

A meeting of the **EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE** will be held in **THE CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER/STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **WEDNESDAY, 21ST JUNE 2023** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

AGENDA

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 5 - 10)

To approve as correct records the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 8th February and 17th May 2023.

Contact Officer: A Roberts - 388015

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary, other registerable and non-registerable interests in relation to any Agenda item. See Notes below.

Contact Officer: Democratic Services - 388169

3. WORKFORCE REPORT QUARTER FOUR 2022-23 (Pages 11 - 30)

To consider an update on HR matters impacting on the performance of the organisation.

Contact Officer: N Bane - 388422

4. WORKFORCE PROFILE REPORT (Pages 31 - 38)

To consider a report by the Strategic HR Manager containing the annual summary of the profile of the workforce by their protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010.

Contact Officer: N Bane - 388422

5. USE OF CONSULTANTS, HIRED STAFF AND TEMPORARY STAFF 2022/23
(Pages 39 - 46)

To consider and comment on a report by the Director of Finance and Corporate Services on the use by the Council of consultants and hired and temporary staff in 2022/23 compared with the previous year.

Contact Officer: K Sutton - 387072

6. HR POLICY UPDATE (Pages 47 - 82)

To consider and comment on a report by the Strategic HR Manager on the proposed new HR policies relating to Disability at Work, Improving Performance and Leave Arrangements.

Contact Officer: N Bane - 388422

7. REVISED POLICY - TIME OFF FOR TRADE UNION DUTIES (Pages 83 - 92)

Pursuant to Minute No 22/19, to consider a further report by the Strategic HR Manager on the Revised Time Off for Trade Union Duties Policy.

Contact Officer: N Bane - 388422

8. REPRESENTATIVES OF EMPLOYEES

At the request of representatives of employees to consider a range of issues.

13 day of June 2023

Oliver Morley

Head of Paid Service

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests.

Further information on [Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests is available in the Council's Constitution](#)

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Please contact Anthony Roberts ,Democratic Services, Tel: 01480 388169 / email Anthony.Roberts@huntingdonshire.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee/Panel.

Specific enquiries with regard to items on the Agenda should be directed towards the Contact Officer.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting as observers except during consideration of confidential or exempt items of business.

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the [District Council's website](#).

Emergency Procedure

In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit.

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER/STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 8th February 2023

PRESENT: Councillor A M Blackwell – Vice-Chair in the Chair.

Councillors S Cawley, C M Gleadow, D N Keane,
B A Mickelburgh and R J West.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors M A Hassall and P A Jordan.

IN ATTENDANCE: R Turner and M Ward (Unison) and C Easter (Employee Representative)

15 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23rd November 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

16 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

17 WORKFORCE REPORT QUARTER THREE 2022-23

The Committee received and noted a report on Human Resources matters impacting on the performance of the Council during the period 1st October to 31st December 2022. The report included the latest position and trends relating to employee numbers, salary costs and sickness absence. A copy of the report is appended in the Minute Book.

The Committee was informed that the total number of employees at the end of the last quarter was lower than at the end of the previous quarter and that the total spend on pay costs for employees in 2022/23 was forecasted to be £1,525,434 lower than the year's budget.

The report indicated that one employee had retired in the quarter. Members recognised the employee's achievements and asked that their congratulations be passed on.

In response to a question by Councillor West on whether the overspend on contractors was partly caused by difficulties recruiting to empty posts, it was confirmed that some roles were covered by agencies and that ways of reducing spending on contractors were being investigated. However, some sections, such as Operations and Planning, routinely needed to use temporary employees and it was sometimes necessary to use contractors to obtain specific skills. Generally, the Council aimed to use permanent staff where at all possible.

Following a further question by Councillor Cawley, the Strategic HR Manager reported that it was a challenge to find published comparison data from other local authorities on sickness absence, but it was recognised as a national issue arising from such factors as Covid and increases of mental ill-health. On a related subject, the Strategic HR Manager outlined the difficulties associated with monitoring uptake of vaccinations. Officers agreed to carry out further work on sickness absence trends by service compared with other councils. It was then

RESOLVED

- a) that the contents of the report be noted, and
- b) that the Council place on record its recognition of and gratitude for the excellent contribution made by the employee who have recently retired from employment in the local government service and pass on its best wishes for a long and happy retirement.

18 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2023/2024

With the assistance of a report by the Strategic HR Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Committee considered the draft 2023/24 Pay Policy Statement. The Statement provided information about the Council's policies relating to the pay and reward of Chief Officers and other employees, as required by the Localism Act. The Statement would be published on the Council's website together with data on Senior Officers' salaries as required by the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency.

Having noted the requirement for the Statement to be approved by the Council, it was

RESOLVED

that the Council be recommended to approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24.

19 NEW POLICY - TIME OFF FOR TRADE UNION DUTIES

Consideration was given to a report by the Strategic HR Manager to which was attached a proposed new policy relating to Time Off for Trade Union Duties. A copy of the report is appended in the Minute Book. During their deliberations on the Policy, Members focussed on what was considered to be reasonable time off. While national standard procedures would be taken into account, they were advised that the particular circumstances within the Council also would be relevant. It was suggested that potential terms for checks and balances should be examined to establish an agreed context for the Policy. It was further suggested that time off recorded for Union duties should be incorporated into the quarterly Workforce Report. However, to avoid delaying the commencement of closer working between management and the Union, it was agreed that the Managing Director should review and amend the Policy along the lines referred to by Members and the outcome reported to the next meeting. Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED

that the Managing Director be requested to review and amend the draft Time Off for Union Duties Policy to include clearer guidance on what is considered to be reasonable time off and the outcome be reported to the next meeting.

20 REPRESENTATIVES OF EMPLOYEES

No matters were identified for consideration.

Chair

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE held in THE CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER/STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 17th May 2023

PRESENT: Councillors A M Blackwell, S Cawley, C M Gleadow, M A Hassall, D N Keane, J E Kerr and R J West.

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor P A Jordan.

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED

that Councillor P Jordan be elected Chair of the Committee for the ensuing Municipal Year.

2 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were received.

3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

that Councillor A Blackwell be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee for the ensuing Municipal Year.

Chair

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Workforce Report Quarter Four 2022-23

Executive Summary

This report looks at the workforce profile of Huntingdonshire District Council during the fourth Quarter of the financial year, 01 January 2023 to 31 March 2023.

The key findings from the workforce profile report are:

- The permanent/fixed term employed workforce headcount is 619 and the full-time equivalent (FTE) total is 563.1 as of 31 March. This is lower than at the end of the previous Quarter where the headcount was 621 and the FTE 565.7. These figures do not include our variable or contingent workforce.
- Pay costs for 2022 /23 employees is around £1,860,000. lower than expected against a budget of £27,330,175. In contrast to this there is an estimated overspend of around £1,487,000 on contractors and agency staff against an expected spend of £299,198. Netting out at an underspend of around £374,000 against staffing budget when the underspend and the existing budget are taken into account.
- Turnover has decreased to 16.9% from the 18.5% reported in the previous Quarter with the top reasons for leaving being are pay, flexible working and job change. At this time our turnover figures are inflated by the kickstart programme which took place during COVID and with the last “kickstarters” leaving at the end of September. The areas with the highest turnover in this Quarter are Executive, COO Division and Operations.
- Executive is high in this quarter with the departure of our Managing Director and Corporate Director – Place, within a small team this creates a high turnover for the area. COO and Operations are areas where we would expect higher turnover due to the nature of the work involved such as customer services and call centres having higher turnover rates.
- Turnover continues to reduce this quarter, which has been a continuous trend for the last 12 months. We are now well below the LGA benchmark and nearing the national average.
- The number of roles advertised in the quarter was higher than the previous quarter, with 48 roles advertised compared to 30 the previous quarter. The number of offers made increased from 49 in the previous Quarter to the 58 in the current Quarter. The most difficult areas to recruit to within HDC are Planning, Environmental Health and One Leisure.

- We are continuing our trial of accepting CV's and covering letters by way of application and encouraging hiring managers to be agile in their approach – reviewing, shortlisting and interviewing during the campaign to reduce the risk of losing talent to other searches.
- In the period there have been a number of engagement activities most notably the iCare values award ceremony that was a great celebration of the hard work and dedication of our colleagues. We have also increased the number of apprentices within HDC 2 internal colleagues starting programmes and 2 new hires to HDC as apprentices, this will help to support our grow your own strategy.
- The annual average sickness figure has decreased to 8.3 days lost per FTE from 8.4 days per FTE reported for the previous Quarter but has increased compared to the same Quarter last year (Q4 2021/22 6.4 days lost).
- Sickness has reduced in this period which is to be expected as we come out of the winter period. Latest data from the ONS shows that sickness rates are the highest on record in the last 12 months, this shows in our higher rates. Long term absence has reduced in the quarter due to active management of team members.
- The HR caseload decreased in this Quarter compared to previous one. Just over half of the active cases managed in the Quarter relate to sickness absence management. Three quarters of all cases were managed informally. During the period we have moved the way in which we record cases to our HR database which helps streamline the process and provide further reporting opportunities.
- Included in this report are the results of the staff temperature check survey that was held in January 2023. Whilst there was a positive response rate and some encouraging results there are areas that it has highlighted that we can work on to help improve people's time at HDC and we will look to take this feedback and build on it as part of the workforce strategy staff engagement that we are planning. We continue to hold these surveys to monitor if the work that we are doing is having a positive impact.
- All of these factors and survey results will inform our forthcoming workforce strategy engagement and the strategy that will follow, which will respond to the needs of the organisation and our residents, but also the desires and needs of our current and future workforce.

Authors: Strategic HR Manager and HR Manager
 Contributors: Finance Business Partner, HR Advisor; Resource and Talent Development Manager
 Date: 12 June 2023

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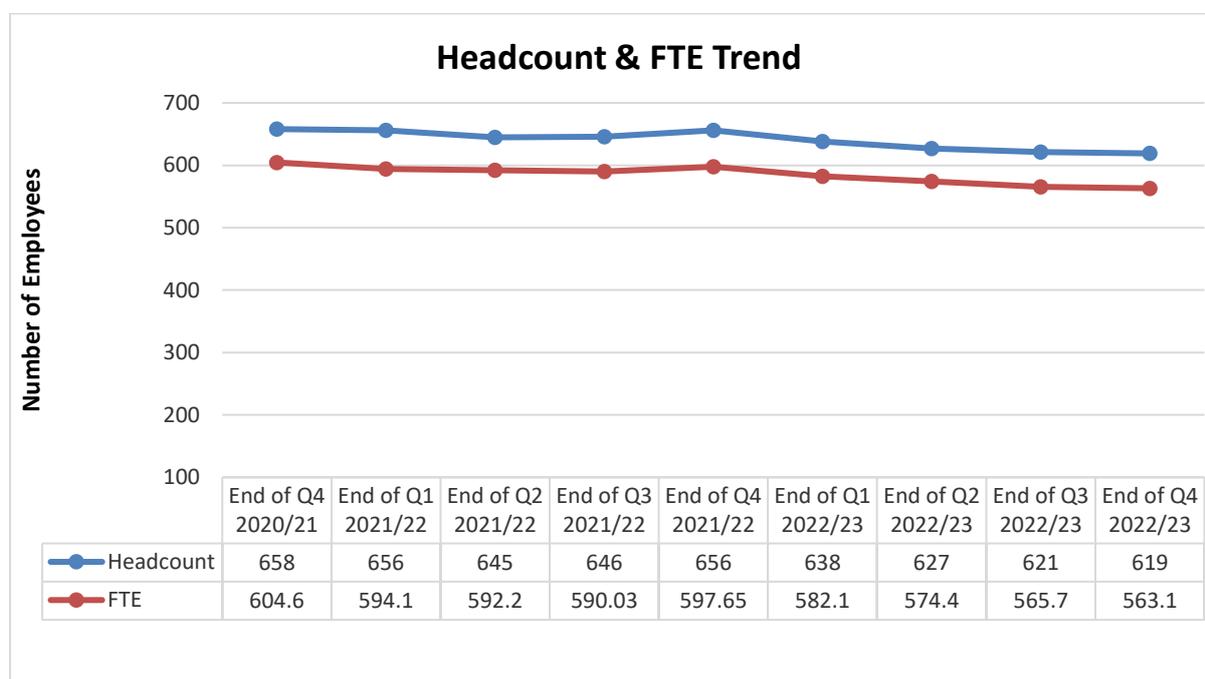
1.0 EMPLOYEE PROFILE

Definition: Headcount is the number of employees working within the Council, counting primary roles only.

A **full time equivalent** (referred to as FTE) is a measure of an employee's workload to make the position comparable across the workforce based on a 37-hour full-time working week. For example, an FTE of 0.5 indicates that the employee works half of a full-time working week (18.5 hours).

1.1 HEADCOUNT AND FTE

At the end of Quarter Four (31 March 2023), the total number of permanent and Fixed term employees employed by Huntingdonshire District Council was 619 (excluding those employed on a variable or casual hour basis) with the number of full-time equivalent posts at 563.1.



1.2 WORKFORCE BY CONTRACT TYPE

Data on Variable employees (zero hours basis contracts) is included in the below table. However, data on Variables are not included in the other areas of the workforce reporting. Variables are typically employed in multiple positions across Leisure services; though a small number of Variables are employed in Operations, Recovery Services, ICT. At the end of Q4 HDC had 420 individuals employed in 921 posts. This is a decrease from quarter three.

Below table numbers may vary as includes employees with multiple contracts/positions.

Employment Type	Quarter Four	Quarter Three
Fixed Term	35	26
Permanent	575	585
Secondment/Acting Up	16	17
Grand Total	626	628
Variable employees	420 (921 Posts)	439 (967 Posts)

1.3 PAYBILL

The following table shows the Council's budget and actual spend on pay costs (including National Insurance and pension contributions) for all employees but excludes hired staff (agency staff). Spend on pay costs for employees in 2022/23 was around £1,862,000 under the budget for the year. In contrast to this there is an estimated overspend of £1,487,845 on contractors and agency staff compared to a budget of £299,198. Netting out at an underspend of around £374,370 against staffing budget when the underspend and the existing budget are taken into account.

Year	Budget (£)	Actual (£)	Forecast (£)
2015/16	22,555,973	20,779,737	
2016/17	22,526,917	21,903,947	
2017/18	24,591,631	23,536,053	
2018/19	25,230,515	23,192,646	
2019/20	24,871,268	23,941,696	
2020/21	25,679,601	24,240,402	
2021/22	25,377,310	25,421,307	
2022/23	27,330,175	26,467,958	26,514,213

1.4 HIGH EARNERS

Definition: High earners are classified as employees who are paid at £50,000 or above. This information is already published annually in line with the Government's commitment to improve transparency across the public sector and the target hasn't changed since it was introduced. The Councils pay policy distinguishes authorisation of salaries over £75,000 per annum.

At the end of Quarter Four 31 employees were paid at FTE salaries of £50,000 or above, representing 5% of the total workforce. Just less than 1% of the workforce are paid salaries over £75,000. The total number of employees classed as high earners is has decreased from the previous Quarter (32).

1.5 LEAVERS

During Quarter Four, 26 full-time/part-time employees on permanent or fixed-term contracts left the organisation, which is higher than the total leaving in the previous Quarter (25).

9 of the leavers from Q4, resigned to take up other posts with either commercial or public sector employers, this is an increase from the 7 in last quarters report. There were 2 individuals who retired that had a combined Service with local government of 34 years.

Leaving Reason	Fixed Term	Permanent	Total
Leaver - Dismissal - Capability		1	1
Leaver - Dismissal - Ill Health		1	1
Leaver - Dismissal - Ill Health Retirement		1	1
Leaver - Dismissal - Misconduct		1	1
Leaver - End of Contract	1		1
Leaver - Retirement		2	2
Leaver - Settlement Agreement		1	1
Leaver - Voluntary Resignation - Better Reward Package	4	14	18
Grand Total	5	21	26

The table below show the above leavers service and whether they left voluntarily or not.

