kept updated and briefed on health and safety matters, promoting clear channels of communication with Elected Members.
- Ensure the Corporate Health and Safety Manager has clear reporting lines within the leadership structure and has sufficient authority to be able to carry out the role effectively.
- Be accessible to the Corporate Health and Safety Manager/Health and Safety Team so that any significant health and safety issues can be raised immediately.
- Carry out periodic health and safety workplace inspections and audits with the Corporate Health and Safety Manager/Health and Safety Team.

- Ensure the Council's health and safety performance is regularly reviewed and reported on.

Deputy Health, Safety and Wellbeing Champion (Nominated Assistant Director)

To support the Corporate Health and Safety Champion to achieve these responsibilities, the **Assistant Director Human Resources is responsible for:**

- Ensuring that sufficient resources are in place to maintain a robust Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System.
- Ensure that there are sufficient resources to maintain the continued safety and security of all employees, councillors and visitors in all council premises.
- Making provision of competent health and safety assistance/advice within the Council, in order to meet the requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Providing management support to the Corporate Health and Safety Manager and ensuring that clear reporting lines are in place for the Manager and Health and Safety Team to carry out their role effectively across the Council.
- Promote the adequate and proper consideration of occupational wellbeing to senior managers, relevant Committee's and more widely within the Council.
- Ensure that the health and safety policy statement reflects current occupational wellbeing priorities of the Corporate Leadership Team and the Council.
- Together with the Learning and Development Manager and the Corporate Health and Safety Team ensure the provision of appropriate health and wellbeing training for managers and employees.
- Ensure that the lead councillors for occupational health, safety and wellbeing are kept updated and briefed on wellbeing matters, promoting clear channels of communication with Elected Members.
- Be accessible to the Corporate Health and Safety Team and HR Teams so that any significant occupational wellbeing issues can be raised immediately.
- Ensure the Council's wellbeing performance is regularly reviewed and reported on.
- Ensure that there is a corporate overarching action plan to improve and maintain the wellbeing of managers and employees.

To support the Corporate Health and Safety Champion to achieve these responsibilities, the **Assistant Director Property Management is responsible for:**

- Ensuring that effective arrangements are in place for building management and maintenance requirements across the Councils property portfolio, ensuring assets are safe and compliant.

- Being the named Assistant Director with corporate responsibility for Asbestos Management, Water Hygiene and Legionella and Fire Risk Management compliance across the Council.

Assistant Directors

Assistant Directors are responsible for ensuring effective health and safety management within their areas of responsibility, ensuring that all managers and employees and any other persons under their area of control are held accountable for the specific application of their health and safety duties.

This will be achieved by them:

- Providing clear and visible health and safety leadership and commitment.
- Integrating health, safety and wellbeing into core business objectives, day to day decision making and strategic planning.
- Making sure that where operational responsibilities are delegated to lower levels of management, that those who have been nominated are competent, and understand and accept their delegated responsibilities.
- Ensuring that Managers have robust arrangements in place for the effective management of health, safety and wellbeing within their services/teams.
- Ensuring adequate and sufficient resources (time, human and financial) are provided within service areas to enable appropriate management to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Endorsing health, safety and wellbeing action plans in place within the Directorate and implementing the requirements with their managers to drive continual improvement within service areas.
- Setting and monitoring health, safety and wellbeing performance in accordance with managers and taking appropriate action to overcome any deficiencies.
- Consulting and seeking advice from the Corporate Health and Safety Team on health and safety matters when required.
- Promoting a proactive and positive health, safety and wellbeing culture throughout their service areas.

Managers, Supervisors and Team Leaders

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'manager' relates to all employees and interim/agency personnel who manage staff and/or services, or to any extent has control at work over people and projects.

Managers, Supervisors and Team Leaders are responsible for:

- The day-to-day management of health, safety and wellbeing in areas under their control.
- Integrating health, safety and wellbeing into service plans, action plans and day to day decision making.

- Identifying hazards, initiating and completing risk assessments, recording the significant findings and implementing any necessary control measures.
- Ensuring that local health and safety procedures, safe systems of work and relevant emergency procedures are in place within their teams/services to control any risks.
- Ensure that there are sufficient resources to maintain the continued safety and security of all employees when undertaking their work duties both in and away from the office.
- Providing information, instruction, training and supervision to help secure the competence of all employees.
- Ensuring that effective communication and consultation arrangements are in place with employees and Union Representatives.
- Ensuring robust inductions are carried out for all new employees including agency workers, contractors and interim personnel.
- Attending mandatory health and safety training as part of continued professional development.
- Providing safe and healthy working conditions in areas under their control, including safe plant, equipment and machinery.
- Ensuring that a formalised workplace inspection regime is in place to check that the work environment is safe and healthy.
- Providing equipment, materials and clothing to employees as is necessary to enable them to work safely.
- Cooperating and coordinating their activities with other teams/services and partners to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees and others affected by any risks.
- Reporting and recording all accidents, incidents and near miss events to the health and safety team and undertaking any investigations and taking appropriate remedial action to prevent recurrences.
- Ensuring that health and safety requirements are included throughout the management of project and procurement processes and contract management agreements.
- Ensuring that health and safety is included when managing contractors and construction-related projects.
- Complying with all corporate health and safety policies, corporate arrangements, and guidance in place within the organisation.
- Participating in health and safety workplace inspections and audits and taking appropriate remedial action where recommendations for improvement have been made.
- Reviewing health, safety, and wellbeing performance within their teams.
- Consulting and seeking advice from the Corporate Health and Safety Team on health and safety matters when required.
- Promoting a proactive and positive health and safety culture.

Managers may choose to delegate responsibilities to specific employees/postholders however, they must ensure that those nominated are competent and understand and accept the responsibilities being delegated to them. **The Manager will remain accountable for these activities.**

Employees

For the purposes of this policy, employees will include students, volunteers, agency workers and contract workers.

All employees, including those with managerial responsibilities, **have a responsibility to:**

- Take reasonable care, while at work, of their own and other people's health and safety.
- Ensure that they understand any security measures implemented in their workplace and follow any necessary instructions.
- Report any concerns and deficiencies in health, safety and security provision to their line manager at the earliest opportunity.
- Cooperate with their manager and other employees to work safely, to comply with health and safety instructions and information, and undertake appropriate health and safety training.
- Comply with all corporate health and safety policies, corporate arrangements, and guidance in place within the organisation.
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety, and welfare.
- Report to their manager any health and safety concerns, deficiencies or defects, or shortcomings in health and safety arrangements and safe systems of work.
- Report and record all accidents, incidents and near miss events.
- Make suggestions to improve health, safety, and wellbeing.
- Promote a proactive and positive health and safety culture.

Authorisation of work by external contractors

Persons authorising work activities involving external contractors must obtain suitable and sufficient Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS) prior to the commencement of any work. They must ensure that the RAMS fully address the scope of the activity and identify any risks to their staff and to others who may be affected in the vicinity of the work. Support and guidance may be sought from the Corporate Health and Safety Team and Facilities Management (FM) where required.

Competent Health and Safety Assistance

The Corporate Health and Safety Team have been appointed under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to provide competent health and safety advice and support to Cherwell District Council, covering all relevant health and safety legislation.

The Corporate Health and Safety Manager and Health and Safety Team will:

- Provide professional, technical, and practical competent health and safety advice and guidance to managers and employees.
- Provide advice and guidance on compliance with relevant statutory requirements and the application of best practice.
- Provide advice and guidance alongside the Facilities Management Team on Security of council owned premises under Martyn's Law.
- Develop, and advise on, corporate health and safety policy, procedures, topic-specific guidance, and corporate arrangements.
- Assist and support managers in the development of risk assessments and safe systems of work for work activities/processes/operations.
- Develop the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan and support directorates in developing their own directorate/service/section health and safety action plans.
- Report to the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) Group on a monthly basis.
- Together with the Learning and Development Team, ensure the provision of health and safety training to managers and employees relevant to their roles and responsibilities.
- Undertake health and safety workplace inspections and audits to monitor occupational health, safety, and wellbeing performance across all directorates.
- Record all accidents, incidents and near misses and ensure relevant reports are notified to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).
- Carry out and assist managers with the completion of accident investigations.
- Liaise with the HSE and other enforcing authorities on any regulatory interventions or investigations as required.
- Use executive powers (on behalf of the Chief Executive and Corporate Health and Safety Champion) to stop any work activities where there is a serious and imminent risk of injury or ill health.
- Promote a proactive and positive health and safety culture and investigate ways of improving health and safety performance across the organisation.

Occupational Health

The Councils appointed providers will work pro-actively with all stakeholders to pro-actively maintain a healthy workforce by meeting the needs of individual employees and managers. Occupational Health is responsible for providing a number of occupational health services these include, but are not limited to:

- Pre-employment screening checks.

- Absence management and return to work planning.
- Advice on the management of health conditions and reasonable adjustments.
- Medicals and driver clearances for specific job role occupations, e.g. HGV.
- Health/medical surveillance monitoring; audiometry, hand arm vibration, lung function testing and ergonomic assessments.
- Vaccination and immunisations.
- Advice to managers and employees on health-related matters.
- Physiotherapy.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

An Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is available for all staff and provides a confidential counselling and information service which is available 24/7 to assist with personal or work-related problems that may be affecting health, wellbeing, or performance.

The EAP can provide help, information, guidance, or support with a wide range of issues including counselling and emotional support, money and debt information, legal information, health and wellbeing information and family care information including young and elder care. The EAP is free to use, confidential and is entirely secure and independent of the Council.

General Arrangements

The Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy sets out the framework for the organisation and arrangements for health, safety and wellbeing across Cherwell District Council.

Corporate arrangements and guidance (corporate level)

To support this policy and to effectively manage the health, safety and wellbeing risks at a corporate level, a series of topic-based health and safety corporate arrangements have been developed for managers and employees to follow.

This information provides specific detail on a range of different topics, and where required, further information on specific roles and responsibilities. These guidance documents are developed by the Corporate Health and Safety Team in conjunction with relevant managers/teams where specialist input is required. Corporate health and safety arrangements and guidance can be accessed from the health and safety pages of the Intranet.

Local health and safety arrangements/procedures (service/team level)

To demonstrate compliance and implementation of this policy and corporate guidance, services/teams must have their own written local health and safety arrangements in place as relevant to their work activity. Managers may choose to include these within their risk assessments as existing control measures, or as part

of a specific written procedure or safe systems of work where a significant risk to health and safety has been identified.

Health and Safety Communication

A comprehensive source of all available information on corporate health, safety and wellbeing in the Council can be found on the health and safety pages of the Intranet.

Health and safety information and guidance can also be sourced directly from the [Health and Safety Executive](#) internet site.

The Corporate Health and Safety Team will communicate any new or updated corporate health and safety information through managers who will be responsible for cascading the information down to all employees.

Communication channels for the exchange of health and safety information should also exist day-to-day in teams/services, e.g. at team briefings, team meetings, one to ones etc. It is recommended that all team meetings have health, safety and wellbeing as a standing agenda item.

Health and Safety Consultation

The Council recognises the importance of effective cooperation between employees, their representatives and managers through active consultation and involvement.

The two relevant pieces of health and safety legislation that apply to the Council are:

- Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 and;
- Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996

Managers should identify how they consult with employees and share information on any significant changes affecting their health, safety and wellbeing.

Trade union (TU) appointed safety representatives are encouraged to cooperate with managers regarding any health and safety issues or concerns in the workplace.

Health and Safety Training/Competence

The competence of employees through recruitment, selection, induction and training is an important part of the health, safety and wellbeing management system in place across the Council. All employees should have sufficient knowledge, skills and information to carry out their work safely and without risk to their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts and omissions.

The mandatory health and safety training requirements within the Council include the following:

- Health and Safety Induction for all new starters (includes health, safety and wellbeing e-learning (or hard copy) and completion of the corporate health and safety induction checklist).
- Health, Safety & Wellbeing e-learning (or hard copy version) – for all employees.

- Introduction to the Management of Health and Safety training - for all managers.

In addition to these core mandatory sessions, managers and employees will need to consider attendance on other specific training programmes, including refresher training that may be relevant to their job role or setting.

Examples include first aid, fire safety/fire warden, manual handling, management of contractors/CDM, personal safety awareness/lone working etc. Also, the consideration of any specific health and wellbeing training programmes, e.g. developing personal resilience, management of work-related stress etc.

In areas where there is a greater element of risk, e.g. Environmental Services operations (waste collection, street cleansing, vehicle fleet management etc.) more comprehensive health and safety inductions and training will need to be carried out to ensure employees are trained and competent.

Examples include driver CPC training, defensive driving, street works and highways training etc.

Health and safety training/development needs for employees should be determined as part of the risk assessment process and in conjunction with the employee appraisal system. Further advice/guidance can be provided by the Health and Safety Team.

Monitoring and Review

The content of this policy and its effectiveness in terms of performance will be the subject of a two-year review unless significant changes occur.

Monitoring of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System and its effectiveness in the organisation will be assessed at a Corporate, Directorate and Service level in order to ensure compliance. Monitoring will be both pro-active and reactive, incorporating spot checks, comprehensive inspections and audits and accident investigations and statistical analysis. Monitoring the requirements of this policy will be carried out by Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers and the Corporate Health and Safety/HR Team to establish whether:

- Legal compliance is being achieved.
- Health and safety responsibilities are being properly assigned and discharged correctly.
- Leadership teams are accepting and dealing effectively with their delegated health, safety and wellbeing responsibilities.
- Corporate health and safety arrangements and guidance are being followed.
- Employees are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Accident trends and occupational health data are showing a continuous improvement.
- Health and safety and targets are being monitored and are being achieved.

- All employees and managers are receiving appropriate health and safety inductions, training and development.

The Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan, Corporate Leadership Risk Register and Directorate Health and Safety Action Plans will also be used to track progress of health, safety and wellbeing performance in the organisation. Health and safety reports to the Senior Leadership team will also be used.

Auditing the Management System – Corporate level

At a corporate level, the Council appointed internal and audit assurance service will independently audit the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System in place within the organisation. This will include work activities undertaken by the Health and Safety Team. This process covers health, safety, and wellbeing as part of corporate governance assurance.

