

<b>This report is public</b>	
<b>Workforce Profile Statistics – Quarter 3 of 2025-26</b>	
<b>Committee</b>	Personnel Committee
<b>Date of Committee</b>	4 March 2026
<b>Portfolio Holder presenting the report</b>	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Councillor Chris Brant
<b>Date Portfolio Holder agreed report</b>	19 February 2026
<b>Report of</b>	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			
<b>Finance</b>	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			
<b>Legal</b>	There are no legal implications within this report as it is for information only. Denzil John Turbervill Head of Legal Services, 3 February 2026			
<b>Risk</b>	There are no risks arising directly from this report. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 3 February 2026			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
<b>Equality Impact</b>		<b>X</b>		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
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is		<b>X</b>		

delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?				
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		<b>X</b>		
<b>Climate &amp; Environmental Impact</b>				N/A
<b>ICT &amp; Digital Impact</b>				N/A
<b>Data Impact</b>				N/A
<b>Procurement &amp; subsidy</b>				N/A
<b>Council Priorities</b>	N/A			
<b>Human Resources</b>	<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>			
<b>Property</b>	N/A			
<b>Consultation &amp; Engagement</b>	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

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

### Document Information

<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>Appendix 1</b>	Workforce Profile Data – Quarter 3, 2025/26
<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Reference Papers</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	Assistant Director of Human Resources, Claire Cox
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<b>Executive Director Approval (unless Executive Director or Statutory Officer report)</b>	Executive Director for Resources