Service	Involuntary	Voluntary	Total	Turnover by Service *
Executive		2	2	22.22%
COO Division	2	7	9	6.55%
Operations	2	5	7	5.30%
Leisure and Health		5	5	4.65%
Corporate Services		2	2	3.60%
3C-ICT		1	1	1.24%
Total	4	22	26	

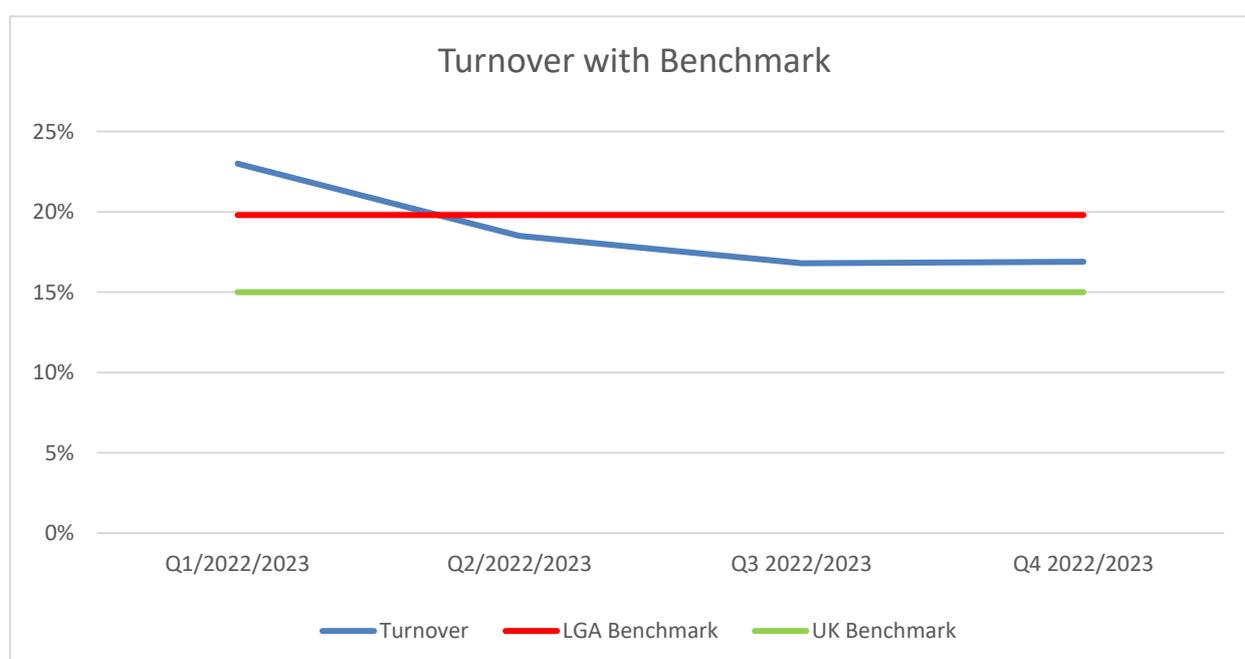
* Turnover calculated by leavers against service size (head count, based on average size of the service across the quarter)

Feedback from completed exit interviews show the top reasons for voluntary leavers leaving the organisation are pay, flexible working and job change. In terms of the feedback - the top-rated response for leavers questionnaires about what they most liked about working for HDC related to people they worked with/supportive colleagues. In response to the question what they least liked about working for HDC the answers which came up were the salary and progression opportunities.

1.6 TURNOVER

In the 12 months to 31 March 2023, 108 employees left the Council. As a proportion of the average number of permanent/Fixed Term employees over this period, the overall annual turnover rate for employees is 16.9%, which is lower than the previous quarter. During the last 12 months, 11 of the leavers (as at end of Q4) included fixed term Kickstart placements, a scheme that we supported which offered funded work placements for a 6-month period.

As can be seen from the graph below there was a steady rise in turnover in 2021 with the figures peaking in March 2022 reaching 28%. Since that point the turnover figures have been reducing. As can be seen by the two benchmarking lines we are currently below the most recent LGA benchmarking of turnover being 19.8% but higher than the UK average of 15%.



External factors are still impacting our turnover rates and pay still being the most frequent reason for people leaving which shows the economic climate is still playing a part. Kick-starters are still impacting our figures but less so each quarter with the last ones due to be removed from the figures in Quarter 3 2023. We expect to see the decreasing trend to continue.

1.7 RECRUITMENT METRICS

Recruitment activity has increased from last quarter. This is what you'd expect going into the start of a new year.

Of the 58 offers made 11 were existing HDC staff, promoted or moving into other positions around the council. The HR team will continue to support the business with creating opportunities to grow and develop our workforce, careers, and mobility around services. An example of our approach to retaining talent; we recently appointed two Application Assessment Officers on a fixed term basis to support with the applications and associated administration of the Alternative Fuel Payment (Alternative fund) which was introduced in February. These candidates demonstrated their talent and alternative opportunities with HDC were shared with them. Following a robust recruitment process, both candidates have been appointed to roles within other service areas.

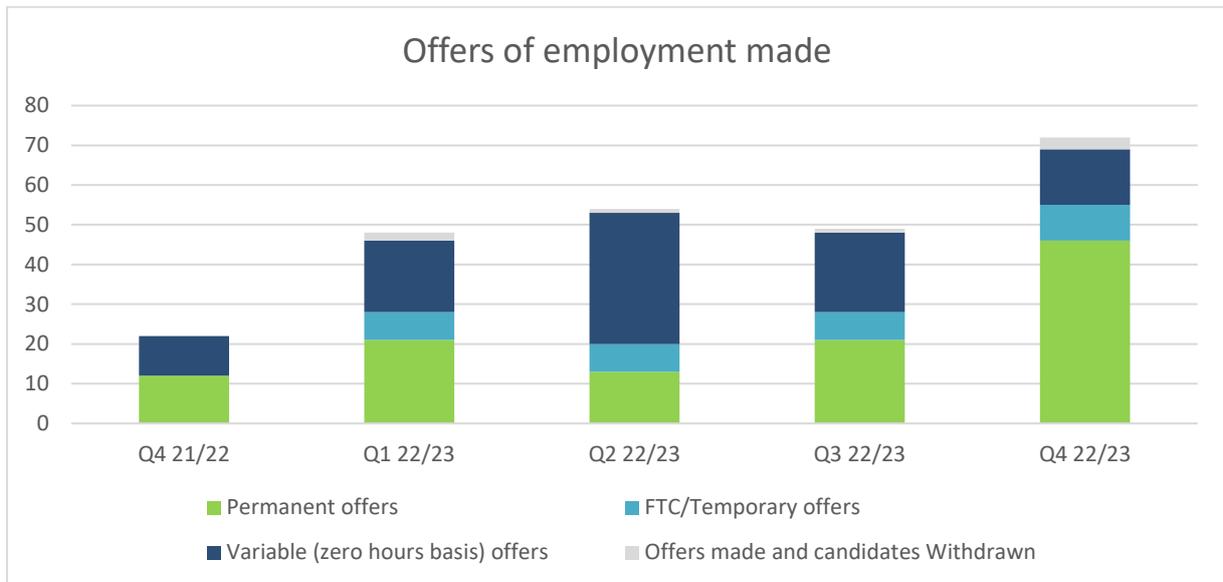
Advertised Roles	Q4 21/22	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23
	38	55	45	30	48

Advertised Roles per business area	Q4 21/22	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23
ICT	6	4	8	3	2
Corporate Services (HR, Finance, Facilities, Dem Services)	3	2	2	5	3
COO (Development/Planning, Community, Revs & Bens, Customer Services)	9	18	10	12	3
Strategic Housing & Growth	4	1	0	3	2
One Leisure	5	8	23	6	18
Recovery Services (Car parking; Countryside, Parks & Open Spaces)	1	1	3	5	0
Operations (Waste, CCTV, Grounds Maintenance, Street Cleaning)	5	4	6	11	17
Executive/Transformation/Communications	0	0	2	0	3

Time taken between advertising a role and start date	Q4 21/22	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23
Average time from Date Job Advertised to shortlisting completed	18	17	18	20	18
Average time from Date Job Advertised to offer	32	30	33	33	33
Average time from Date Job Advertised to employment start date	54	56	61	64	55

The most popular source of recruitment for candidates offered employment are:

- The HDC website
- Internal applicants
- Indeed



1.8 RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES

Challenges for recruitment in quarter four continue in the same themes as in quarter three where we have seen a number of failed campaigns which required roles to be readvertised/closing dates extended or roles to be reviewed due to either low application rate or losing candidates to competing offers.

The recruitment team continue to look at ways to make HDC more attractive during the recruitment process, and also focusing where possible on more agile recruitment campaigns.

We are working with the digital team on improvements to our careers website to promote HDC as an employer of choice. We are working on a ‘staff voices’ page where we can highlight the positive experiences of our colleagues and showcase that we truly are a flexible employer.

To proactively engage with untapped talent pools, we offered a session to our refugee communities giving additional detail on our current and upcoming opportunities, where to find those opportunities and how to apply. We shared hints and tips on completing an application form and how to prepare for interviews. The session was very well received, and we have since received a request to arrange another one.

The most difficult to recruit to areas and recent recruitment activity is as detailed below:

Senior Implementation Officer (Infrastructure Planning) – Trial use of Public Practice who provides specialist skills to be placed within fixed-term, hard-to-fill positions within Local Authorities. To date, Public Practice has placed 292 place professionals in 78 Authorities across London, the South East, East of England, North West, North East and Yorkshire and Humber. They do this by recruiting experienced placemaking professionals from the private sector to help local authorities overcome our recruitment and placemaking challenges. We sought feedback from Greater Cambridge Shared Planning who have experienced success and highly recommended the service.

Environmental Health Officer – Worked with hiring manager to create a new ‘entry’ level role of Technical Officer which doesn’t require a degree in environmental health or science related discipline. This role will enable career progression and support our ‘grow your own’ approach in difficult to recruit areas.

Team Leader, One Leisure – The job description has been reviewed to ensure responsibilities and salary of role align. Recommendations of amendments to consider provided to the One Leisure Team.

1.9 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Activities that have taken place in the last quarter to help support employee engagement and aid in retention the following activities have taken place:

- The staff temperature check survey was completed in January 2023, results of which are included in this report.
- In January the HDC annual iCare awards were relaunched, there was a great event held at Pathfinder House where our winners were celebrated. There were over 90 nominations spread across the whole of HDC, with a winner in each iCare category with an overall winner and a special leaders award.

Planned future activities are to:

- It is planned the Level 5 and Level 7 Leadership and Management apprenticeships accredited by the Chartered Management Institute will be launched in June with a view to courses starting in September. This builds on the Level 3 course which currently is on-going, and is receiving positive feedback from learners and managers,
- To support work on the new Workforce Strategy engagement groups will be held across HDC to gain thoughts and opinions of employees to help shape the strategy going forward.

Learning & development

From the beginning of January through to the end of March 2023 Learning and Development have signed up 4 new apprenticeships; 2 are existing employees and 2 are new apprentice contracts. The apprenticeships being undertaken are a mixture of Level 3 Business Administration, Level 4 Countryside Ranger and Level 7 Digital and Technology Solutions Specialist.

Enquiries	Live apprenticeships	Level 3	Level 4	Level 6	Level 7	Signing up
3	32	28	2	1	1	1

Temperature Check Survey Results January 2023 Summary

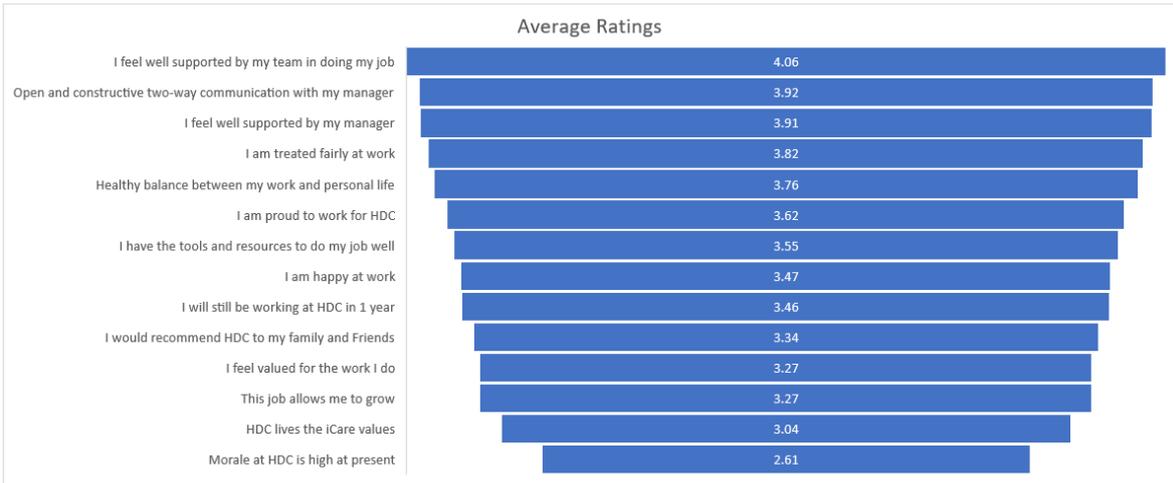
Background

This was the first temperature check survey in 2023 and was run between 09 January and 27 January 2023. The survey was via, and MS teams form and hard copy forms for non-wired colleagues in One Leisure and Operations.

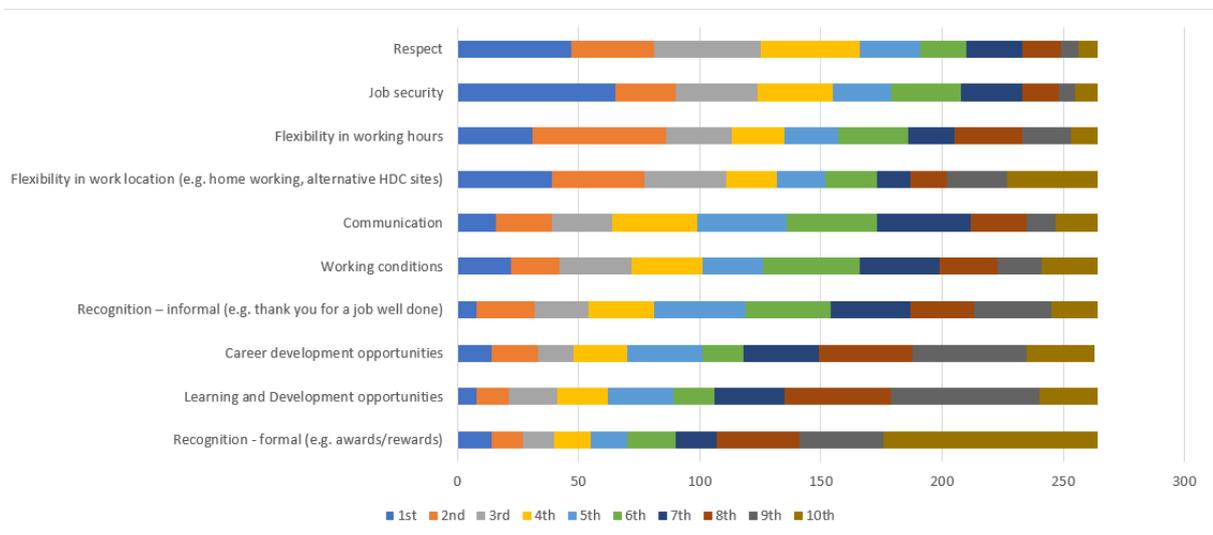
Results

We had 275 surveys completed which was a 44% return rate. Evidence shows that an average return rate for surveys of this kind is around 30-40% so we are above that threshold and we have scope to work to increase this response level in future surveys. The highest noted response rates came from Operations (16%) and Leisure and Health (13%) and with 16% of respondents preferring not to state where they work. In the survey there were 15 questions asked to gather how people are feeling and their perception of others at HDC at this time and then a number of statements for people to order in relation to their importance to them at work.