Auditing the Management System – Directorate level

At a directorate level, the Corporate Health and Safety Team will audit the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System in place in services/teams across the organisation. This will be carried out on a rolling programme using a risk-based approach. The aim of audits undertaken will be to establish whether appropriate management arrangements are in place, adequate risk control systems exist, are implemented and reflect the hazards the organisations need to manage.

A health and safety workplace inspection programme will also be carried out to identify and evaluate health and safety hazards in the workplace and identify actions where improvements need to be made.

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This report is public	
Workforce Profile Statistics – Quarter 3 of 2025-26	
Committee	Personnel Committee
Date of Committee	4 March 2026
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	19 February 2026
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:

- 1.1 To review and note the workforce data for quarter 3 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 3 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 3 as follows:

- 13 leavers and 8 new starters
- As at the end of quarter 3, headcount reduced by 5 to 624. Of the 624, 14 employees are multiple role holders
- FTE reduced by 3.57, to 515.12, as at quarter end
- Minimal shift in employment basis and role basis
- Increase of 10 agency workers at the end of quarter 3, compared to the previous quarter, from 38 to 48.

- A quarterly turnover rate of 2.08%, 0.17% higher than the previous quarter.
- Resignation was the main reason for leavers, accounting for 66.67% of all leavers. 54% of leavers completed exit interviews.
- Key reasons for leaving included lifestyle changes, relocation, career progression, and the pursuit of roles offering greater development or higher remuneration. While many employees spoke highly of their experience and expressed pride in the organisation, some feedback pointed to frustrations around limited progression pathways, perceived lack of empowerment or trust in professional judgement, and concerns regarding managerial behaviours.
- Overall, the feedback reflects a largely positive employee experience, coupled with identifiable opportunities to strengthen leadership consistency, empowerment, and career development structures.
- 261 sickness absence incidents were recorded, 5 more than the same quarter in the previous year.
- Absence rate at the end of quarter 3 was 1.24 which has decreased slightly compared to the end of the last quarter. It still remains higher than past quarters and this is due a rise in long-term sick cases with 17 remaining open at the end of quarter 3. This is 7 less open cases than at the end of quarter 2.
- 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.
- 26 apprenticeships currently underway across a diverse range of subject areas. Of the 26, 5 are being completed by apprentices, and 21 are being undertaken by staff. No apprenticeship funds expired in quarter 3 of 2025/26.

2.3 Recent government reforms continue to reshape the apprenticeship landscape, with significant implications for local authorities. New Foundation Apprenticeships, launched in August 2025, provide paid Level 2 entry routes for young people and clear progression pathways into higher-level training. From April 2026, employers will also be able to use the levy to fund short, flexible 'apprenticeship units' in priority areas such as digital, AI and engineering.

2.4 English and maths requirements have been updated so that adult apprentices (19+) no longer need formal qualifications to complete their apprenticeship, instead demonstrating these skills through workplace tasks. Minimum apprenticeship durations may now be reduced from 12 to 8 months where justified by prior learning or industry need.

- 2.5 The most material change for CDC is the restriction of government funding for Level 7 apprenticeships from January 2026 to young people aged 16–21 (or under 25 for care leavers and those with an EHCP). As a result, Level 7 programmes currently funded through the apprenticeship levy—such as Accountancy and Spatial Planning—will, for existing staff, need to be financed from the Learning and Development budget going forward. The government has announced additional investment to support these reforms and boost apprenticeship participation among young people.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary			
Finance	This is an information report only, for the review of workforce statistical data for Q3 2025-26. It must be noted that future level 7 apprenticeships funded from the corporate Learning and Development budget, will add additional pressure to an already stretched budget. It is important that training budgets are reviewed as part future budget processes to ensure adequate funds are available. Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 2 February 2026			
Legal	There are no legal implications within this report as it is for information only. Denzil John Turbervill Head of Legal Services, 3 February 2026			
Risk	There are no risks arising directly from this report. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 3 February 2026			
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, 3 February 2026
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is		X		

delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?				
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, 10 January 2026</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 2 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 2 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

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 3, 2025/26
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
Report Author	Assistant Director of Human Resources, Claire Cox
Report Author contact details	Claire.cox@cherwell-dc.gov.uk , 01295 221549
Executive Director Approval (unless Executive Director or Statutory Officer report)	Executive Director for Resources

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 a reduction of 3 between the end of quarters 1 and 2 of 2025/26. Within the headcount of 624, 14 employees have 2 roles, and have therefore been counted twice, meaning we have 610 employees.

Quarter 3 of 2025/26 has seen adjustments of 13 leavers and 8 new starters across the organisation.

Chart 1

**Headcount by Quarter
Quarter 4 2022-23 to Quarter 3 2025-26**

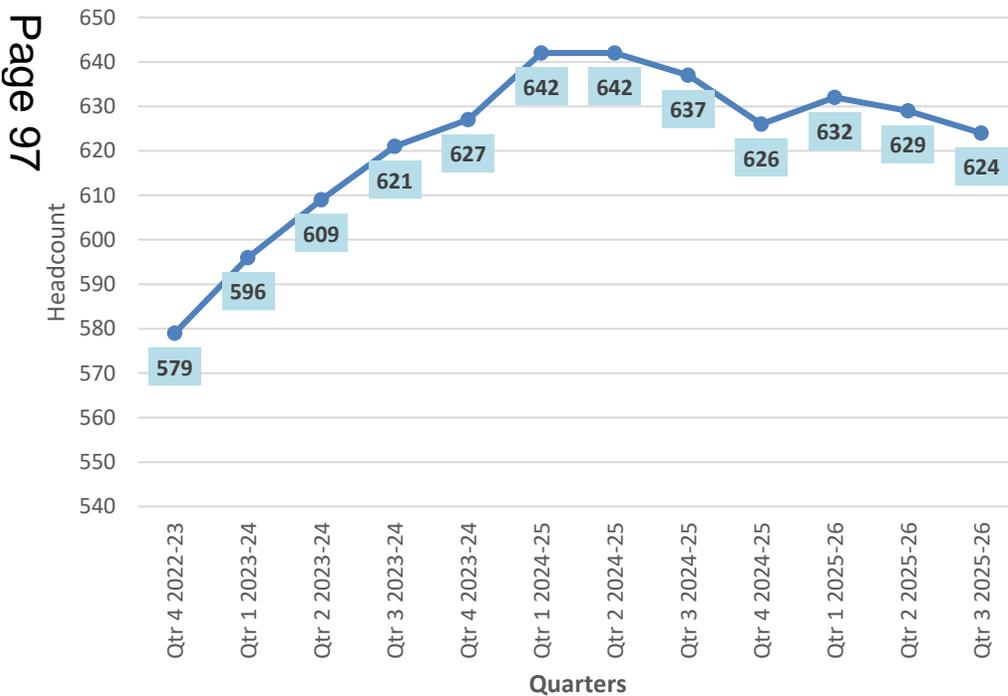


Chart 2 details the distribution of headcount across our departments and directorates as at the end of quarter 3 of 2025/26. Wellbeing and Environmental Services continue to show the highest headcount. CDC are host employer to the District Councils Network (DCN) and these employees are included in the HR, OD and Payroll directorate.

Data for quarter 3 of 2025/26 is reflective of the new senior management structure that was implemented in October 2025. Some departments have been split out so tracking of changes from quarter 2 to quarter 3 is a little more challenging, however, Environmental Services had the biggest reduction in headcount with 4 since quarter 2. Wellbeing reduced by 3, as did headcount across Planning and Development Management. Regulatory Services increased by 2.

Chart 2

**Headcount by Department as at
31 December 2025**

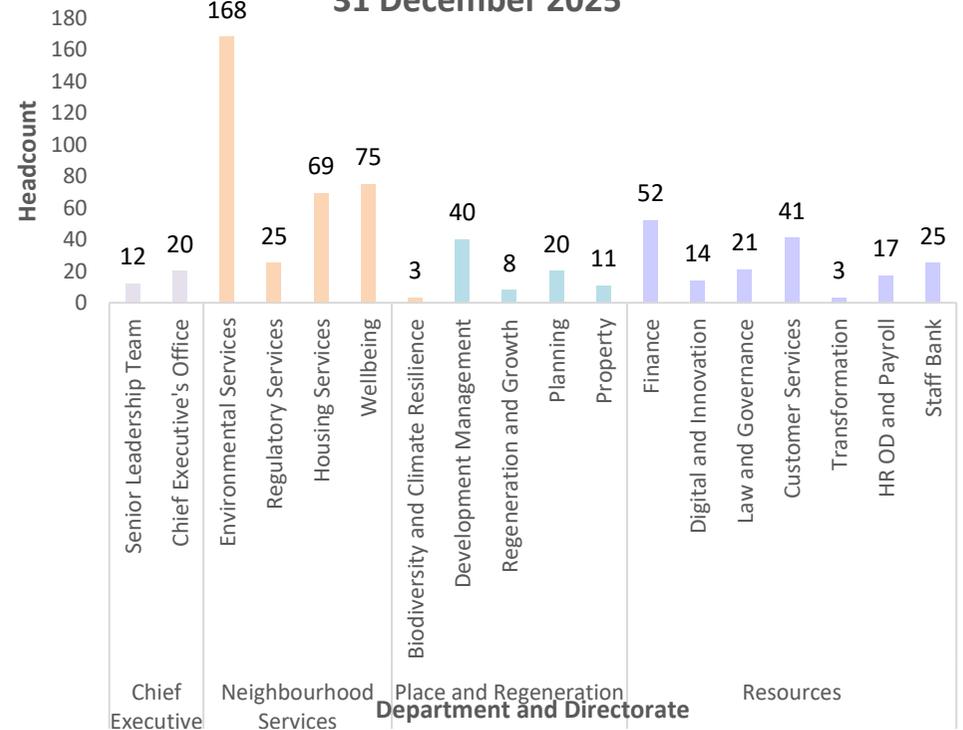
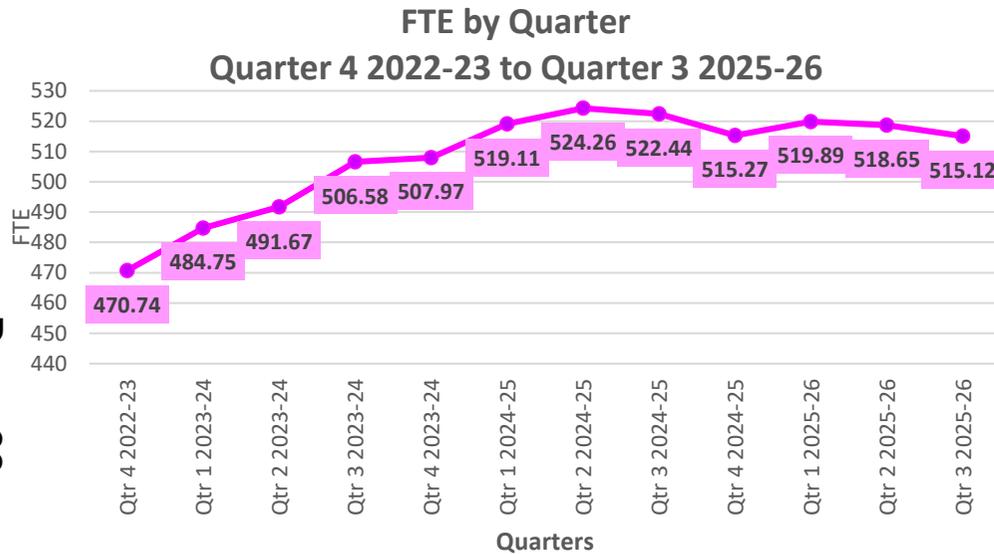


Chart 3 outlines the fluctuation of FTE which has reduced by 3.57 between quarters 2 and 3 of 2025/26.

Chart 3



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Chart 4 FTE by Department as at 31 December 2025

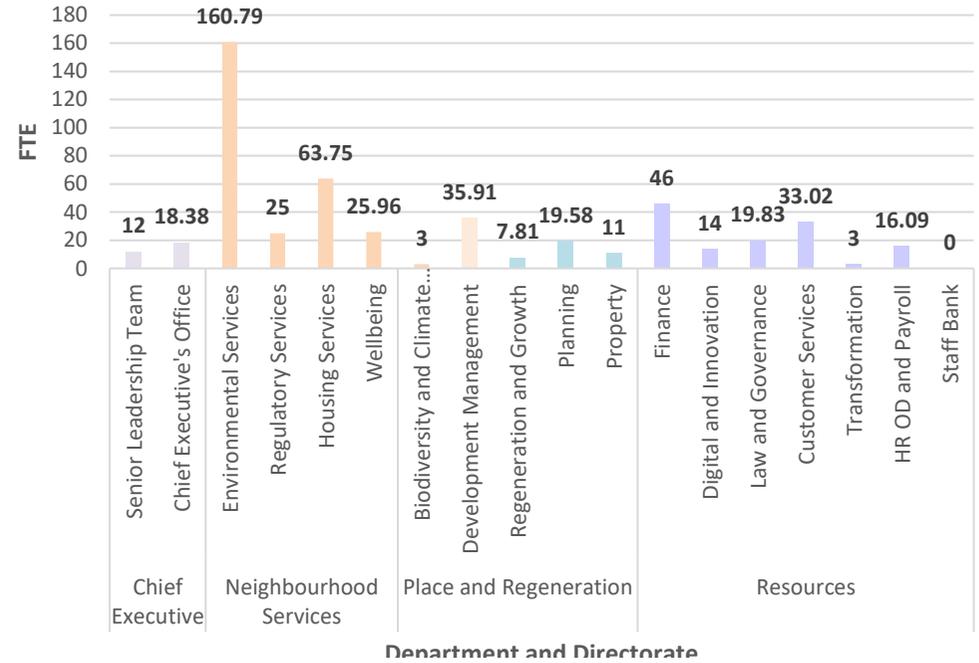


Chart 4 outlines the distribution of FTE across the departments and directorates as at the end of quarter 3 of 2025/26.

Since quarter 2 of 2025/26; Regulatory Services has increased by 2 FTE. Environmental Services' FTE has reduced by 4.25. Wellbeing reduced by 2.13 FTE.

