

Report for: General Purposes Committee 2nd of July 2024

Title: People Report – May 2024, March 2024 data

Report authorised by: Dan Paul, Chief People Officer

Lead Officer: Tanya Patchett, Head of Employee Relations, Business Partners and Reward

Ward(s) affected: N/A

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** N/A

1. Describe the issue under consideration

The People Report is designed to give officers and members relevant workforce data in an easy to understand format in order to support informed strategic decision making.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

Not applicable.

3. Recommendations

The Report is for information and for the Committee to note.

4. Reason for Decision

Not applicable.

5. Alternative Options Considered

Not applicable.

6. Background information

The People Report combines key workforce data and analysis including headcount, the cost of both the permanent workforce and off payroll arrangements, starters/leavers, sickness absence and Apprentices as shown in Appendix A.

6.1. People Report Headlines

- 6.1.1 The council's established workforce has slightly increased by 0.4% going from 3362 in December to 3374 in March which is an increase in headcount of 12. The FTE has slightly increased by 0.6% (3111.3 to 3130.9).
- 6.1.2 There has been an increase in workforce cost from £11,198,629 in December to £11,216,824 in March, this increase is in line with the slight increase in both FTE and headcount.
- 6.1.3 Agency worker headcount is broadly unchanged (an increase of 1 headcount) but there has been an increase in FTE from 413.4 to 474.7. There has been an increase in agency cost in the period December to March with the monthly cost in December at £2,692,828 compared to £3,136,708 in March. This is to be expected as agency worker usage is lower in December due to the Christmas break, and March 2024 was a 5 week month for agency staff payments and FTE calculation.
- 6.1.4 It is acknowledged that some agency workers are likely to always be required as there will be a requirement to use this type of workforce in the event of roles which are subject to market pressures (legal/ technology/ social workers) and to help fill short term or stop gap situations where the Council needs to address an imbalance in the workforce, workload or whilst permanent recruitment is undertaken, in order to continue delivering key services to our residents. The council will continue to focus on agency reduction as part of cost efficiency work.
- 6.1.5 During the last rolling year period of 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, 54% of new starters were under 40 years old, whereas 32% of leavers were under 40.
- 6.1.6 Sickness rates have not seen a significant change between December 2023 and March 2024. Average sick days has slightly reduced from 11.4 days to 11.2 days, long term sickness rate (20+ days) was 8.4 in December and was 9.2 in March. Short term sickness (under 20 days) has gone from 3.0 to 2.0, which is a good reduction. The reduction in short term absence and overall slight reduction in sickness rates explains the reduction in sickness cost from £4,962,000 to £4,431,000.
- 6.1.7 There has been a slight decrease in apprentices overall from 132 to 107. It should be noted that this figure includes both new employees taken on as apprentices, and existing employees who are undertaking apprenticeship qualifications funded by the apprentice levy. This is due to 24 apprentices completing their qualifications in this period. There is a pipeline of approximately 20 apprentices due to join in the coming weeks.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

In order to streamline the production of timely workforce data the People Report will act as a single source of people data for the use of both officers and members.

The production of this report will complement the reports produced by Finance to give officers and members a set of management controls that will help track the reduction in the workforce, both on and off payroll; and the associated spend across the Council.

It will enable officers and members to track the progress of HR related initiatives controlling recruitment, establishment numbers, and performance management exercises.

8. Statutory Officers' comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities

8.1 Chief Finance Officer

This report recommends Committee to note the changes in the workforce from December 2023 to March 2024. The impact of these changes has already been considered as part of the regular budget monitoring process and would have been reported accordingly. There are no other financial implications arising from this report.

8.2 Head of Legal and Governance

This report is for information only.

9. Use of Appendices

Appendix A - People Report (March 2024)

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Not applicable.