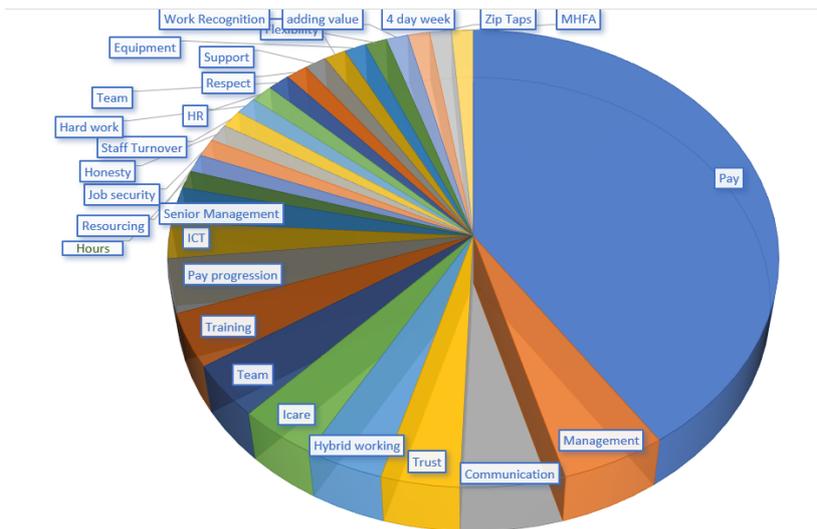
The graph below shows the overall ratings for each question and the rankings for what is most important for people at work. The highest scoring question about people's perception of working at HDC was being supported by my team which scored 4.06/5 and the lowest scoring question was around the perception of morale at HDC at this time which came out at 2.61/5. With scoring being rate their answers between 1 and 5 where 5 = strongly agree, 4 = Agree, 3= Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree



When looking at what is important for people at work the two areas scoring highest were respect and job security and learning and development and formal recognition were shown to be the least important. The graph below shows the breakdown of how each area was ranked and the order that they came out in the ranking.



Alongside the ranking we asked for any additional comments around what people felt was important to them at work 78 people provided additional comments. Within those comments 32 people mentioned pay as a topic that was important to them. As a note pay was intentionally not included in the survey as this was held shortly after the UNISON/ERG Pay survey and this survey could not make any impacts on the pay process this year. The other areas that were mentioned most were management and communication. The summary of the areas of comments included below, with the majority only getting one comment.



Conclusion and next steps

Whilst for a survey of this type we had a good response rate we would like to see a higher figure of returns so we can capture more of our colleagues thoughts, we will therefore look to run the survey again later in the year, and we have taken onboard some of the feedback we received regarding how the survey was distributed and we will look to change this for future surveys.

There were some positive results from this survey as to how our colleagues perceive HDC, but from the data we can see that there are areas that we need to focus on to improve. The main one being morale. Therefore, as part of the planning for the workforce strategy we will be holding engagement session with our colleagues to try and understand the ratings and to gain feedback on how we can improve not only morale but other aspects of people’s time at HDC.

It is felt that respect coming out as the most important thing to people at work as a positive as this is one of our iCare values, it can be seen that HDC living our iCare values only scored a 3.04/5, one of the lowest scored areas, which highlights that we need to do more work on embedding the values. This work has already started with values courses recommencing and the iCare awards that were held in early 2023 bring the values back into the fore. This work will be on-going.

Overall, the survey has given us some useful data to start working from when we commence the workforce strategy engagement and as we move through that work and repeat this survey we aim to see our scores improving in all areas.

2.0 SICKNESS ABSENCE

Definition: Long term sickness is classified as a continuous period of absence of 28 or more calendar days. All other periods of absence are defined as **short term**.

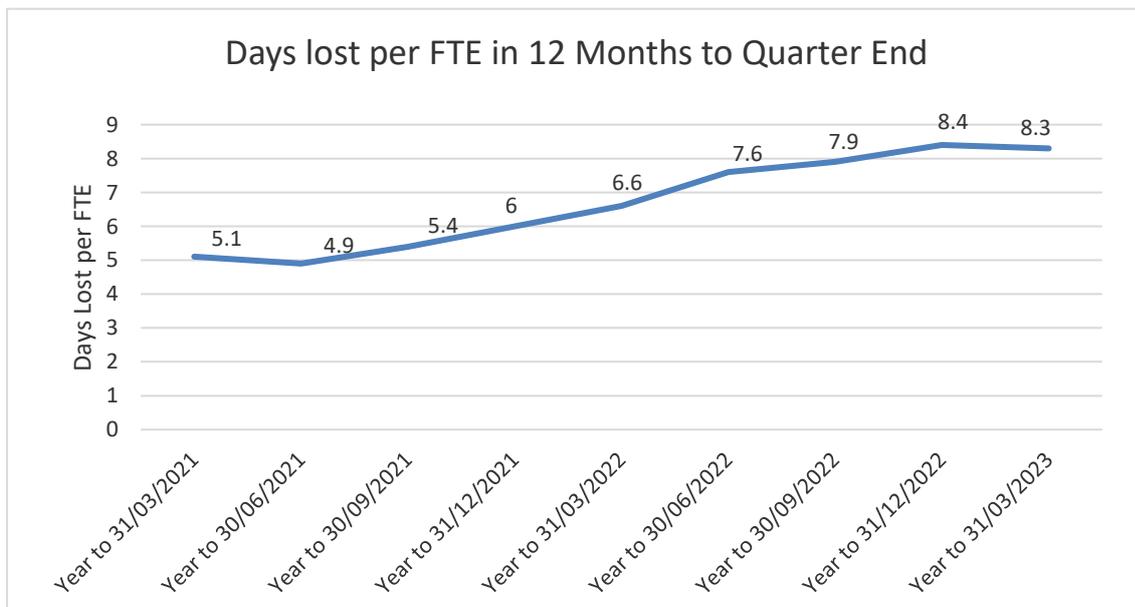
The absence data is calculated per full-time equivalent (FTE) as per the guidelines set out in the previous Best Value Performance Indicators (former statutory dataset) for sickness to account for adjustments in working hours.

Trigger points for management action under HDC policy are as follows:

- 3 or more periods of absence in a rolling 3-month period
- 6 or more periods of absence in a rolling 12-month period
- 8 working days or more in a rolling 12-month period
- Long term absence of 28 calendar days or more
- Pattern of absence (e.g., regular Friday and/or Monday; repeated absences linked to holidays)

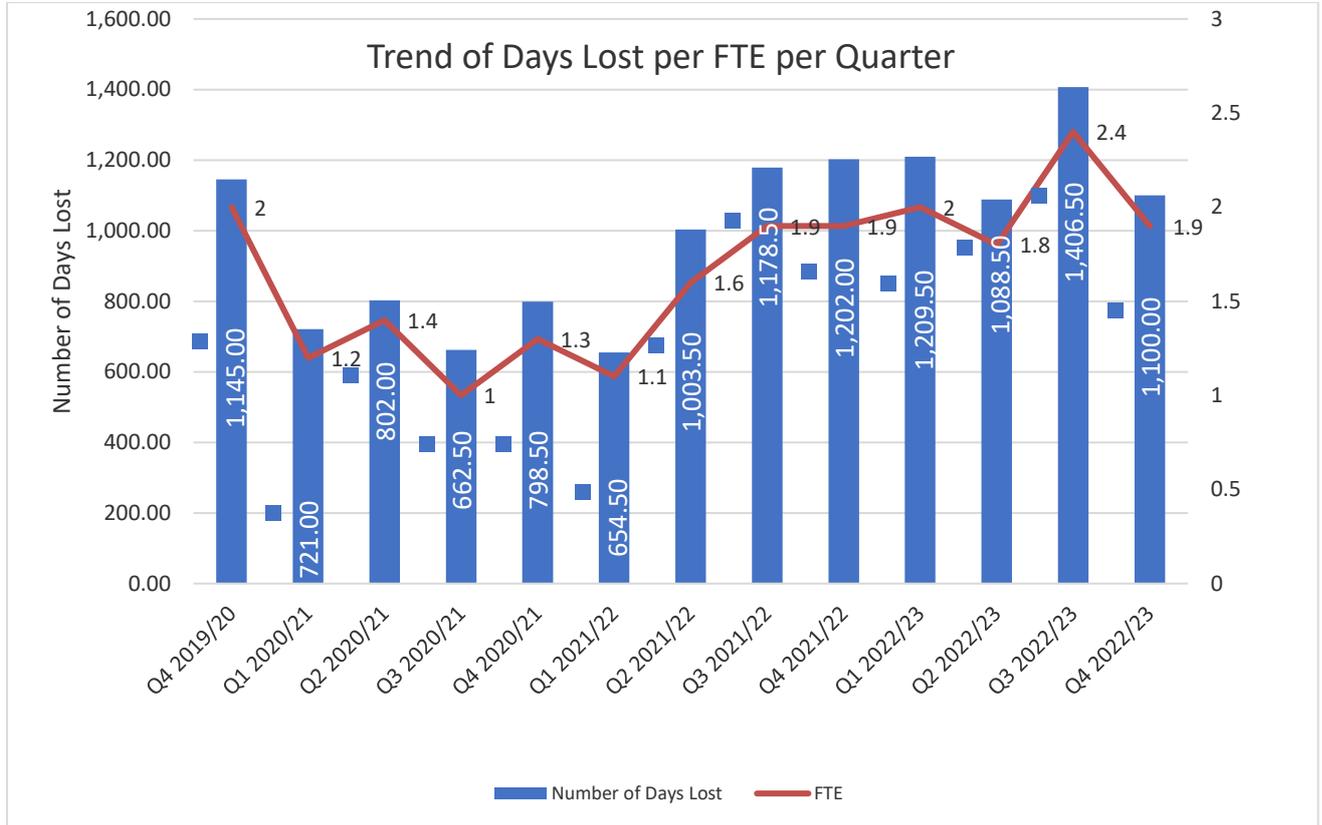
2.1 TREND OF WORKING DAYS LOST ACROSS HDC

The graph shows the trend in sickness absence per FTE employee over a rolling period to the end of each Quarter since March 2021. It shows that sickness absence to the end of Quarter Four has decreased, to 8.3 days per FTE.



2.2 TREND OF WORKING DAYS LOST ACROSS HDC BY QUARTER

The total number of working days lost in Quarter Four (1100) this is lower than in the previous Quarter; as is the days lost per FTE (1.9) for sickness absence.



175 employees were absent due to sickness in Quarter Four which is 28%* of all those employed during the period (excluding those with variable/casual posts only).

(*percentage is based on average headcount during Quarter)

2.3 REASONS FOR SICKNESS ABSENCE

Please see the top 5 reasons for sickness absence by category below: -

Absence Reason	Days Lost	Employees	Percentage
Stress Anxiety Depression (Personal)	193	10	17.55%
Cough cold flu influenza eye ear nose and throat problems (including infection)	152.5	59	13.86%
Asthma chest respiratory heart cardiac circulatory	149	12	13.55%
Gastrointestinal - abdominal pain vomiting diarrhoea gastroenteritis	98	36	8.91%
Covid-19	98	23	8.91%

2.4 SICKNESS ABSENCE BREAKDOWN

Days lost due to long-term sickness has decreased in Q4, from the previous Quarter. The % of absence increased due to the reduction in headcount.

Quarter	Total days of long-term sickness	Total Working days lost (Short term sickness)	% of total absence long-term	% of total absence short-term
Q4 2021/22	556 (11)	646	46.20%	53.80%
Q1 2022/23	517 (10)	692.5	42.70%	57.30%
Q2 2022/23	647 (11)	441.5	59.40%	40.60%
Q3 2022/23	771 (15)	635.5	54.82%	45.18%
Q4 2022/23	348 (8)	752	31.6%	68.4%

*Brackets denotes number of employees absent.

2.5 SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORTING BY SERVICE

The table below shows the sickness by service. It can be seen it has decreased from last quarter in 5 services, and increased in 4, compared to the last quarter.

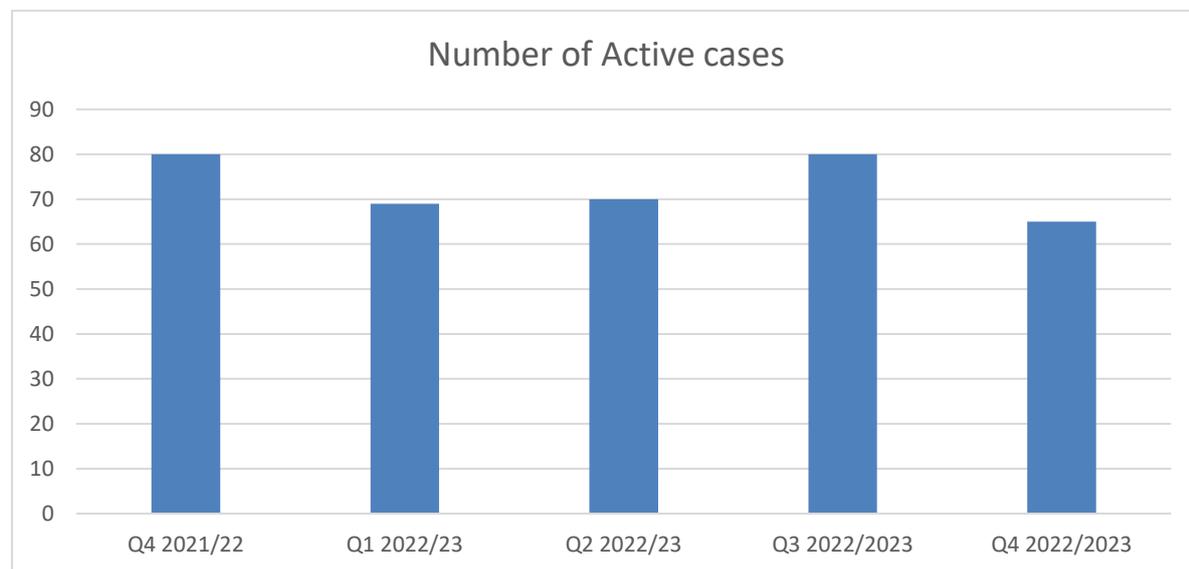
Service	Number Employees absent in Quarter 4	Total days sick Q4	Total days sick Q3	
Chief Operating Officer	46	479	733.5	↓
Corporate Services	11	39	34	↑
Digital & ICT Services	21	55.5	49.5	↑
Executive	0	0	6	↓
Growth	2	10	11	↓
Leisure and Health	24	99.5	129	↓
Operations	49	284	309.5	↓
Planning	9	80	40	↑
Strategic Insights & Delivery	13	53	13	↑
OVERALL	175 (28% of HDC employees*)	1100	1406.5	↓

*percentage is based on average head count during Quarter

3.0 HR CASELOAD

The HR Team's caseload is recorded to provide an indicator of the type of HR issues that the organisation has been dealing with over the last 12 months.

3.1 BREAKDOWN OF HR CASES BY TYPE



During Quarter Four, there were 65 cases in progress, of which 15 were dealt with under formal procedures. The Overall total was lower than in the previous Quarter, with cases for the previous Quarter also shown below for comparison purposes.