Charts 5 shows the breakdown of basis of hours across our workforce as of 31 December 2025. Since quarter 2 of 2025/26 there has been minimal change to the make-up of role-basis with our full-time increasing by 0.10% and part-time increasing by 0.10% and our casual workforce remaining the same.

Chart 5 % Breakdown of Role Basis as at 31 December 2025

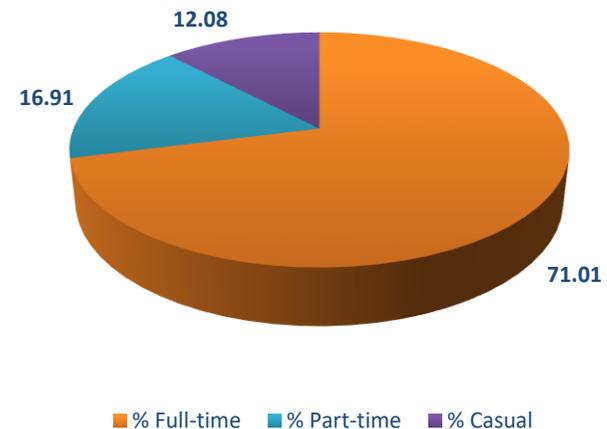
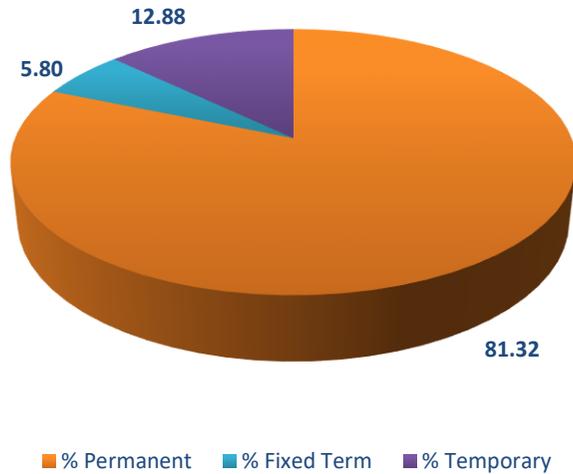


Chart 6 outlines the employment basis of those directly employed by CDC shows that 81.32% of our workforce are in permanent roles. This has slightly reduced, by 0.24% since Quarter 2 of 2025/26. There has been minimal fluctuation of employment basis since the last quarter.

Chart 6

% Breakdown of Employment Basis as at 31 December 2025



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

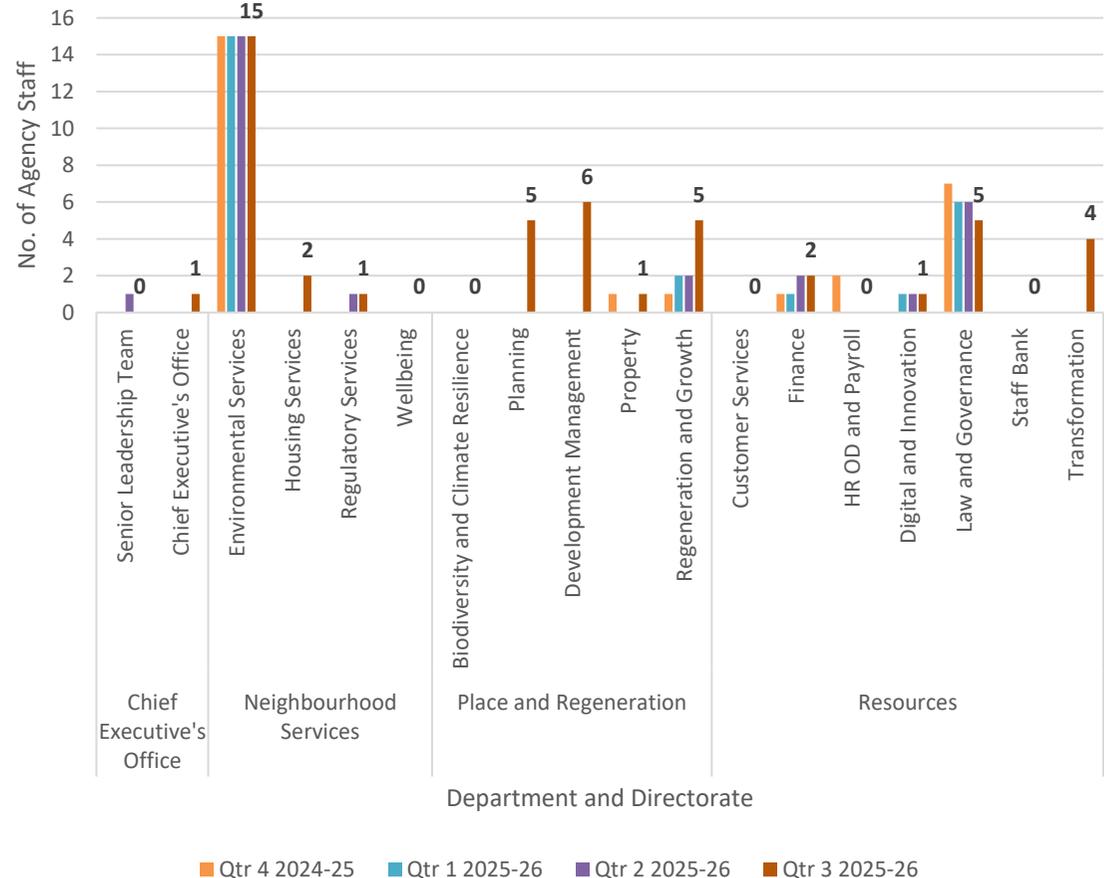
Chart 7 outlines agency usage as at the end of each quarter for the last rolling year by department. A total of 48 agency workers were engaged with CDC at the end of quarter 3 of 2025/26. This has increased by 10 since the end of quarter 2 and is 13 more than the same quarter in 2024/25.

The highest agency usage is usually Environmental Services. Usage in this area has remained the same for the last 4 quarters.

Regeneration and Growth have increased agency usage by 3 in quarter 3 of 2025/26, and Housing Services have increased usage by 2. Law and Governance have reduced by 1.

Chart 7

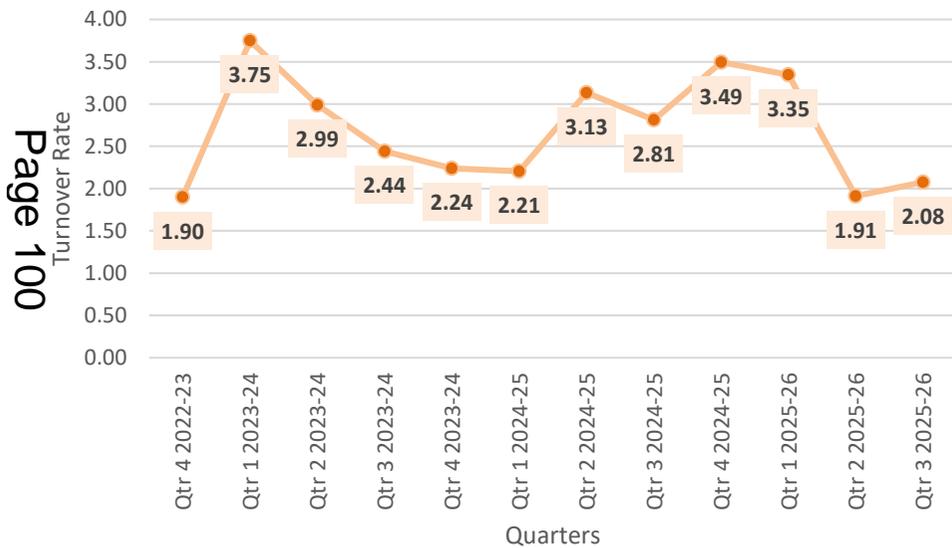
Agency Usage as at Quarter End for the last rolling 12 months



Turnover rates and Leaver information

Chart 8 tracks the turnover rate per quarter over a 3-year period, from January 2023 to December 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 4 2022-23 to Quarter 3 2025-26



The turnover for quarter 3 of 2025/26 shows an increase of 0.17% in the turnover rate since quarter 2.

Chart 9 details the quarterly turnover rate by department for quarter 3.

Chart 10 outlines leavers by reason for quarter 3 of 2025/26. Of the 13 leavers recorded in quarter 3, resignation is the highest reason for leaving, accounting for 66.67%. Death in service, Dismissal – capability, Redundancy and Retirement accounted for 8.33% each.

Chart 9
Quarterly Turnover Rate by Department
as at
31 December 2025

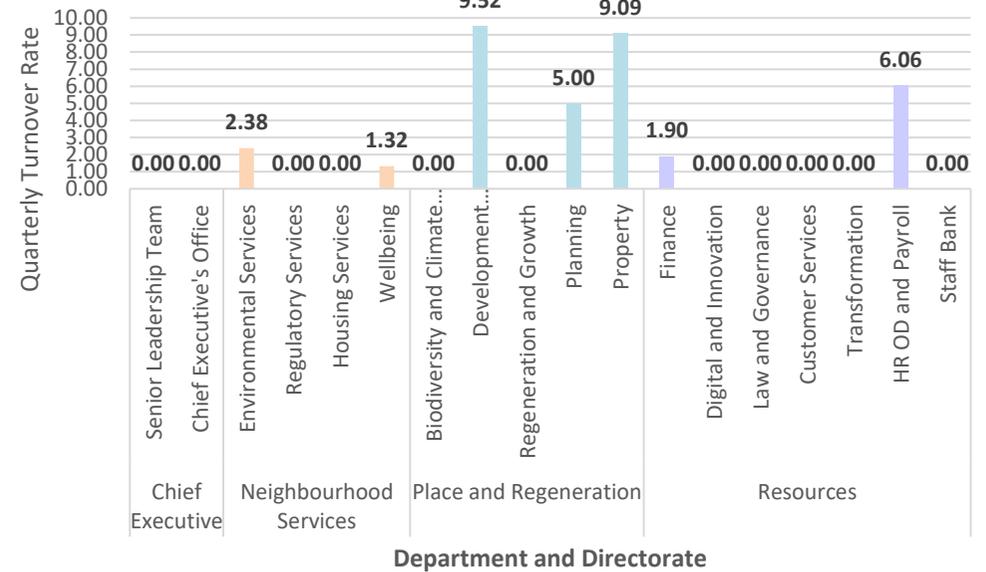


Chart 10
% of Leavers by reason
1 October to 31 December 2025

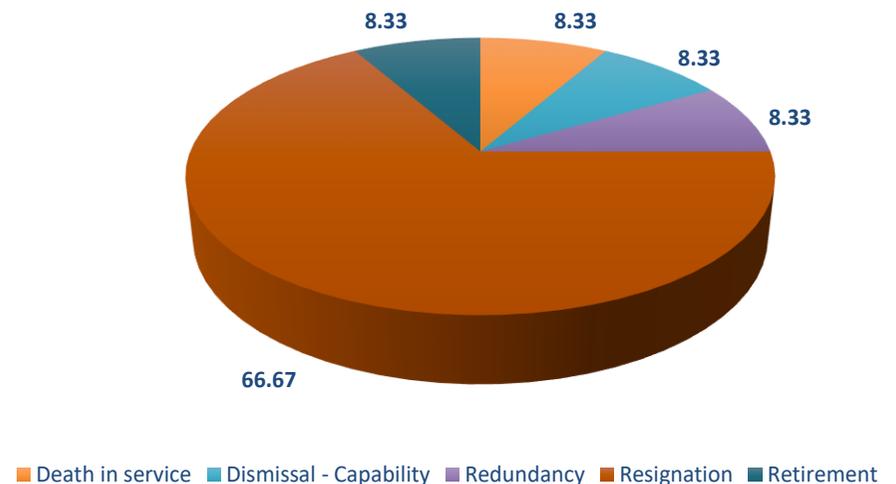
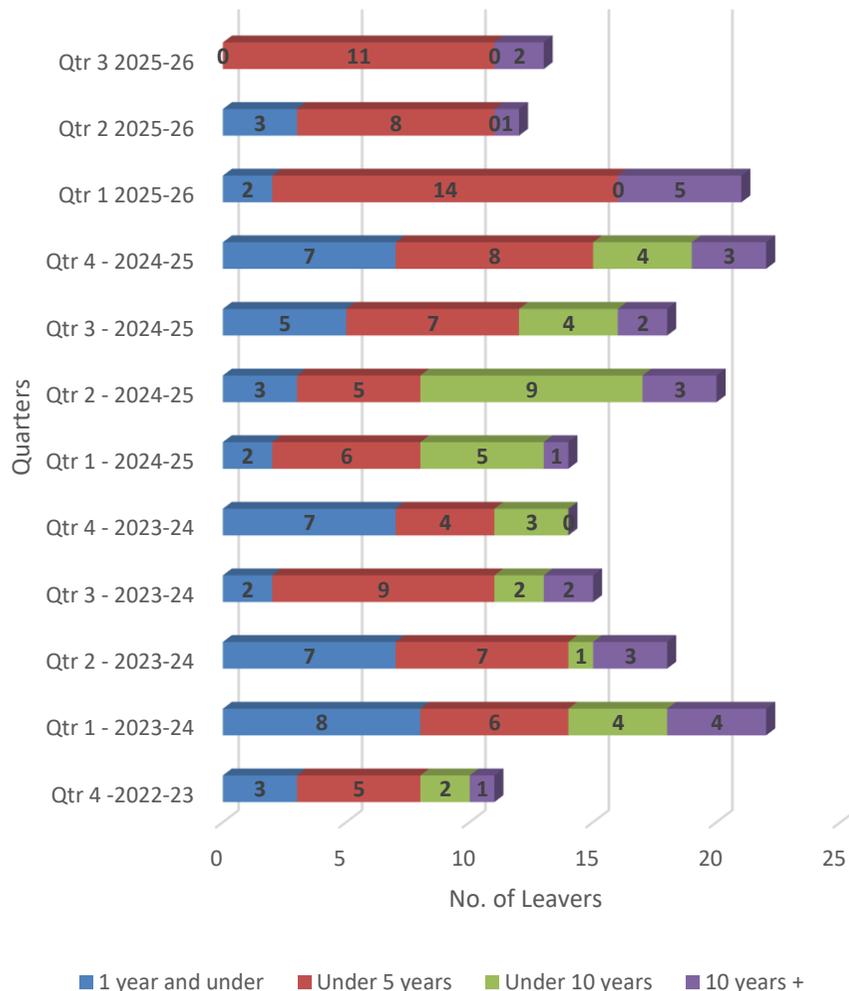


Chart 11 outlines leavers by length of service across the last 12 quarters. In quarter 3 of 2025/26, 11 leavers had less than 5 years' service and 2 had over 10 years.

