

Report for: General Purposes Committee - 1 July 2025

Item number: 7

Title: People Report March 2025

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:** Non-key

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 By the end of this quarter, the workforce has grown 2.5% since December 2024 and the Council's pay bill has increased a further 2.4%.
- 6.1.2 The number of agency workers decreased by 15 when compared to December 2024. When compared to the previous financial year (2024/25), the Council has reduced agency worker usage by 25.3%, achieving a total cost saving of 24.5%. For the financial year 2025/26, the Council remains committed to continuing to minimise agency worker engagement, while recognising their role in helping address short-term staffing gaps, workload fluctuations and ongoing recruitment processes. This approach ensures the continued delivery of critical services to residents.
- 6.1.3 As of March 2025, the Council engaged 60 'off payroll' workers earning a daily rate above £500, reflecting in a headcount reduction of 3 since December 2024. When compared to the previous financial year (2024/25), the Council has reduced its costs by 5% in this workforce group.
- 6.1.4 The total workforce has increased by 1.7%, reflecting a minimal change overall.
- 6.1.5 Over the past rolling year, 55% of new starters were under the age of 40, reflecting a 1% increase from the previous rolling year. Meanwhile, the proportion of leavers in this age group has remained steady at 36%.
- 6.1.6 While the long-term sickness rate has declined over the past rolling year, a slight rise in the average number of sickness days and the short-term sickness rate has led to a 4.5% increase in sickness-related costs. Strategic HR and OD Business Partners continue to work closely with Corporate Directors and Directors to tackle sickness rates across the Council.
- 6.1.7 The total number of apprenticeships across the Council remains at 128, with the top three directorates continuing to be Placemaking & Housing, Adults, Health & Communities and Children's Services. It should be noted that due to the Council restructure and a reduction in the number of Directorates, apprentice numbers in the People Report for the next 12 months at Directorate level will not be directly comparable to previous reports.

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 2024 to March 2025. 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 2025)

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Not applicable.