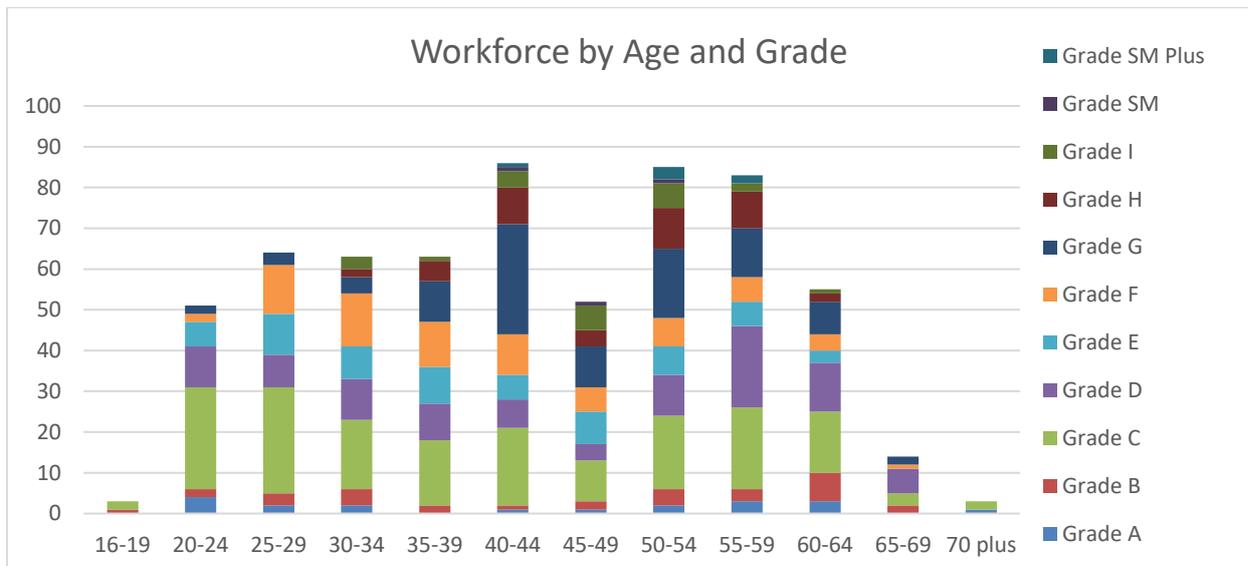
Type of Case	Informal Cases	Formal Cases	Total Q4	Previous Quarter
1 Appeals	0	0	0	1
Capability – Sickness	29	8	37	54
Capability – Performance	2	1	3	8
Consultations (including TUPE)	1	0	1	0
Bullying and Harassment	0	1	1	0
Disciplinary	5	3	8	9
Employment Tribunals	0	0	0	0
Flexible Working Requests	6	0	6	-
Grievance	4	0	4	3
Probation	0	0	0	1
Subject Access Request	0	0	0	0
Other	3	2	5	4
Total	50	15	65	80

4.0 EQUALITIES DATA

Equality Data may be presented using percentages and not specific numbers as in some cases the sharing of specific numbers would mean that a small group of people could be easily identified.

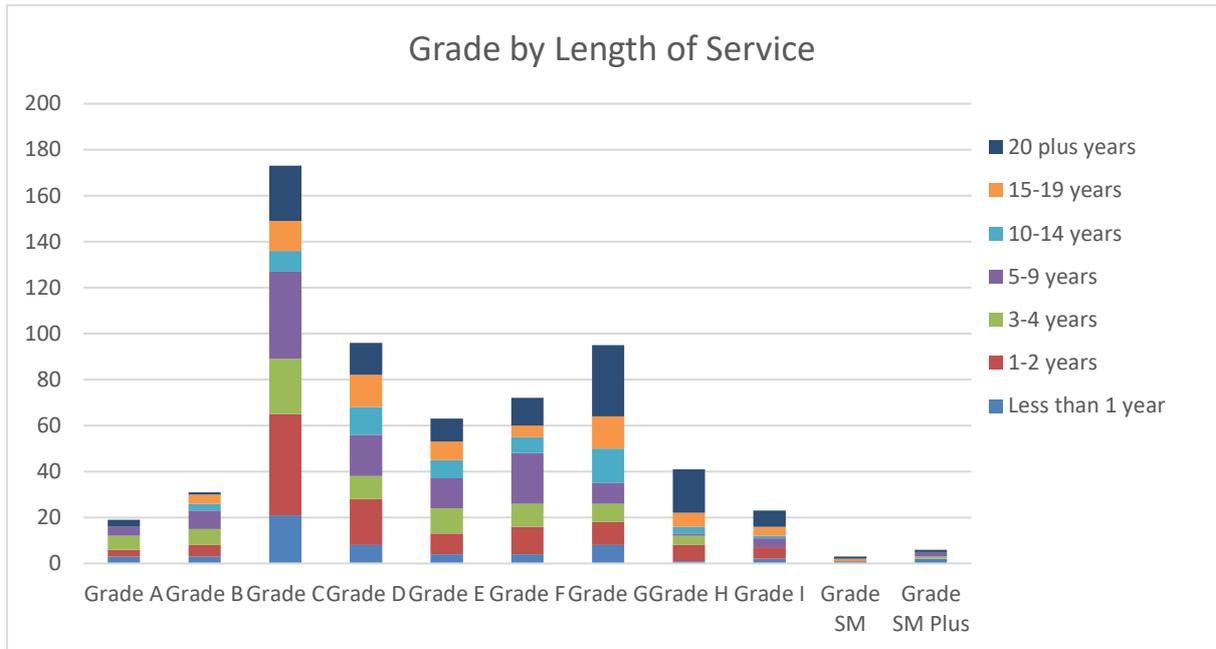
4.1 WORKFORCE BY AGE AND GRADE

As requested at the January 2023 employment committee we are including the workforce based on Age and Grade. The number of employees by 5-year age band is depicted below by pay grade. Please note that where an employee has two jobs on different grades, they have been counted within their age band against both grades. This information shows that we do not have any specific pinch points around this with age groups spread across the grades.



For the purposes of simplifying this graph, employees who have transferred into the Council on existing terms and conditions have been linked to Huntingdonshire District Council pay grades based on their current salary levels.

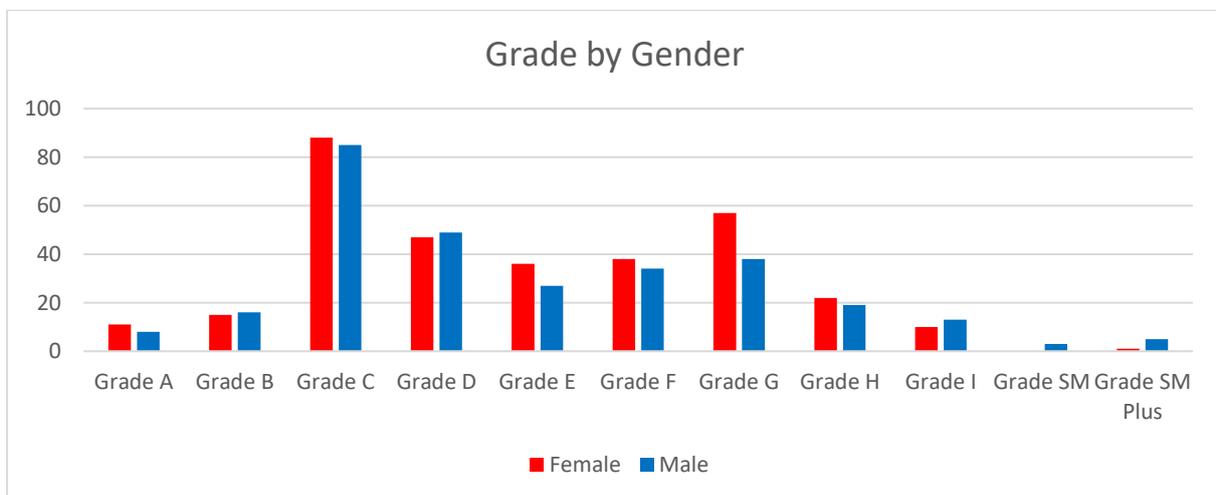
4.2 WORKFORCE BY GRADE AND LENGTH OF SERVICE



4.3 WORKFORCE BY GENDER



4.4 EMPLOYEES BY GRADE AND GENDER



4.5 WORKFORCE BY ETHNICITY

Ethnicity	% of workforce
Asian	2.10%
Black	1.13%
Mixed	0.97%
Other	0.65%
White	73.93%
Not Declared	19.22%

4.6 DISABILITY DATA

Disability Status	% of work force
No	64.62%
Yes	10.50%
Not Known	1.29%
Not Declared	23.59%

WORKFORCE PROFILE

as at 31 March 2023



Equality Act 2010: Public Sector Equality Duty

The purpose of this report is to provide an annual summary of the profile of the workforce of Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) by their protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010.

All public sector employers, including local authorities, have a statutory duty under the Equality Act (2010) to publish the equality profile data it holds for its directly employed workforce on a regular annual basis. The latest workforce information for HDC is based on data obtained as at 31 March 2023.

The three aims of the Equality Duty are:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

As equality monitoring questions are optional, the Council does not hold a full set of information for every employee. Where employees did not answer or did not want to state their protected characteristics, these are shown as “not declared”

Huntingdonshire District Council 2022/23 - Headcount and Gender



619
TOTAL HEADCOUNT



563.1
TOTAL FTE



322

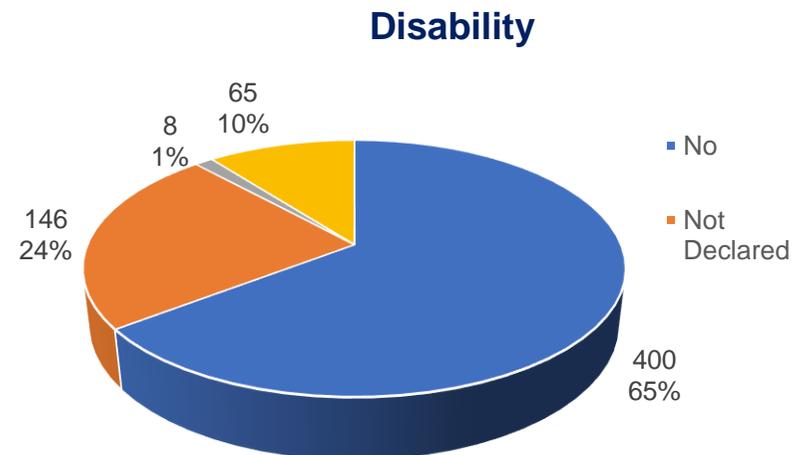


297

The figures are split by Total Headcount

Huntingdonshire District Council 2022/23 - Disability

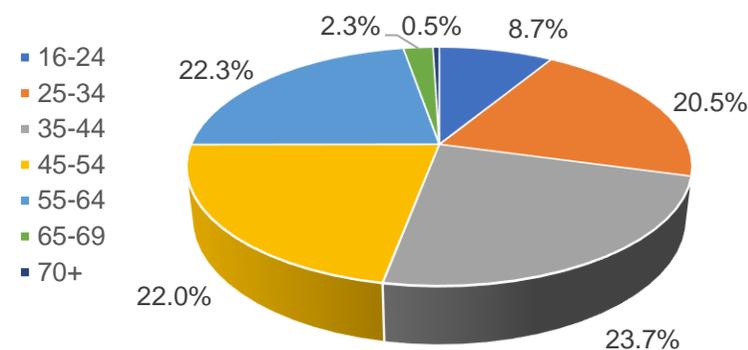
Year	No	Yes	Not Known	Not Declared
2022	186 (28.35%)	32 (4.88%)	9 (1.37%)	429 (65.40%)
2023	400 (64.62%)	65 (10.5%)	8 (1.29%)	146 (23.59%)



Huntingdonshire District Council 2022/23 - Age

Age Group	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-59	70+
Number of Employees & percentage	54 8.7%	127 20.5%	147 23.7%	136 22%	138 22.3%	14 2.3%	3 0.5%

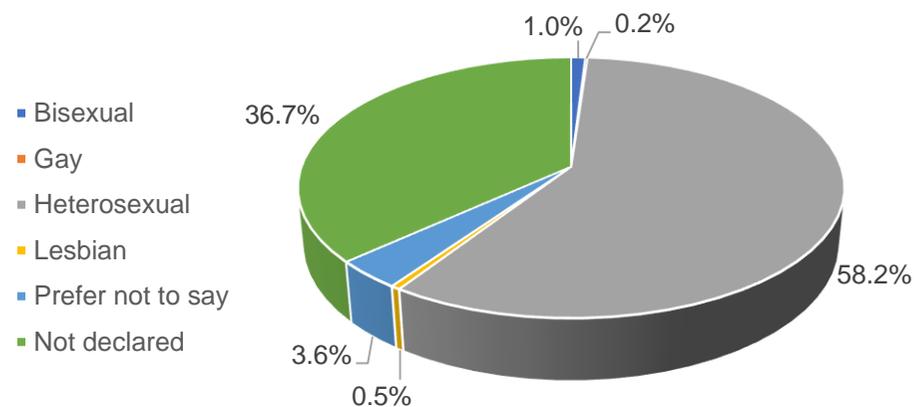
Workforce by Age



Huntingdonshire District Council 2022/23 - Sexual Orientation

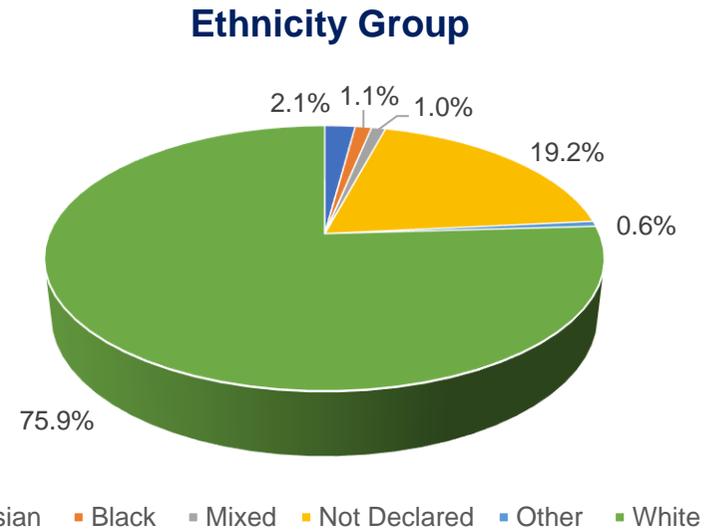
Sexual Orientation	No of Employees and percentage
Bisexual	6 (1%)
Gay	1 (0.2%)
Heterosexual	360 (58.2%)
Lesbian	3 (2.5%)
Prefer not to say	22 (3.6%)
Not Declared	227 (36.7%)

Sexual Orientation



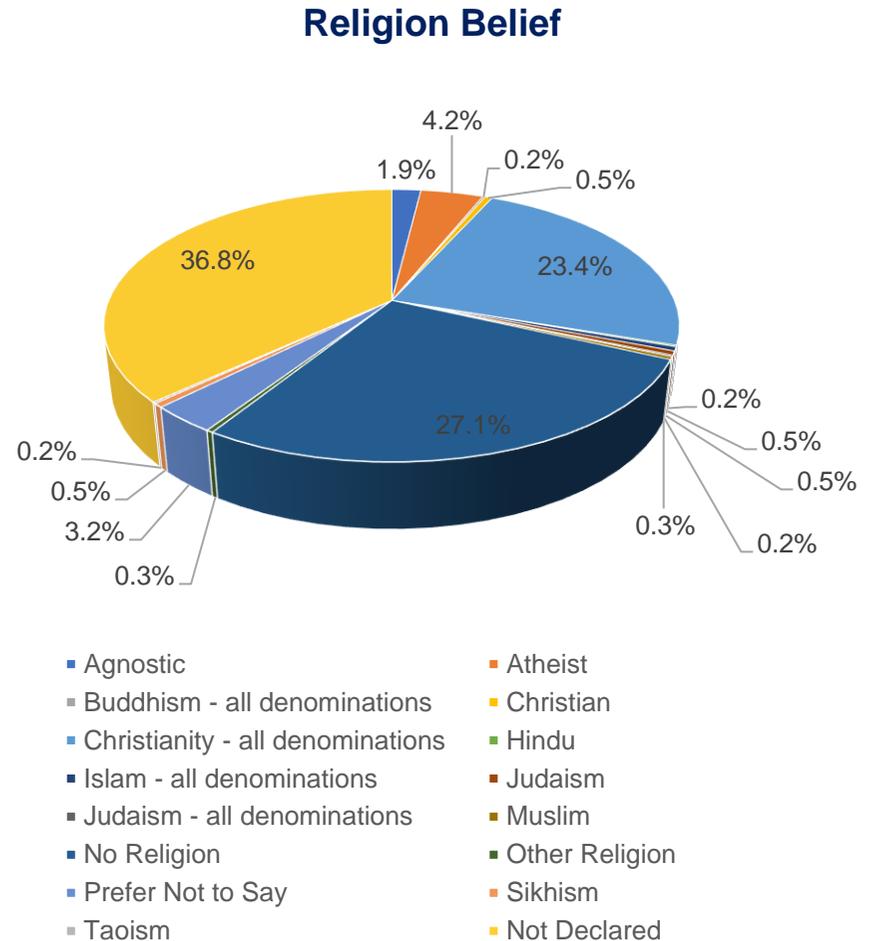
Huntingdonshire District Council 2022/23 - Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	White	Not Declared
Number of Employees 2022	13 1.98%	3 0.46%	4 0.61%	4 0.61%	469 71.49%	163 24.85%
Number of Employees 2023	13 2.1%	7 1.1%	6 1%	4 0.6%	470 75.9%	119 19.2%