Chart 11
Leavers by Length of Service
1 January 2023 - 31 December 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 13 leavers in quarter 3, 7 exit interviews were completed. This is a completion rate of 54%, which is an increase of 19% compared to quarter 2. 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, 43% were moving to another local authority, 43% were retiring, 14% were removing to the private sector.

Exit interview feedback this quarter highlighted consistently positive reflections on team culture, with many departing employees describing their colleagues as warm, supportive and collaborative. Several leavers praised the organisation's varied and challenging workload, noting strong development opportunities and a positive overall working environment.

Key reasons for leaving included lifestyle changes, relocation, career progression, and the pursuit of roles offering greater development or higher remuneration. While many employees spoke highly of their experience and expressed pride in the organisation, some feedback pointed to frustrations around limited progression pathways, perceived lack of empowerment or trust in professional judgement, and concerns regarding managerial behaviours. Overall, the feedback reflects a largely positive employee experience, coupled with identifiable opportunities to strengthen leadership consistency, empowerment, and career development structures.

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, with data captured on a monthly basis, back to January 2024. Musculo-skeletal has seen the most incidents across this period, with 263 recorded. This is closely followed by Stomach/liver/kidney and digestion which had 233 incidents.

There were 261 incidents of sickness absence recorded in Quarter 3 of 2025/26, this is 5 more incidents than the same quarter of 2024/25.

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For quarter 3 of 2025/26, cold and flu symptoms was the highest recorded reason for sickness absence, accounting for 23% of all incidents in the last quarter. This is followed by musculoskeletal, which accounts for 17% of all incidents in the last quarter. The third highest reasons this quarter was Stomach/liver/kidney and digestion, accounting for 12% of all incidents.

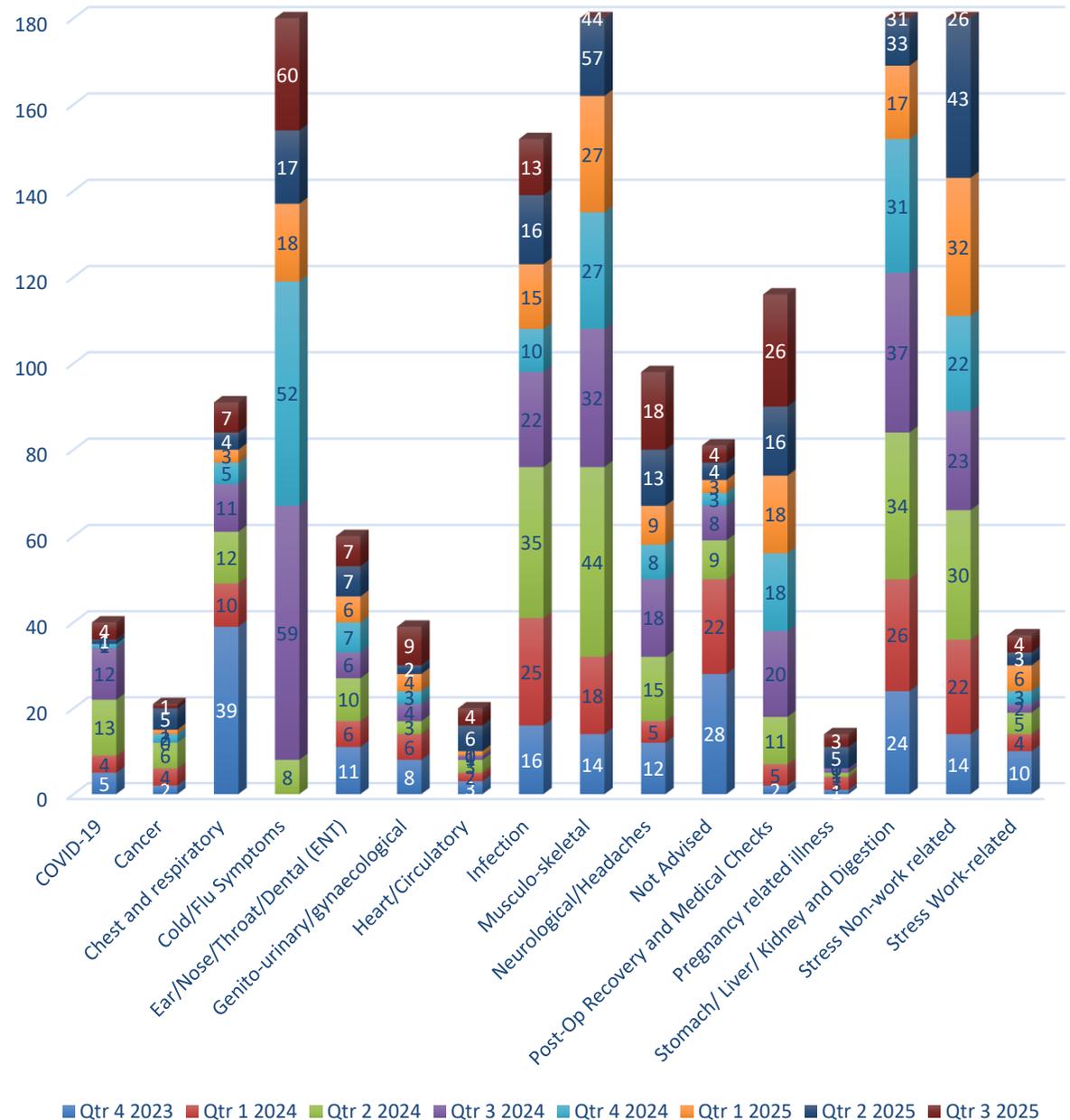
The highest reason for sickness absence across the last rolling 12 months was musculoskeletal, with 155 incidents recorded and accounting for 18.5% of all incidents.

The second highest reason for sickness absence in the last 12 months is cold and flu symptoms, with 147 incidents reported which equates to 17.5% of all incidents.

Stress – non work related is the third highest reason in the last 12 months, recording 123 incidents and accounting for 14.5% of all incidents.

Sickness Absence Incidents by Reason
January 2024 to December 2025

Chart 12



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 January 2023 to December 2025 and shows a slight reduction after an initial increase in the absence rate since the end of quarter 2 of 2025.26. The absence rate is calculated by dividing the hours lost due to sickness absence by the available working hours for the period. October 2025 records the highest rate of absence at 1.44% of working time lost. Research completed by the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) and Simplyhealth with over 1100 employers and published in September 2025 recorded that *UK employees were off sick for nearly two full working weeks (9.4 days) on average in the last 12 months* which has jumped from 7.8 days in 2023, and 5.8 days pre-pandemic (<https://www.cipd.org/uk/about/press-releases/workplace-absence-soars-nearly-two-working-weeks-each-year/>). Whilst CDC’s absence rate has increased, it remains significantly lower than the findings of the CIPD report. The report acknowledged that *As people are working and living longer, employers need to create workplaces that are supportive and help staff manage health changes, like flexible hours and adjustments to workload*. CDC are committed to considering flexible working hours as appropriate, and HR work closely with managers and Occupational Health to review possibilities around workloads as required.

Chart 13

Council Absence Rates by Month
Overall and broken down into short-term, long-term and stress
January 2023 to December 2025

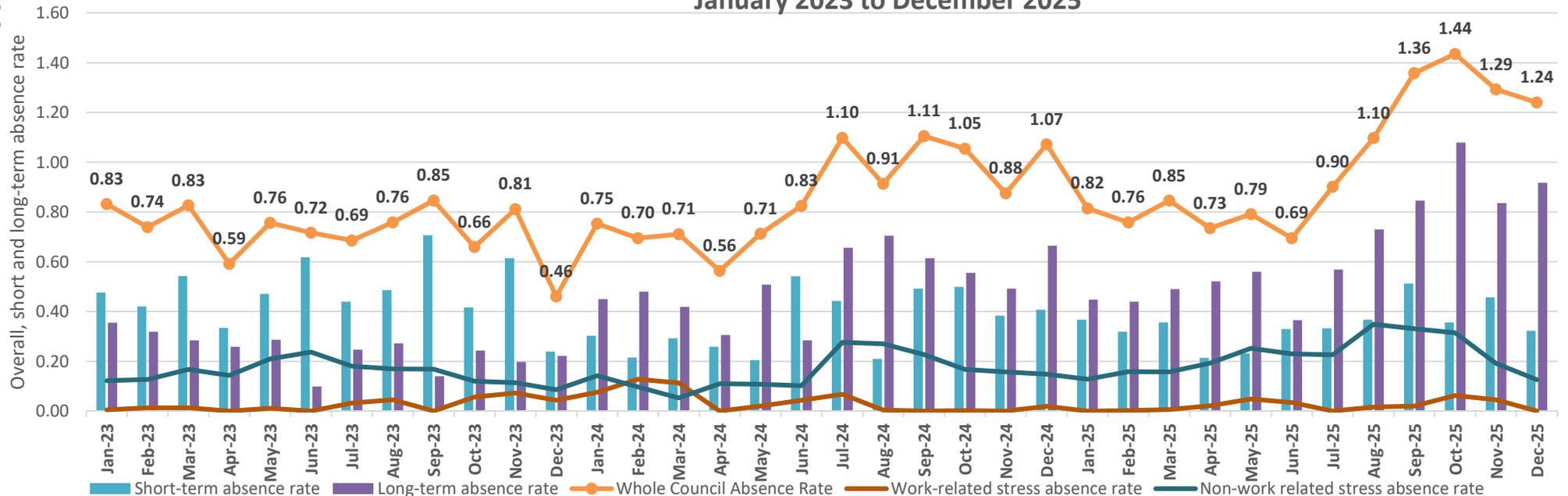


Chart 13 also captures the absence rate of short and long-term instances, in the last 12 months. September 2025 has the highest rate of short-term absence, recording a rate of 0.51 days lost. October 2025 had the highest rate of long-term absence in the last 12 months, with 1.08 days lost. At the end of quarter 3 of 2025/26, 17 long-term sickness absence cases remained ongoing, which is 7 less than at the end of quarter 2.

The absence rate attributed to stress is also displayed in Chart 13 and a reduction in work-related stress was recorded in the last quarter, with no live cases at the end of December 2025. Work-related stress incidents accounted for 1.5% of incidents in quarter 3 of 2025/26 and 2% of incidents in the last rolling 12 months.

The non-work-related stress absence rate has reduced slightly over the last quarter, from 0.33 at the end of quarter 2 of 2025/26 to 0.13 at the end of quarter 3. Non-work-related stress accounted for 10% of incidents in quarter 3 of 2025/26 and 14.5% 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



Chart 15



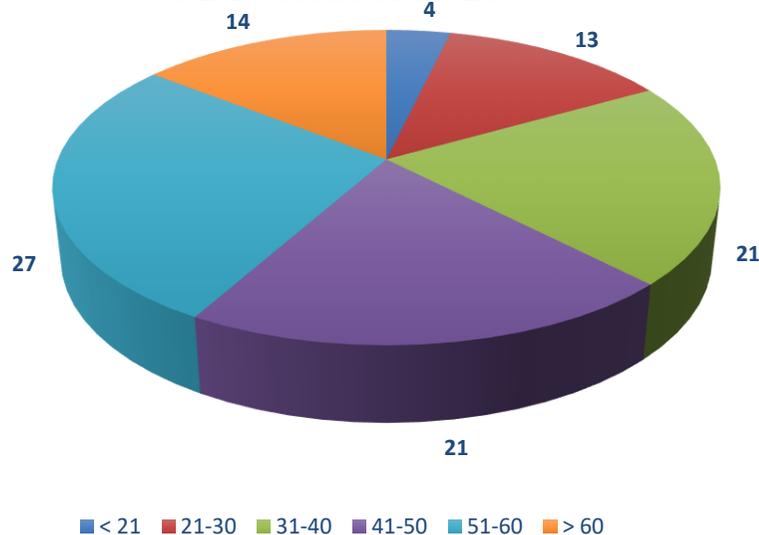
Age, Gender, Ethnicity, Disability and LGBTQ+ Workforce Profile as at 31 December 2025

Chart 17

Chart 16 shows a breakdown by age of the CDC workforce, expressed in percentage. 14% of CDC employees are over 60. 27% are aged between 51 and 60. 21% of CDC employees are aged between 41 and 50. 21% are aged between 31 and 40 and 17% aged 30 and under. There has been minimal change to the age profile within the last quarter.

Chart 16

Age Profile Percentage as at 31 December 2025



Gender Profile Percentage as at 31 December 2025

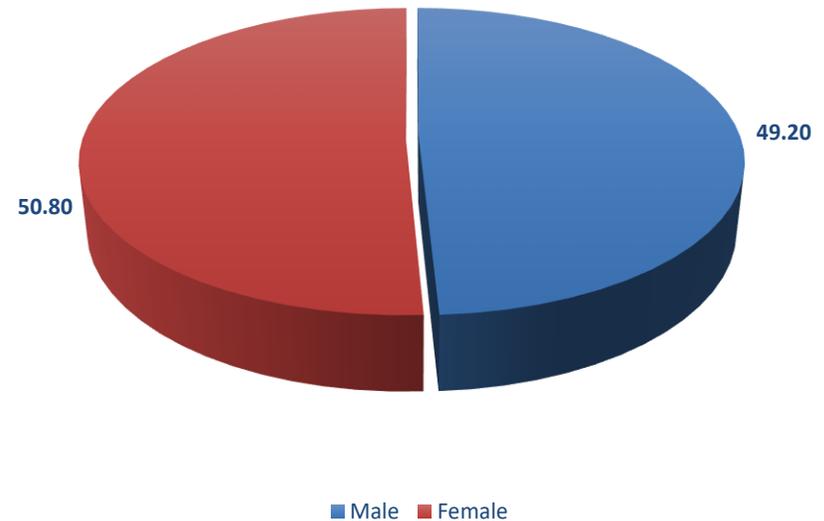


Chart 17 breaks down the gender of the CDC workforce and shows that CDC is almost a 50% split.

