

Report for: General Purposes Committee - 22 January 2026

Item number: 7

Title: People Report - September 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 During this reporting quarter, the Council's established workforce has increased slightly by 0.5% compared to June 2025. The Council's pay bill rose by 3.7%, which is mainly due to the implementation of the NJC pay award in August 2025 (backdated to 1st April 2025) and the rise in headcount.
- 6.1.2 Agency worker (excludes day rate of £500+) headcount decreased further by 9.8% and costs reduced by 23.2%. This continued downward trend reflects the Council's strategic commitment to reducing reliance on agency staff, strengthening workforce stability and achieving cost efficiencies. While the Council will seek to limit agency engagements wherever possible, it acknowledges their essential role in covering short-term staffing gaps and meeting immediate service demands. During June and September 2025, approximately 13 agency workers successfully transitioned through the accelerated recruitment process and are now employed directly by the Council.
- 6.1.3 As of September 2025, the Council's use of Consultants and Interims decreased from 56 to 53, resulting in a 16% reduction in costs.
- 6.1.4 During the last rolling year period 52% of new starters were aged under 40 years old, an increase of 2% since the previous rolling year. However, 35% of leavers were also from this age group, an increase of 3% when compared to the previous rolling year period.
- 6.1.5 Sickness rates have improved across all areas, resulting in an additional 10.3% reduction in sickness-related costs.
- 6.1.6 The Council has had 83 employees starting new apprenticeships and 8 apprentices have completed their programmes throughout June to September 2025. The most popular apprenticeships standards / frameworks were in Data at Levels 3 and 4 followed by Senior Leader at Level 7.

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), Director of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

8.1 Chief Finance Officer

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

8.2 Director of Legal and Governance

This report is for information and for the Committee to note its content. The Director of Legal and Governance has read the report and has no comments to add.

9 Use of Appendices

Appendix A - People Report (September 2025)

10 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Not applicable.