Huntingdonshire District Council 2022/23 - Religion Belief

Religion	Number of Employees and Percentage
Agnostic	12 (1.9%)
Atheist	26 (4.2%)
Buddhism - all denominations	1 (0.2%)
Christian	3 (0.5%)
Christianity - all denominations	145 (23.4%)
Hindu	1 (0.2%)
Islam - all denominations	3 (0.5%)
Judaism	3 (0.5%)
Judaism - all denominations	1 (0.2%)
Muslim	2 (0.3%)
No Religion	168 (27.1%)
Other Religion	2 (0.3%)
Prefer Not to Say	20 (3.2%)
Sikhism	3 (0.5%)
Taoism	1 (0.2%)
Not Declared	228 (36.8%)

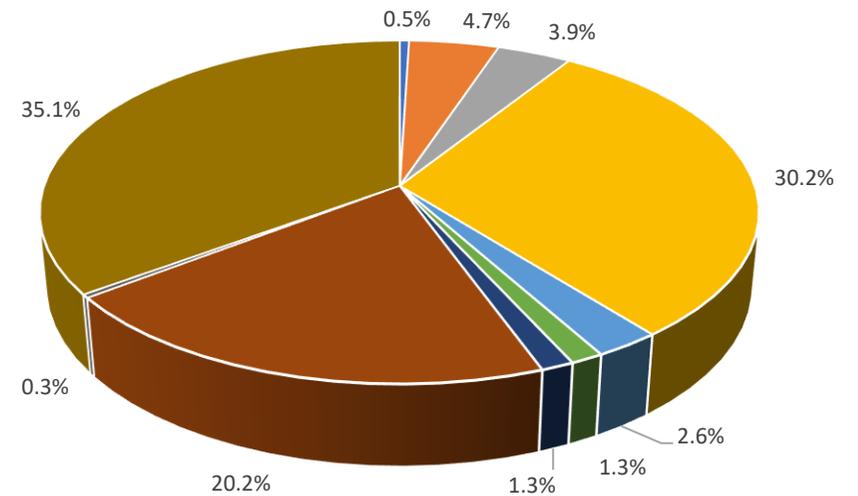


Huntingdonshire District Council 2022/23 – Marital Status

Marital Status	Number of Employees and percentage
Civil Partnership	3 (0.5%)
Co-habiting	29 (4.7%)
Divorced	24 (3.9%)
Married	187 (30.2%)
Partner	16 (2.6%)
Prefer not to say	8 (1.3%)
Separated	8 (1.3%)
Single	125 (20.2%)
Widowed	2 (0.3%)
Not Declared	217 (35.1%)

- Civil Partnership
- Co-habiting
- Divorced
- Married
- Partner
- Prefer not to say
- Separated
- Single
- Widowed
- Not Declared

Marital Status



Recommendations

Work during 2022/2023 has been focused on increasing the declaration rate for protected characteristics. This has helped to improve the data and this will continue, recommendations and future steps include the following:

- Continue to work at increasing the data on protected characteristics.
- Carry out analysis on the data we have and compare this against census data and bring back to September Employment Committee with an action plan.
- Updating the Disability at work Policy has already been identified and carried out and has been brought to the June Employment Committee.
- Initial findings also show that the Equal Opportunities policy needs updating

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Subject Matter:	Use of Consultants, Hired Staff and Temporary Staff
Meeting:	Employment Committee
Executive Portfolio:	Strategic Finance
Report by:	Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Ward(s) affected:	All

Executive Summary:

Members requested this annual report in order to monitor the Council's use of interim staff (consultants and temporary staff).

Capital

During 2022/23, consultants have continued to be employed to provide technical and professional advice in respect of the Commercial Investment Strategy, Local Plans, future high street funding and development of market town prospectus for growth. There were also costs for temporary staff which have been employed on capital projects in the year.

Revenue

Overall, there was a net increase of £215k in the cost of interim staff in 2022/23 when compared to 2021/22. There is a continued use of interim staff to meet one off-activities delegated from central government, to cover staff vacancies across the Council where recruitment has proved difficult, and to provide expert advice and interim capacity whilst the Council follows the current transformation programme, development of the Local Plans and other business efficiency improvements.

All costs relating to interim staff have been met from within current resources (central government grants, existing budgets or use of earmarked reserves) and the use of such staff has given the Council the flexibility and short-term capacity to undertake its transformation programme.

Recommendation:

Members are asked to consider the report and comment as they consider necessary.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To advise of the use of consultants and temporary staff during the 2022/23 financial year.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In July 2014 the Employment Panel approved guidance notes for managers regarding the use of consultants and temporary staff.
- 2.2 The use of interim staff is an essential requirement in the day-to-day management of the Council's business. However, their use is limited to a range of specific purposes i.e., to meet a specialist skills gap where a full-time resource would not award the Council value for money, to cover for unplanned gaps in staffing or to meet short-term peaks in workload.
- 2.3 Increasingly, the Council is benefitting from successful bids which attract external funding to deliver projects that meet our corporate objectives. Use of interim staff to deliver these projects is therefore fully funded and does not represent an additional burden on the MTFS.
- 2.4 The Council's accepted definitions for consultants and temporary staff is shown below:

Consultants

Individuals contracted to the Council as a sole trader or employees of a contractor to provide specialist and/or professional skills and knowledge the Council lacks. This is often to deliver a specific task or project where it would be non-economic for the Council to retain these skills on a full-time basis. The contract terminates after a defined period of event (e.g., delivery of a report of advice).

Temporary Staff

Individuals contracted to the Council as employees of an agency or contractor to provide additional capacity. They may be providing short term cover for staff absences (e.g., refuse operatives) or medium-term cover (e.g., cover for vacant posts while permanent recruitment completes).

3. EXPENDITURE ANALYSIS

- 3.1 The analysis shown below is split between capital and revenue. The reason for this distinction is that interim staff employed for capital development projects are incidental to the project and can be financed from capital resources i.e., the sale of assets.

3.2 Capital

During 2022/23, there was a net decrease of £521k in the cost of interim staff compared to 2021/22, a summary is shown below, and the detailed analysis is shown in **Appendix 1**.

Capital Comparison of consultants and temporary staff 2022/23 and 2021/22			
	Consultants	Temporary	TOTAL
	£000	£000	£000
2022/23	827	155	982
2021/22	1,259	244	1,503
Decrease	(432)	(89)	(521)

This decrease relates mainly to decreased reliance on consultants within the Market Town/Future High Street programme and the Commercial Investment Strategy, and the completion of decarbonisation works at Council properties.

3.3 Revenue

During 2022/23, there was a net increase of £215k in the cost of interim staff compared to 2021/22, a summary is shown below, and the detailed analysis is shown in **Appendix 2**.

Revenue Comparison of consultants and temporary staff 2022/23 and 2021/22			
	Consultants	Temporary	TOTAL
	£000	£000	£000
2022/23	1,056	1,787	2,843
2021/22	598	2,030	2,628
Increase/(Decrease)	458	(243)	215

This increase can, in the main, be attributed to the delivery of the Place Strategy and the continued use of consultants to support the planning application processes.

4. KEY IMPACTS

- 4.1 The use of interim staff assists the Council in meeting services needs and objectives. If such resources are not used from time-to-time, then it is very likely that service delivery and priorities would be impacted, and the process of transformation would take considerably longer.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Regarding capital, as the Commercial Investment Strategy matures there will be incidental costs relating to both the acquisition, and in time, disposal of assets. Also, over the life of a capital asset it is necessary for the Council to undertake some enhancement activity to ensure that such assets maintain their capital value, can continue to meet agreed lease standards and health & safety obligations.

6.2 New regulations came into force on 6 April 2017 changing the responsibility for assessing the tax status of consultants, interims, and temporary staff. If directly engaged (not through an agency), the Council must determine whether the individual is acting as if a member of staff and if appropriate, collect national insurance (NI) contributions and tax. The determination, based on HMRC guidance, considers a number of factors including duration, if a post holder, ability to substitute, etc. Failure to collect the correct tax and NI risks incurring fines, interest charges and back tax. The Management Team have been briefed and provided with links to the HMRC guidance and the HMRC online assessment tool. The Heads of Service have been tasked with identifying any consultants, interims and temporary staff that fall within the scope of the regulations and carrying out the appropriate assessment.

7. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

- Appendix 1 - consultants and temporary staff – capital expenditure
- Appendix 2 - consultants and temporary staff – revenue expenditure

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

CONTACT OFFICER

Karen Sutton
Director of Finance and Corporate Resources

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Comments on expenditure in excess of £10,000 are provided.

CONSULTANTS CAPITAL EXPENDITURE			
Head of Service	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	
Chief Operating Officer	7	15	Replacement Environmental Health software
Corporate Resources	305	23 4 6	Bridge Place car park Oak Tree Drive remedial works Upgrade to public conveniences
Housing Strategy	807	706	Project Management for the Market Town & Future High St Programme *
ICT Shared Services	0	9	
Leisure & Health	20	3	
Operations	0	7	Godmanchester Mill weir improvements *
Strategic Insight & Delivery	120	30 24	Fees relating to: Hinchingsbrooke Country Park St Neots Riverside path & cycle ways *
TOTAL	1,259	827	

TEMPORARY STAFF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE			
Head of Service	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	
ICT Shared Services	9	73	Telephony project
Strategic Insight & Delivery	7	0	
Housing Strategy	120	81	Project Management for the Market Town & Future High St Programme *
Corporate Resources	108	1	
TOTAL	244	155	

* externally funded

REVENUE EXPENDITURE

Comments on expenditure in excess of £10,000 are provided.

CONSULTANTS REVENUE EXPENDITURE				
Head of Service	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	Expenditure for 2022/23 includes	Justification for Spend
Chief Operating Officer	4	22 7 8	Support for: Licensing Customer Services Printing Services	Specialist advice not available within establishment
Chief Planning Officer	63	180 21 10 4	Support for: Planning applications** A428 project** Local plan** Other**	Specialist advice not available within establishment
Corporate Leadership	7	138	Support for the Place Strategy *	Specialist advice not available within establishment
Corporate Resources	244	95 118 74 20 20	Support for: Covid-19 initiatives * Commercial Estates ** Treasury, valuations and pension fund administration** HR initiatives Other areas	Specialist knowledge not available within the Council and/or that is required for financial stewardship and audit
Economic Development	2	0		
Housing Strategy	16	0		
ICT Shared Services	96	142	Support for ICT applications **	Specialist knowledge not available within the establishment

Leisure & Health	1	16 4 5 6	Support for: Sales Support Programme Digital audit Demographic analysis Other areas	Specialist knowledge not available within the establishment
Operations	8	13 13 5 5 5	Support for: Amey contract novation RouteSmart options modelling ISO9001 management system DAS certification Other areas	Specialist knowledge not available within the establishment
Strategic Insight & Delivery	157	58 48 15 4	Support for: Civil parking enforcement implementation project * Biodiversity initiatives * Review of traffic regulation orders Other areas	Specialist advice not within establishment.
TOTAL	598	1,056		

* externally funded or funded from earmarked reserves/increased income

** budgeted in MTFS

TEMPORARY STAFF REVENUE EXPENDITURE				
Head of Service	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	Expenditure for 2021/22 includes	Justification for Spend
Chief Operating Officer	102	192	Agency staff for Benefits Administration *	A combination of cover to maintain service delivery and to cover additional workload re grant payments
Chief Planning Officer	488	243	Agency staff for Development Management *	Cover to maintain service delivery
Corporate Resources	638	96	Agency staff for Commercial Estates *	To support the income generating portfolio of property
Housing Strategy	168	125	Temporary staffing *	Market town programme manager costs
ICT Shared Services	189	141	Specialist staff employed to assist with software and project implementation **	Cover for vacant posts and project delivery
Operations	437	815 162 13	Agency staff for: Waste Management * Street Cleansing * Vehicle maintenance	Requirement to back fill vacancies and holidays with agency staff to maintain service delivery
Strategic Insight & Delivery	8	0		
TOTAL	2,030	1,787		

- * externally funded or funded from earmarked reserves/increased income/staff savings
- ** budgeted in MTFS

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: HR Policy Update

Meeting/Date: Employment Committee – 21 June 2023

Executive Portfolio: Cllr Martin Hassall (MH)

Report by: Strategic HR Manager (NB)

Ward(s) affected: N/A

Executive Summary:

As noted in the November 2022 committee meeting HR are undertaking a programme of reviewing and refreshing our current policies to ensure that they are accurate, legally compliant and reflect current practice within HDC. We are therefore bringing the next set of policies we have reviewed to you.

The policies reviewed in this period are:

- The Disability at Work Policy
- The Improving Performance Policy
- The Leave Arrangements Policy

Summary of the changes:

Policy	Amendments
The Disability at Work Policy	Added front cover for version control - Minor typos/sentence clarity, Staff Council change to ERG, refreshed the wording to make sections clear. Added an adjustment passport for employees to use if required.
The Improving Performance Policy	Added front cover for version control - Minor typos/sentence clarity
The Leave Arrangements Policy	Added front cover for version control - Minor typos/sentence clarity

Full copies of the policies are included in the appendices for your information.

Recommendation(s):

The Committee is asked to consider and endorse the updated policies

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report draws Committee attention to the revised policies and that we are seeking endorsement to use the new format.

2.2 WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- a. The main reason for these policies being updated is to ensure that we have legally compliant, up to date and in line with current processes policies that are accessible for all to use.
- b. It also ensures we have correct version control on the document to reflect any changes as we move forward.
- c. Finally, this will ensure that all policies going forward will reflect the correct employee representative groups.

2.3 KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

- a. Having up to date policies that are regularly reviewed ensure that we are legally compliant and that our processes are robust by following them, reducing any risks of potential future claims.

2.4 WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- a. The updated policies will replace the current policies on our employment policy section of the intranet.

2.5 LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

[*\(See Corporate Plan\)*](#)

- a. To have an engaged and motivated workforce, as part of being a more efficient and effective council – through updated, clear employment policies.

2.6 CONSULTATION

- a. Senior Leadership Team, the Employee Representative Group and UNISON have been briefed and given the opportunity to review the proposed policy changes and support them.

2.7 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- a. Adoption of the revised policies will ensure that HDC is legally compliant and has a clear trail of policy amendments.

2.8 LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 - The Disability at Work Policy
Appendix 2 - The Improving Performance Policy
Appendix 3 - The Leave Arrangements Policy

CONTACT OFFICER

Name/Job Title: Nicki Bane
Tel No: 01480 388422
Email: nicki.bane@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Disability at Work Policy

1.1

Version Control			
Version	Author	Date	Changes
1.1	Kiran Hans	March 2023	Updated to reflect what HDC currently have in place and taken out services that have changed. Added health conditions that are considered a Disability from day 1. Taken out info that is not essential to policy to streamline. Paragraph on hospital appointments are worded to make clearer and added to Appendix 1.