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.

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, 49.20% of our workforce are male and 50.80% are female meaning it is representative of the district.

CDC employees continue to be encouraged to share their equalities data. In relation to employee ethnicity data, in quarter 1 of 2022/23 51% of employees had not provided this. At the end of quarter 3 of 2025/26, 88.78% of employees have recorded this information, with 4.65% 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 1.

Chart 18 Ethnicity Profile Percentage as at 31 December 2025

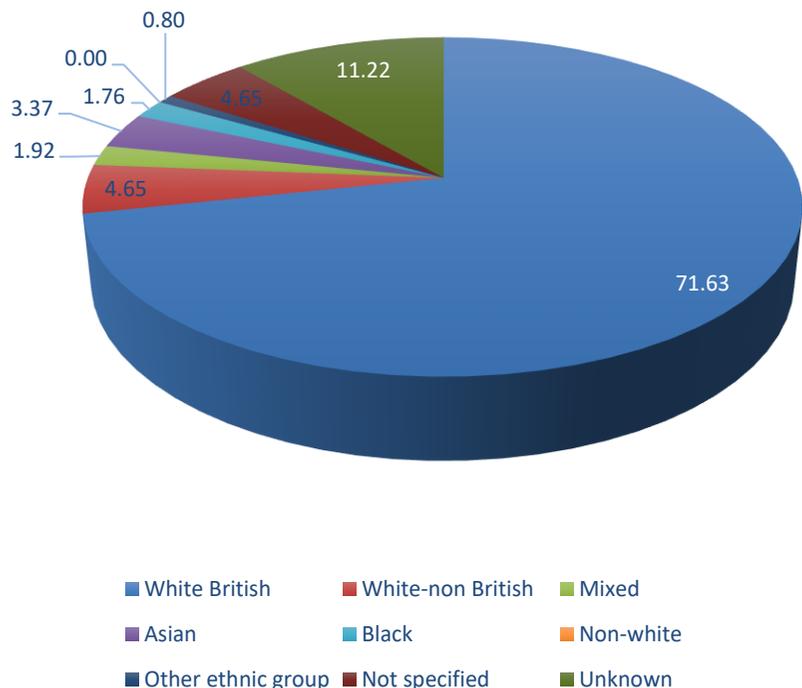


Table 1

Ethnic Group	England average (%)	Cherwell District (%)	CDC (%) Qtr 4 24/25	CDC (%) Qtr 1 25/26	CDC (%) Qtr 2 25/26	CDC (%) Qtr 3 25/26
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	9.3	6.0	3.98	3.80	3.66	3.37
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	4.0	1.8	1.59	1.42	1.43	1.76
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	2.9	2.9	1.91	1.74	1.75	1.92
White	81.7	88.1	74.84	76.27	76.47	76.28
Other ethnic group	2.1	1.3	0.80	0.79	0.79	0.80
Prefer not to say	N/A	N/A	5.10	4.75	4.61	4.65
Unknown	N/A	N/A	11.78	11.23	11.29	11.22

CDC’s workforce is predominantly white British with 71.63% of the workforce recording their ethnicity in this category.

Table 1 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 reduced in the last quarter by 0.19% and at the end of quarter 3 was 11.82% 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 2 and 3 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 3 of 2025/26 this was 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 31 December 2025

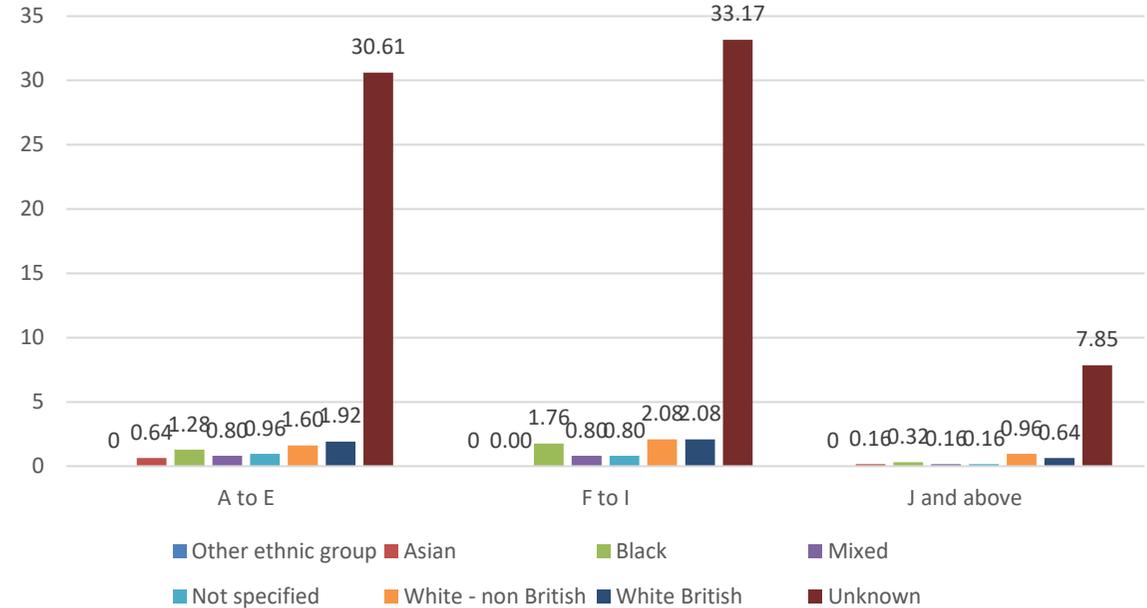


Chart 20

Disability Percentage Profile as at 31 December 2025

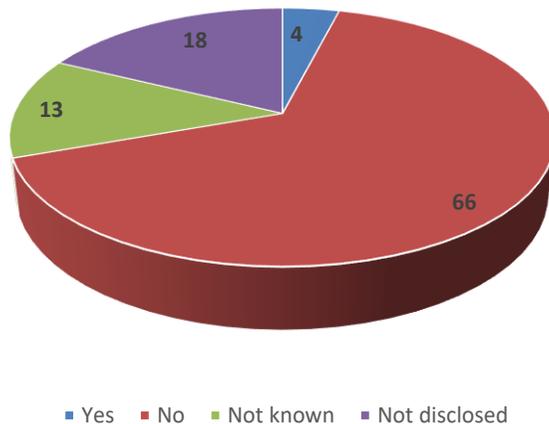
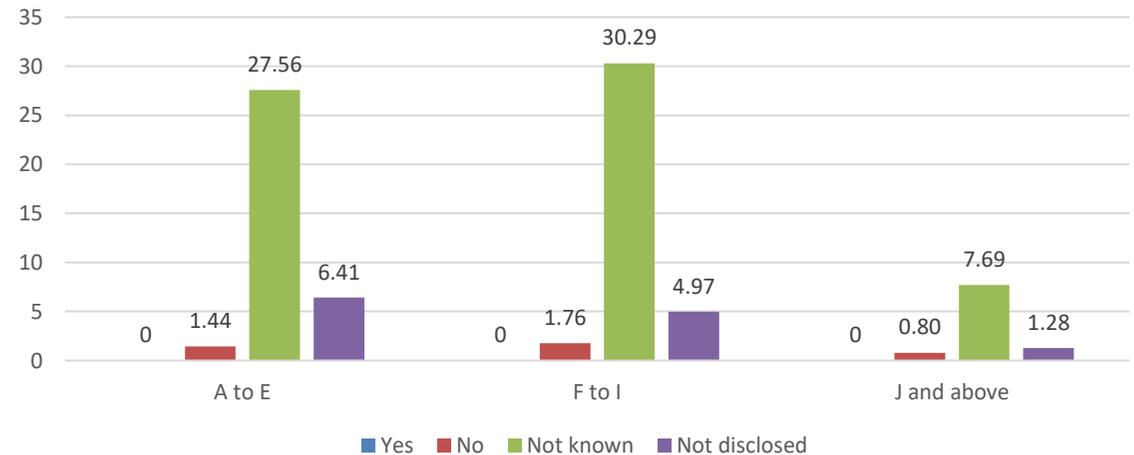


Chart 21

Disability Percentage by Grade Band as at 31 December 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 12.02% 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

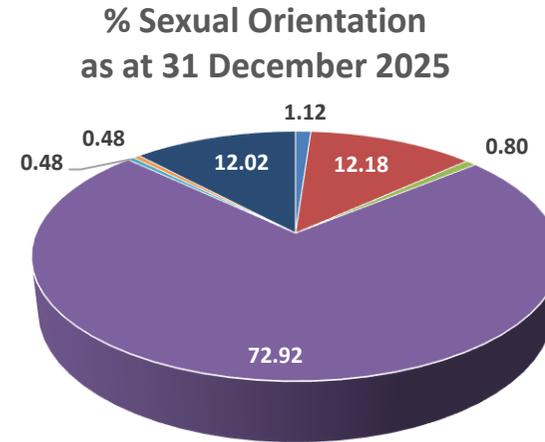
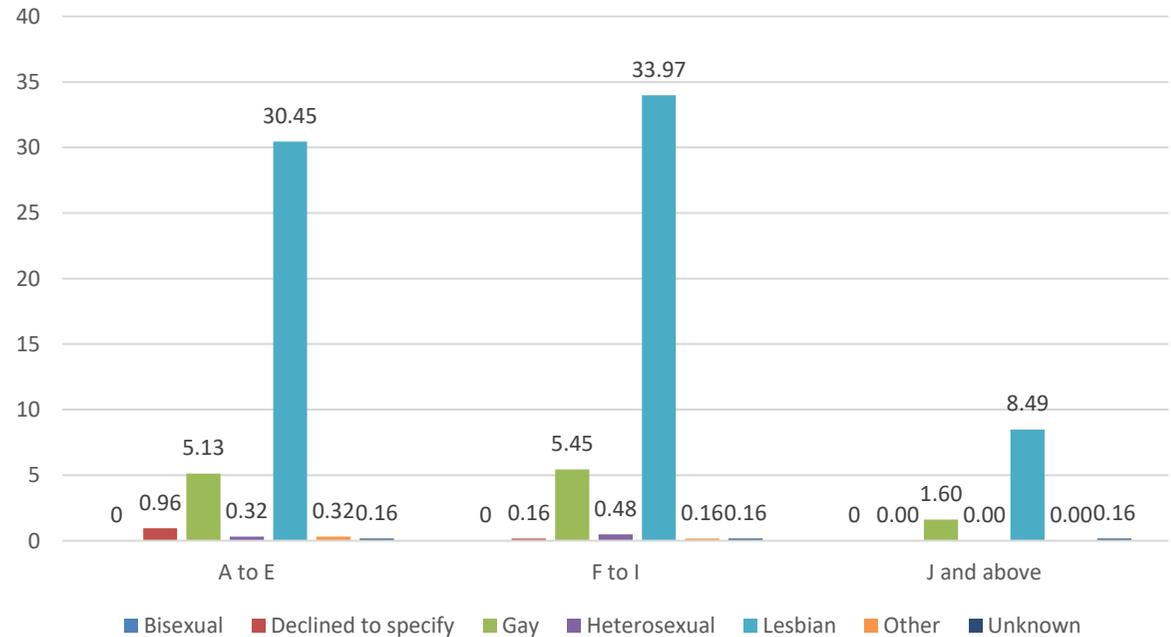


Chart 23

■ Bisexual ■ Declined to specify ■ Gay ■ Heterosexual ■ Lesbian ■ Other ■ Unknown

Sexual Orientation Percentage by Grade Band as at 31 December 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 January to December 2025. There have been 91 recruitment campaigns during this period to which 1323 applications were received and 78 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 25 and 34, followed by 35 to 49, these 2 groups account for 68.1% of all applications. Table 2 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. Applicants in the 50-64 age range are significantly lower than the district percentage. and other categories broadly align.

Chart 24

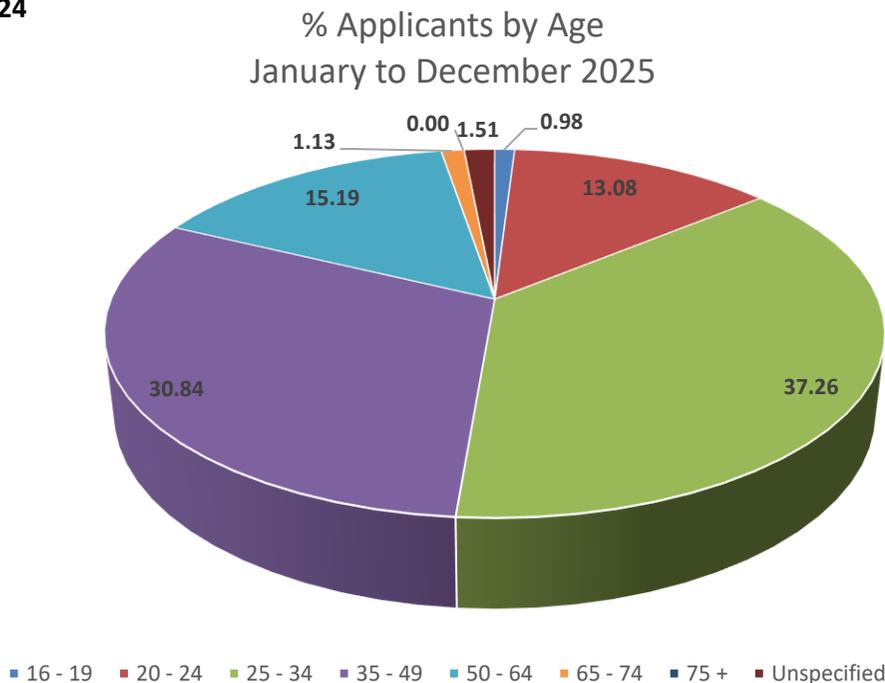


Table 2

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 3 shows the make-up of the District.