Name of Policy	Disability at Work Policy
Person/posts responsible	Strategic HR Manager
Date approved/adopted	Reviewed February 2023 for Approval in June 2023
Approved by	Employment Committee
Review Date	June 2024

Disability at Work Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) is committed to equality of opportunity. This policy sets out our commitment to ensuring people with a disability are treated equitably and with respect consistently throughout the Council.
- 1.2 HDC is required under the Equality Act 2010 to annually monitor and publish information relating to the protected characteristics and to have an action plan to ensure HDC are an equal opportunity employer.

2 Definition

- 3.1 The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as, "someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (long-term means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last, for at least 12 months)". Certain health conditions are classified as a disability from day one e.g. cancer, being certified blind, Multiple sclerosis, or being diagnosed as HIV positive.
- 3.2 The ability of a disabled person to carry out normal day-to-day activities can be adversely affected in one or more of the following ways:
- a) mobility;
 - b) manual dexterity;
 - c) physical co-ordination;
 - d) ability to lift or otherwise move everyday objects;
 - e) speech, hearing or eyesight;
 - f) memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; or
 - g) understanding the risk of physical danger
- 3.3 It is not always obvious if someone has a disability. Generally, you will not know if a person has a "hidden" impairment, such as a heart condition or diabetes when you first meet them. Some people who do not consider themselves disabled may also be covered by the Equality Act.
- 3.4 Disability discrimination occurs, although not exclusively, when:
- 3.4.1 a disabled person is treated less favourably than a person without a disability; or
 - 3.4.2 if they are treated less favourably for a reason relating to their disability and the treatment is not justified; or
 - 3.4.3 if they are treated less favourably on the basis of their association with a disabled person; or
 - 3.4.4 where the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments.

4 Aims

- 4.1 This policy aims to:

- ⇒ provide managers and employees with guidance on the reasonableness of a range of adjustments that HDC can consider to ensure employees with a disability are supported at work;
- ⇒ enable, so far as is reasonably possible, equity in access to the full range of recruitment, training and career development opportunities for all job applicants and employees in line with the Equality Act 2010;
- ⇒ ensure that there is no unfair discrimination or harassment on the grounds of disability and that access to employment and promotion in HDC is based on skills, qualifications and suitability for work; and
- ⇒ identify ways to monitor diversity and adopt targets for improvements.

6 Advice and Support

- 6.1 Advice, support and guidance is available from Human Resources (HR). Managers should contact HR at the earliest opportunity to consider reasonable adjustments for an employee.
- 6.2 If an employee believes they have been discriminated against for a reason relating to their disability, this should be raised immediately with a member of the HR team or their manager where appropriate. It may be appropriate to use HDC's Grievance Policy.
- 6.3 A management referral can be made via HR to the Occupational Health service, for a medical opinion and guidance as to if an employee may have a condition recognised under the Equality Act and any reasonable adjustments that could be considered.
- 6.4 HDC provides an Employee Assistance Programme that provides external professional counselling service to employees who wish to discuss work related or personal problems with professional counsellors. - add info
- 6.5 Managers can seek Specialist advice and support on the modification of duties from the Department of Work and Pensions Access to Work Scheme. It may be possible to apply for funding support reasonable adjustments via the scheme.

7 Reasonable Adjustments

- 7.1 HDC will make reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises to ensure that disabled employees are not placed at a substantial disadvantage because of their disability. Managers should liaise with Occupational Health, HR and the employee who is affected by the disability when considering reasonable adjustments (see appendix 1). HDC will look to make reasonable adjustments where practicable but will discuss with employees on a case by case basis.
- 7.2 The Equality Act places positive duties on employers to think carefully about the needs of people with a disability and failure to do so could result in legal action being taken.
- 7.3 When reviewing possible reasonable adjustments a manager should, with the support from HR, consider:
- a) the adjustment options available;
 - b) how effective the adjustment is in preventing disadvantage;
 - c) how practical the adjustment is;
 - d) the cost of making the adjustment;

- e) the potential disruption caused in making the adjustment;
- f) the time, effort and resources involved in making the adjustment;
- g) the amount of resources already spent on making other adjustments; and
- h) the availability of financial or other help;

This is to ensure that fair and balanced decisions are made.

8 Facilities

- 8.1 HDC will endeavour to ensure that all its facilities are accessible to employees with a disability by:
 - 8.1.1 ensuring, as far as reasonably possible, that the work location for HDC employees is fully accessible and will make reasonable adjustments to existing premises where possible.
 - 8.1.2 providing car parking near to the work location for blue badge holders. Where a staff member has a mobility issue in conjunction with advice from the Occupational Health service alternative options will be considered. Decisions will be reviewed regularly and where car park passes are granted these will need to be paid for by the staff member;
 - 8.1.3 compiling a Personal Employee Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for employees with a disability or impaired mobility.

9 Recruitment

- 9.1 HDC aims to have a workforce which reflects the community and to ensure that disabled people have access to employment opportunities across the whole organisation ensuring inclusivity. This will be done through the Disability Confident Scheme.

10 Employment

- 10.1 HDC will support employees as far as reasonably possible, whose disability worsens or who acquire an impairment during their employment with HDC.
- 10.2 Wherever possible HDC will ensure that disabled employees are able to remain in employment and maintain their existing career paths by providing reasonable adjustments or suitable alternative employment appropriate to their experience and abilities.
- 10.3 Reasonable adjustments could include changes to working hours or environment. (see Appendix 1 for examples of adjustments that could be made).

11 Learning and Development

- 11.1 E Learning is provided by HDC to raise managers' and employees' awareness on the importance of equality.
- 11.2 Training and Guidance is available to managers from the HR Team on managing sickness absence, which includes the process for making reasonable adjustments to the role and workplace for disabled employees.
- 11.3 Equality impact assessments are to be carried out on all policies to ensure they are inclusive.

12 Engagement/Support Services

- 12.1 HDC promotes equality by engaging and understanding the needs, aspirations and priorities of people with a disability. It will therefore:
- 12.1.1 ensure people with a disability have the opportunity to discuss any issues relating to their work, which are affected by their impairment through their manager, HR, Employee Representatives Group,
 - 12.1.2 HDC have introduced an Adjustment Passport which is designed to support employees in the work place, where they have a disability, health condition or need temporary adjustments to enable them to carry out their role. The document is designed to facilitate conversations between employees and their line manager to capture the adjustments agreed. The passport is owned by employees and is optional to use and share with your manager if you feel this would be helpful (see Appendix 2 and 3)
 - 12.1.3 Mental Health First Aiders and Occupational Health;

14 Responsibilities

- 14.1 All employees are responsible for complying with this policy and ensuring everyone is treated equitably.
- 14.2 The employee has a responsibility to inform the organisation if they have a disability, especially where this may affect their day to day work activities. This can be done through their manager, iTrent and/or HR. Where the manager becomes aware that the employee has a disability, they should encourage the individual to update their HR record to reflect this and discuss any adjustments and impact on their role. Where an employee has a health condition that impacts on their day to day activities and you are unsure whether this falls under the definition of the Equality Act for a Disability, please contact a member of the HR Team.
- 14.3 If an employee is believed to have committed an act of discrimination, they will be investigated under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and this may be treated as gross misconduct.

Reasonable Adjustments

There are a number of reasonable adjustments that can be made to support people with a disability to ensure they receive equality of opportunity in every aspect of their pre and post employment dealings with HDC. Reasonable adjustments could include:

- making adjustment to premises;
- allocating some of the disabled person's duties to another person;
- altering hours of work;
- specific training;
- providing a reader or interpreter;
- providing regular one to one ;
- agreeing to a different place of work;
- acquiring or modifying equipment;
- transferring the person to fill an existing vacancy;

1 Examples of reasonable adjustments

- 1.1 Changing the working hours, pattern, working from home or an alternative base. This may include facilitating flexible hours to enable additional breaks to overcome fatigue or accommodating the hours to fit in with the availability of a carer or driver;
- 1.2 Considering all elements of the role and looking at alternative ways that the role could be done. For example transferring the duties to another person or reviewing the core elements of the role;
- 1.3 Organising a phased return to the role with Occupational Health to rebuild confidence and ensure the reasonable adjustments that have been put in place are effective;
- 1.4 Providing a programme on HDC computers, which can assist in altering the size of the Font, the way the document is viewed to magnify it, vary the colour of the screen and colour of the arrow;
- 1.5 Providing voice activated software and electronic palm held devices that can be used away from the computer and converted into word;
- 1.6 Acquiring or modifying equipment including electronic or specialist aids and adaptations, for example, providing a specially adapted keyboard for a visually impaired employee or someone with arthritis;
- 1.7 All sickness absence will be monitored, however it maybe appropriate to adjust sickness triggers in relation to disability related absences specifically (this will not preclude an employee from the sickness absence stages process).
- 1.8 Reasonable time away from work to attend medical appointments related to a disability are to be agreed in advance with your manager. Where an employee is absent from work time for the appointments can not be reclaimed.

Any reasonable adjustments need to take in to account the points outlined in 7.3, which include the cost of the reasonable adjustment to the organisation. This may also require discussions with the budget holder and looking at comparators from other areas of HDC.



Adjustment Passport

The Adjustment Passport is designed to facilitate conversations around support in the workplace, and to document adjustments agreed between an employee and their line manager. For further guidance around completing the form please refer to the Adjustment Passport guidance document which can be found on SharePoint.

Employee Name:	
Name of Line Manager:	
Business Unit and Department:	
Date of Initial Completion:	
Date of last review:	

Section A: To be completed by the employee

Please use these questions to help you to think about what supports your health at work and what adjustments would be helpful. This tool is to capture adjustments for any health condition, physical and/or mental (please note that you do not require a medical diagnosis in order to implement an Adjustment Passport).

Description of your health condition(s), disability or impairment

Please provide a brief description of your health condition(s), disability or impairment. Things to consider:

- On a 'good day' what impact does this have on your working day?
- On a 'not so good day' what impact does this have on your working day? For example, impacted coordination, dexterity or mobility, effect on hearing, speech or visual impairment, impacted ability to focus or ability to interact with colleagues

Staying well at work

Please reflect and provide details on the following:

- What helps you to stay well at work? (For example a full lunch break, keeping a clear to-do/priorities list)
- What can your manager do to support you to stay healthy at work? (For example regular feedback and supervision, providing clear written instructions)
- Are there any situations at work that can negatively impact your health? (For example, movement between meeting rooms, being put on the spot, conflict at work, organisational change)

If you become unwell at work

(Please ensure that your emergency contact details are up to date)

- What steps can you take if you start to feel unwell at work? For example, take a break and go for a short walk, make use of the onsite quiet space/wellbeing room, ask manager for support (if your manager is unavailable what process will you follow?)
- How would you, your manager, or people around you notice that you are not well enough to be at work or that you need to adjust your tasks? What action should your colleagues/manager take? For example, talk to you discreetly about it, contact someone that you have asked to be contacted, contact a Mental health First Aider.
- Is there information about your condition which you would like to share with the team?

Is there anything else you feel would be useful to discuss and record? If a PEEP (personal emergency evacuation plan) is required then please follow the PEEP guidance available on SharePoint [here](#)

If your condition may result in you taking time off work what would your 'keep in touch' preferences be during periods of sickness absence?

- For example, being contacted via email vs being contacted by phone, the frequency of contact during a period of sickness absence.



Huntingdonshire District Council Adjustment Passport Guidelines

An Adjustment Passport is a living record of adjustments agreed between an employee and their line manager. Some organisations refer to these as 'Plans' or 'Agreements'.

The purpose of this living record is to:

- Ensure that the employee and line manager have a record of what has been agreed.
- Provide employees and their line managers with a structure to use when regularly reviewing and updating information about workplace adjustments.
- Act as a starting point for discussion when an employee changes jobs, is relocated, or assigned a new manager within the organisation.
- Plan for when an employee is unwell and needs additional support because of their disability or condition. This particularly applies to employees with fluctuating or progressive conditions.

The term 'Passport' suggests that all adjustments are portable and are automatically transferred across to an employee's new role without the need for discussion. In reality, not every team in the organisation works in the same way and an employee may require different adjustments to carry out a new role. It may also be beneficial for a new manager to discuss the adjustment passport with the employee, to help them gain a better understanding of how they can best support the individual.

A living record

The key purpose of an Adjustment Passport is to be a living record. This means that the plan should be reviewed and updated regularly as appropriate and with the agreement of the employee and their line manager:

- At any regular one-to-one meeting.
- At a return-to-work meeting following a period of sickness absence.
- Before a change of job or duties or introduction of new technology or ways of working.
- Before or after any change in circumstances for either the organisation or the employee e.g. a change to working location or after a period of time in a new role or working with a new manager.

The employee should inform the line manager if there are changes to their condition which have an effect on their work and/or if the agreed adjustments are not working. They should then meet privately to discuss any further reasonable adjustments or changes that should be made. If the line manager notices a change in the employee's performance at work or feels these adjustments are not working, the employee and the line manager should meet to discuss alternatives.

An up-to-date copy of Adjustment Passport will be retained by employee who will share this with their line manager.

A copy of this form may also be given to a new or prospective line manager with the prior consent of the employee.

Use of Adjustment Passport

An Adjustments Passport is a really useful tool when used correctly. To be most effective, an Adjustment Passport should be:

- Introduced into the discussion about adjustments early on.
- Owned by the employee and shared only with their consent.
- Supported by the line manager.
- Viewed as a living document, which is regularly reviewed and updated.
- Seen as a tool to support positive discussion around adjustments.

Notes for managers

An Adjustment Passport allows managers to:

- Understand how a particular employee's disability or condition affects them at work.
- Explain the needs of the business or organisation.
- Explain the organisation's sickness absence and attendance policy.
- Recognise signs that an employee might be unwell and know what the employee wants you to do in these circumstances – including who to contact for help.
- Know how and when to stay in touch if the employee is off sick.
- Consider whether the employee needs to be referred for an assessment by an occupational health or another adviser to help both parties understand what adjustments could be effective.
- Review the effectiveness of the adjustments already agreed.
- Explain any change in the employer's circumstances.

The plan should be regularly reviewed and updated. Remember, however, that expert advice from third parties (such as occupational health advisers or Access to Work) may be needed before changes can be agreed and implemented.

Notes for employees

An Adjustment Passport allows employees to:

- Explain the impact of a disability or condition at work.
- Suggest adjustments that will make it easier for the employee to do their job.
- Supporting discussion around occupational health or Access to Work.
- Review the effectiveness of the adjustments agreed.
- Explain any change in the employee's circumstances.
- Be reassured that the manager knows what to do if the employee becomes unwell at work and who to contact if necessary.
- Know how and when the line manager will keep in touch if the employee is absent from work because of illness or a disability-related reason.

Improving Performance Policy

Version 1.2

<u>Version Control</u>			
<u>Version</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Changes</u>
1.2		April 2023	Updates

Name of Policy:	Fixed Term Contracts
Person/posts responsible:	Strategic HR Manager
Date approved/adopted:	April 2023
Approved by:	Employee Committee
Review Date:	April 2025

1. Introduction

Huntingdonshire District Council are committed to delivering quality services; to achieve this we must enable all our employees to perform to the required standard.

We will therefore support:

- all our employees to personally deliver the highest standards of service possible
- our managers to proactively address performance issues.

This policy provides a framework for achieving the best performance on a day to day basis. and supports employees who are not performing, with the emphasis on employees achieving an improvement to the required standards, within agreed and achievable timescales.

This policy along with the Improving Performance tool kit aims to:

- Ensure employees are fully aware of the standard of performance that is expected and how their performance needs to improve (performance gap).
- Support employees to achieve the required standard for their role and to maintain this standard of performance.
- Support managers to effectively manage all underperformance issues promptly.
- Ensure consistency and fairness of approach.

If an employee has concerns about the way their performance is being managed, they should promptly raise their concerns with their line manager or using the appropriate policy. This will not however normally stop the performance management process from progressing.

2. Scope

This policy and toolkit apply to all employees except those in their probationary period

This policy should be applied to employees who are underperforming due to a lack of skills, knowledge or ability. Where a manager believes underperformance is due to misconduct, e.g. carelessness, negligence or lack of effort the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure should be applied.

3. Responsibilities

Effective performance management requires everyone to understand and carry out their responsibilities. The toolkit clearly outlines the responsibilities of both Managers and Employees in the process.

Managers are responsible for seeking timely advice and support on performance concerns from the Human Resources Team. The Human Resources Team are responsible for providing advice to managers and for escalating any procedural concerns to the relevant Service Manager to ensure the policy aims are met.

4. Policy Stages

The Improving Performance toolkit details the procedure that will be followed to improve performance, and this is summarised below:

a. Day to Day Management

In most cases the day-to-day management of an employee and/or regular 1:1s will successfully address any minor underperformance concerns at an early stage. Where performance concerns have not been resolved, or where the employee's performance has been identified as 'needing improvement', the line manager will explore with the employee the reasons for the underperformance concerns and help identify whether any specific support may be required through regular 1:1s.

b. First Formal Meeting

Where performance concerns have still not been resolved, line managers will continue to work with employees to address concerns via a more formal process. The first step in this process is for the line manager to hold a first formal meeting at which the employee's performance will be discussed against the expectations and standards required for the role through a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) which will be set for an identified period and monitored through regular review meetings with progress and feedback. A review of the measures taken to support the employee so far in addition to any mitigating circumstances will be considered. A timescale for improvement will be set, and an end of review meeting will be put in the diary confirming that the review period has been successful or referring to a second formal stage (outlining the possible outcomes).

c. Second Formal Meeting

If at the end of the first formal review period the employee's performance has not reached the required standard, the second formal meeting will go ahead. The manager conducting the meeting will consider the evidence regarding the case to date, review the actions taken to and give the employee and/or their representative the opportunity to explain any mitigating circumstances. The manager conducting the meeting will adjourn to consider all of the evidence presented. Having made a decision, they will continue with the meeting to deliver their decision which will be either that the overall performance has or has not improved to the required standards. If the decision is that performance has not improved to an acceptable standard, the employee will normally be dismissed with notice.

Employees have the right to be supported by a work colleague, Trade Union representative or an Employee Representative Group (ERG) member during the first and second formal stage meetings. A member of HR will also be present at both the first and second formal stage meetings.

If an employee is dismissed, they will have the right of appeal against their dismissal. The Appeals against Dismissal policy provides details on how to appeal, the process to be followed and the timescales.

Full information and advice is provided in the Improving Performance toolkit.

Leave Arrangements Policy

1.1

<u>Version Control</u>			
<u>Version</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Changes</u>
1.1	Kiran Hans	28/04/13	Version control front page added Typos amended New link added to annual leave calculator

Name of Policy	Leave Arrangements Policy
Person/posts responsible	Strategic HR Manager
Date approved/adopted	Reviewed February 2023 for Approval in June 2023
Approved by	Employment Committee
Review Date	June 2024

Leave Arrangement Policy

1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 We recognise the importance of employee wellbeing and that employees need to balance their home and work life. To assist with this, we offer a number of different types of leave that afford flexibility in a range of circumstances.
- 1.2 This policy intends to provide guidance for employees and managers on all types of leave arrangements including:

2.0	Annual Leave
3.0	Bank Holidays
4.0	Unpaid Leave
5.0	Time off for Dependents
6.0	Employment Break/Sabbaticals
7.0	Unpaid Leave, Considerations for Employees
8.0	Compassionate Leave and Parental Bereavement Leave
9.0	Adverse Weather
10.0	Jury Service
11.0	Public Duties
12.0	Reservist
13.0	Election Duties

There are separate policies for guidance on leave through Flexible working, Maternity, Paternity, Adoption; Shared parental leave and Unpaid Parental Leave.

- 1.3 In line with our organisational values, we expect employees and managers to be accountable for their individual responsibilities under this policy, and through respect for each other we can manage the provision of leave fairly taking into account individual circumstances and organisational needs.

2.0 Annual Leave

2 Annual leave entitlements

The entitlement to annual leave for all posts up to Corporate Director, increases with service.

	Length of service	Annual leave entitlement, full time equivalent – days/ hours leave per year
Employees up to Corporate Directors/Managing Director	Less than 5 years local government continuous service	24 days (177.6 hours)
	Entitlement to annual leave will increase on the 5 th anniversary of an employee's start date	30 days (222 hours)
Managing Director and Corporate Directors		34 days (251.6 hours)

- 2.1 The annual leave year runs from 1st April to 31st March.
- 2.2 Annual leave in the HR system will be allocated in hours and minutes rather than days, a standard 7.4 hours is applied to a days entitlement, except for employees who work in CCTV whose standard FTE is greater than the council norm and is calculated on 8.8 hours.
- 2.3 Annual leave entitlement is pro rata for part time employees and for staff that work annualised hours, annual leave entitlement will be pro rata'd based on the average weekly hours of the contract
- 2.4 The annual leave calculator is available on the HR page or by clicking the link below:
[Annual Leave Calculator - Hourly Entitlement 2023-2024 READ ONLY.xlsx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

2.5 First Aiders

Designated first aiders, will receive 2 extra days leave per year (pro rata for part time employees). Where an employee becomes a first aider part way through the leave year, the entitlement would need to be pro rata for the months completed within the year.

2.6 Leave for term-time only employees

Employees working term-time only are entitled to leave within usual school holiday time. Because full allowance has been made for the leave entitlement (and all statutory and non-statutory holidays) in the formula for the calculation of their salary, leave may not be taken during term time. If, exceptionally, special leave is granted during term time it will be without pay.

2.7 Booking annual leave

Employees are responsible for keeping an up to date record of annual leave taken and leave remaining in a given year via the HR system or by card where this is not available.

Staff that work compressed hours (which is full time hours over fewer days), are required to book their normal working day as leave, e.g. if on compressed hours I work a 9 day fortnight and my working day is 8.2 hours instead of normal full time equivalent of 7.4, I would need to book 8.2 whenever I took holiday.

Managers must authorise all leave in advance, and employees should try to provide as much notice as possible, especially where the leave is for a longer period. Local

arrangements are in place, in some areas, which detail how far in advance annual leave needs to be booked and any specific local rules around the taking of annual leave. Where travel arrangements are booked prior to authorisation, HDC will not recompense any costs incurred.

HDC recognises the importance of employees taking rest periods from work, and so would only in exceptional circumstances, and with good business reason, withdraw authorisation of leave already granted. This will be discussed with the affected employee on an individual basis.

2.8 Carrying over annual leave

All annual leave should be taken within the leave year. Managers should encourage all employees to take their entitlement to leave within the current leave year therefore avoiding the need to carry over leave. However, in exceptional circumstances, e.g. needs of the service, a manager may authorise in advance the carry forward of maximum of 5 days' annual leave (pro rata for part time employees) into the next annual leave year.

Manager should send confirmation of the employee name and amount of leave agreed to be carried over to Humanresources@huntingdonshire.gov.uk by end of holiday year. Carry over will be applied in the HR system as soon as possible, but by end of April at latest.

In circumstances when an employee has been on long term sick and has been unable to use their annual leave for that year, annual leave shall be accrued and carried over to the next leave year if applicable.

2.9 Annual leave on termination

Employees should take any outstanding leave (pro rata to the end date) prior to their last date of employment.

Any leave accrued up to last day of employment and not taken will be paid in your final salary and if you have taken holiday in excess of your accrued entitlement, this will be deducted from final salary. For annualised hours contracts, the leave entitlement on termination will be calculated based on the hours actually worked during the leave period and up to their last day of employment.

Leave will be calculated in the HR system for leavers, where the system has an accurate work pattern and the system has been used to book and take holiday. If a local system is used, it is the managers responsibility to calculate the accrued leave and provide accurate information to payroll on remaining or overtaken holiday for final pay period.

2.10 Buying Annual leave

The option to buy additional Annual Leave is open to all employees (subject to earnings levels and will be subject to manager approval) with consideration to business needs. There is no requirement for you to participate in the scheme and buying annual leave is not an automatic right – it must be agreed and in applying you, as the employee, agree for the amount to be deducted from your net pay.

A maximum of 5 days can be requested to be bought, pro rata'd for part time individuals and pro rata'd for fixed term contracts to match the duration of the contract end. E.g. if 6 months of the new leave year is left on fixed term contract, half the amount of leave a perm employee can

request who will work the full year, e.g. 2.5 days if full time. If the contract is extended this will not affect the payment arrangement i.e. the final payment date will remain as their original contract end date.

The option to buy additional annual leave, will be open to employees to request only once a year, and in advance of the leave year. All leave including purchased annual leave must be used within the leave year, there will be no option to sell back; and there will be no guarantee that additional leave can be carried over. Further requests to book and take the bought annual leave are in line with normal policies, and subject to manager approval.

All applications will be assessed on its merits; manager should give consideration to (but not limited to):

Role of individual and how easy to allow additional leave,

Where any required backfill would be impractical

Amount of leave requesting to buy

Impacts on customer, colleagues, team, budgets, service delivery

Amount of leave individual already has

Number of other applications within the service to buy leave

The reasons behind applications request for additional leave – e.g. extended family holiday

If they are already allowing to carry over leave

The buying of annual leave will be considered prior to the start of the leave year; window to buy leave will be open to all staff annually around March and shared through all staff comms. Employees should complete the buying annual leave form and email or share with their manager by the deadline. Manager should consider their teams applications together, Managers should feedback their decision and share all approvals with HR.

All requests to buy leave will be given full consideration by managers. Managers may decline, approve or partially approve – e.g. manager may feel they can accommodate 2 days' but not more.

Where it is not possible to accommodate the request, a response detailing why the application has not been successful will be provided by the line manager. Advice can be sought from HR where rejection is being considered.

The approved additional holiday will be added to the HR system by the HR team, as Adjusted holiday (reason bought leave) by end of April at the latest.

The buying of annual leave will be considered a Salary Sacrifice and may affect pension benefit. Payroll will take deductions for bought leave directly from pay as 1/11th of the cost of annual leave, commencing May payroll, through to March.

By law you cannot enter into a salary sacrifice arrangement where this will take your gross salary below the national minimum wage – Payroll will check that you are not entering into an arrangement that will take you below national minimum wage' or 'If the deduction for additional annual leave results in your salary falling below the National Minimum Wage or below the Lower Earnings Limit for National Insurance purposes then the request will be declined, even if your manager approves this. If you are unsure about your circumstances, please check with HR or payroll before applying.

In the situation that an employee is absent from work for a period of time and their salary reduces deductions will continue to be taken as long as the employee's income allows this. In the event that payments are suspended due to the employees income reducing or ceasing, payments will resume when the employee returns to work or deducted from their final salary where appropriate (therefore the term of your repayments could run in to the next leave year).

The Cost of Annual leave will be calculated as at the time of application and will not change if there are changes to the individuals salary to go either up or down in the period deductions are taken.

Salary sacrifice for holiday purchase will affect pension benefits, and it would be the employees choice to top this back up, this includes staff on maternity and sick pay.

Individuals who leave employment during the leave year - Where an employee leaves part way through the leave year, their annual leave allowance will be calculated on a pro-rata basis up until their last employed day, plus any additional bought leave. Any debit in the amount of leave taken or balance of monies to be repaid in respect of days bought will be recovered automatically from the employee's final pay. Any outstanding leave should normally be taken in the notice period.

2.11 Selling Annual Leave

Eligibility Criteria:

- This will be limited to employees who work in roles that require a backfill when leave is taken – such as Operations or roles on a rota, including Leisure.
- It applies to employees who have contracted hours, so will not apply to Variable staff.
- It does not apply to fixed term employees whose contract is due to finish within the leave period and selling of leave may reduce entitlement lower than the working time regulations.
- These roles do not qualify for flexi leave

As with buying leave, there is no requirement for you to participate in the scheme, but you must meet eligibility criteria set out above if you wish to consider selling annual leave back to HDC.

To comply with working time regulations, those employees with less than 5 years Local government continuous service (holiday entitlement of 24 days – 177.6 hours) will only be permitted to sell up to 4 days leave (pro rata'd for part time staff); and those employees with more than 5 years service (30 days 222 hours of entitlement) are permitted to sell up to 5 days.

The option to sell annual leave, will be open to eligible employees to request only once a year, and in advance of the leave year.

All applications will be assessed on its merits; manager should give consideration to (but not limited to):

Role of individual and whether meets the eligibility criteria

Impact on budgets and if service can afford

Amount of leave requesting to sell

The selling of annual leave will be considered prior to the start of the leave year; window to sell leave will be open to eligible staff annually around March and shared through all staff comms. Employees should complete the selling annual leave form and email or share with their manager by the deadline. Manager should consider their teams applications together and they have until end of March to consider. Managers should feedback their decision and share all approvals with HR.

All requests to sell leave will be given full consideration by managers. Managers may decline, approve or partially approve – e.g. manager may feel they can accommodate 2 days’ but not more.

Where it is not possible to accommodate the request, a response detailing why the application has not been successful will be provided by the line manager. Advice can be sought from HR where rejection is being considered.

The approved sold holiday will be added to the HR system by the HR team, as negative Adjusted holiday (reason sold leave) by end of April at the latest.

Payroll will make payments for sold leave directly from pay as 1/11th of the cost of annual leave, commencing May payroll, through to March. This ensures that leave not yet accrued is not sold, should the employee leave. The payment for annual leave sold is income and therefore subject to the appropriate income tax and NI deductions.

The Cost of Annual leave will be calculated as at the time of application and will not change if there are changes to the individuals salary to go either up or down in the period deductions are taken.

Pension contributions will remain unchanged as both the employer and employee contributions will continue to be made on normal pay i.e. prior to the deduction for sold leave being made.

Individuals who leave employment during the leave year - Where an employee leaves part way through the leave year, their annual leave allowance will be calculated on a pro rata basis up until their last day of employment on their adjusted leave (e.g. 177.6 hours, sold 28 hours, leave calculated on 149.6 hours balance). Any debit in the amount of leave taken will be recovered automatically from the employee’s final pay. Any outstanding leave should normally be taken in the notice period but will be paid if untaken by leave date.

3.0 Bank holidays

- 3.1 There are generally 8 bank holidays in each year (though on occasion the government may grant extra bank holidays, on those occasions the HR system will be updated to reflect any additional bank holidays.
- 3.2 Bank Holiday entitlement will be allocated within the HR system at the beginning of the leave year (Part time employees, or on a flexible working pattern will have a pro rata bank holiday allowance – based on contractual working hours) and bank holidays that fall on working patterns will be deducted from entitlement based on working hours for that day. Which means staff that work part time and on Monday’s may find they take more leave for

bank holidays than they are allocated and this is accounted for in their annual leave balance at the start of the year.

If individuals work a bank holiday, the system will automatically deduct this leave, and this may need adjusting, managers should send an email to Humanresources@huntingdonshire.gov.uk confirming the name of employee and hours and date they worked a bank holiday and the HR team will add an adjustment to the holiday entitlement, which effectively adds the hours back into their holiday entitlement to book.

4.0 Unpaid Leave

4.1 The council identifies the following types of unpaid leave an employee may wish to request:

- Unpaid leave (up to 2 weeks)
- Time off for Dependents (statutory right)
- Employment Breaks (1 to 12 months)
- Unpaid Compassionate Leave

4.2. Unpaid Leave

In situations where short periods of unpaid leave is required by individuals, leave may be requested by employees and managers will consider individual needs against operational requirements. Unpaid leave can be used for short term leave i.e. up to a period of 2 weeks.