Chart 25

% Applicants by Ethnicity
January to December 2025

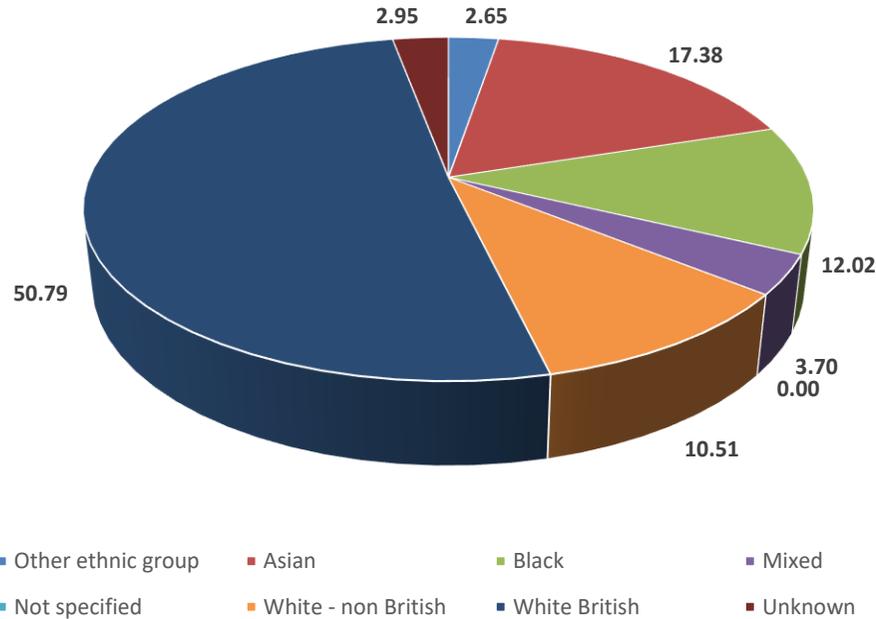


Table 3

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
January to December 2025

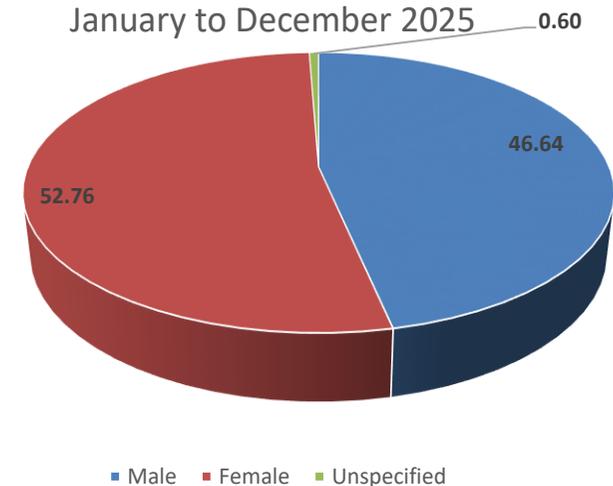


Chart 26 shows the percentage of applicants by gender, which is an almost 50/50 split across male and female, which is both reflective of our current workforce and district data covered earlier in this report.

Chart 27

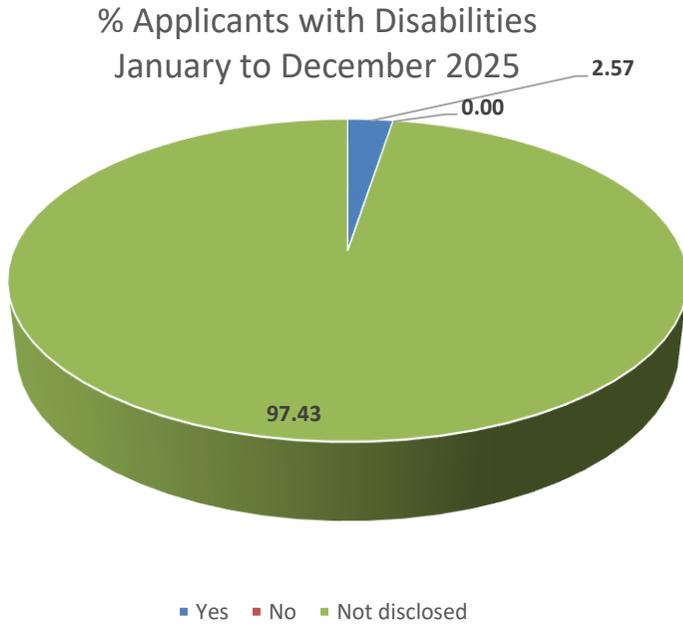


Chart 28 shows the percentage of applicants by sexual orientation. Oxfordshire County Council confirms from census 2021 information that 89.4% of the county identify as straight or heterosexual, with 3.4% not identifying as straight or heterosexual and 7.9% preferring not to say. CDC's applicant data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

Chart 28

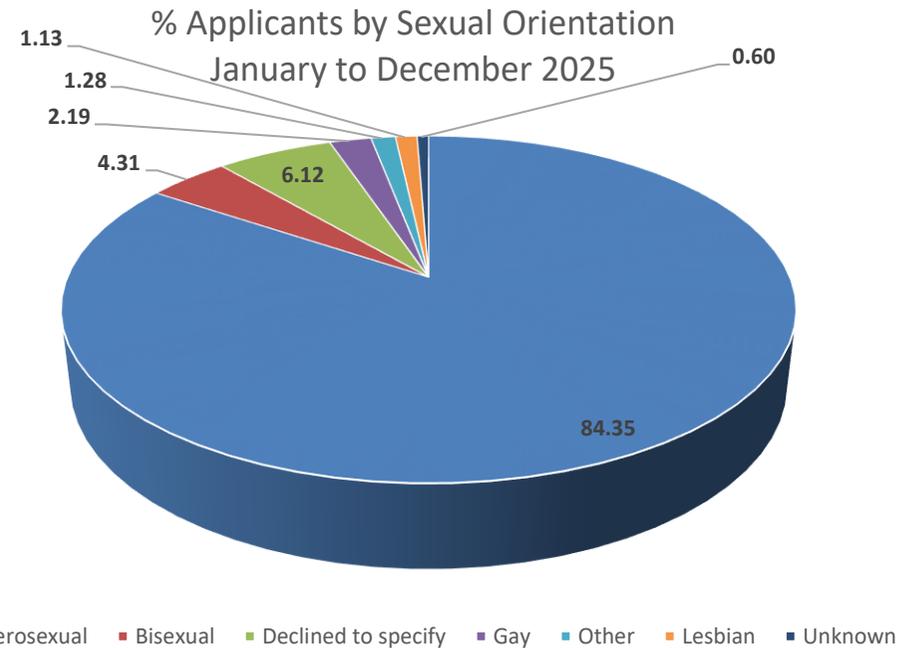


Chart 27 shows the percentage of applicants by disability. 97.43% of applicants have not disclosed this at applicant stage. It is hoped that applicants would provide this information should they have disabilities as we have a guaranteed interview scheme if they meet the essential criteria for a role, 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 4-8 below provide a breakdown of applicants and offers of employment made over the last rolling 12 month period, broken down into grade groups and then by:

- Ethnicity
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Gender
- Disability

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

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% ETHNICITY	A to E		F to I		J and above		TOTALS	
Comparator Ethnic Group	No. of applicants	No. of offers						
Other ethnic group	2.25	3.13	2.68	0.00	3.19	0.00	2.65	1.28
Asian	14.55	3.13	17.43	8.33	21.73	0.00	17.38	5.13
Black	7.58	3.13	17.24	8.33	10.22	10.00	12.02	6.41
Mixed	4.30	9.38	2.68	0.00	4.47	0.00	3.70	3.85
Not specified	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
White - non British	8.20	3.13	9.58	0.00	15.65	0.00	10.51	1.28
White British	62.30	71.88	47.51	77.78	38.34	90.00	50.79	76.92
Unknown	0.82	6.25	2.87	5.56	6.39	0.00	2.95	5.13
TOTAL %	100	100.00	100	100.00	100	100.00	100.00	100.00
TOTAL NUMBER	488	32	522	36	313	10	1323	78

Table 5: 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						
Heterosexual	89.96	84.38	85.25	88.89	74.12	90.00	84.35	87.18
Bisexual	3.07	3.13	3.64	0.00	7.35	0.00	4.31	1.28
Declined to specify	3.48	0.00	6.32	5.56	9.90	10.00	6.12	3.85
Gay	1.23	3.13	3.07	0.00	2.24	0.00	2.19	1.28
Other	0.61	0.00	1.15	0.00	2.56	0.00	1.28	0.00
Lesbian	1.64	3.13	0.57	0.00	1.28	0.00	1.13	1.28
Unknown	0.00	6.25	0.00	5.56	2.56	0.00	0.60	5.13
TOTAL %	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
TOTAL NUMBER	488	32	522	36	313	10	1323	78

Table 6: 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						
16 - 19	2.05	0.00	0.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.98	0.00
20 - 24	14.96	12.50	11.69	2.78	12.46	0.00	13.08	6.41
25 - 34	30.53	12.50	38.31	38.89	46.01	30.00	37.26	26.92
35 - 49	31.76	40.63	33.72	33.33	24.60	50.00	30.84	38.46
50 - 64	18.24	34.38	14.94	22.22	10.86	20.00	15.19	26.92
65 - 74	1.84	0.00	0.57	0.00	0.96	0.00	1.13	0.00
75 +	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unspecified	0.61	0.00	0.19	2.78	5.11	0.00	1.51	1.28
TOTAL %	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
TOTAL NUMBER	488	32	522	36	313	10	1323	78

Table 7: 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						
Male	49.18	62.50	41.38	36.11	51.44	70.00	46.64	51.28
Female	50.82	37.50	58.05	61.11	46.96	30.00	52.76	47.44
Unspecified	0.00	0.00	0.57	2.78	1.60	0.00	0.60	1.28
TOTAL %	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
TOTAL NUMBER	488	32	522	36	313	10	1323	78

Table 8: 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						
Yes	0.82	9.38	1.72	5.56	6.71	20.00	2.57	8.97
No	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Not disclosed	99.18	90.63	98.28	94.44	93.29	80.00	97.43	91.03
TOTAL	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
TOTAL NUMBER	488	32	522	36	313	10	1323	78

Apprenticeships within Cherwell District Council as at Quarter 3 – 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

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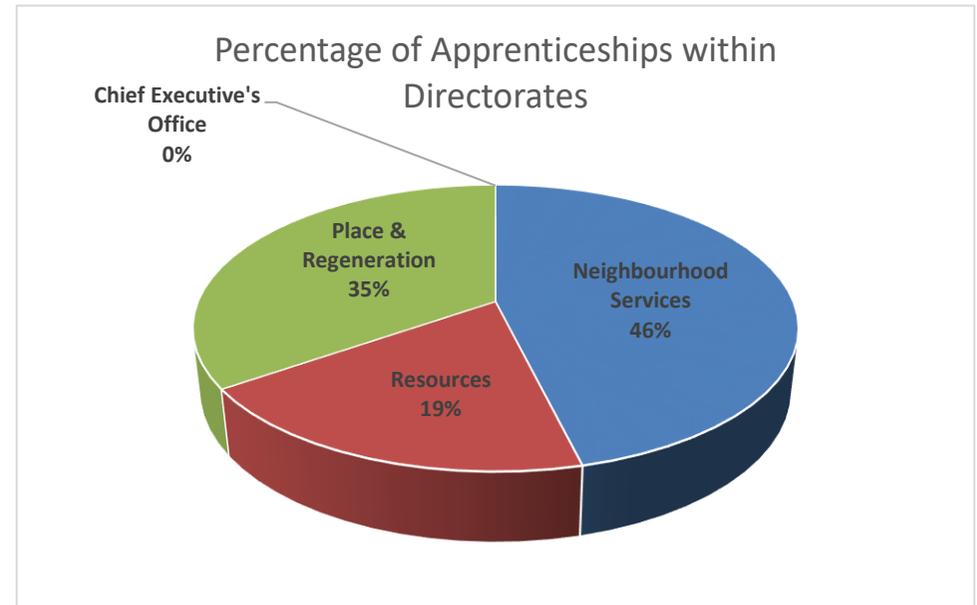
There are 26 apprenticeships currently running within the Council for this quarter, of which 5 is an apprentice on programme, employed specifically as an apprentice; and the remaining 21 are employees undertaking an apprenticeship as CPD or career progression.

There are currently 12 apprenticeships within the Neighbourhood Services Directorate, 9 in Place and Regeneration, 5 within the Resources Directorate and 0 within the Chief Executive’s Office – 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:

Apprenticeship Standard	Level of Apprenticeship	Duration of Apprenticeship	Number of employees on apprenticeship	Apprentice or Employee CPD	Team	Directorate	Cost of Apprenticeships (£)
Urban Driver	Level 2	8 months	3	CPD	Waste Collection	Neighbourhood Services (3)	24,000



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	Neighbourhood Services (1)	5,000
Transport and warehouse operations supervisor	Level 3	14 months	1	CPD	Business Support - Depot	Neighbourhood Services (1)	4,700
Motor vehicle service and maintenance technician - light vehicle	Level 3	22 months	1	Apprentice	Fleet Management	Neighbourhood Services (1)	10,669
Associate Project Manager	Level 4	18 months	1	CPD	Waste Collection	Neighbourhood Services (1)	7,000
Sports Coach	Level 4	14 months	1	Apprentice	Wellbeing	Neighbourhood Services (1)	9,000
Data Protection and Information Governance Practitioner	Level 4	18 months	1	CPD	Legal Services	Resources (1)	10,000
Senior housing and property management	Level 4	22 months	2	CPD	Housing Grants and Standards	Neighbourhood Services (2)	17933
People Professional	Level 5	18 months	2	CPD (1)	Human Resources	Resources (2)	22,000

Apprenticeship Standard	Level of Apprenticeship	Duration of Apprenticeship	Number of employees on apprenticeship	Apprentice or Employee CPD	Team	Directorate	Cost of Apprenticeships (£)
				Apprentice (1)			
Building control surveyor	Level 6	48 months	1	CPD	Building Control	Place and Regeneration (1)	24,000
Chartered Surveyor	Level 6	66 months	1	Apprentice	Access and Grants	Place and Regeneration (1)	27,000
Environmental Health Practitioner	Level 6	48 months	1	CPD	Health Protection and Compliance	Neighbourhood Services (1)	22,000
Public Health Practitioner	Level 6	36 months	1	CPD	Health Place Shaping	Place and Regeneration (1)	22,000
Chartered Town Planner	Level 7	30 months	6	CPD	Planning	Place and Regeneration (6)	68,400
Accountancy or Taxation Professional	Level 7	38 months	1	CPD	Finance	Resources (1)	21,000
Accountancy Professional (CIPFA)	Level 7	36 months	1	CPD	Finance	Resources (1)	20,433
Sustainability business specialist	Level 7	24 months	1	CPD	Environment Services	Neighbourhood Services (1)	10,755
			26		Total apprenticeship levy committed		325,890

Current amount in the Levy Account

The Council currently has £163,246 in their levy account.

Expired Funds

No funds expired in Quarter 3 of 2025/26. We are not able to estimate what will expire in the future, as the government has taken this option out of the apprenticeship dashboard but will be updating these calculations in the future.

Latest Update around apprenticeship reforms

- **Foundation Apprenticeships** - Foundation apprenticeships offer opportunities for young people in that they are paid jobs with structured training in an entry level occupation (at Level 2) designed for young people at the start of their career. They will have a pathway to progression as these apprenticeships offer a clear progression route, enabling individuals to gain relevant employability skills and experience that can lead to more specific or advanced apprenticeships. This structured pathway supports long-term career development and growth. The first foundation apprenticeships went live on 1 August 2025 in construction and the built environment, engineering and manufacturing, digital and health and social care.
- **Apprenticeship Units** - The government wants employers to be able to use the levy on short, flexible training courses. From April 2026, they are introducing the first wave of these courses, called 'apprenticeship units' in England, funded through the Growth and Skills Levy. These courses are designed to help employers respond quickly to evolving skills needs and invest in workforce development. They will be available in critical skills areas such as digital, advanced AI (Artificial Intelligence) and engineering. They will work with Skills England to ensure the offer aligns with employer needs and wider national priorities, so that it is affordable alongside the wider apprenticeship offer.
- **English and Maths Requirements** - All new and existing adult apprentices, who are aged 19 and over at the start of their apprenticeship training, are no longer required to hold or achieve English and maths qualifications to pass their apprenticeship. Instead, apprentices will demonstrate their English and maths skills by using them in real work tasks as part of their apprenticeship. Apprentices who are aged 16 to 18 at the start of their training, are still required to achieve English and maths qualifications to support their career progression. Funding will continue to be available for English and maths qualifications for all apprentices, including those aged 19 and over, where the employer agrees this should be part of their apprenticeship.
- **Minimum Duration of apprenticeships** - The minimum duration of an apprenticeship was reduced from 12 to 8 months in August 2025, only for where it is right to do so. The typical duration for each apprenticeship still exists, but this change allows apprentices to achieve occupational competence more quickly where it makes sense, for example, because they have significant prior learning or to better align training with the industry.

- **Level 7 Apprenticeships** - The government is refocusing investment towards young people at the start of their working lives, rather than those already in work with higher levels of prior learning and qualifications. From 1st January 2026: only level 7 apprenticeships for young people aged 16-21, and under 25 for care leavers and those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) at the start of their apprenticeship will be eligible for government funding (those aged 22 and over will not be eligible). Any apprentice who started a level 7 apprenticeship before 1 January 2026 will continue to be funded through to completion
- **New Investment** - This government is investing in young people's futures and reversing the sharp decline in apprenticeship starts amongst young people. At the Autumn Budget, the Chancellor announced a package of additional investment to deliver the next phase of the Growth and Skills Levy. This investment will ensure we have the skills to power economic growth, roll out new flexibilities for business, deliver important reforms, and support young people to progress more quickly into skilled, well-paid jobs.

Impact

The main impact on CDC following the changes above will be around the Level 7 Apprenticeships no longer being funded via the levy. For existing staff, we fund Level 7 Accountancy and Spatial Planning with the apprenticeship levy but going forward these qualifications will need to be funded from the Learning and Development budget.

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This report is public	
Gender Pay Gap Report	
Committee	Personnel Committee
Date of Committee	4 March 2026
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	19 February 2026
Report of	Assistant Director of Human Resources, Claire Cox

Purpose of report

To provide the Personnel Committee (PC) with the latest Gender Pay Gap report for information.

1. Recommendations

The Personnel Committee resolves:

- 1.1 To review and note the Gender Pay Gap Report, which is submitted for information.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides the Personnel Committee (PC) with the latest version of the Gender Pay Gap report for information ahead of it being published on the CDC Website by 30 March 2026.
- 2.2 The Gender Pay Gap report outlines a mean difference in pay between men and women of 3.1%, with men earning an average of £0.65 more an hour than women. This has reduced from 4.97% in March 2024.
- 2.3 For the fourth year in a 4-year period, there has been no median pay difference between men and women.
- 2.4 Even with a mean difference of 3.1% CDC remain significantly lower than the national public sector mean pay gap of 12.3%, and the median pay gap of 13.5%.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
Finance	<p>There are no financial implications directly associated with this report. This is historic information for which any costs will already have been incurred.</p> <p>Kelly Wheeler, Finance Business Partner, 2 February 2026</p>
Legal	<p>The report identifies that we have a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 (specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 to publish a report on the average pay differences between male and female employees.</p> <p>The regulations set out detailed guidance as to how to calculate the required reporting information and we have assumed that the calculations have been carried out in accordance with these requirements.</p> <p>By completing the gender pay gap reporting, CDC are ensuring that they are complying with their requirements to report on the gender pay gap within the organisation.</p> <p>The Council should ensure that it publishes the report on CDC's website and the Government's portal to ensure continued compliance as noted within the report.</p> <p>The report does not identify any direct actions and proposes to continue to monitor and learn from best practice, there are therefore no legal implications arising from these recommendations.</p> <p>Denzil John Turbervill, Head of Legal Services, 3 February 2026</p>
Risk	<p>There are no risks arising directly from this report. The publication of this report mitigates the risk of not being compliant with the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 3 February 2026</p>

Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact	X			Publishing a Gender Pay Statement is a requirement of the Equality Act; in line with the council's EDI framework and our commitment to promote an Inclusive Work Force, producing a Gender Pay Statement allow us to ensure that gender pay data continues to be monitored, and any identified issues are mitigated. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 3 February 2026
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>By completing the Gender Pay Gap Report, CDC is meeting its legal requirement.</p> <p>It is positive to note that the mean gap has reduced in the last 12 months, and there remains no median gap for the fourth year in a row.</p>			

	Claire Cox, Assistant Director of Human Resources, 28 January 2026
Property	N/A
Consultation & Engagement	N/A

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 Since 2017 employers with a headcount of 250 or more employees have been required to comply with the regulations on gender pay gap reporting.
- 3.2 The gender pay gap is the difference between the average (mean and median earnings of men and women across the workforce).

4. Details

- 4.1 As a public sector body, CDC is required to provide pay data, broken down by gender at a 'snapshot date' of 31 March. The data included in the Gender Pay Gap Report at appendix 1 is from 31 March 2025.
- 4.2 The report provides a mean and median gender pay gap for March 2025, as well as the last 3 years and outlines the proportion of men and women working at CDC in four quartile pay bands.
- 4.3 CDC are required to report their gender pay gap findings to central Government and publish the report at appendix 1 on the CDC website by 30 March 2026.
- 4.4 This year's Gender Pay Gap outlines a reduction in the mean difference from 4.97% to 3.1%, with men earning £0.65p per hour more than women.
- 4.5 Table 1 outlines how the workforce is split across the quartiles and the hourly rates of pay for each.

Quartile	Hourly rates	% Men 2025	% Women 2025
Lower	Up to £15.56	60.29	39.71
Lower middle	£15.81 to £19.20	44.12	55.88
Upper middle	£19.20 to £23.08	47.06	52.94
Upper	£23.16 and above	53.68	46.32
Average		51.30	48.70

4.6 For the fourth year in a row however CDC records no median difference in pay between men and women, with the median hourly rate recorded as £19.20.

4.7 The median hourly rate means that half of CDC employees' earnings will be above this midpoint and half will be below this midpoint. The median pay gap is often lower than its corresponding mean pay gap because this is calculated by adding all employees' rates of pay together and dividing by the total number of employees.

4.8 The Office of National Statistics have recorded the national public sector mean gender pay gap as 12.3%, which is 9.2% higher than CDC, and a median gender pay gap of 13.5% where CDC's is zero.

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: This report is provided for information only. There are no other options required as CDC must ensure compliance with the Gender Pay Gap Regulations

6. Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 By completing the gender pay gap report and ensuring it is reported and published by the deadline of 30 March 2026, CDC are ensuring compliance with the Gender Pay Gap Regulations.

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	Gender Pay Gap Report 2025
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
Report Author	Assistant Director of Human Resources, Claire Cox
Report Author contact details	Claire.cox@cherwell-dc.gov.uk
Executive Director Approval (unless Executive Director or Statutory Officer report)	Executive Director for Resources



Gender Pay Gap Report 2025

Background

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 stipulate that all businesses, public sector and third sector organisations with over 250 employees must publicly report on average pay differences between their male and female employees. The Regulations require employers to publish their:

- Mean gender pay gap in hourly pay
- Median gender pay gap in hourly pay
- Mean bonus gender pay gap
- Median bonus gender pay gap
- Proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment, and
- Proportion of males and females in each pay quartile.

As a public sector body, we are required to publish this pay gap information within 12 months, taking the “snapshot date” of 31 March 2025.

Our calculations follow the legislative requirements as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties & Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. All staff who were deemed to be relevant employees at 31 March 2025 are included.

This information will be published on the Cherwell District Council (CDC) website for a minimum of 3 years and published on the government website (www.gov.uk) by 31 March 2026.

Equal pay and gender pay gap

The purpose of gender pay gap reporting is to achieve greater gender equality in terms of pay across the UK and increase pay transparency. This differs from equal pay which deals with differences between men and women who carry out the same roles.

Details within this report

Using a snapshot of employees' pay as at 31 March 2025, 4 of the 6 calculations detailed above were made:

1. Mean gender pay gap
2. Median gender pay gap
3. Proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment, and
4. The proportion of men and women divided into four quartile pay bands

The remaining 2 calculations relate specifically to bonus payments. The only bonuses awarded by CDC are to celebrate long service and these would not therefore be included in an employees' hourly rate for the reporting period. Details on long service awards provided by gender have been included in this report for information.

Information required for publication

Relevant employee

An employee who was on full pay at the point of the data snapshot as at 31 March 2025.

Mean gender pay gap

The mean is defined as the average of the figures and is calculated by adding up all the figures and dividing by the number there are.

Median gender pay gap

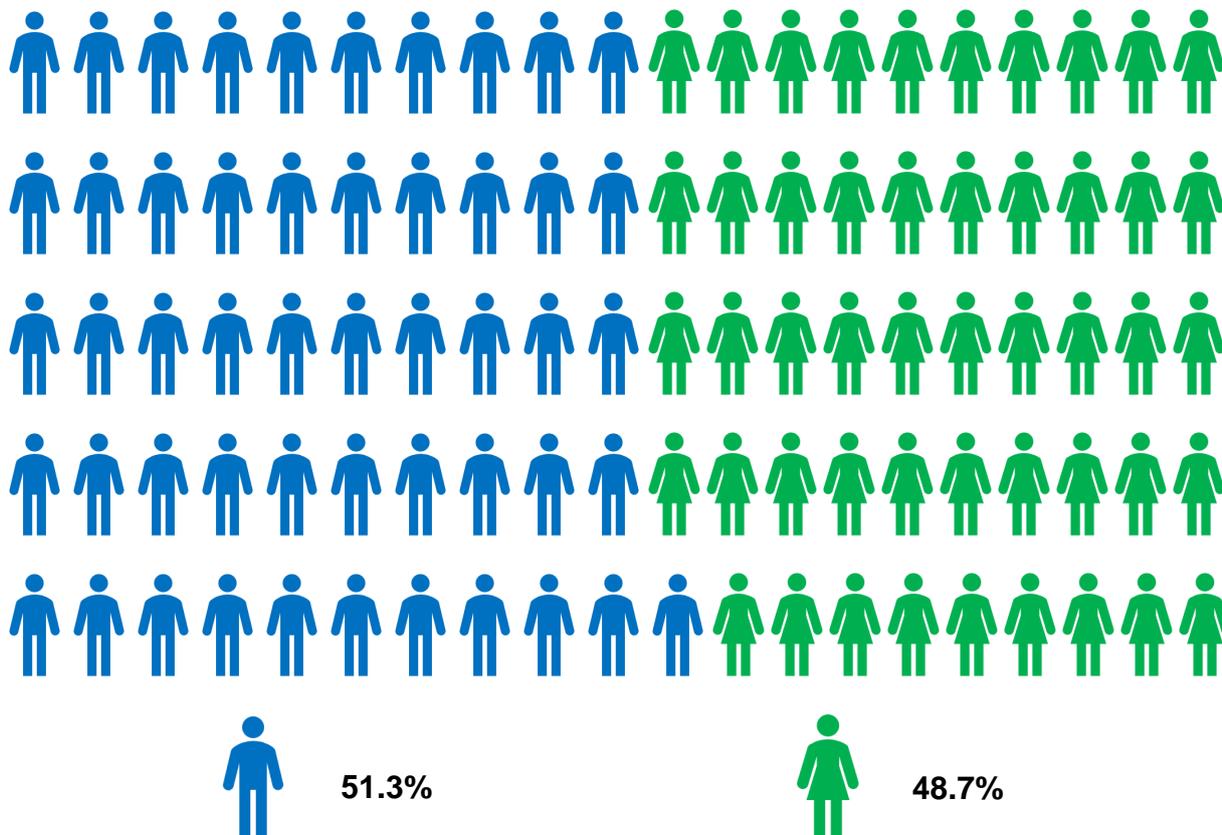
The median is defined as the salary that lies at the midpoint and is calculated by ordering all salaries from highest to lowest and the median is the central figure.

Quartile pay bands

The quartile information is calculated by listing all salaries from highest to lowest and then splitting that information into four equal quarters to determine the percentage of male/female employees in each quartile.

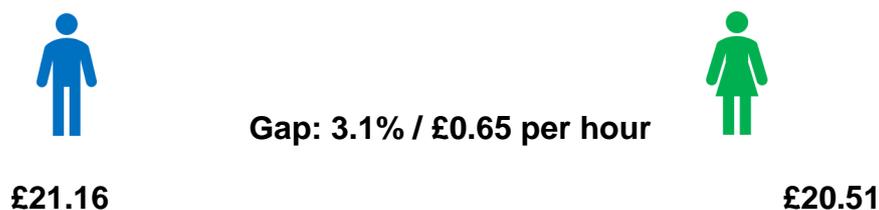
Workforce profile

On 31 March 2025, CDC had 544 relevant employees¹; of which 51.3% (279 employees) were men and 48.7% (265 employees) were women.



Gender pay gap as at 31 March 2025

Mean: percentage difference and average hourly rate of pay



The mean difference recorded at CDC has decreased from the previous year (Table 1) and still remains substantially less than the national public sector mean pay gap which is 12.3% (Office for National Statistics).

¹ A relevant employee is an employee that received full pay, not reduced due to parental leave pay or sick pay, for example, as at the snapshot of data on 31 March 2025.

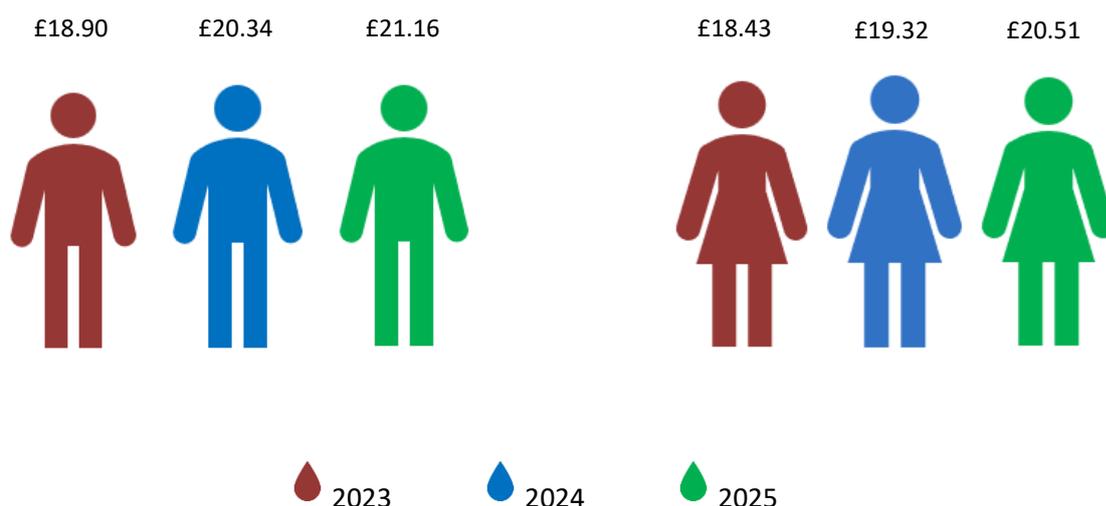
Table 1

Data snapshot	Mean gender pay gap	Hourly pay rate
March 2025	3.1%	£0.65 pence per hour
March 2024	4.97%	£1.01 pence per hour
March 2023	2.49%	£0.47 pence per hour
March 2022	1.64%	£0.29 pence per hour

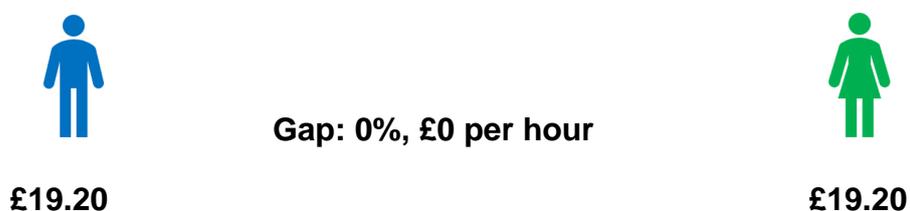
As at 31 March 2025 the mean hourly rate for men was £21.16 per hour and for women it was £20.51 per hour. This means that men earned an average of £0.65 per hour more than women, which equates to a mean difference of 3.1%.

Changes in mean hourly pay rates for both male and females over the previous three years can be seen in the diagram below.

Mean Male and Female Hourly Pay Rates



Median: percentage difference and hourly rate of pay

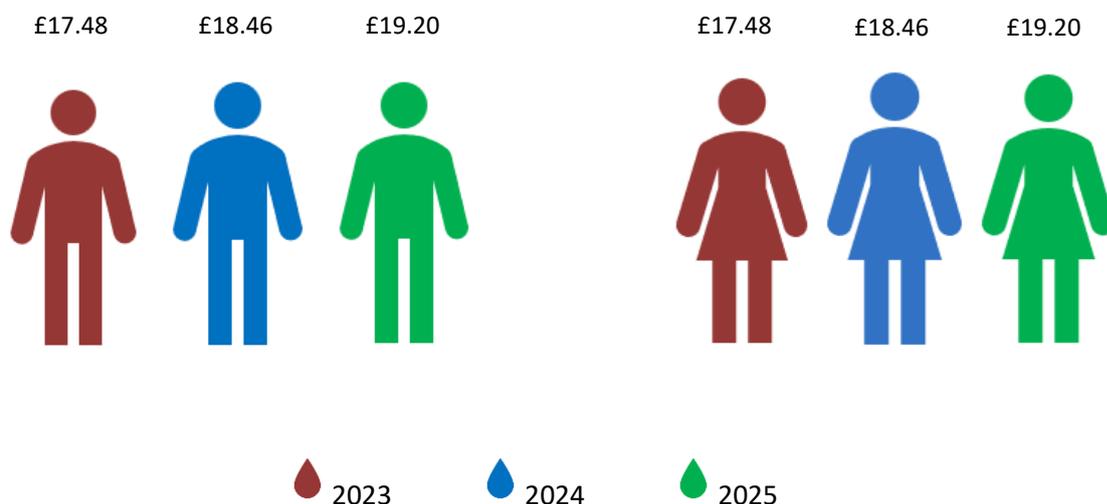


As at 31 March 2025 the median hourly rate of pay for men and women was the same with both being paid £19.20 per hour. This is the fourth time in a 4-year period that there has been no median difference between men and women. As there is no

median difference as at 31 March 2025, CDC remain substantially less than the national public sector median pay gap which is 13.5% (Office for National Statistics).

The figures for the previous three years can be seen in the diagram below. This diagram shows a consistent increase in hourly rate of pay for both men and women over the last three years.

Median Male and Female Hourly Pay Rates



Proportion of men and women receiving bonuses

The only bonuses awarded at CDC are to celebrate long service awards. These awards are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2

Eligible service	Bonus awarded
20 years	£100 gift voucher
25 years	£200 gift voucher
30 years	£300 gift voucher
40 years	£500 gift voucher

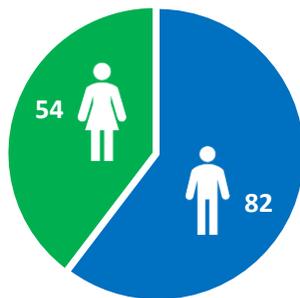
During the reporting period 19 long service bonuses were awarded, 10 to men and 9 to women.

The overall percentage of men receiving a bonus was 3.6%. The overall percentage of women receiving a bonus was 3.4%.

Pay quartiles

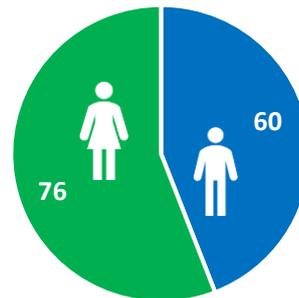
CDC employed 544 relevant employees as at 31 March 2025 which means there are 136 employees in all quartiles. The gender split per quartile as at 31 March 2025 is detailed below and serves as a useful benchmark to determine progression through the pay scales.

Lower Quartile



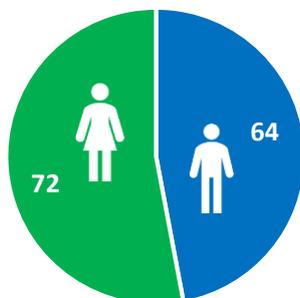
■ Men 60.29% ■ Women 39.71%

Lower Middle Quartile



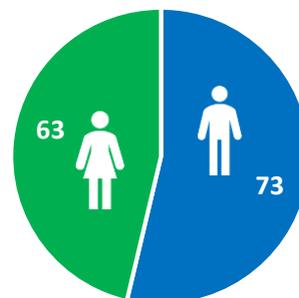
■ Men 44.12% ■ Women 55.88%

Upper Middle Quartile



■ Men 47.06% ■ Women 52.94%

Upper Quartile



■ Men 53.68% ■ Women 46.32%

The hourly rates that represent each quartile are as follows:

Upper - relates to the hourly rates of £23.16 and above

Upper middle - relates to the hourly rates of £19.20 - £23.08

Lower middle - relates to the hourly rates of £15.81 - £19.20

Lower - relates to the hourly rates up to £15.56

The percentage difference from 2024 to 2025 is displayed in Table 3.

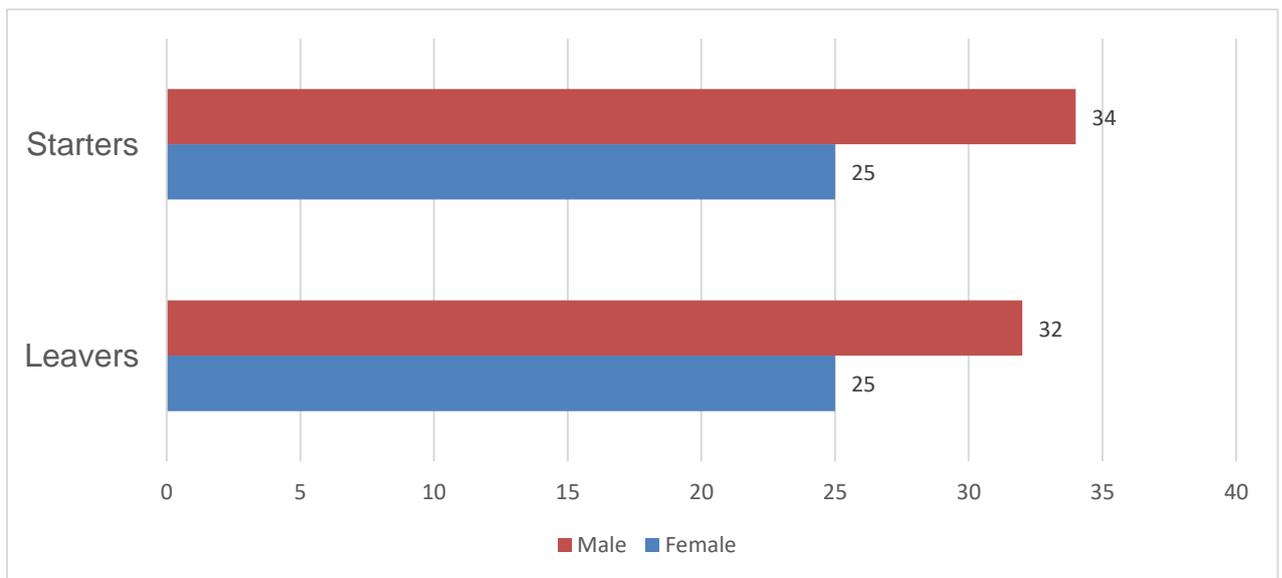
Table 3

Quartile	% Men 2024	% Men 2025	% Women 2024	% Women 2025	% increase in gender
Lower	54.07	60.29	45.93	39.71	6.22 in men
Lower middle	48.51	44.12	51.49	55.88	4.39 in women
Upper middle	49.25	47.06	50.75	52.94	2.19 in women
Upper	53.73	53.68	46.27	46.32	0.05 in women

When reviewing the quartiles year on year, they have remained fairly consistent. Three quartiles have seen increases in women being employed in those quartiles, with only the lower quartile seeing a 6.22% increase in men.

General turnover accounts for the majority of the change in quartiles. 7 additional employees were included in this year's gender pay gap. Graph 1 outlines starters and leavers by gender for the financial year 2024/25

Graph 1 – Starters and Leavers by Gender during 2024/25



CDC continues to do its utmost to ensure equity of opportunity when recruiting, for all with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010, it is important that the process is robust and ultimately the person who demonstrates the best skills and attributes for the role is appointed. All applicants are measured against objective criteria, both at shortlisting and interview stage. This means that recruitment should be based on evidence-based merit and not be influenced by the protected characteristics of the applicant.

Commitment

We are committed to the principles of equality, diversity, fairness and inclusion and our approach to people management should not put any group at a disadvantage. Regardless of identity or background, everyone deserves to be able to develop their skills and talents to meet their full potential, work in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment, be fairly rewarded and recognised for the work they do and have the opportunity to have their say on matters that affect them. We are also committed to achieving a diverse workforce that fully reflects our community.

We will continue to advance our inclusion initiatives, particularly where there are any barriers for women to progress into higher paid roles.

Flexible and agile working and family friendly policies will assist Cherwell District Council to attract and retain staff in a competitive job market and in a geographical area with low unemployment.

Summary

This year sees a further increase in the gender pay gap at CDC with men now earning a mean difference of 3.1% more than women.

The median difference however reports no difference for the fourth time in a 4-year period.

Even with the shift in the mean, the gender pay gap at CDC does not pose a significant concern at this time and remains significantly lower than the public sector averages.

It will be necessary to continue to monitor and be committed to learning from best practice as part of our journey. The gender pay gap data will be analysed on an annual basis and a comparison of figures will be completed year on year. We will ensure that job grades continue to be determined through objective analysis and job evaluation to maintain the integrity of the pay and grading system.