During periods of unpaid leave all council policies and procedures and contractual rights continue to apply, e.g. an employee will retain their ID card and will be able to access their normal work base and periods of approved unpaid leave will count when calculating local government continuous service.

4.3 Notification – requesting and approving short periods of Unpaid leave

Employees should submit unpaid leave requests in writing to their managers via Appendix 2: HDC Employee Unpaid Leave Form. Managers should add this unpaid absence in MSS and send the approved requests by email to HumanResources@huntingdonshire.gov.uk as soon as they can and at least by the payroll deadline of the month to avoid under or over payments.

5.0 Time Off for Dependants

5.1 As an employee you're allowed 'reasonable' time off to deal with an emergency involving a dependant. For example (not exhaustive);

1. To provide assistance when a dependant falls ill, gives birth, is injured or assaulted.
2. To make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependant who is ill or injured.
3. To deal with the unexpected disruption of arrangements for the care of a dependant.

5.2 A dependant could be a spouse, partner, child, grandchild, parent, or someone who depends on you for care.

5.3 There is no set amount of time for 'time off for dependants' each request will be considered on the situation. You should tell your manager as soon as possible how much time you will need.

5.4 Time off for dependents is for emergency situations only, where you did not know about the situation before or where other types of leave could not have been planned for. In those situations, please consider Parental Leave policy or compassionate leave (below).

5.5 Notification – requesting and approving Time off for Dependents

Employees should submit requests in writing to their managers via 'Appendix 2: HDC Employee Unpaid Leave Form' Managers should add this unpaid absence in MSS and send approved requests by email to Humanresources@huntingdonshire.gov.uk as soon as they can and at least by the payroll deadline of the month to avoid under or over payments.

6.0 Employment Breaks/Sabbaticals

6.1 HDC recognises that there are times when employees may wish to take a longer period of time away from work and the Council provides **employment breaks** (sometimes called a sabbatical) to enable employees to take time out for any reason other than to pursue other employment. Examples may include: extended holiday; to go travelling; To fulfil domestic commitments (e.g. bringing up children or caring for a dependant); To undertake voluntary work; and / or to pursue non-work related training / further education.

6.2 Employment Breaks - Qualifying conditions

To be eligible employees must have been employed on a permanent contract, for at least 12 months and at the time of requesting not be subject to disciplinary or formal performance procedures.

6.3 Requesting & approving Employment Break:

Employees must put their request in writing to their manager using the 'Unpaid Leave form; outlining the period of leave requested and the reasoning, and providing the same notice as in their contract of employment i.e. at least one month, up to a period of three months.

All employment breaks are subject to a line manager's authorisation. Managers should use their discretion when agreeing to an employment break, considering the needs of the service at the time of the application; the needs of the employee; the ability to recruit a temporary replacement or manage without a replacement and the number of employment breaks already taken, by the individual, together with the anticipated duration of the break.

Managers must ensure when considering requests that the maximum entitlement to employment break, is not exceeded i.e. 12 months in a 5 year period. Managers should check with HR if they are unsure, what previous breaks may have been taken.

Managers should send Appendix 2: HDC Employee Unpaid Leave Form by email to Humanresources@huntingdonshire.gov.uk as soon as they can and at least by the payroll deadline of the month in which the employment break is to commence. A member of the HR department will confirm the employment break with the employee in writing.

6.4 Length of Employment Break

Employment breaks can be agreed for a minimum of one month and up to a maximum of 12 months. An employee may take a maximum employment break of 12 months for every 5 years continuous employment with HDC. This means that an employee could take a number of months unpaid break each year, provided that the total of the breaks does not exceed 12 months in a 5 year period.

6.5 Contractual Rights during an Employment Break

Employment breaks are unpaid. An employee's salary scale point, annual leave and bank holiday entitlement, sick leave, occupational maternity leave and redundancy entitlement are frozen until an employee returns from an employment break. An employment break cannot be recognised for performance related pay reviews.

During an employment break an individual remains an employee of HDC and all other terms and conditions of employment (as stated in the employee's contract of employment) will continue to apply. For example:

- You cannot take up paid employment with another organisation without prior agreement from a manager.
- You may be able to work in a self-employed capacity or undertake some relief work for HDC (on an appropriate relief contract) – employees should discuss this with their manager before the commencement of the employment break.
- All HDC policies and procedures e.g. continuous service, disciplinary policy and procedure, code of conduct, grievance procedure and the requirement to maintain confidentiality will apply during the employment break.
- The employees notice period to terminate employment.
- The employee will retain their ID although this may be suspended for the duration of the employment break.

The period of the employment break does not count as a break in service and will be regarded as continuous employment for statutory purposes under the Employment Rights Act 1996, as amended. However, as outlined above some contractual rights are frozen for the duration of the employment break.

6.6 Conditions during the Employment Break

Employees will be expected to fulfil certain requirements and maintain their right to return to work, the purpose of which is to maintain their skills, knowledge and expertise in an up to date state, thus ultimately enabling a smooth transition back into employment.

An employee may be required to maintain their professional subscriptions/membership where this is required for employment purposes.

An employee will be required to provide a contact address and notify HDC of any changes to their circumstances.

An agreement between the manager and employee will be made on how they will be kept updated, if possible, on any developments within HDC.

6.7 Right to return following an Employment Break

At the end of an employment break an employee will have the right to return to their original post or one on a similar grade, depending on the circumstances at the time.

If an employee wishes to return at an earlier date than that originally agreed, he/she must provide their manager with at least one month's notice of the intention to return early. Where sufficient notice is not provided HDC reserves the right to delay the return to the date originally agreed.

If an employee does not return to work on the agreed return date, without good reason or notice, he/she will be considered to be absent without leave (AWOL) and this will be dealt according to the relevant policy.

6.8 Redundancy during an Employment Break

If a job role gets identified as at risk of redundancy during an employee's employment break, the Council will follow its normal redundancy and consultation obligations.

7.0 Unpaid Leave Considerations for Employees

7.1 For any periods of unpaid leave, resulting in a reduction in salary, employees should consider the following:

7.2 Payments/Deductions

An employee should discuss with the payroll team, the effect that any period of unpaid leave will have on other payments/deductions made via salary. For employees in receipt of car loans, they must ensure that arrangements are made to continue with any monthly loan payments.

7.3 Pensions Contributions - Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

The period of unpaid leave will not count for pension purposes unless you elect to pay Additional Pension Contributions (APC's), to purchase the amount of pension lost during that period of absence. Where an employee elects to purchase an APC within 30 days of returning to work, then the cost is split between you and the employer, with the Council paying 2/3rds of the cost. If an employee elects to buy an APC after this 30 day period, the full cost must be met by the employee.

Employees should contact the Pension's Service to arrange the purchase of an APC and for further information on the impacts of unpaid leave on their pension.

8.0 Compassionate Leave

12 8.1 Compassionate Leave – Bereavement and Serious Illness

To support our employees at one of the most difficult times, HDC provides up to 5 days full paid compassionate leave in relation to the death or serious illness of a spouse; civil partner; partner; son; daughter; parent; guardian; grandparent; sibling; or close relative.

This paid time off includes the time needed to make preparations or attend a funeral. These provisions support consistency across HDC. Managers should consider the precedent that is set by giving compassionate leave above these provisions and where this is being considered HR advice should be sought.

8.2.1 Parental bereavement leave

The right to Statutory Bereavement Leave will apply to the biological parent; adoptive parent (if the child was living with them); person who lived with the child and had responsibility for them, for at least 4 weeks before they died; 'intended parent' – due to become the legal parent through surrogacy; Partner of the child's parent, if they live with the child and child's parent in an enduring family relationship.

Parents have a right to take 2 weeks' Statutory Parental Bereavement Leave for each child who has

died (under the age of 18) or who was stillborn after 24 weeks' of pregnancy.

Parental Bereavement Leave can be taken as 2 weeks together (a week being the same number of days you normally work in a week), or 2 separate weeks of leave and can be taken in any period up to 56 weeks from the date of death or stillbirth. To request Parental Bereavement leave an individual will check they meet the eligibility due to relationship to the child or baby and will discuss with their manager the dates of the leave required and will confirm for processing the date of the death or stillbirth.

8.2.2 Parental Bereavement Pay

1 week 90% of average weekly earnings and 1 week at appropriate statutory pay rate.

8.3 Managers may approve period of paid compassionate leave, as well as Statutory Parental Bereavement leave where necessary. Managers should add this leave in MSS.

8.4 Return to work following compassionate leave

In certain circumstances an immediate full return to work may not be possible for an employee, following the death of an immediate relative – for example, when the employee's grief is likely to impact on their ability to properly perform their role, or where new childcare arrangements have to be sourced or responsibility for the care of an elderly parent has transferred to the employee. In this situation a request to work temporarily on a part-time or reduced hours basis, or alternative duties may be considered (where practicable), subject to line managers approval; and would be for an agreed maximum period of time and managed in line with flexible working/part-time working, as such employees would be paid only for hours they worked, and options like taking annual leave to top up pay may be considered.

8.5 Compassionate leave – Unpaid

Where paid compassionate leave is exhausted and/or not appropriate unpaid compassionate leave may be granted.

Compassionate leave required in relation to a sick or injured dependent may be accommodated by a temporary alteration of working arrangements. Where this is not possible and Time off for dependents leave is not appropriate a manager may grant a reasonable amount of unpaid leave in line with service needs.

8.6 Notification Procedures – Compassionate Leave

Managers should add the compassionate leave absence in MSS (no form is required)

9.0 Adverse Weather

9.1 In incidents of adverse weather employees who are able to attend work safely should do so. However, the Council does not expect any employee to put themselves at risk by travelling to work in adverse weather. Employees should telephone their manager or another appropriate manager as soon as possible if they cannot attend their normal place of work. Where possible employees should work flexibly during periods of severe weather e.g. work from home or another HDC location.

- 92 During adverse weather conditions employees should consider their means of travel and potential for shared transport. Employees should regularly check for updates and discuss any concerns with their manager. The Council will consider the needs of employees to leave early to avoid getting stranded on the way home and/or to take extra time to complete journeys.
- 93 Employees who cannot attend work, or who are unable to work from home, should take a day's flexi leave, annual leave or unpaid leave. There is no automatic right of payment for lost time due to adverse weather conditions, however, employees who have been instructed not to attend work due to adverse weather will receive pay as normal for that day. Instruction to stay at home will follow a corporate decision taken by the Head of Paid Service or a nominated deputy.
- 94 Where there are increased absence levels in critical service areas, the Council may ask individuals who are able to get to work, to cover different roles or to complete additional hours in order to maintain Council services.

10.0 Jury Service

- 10.1 Jury service is a public duty that an individual is legally required to undertake. If you are called for jury service you must tell your manager immediately. Notice from the appropriate court will summons an individual to attend as a juror.
- 10.2 The Council will provide paid time off for an employee to undertake jury service. The Court Service will reimburse an individual for travelling/subsistence expenses and other 'financial' loss, which includes loss of earnings, loss of benefits and additional childcare/dependant carer costs.
- 10.2 An employee must claim loss of earnings from the court. Once this has been completed a copy of the statement is to be provided to the Payroll department for the deduction from salary to be made. The employee may keep any travel and subsistence allowances paid by the court.

11.0 Public Duties

- 11.1 The Council encourages employees to play an active part in the life of the community. However, before committing to undertake public duties an employee must seek the approval of their manager and give a clear indication of what level of commitment is likely to be required.
- 11.2 In accordance with the Employment Rights Act HDC defines public duties as those where an employee acts as a:
- Justice of the peace
 - Member of a local authority
 - Member of the police and crime panel
 - Member of a relevant education body (e.g. school governor)
 - Member of the General Teaching Councils for England and Wales
 - Member of the Environment Agency
 - Member of a relevant health body (e.g. NHS Trust or PCT)
 - Member of a statutory tribunal

- Member of a board of prison visitors or a visiting committee
- Member of the Service Authority for the National Criminal Intelligence Service or the Service Authority for the National Crime Squad

Factors for managers to take into account when considering requests will include:

- How much time off is required for the general performance of the public duties
- Whether there would be potential benefits for the people of Huntingdonshire
- Effect of the absence and the needs of the service

11.3 Where an employee holds a public office or public position then they are entitled to reasonable unpaid time off during working hours up to a maximum of 16 days per year (pro rata for part time employees). Requests for time off should be made at least one week in advance and if safety or staffing levels are compromised by the leave, it may be necessary to reduce the agreed amount of time.

11.4 In addition HDC recognises retained Fire Fighters operation duties as a public duty. When work is commenced with a Fire Authority, the working hours should be agreed outside of HDC working time, wherever possible. In exceptional circumstances where unpaid time off is needed this is to be agreed with your manager in advance. Every effort should be made to plan the hours to allow enough time to finish the fire duties before starting work, with consideration to Working time Regulations and appropriate rest breaks.

12.0 Reservists

12.1 Reservists are individuals who volunteer their services, in their spare time, to train to serve alongside the regular armed forces (the Territorial Army is now known as the Army reserve). A reservist is expected to meet minimum training requirements as follows:

- Weekly training (2¹/₂ hours each week during the evening)
- Occasional training days (weekends spread through the year)
- Continuous training period (undertaken on an annual basis over a continuous period of 15 days)

HDC provides reservists with additional unpaid time off to undertake these training commitments up to a maximum of 16 days per leave year.

12.2 Mobilisation is the process of calling reservists into full-time service with the regular armed forces to undertake military operations. Mobilisation can last for several months, depending on the operation. An employee should notify their manager in case of mobilisation, as the employer's consent is required. There is no specified warning period prior to mobilisation however the reservist and the employer should generally have at least two weeks' notice. A reservist would not receive pay for the period of mobilisation.

12.3 Employers may seek exemption from, or deferral of, mobilisation if the loss of the employee will cause serious harm to HDC. An employee's mobilisation may result in additional costs, however, HDC can apply for financial assistance to meet these costs. The Reserve Forces (Safeguard of Employment) Act provides a mobilised reservist with the right to be re- employed by their former employer after demobilisation and provides dismissal protection for reservists.

13.0 Election Duties

13.1 Employees must have permission from their line manager to take time off to undertake election duties. Time off is with full pay and there is not a requirement to take annual leave for these purposes.

Appendix 1: Summary Types of leave

Type of leave	Definition	Entitlement	Paid/Unpaid
Annual Leave	As per 2.1	24/30/34 days	Paid
Bank Holidays	As per 3.0	8 days pro rata	Paid
Unpaid Leave	Where it is necessary or desirable to extend a period of absence beyond the parameters available within other policies covering paid time off work and subject to operational approval.	Up to 2 weeks	Unpaid
Time Off For Dependant	Where it is necessary to help someone who depends on them in an unexpected event or emergency.		Unpaid
Employment Break	This allows an employee time off work, which could be for a number of reasons; travelling, family commitments, volunteering or studying as examples.	Minimum 1 month Maximum 12 months	Unpaid
Compassionate Leave	Serious illness or bereavement of close relative, partners, dependants.	Up to 5 days	Paid
Compassionate Leave Unpaid	Compassionate leave beyond the 5 days paid leave		Unpaid
Parental Bereavement Leave	Statutory leave if a child dies before they turn 18, or if a pregnancy results in a stillbirth after 24 weeks.	2 weeks	Paid 1 week 90% 1 week statutory pay

Appendix 2: HDC Employee Unpaid Leave Form

Employee Details			
Employee Number		Employee Name	
Post Title		Department	
Category Unpaid Leave (Please select)			
Unpaid leave		Time off for dependents	
Employment Break (1-12 months)		Other (please type in reason for unpaid leave)	
Details of Unpaid Leave			
Unpaid Leave Start Date		Unpaid Leave End Date	
Reason for Unpaid Leave			
Any other comments/notes Employee wishes to share ‘			
In submitting this form the employee, has read and understands the Leave policy and agrees that the period of leave requested, will be unpaid and deducted from the next available pay period.			
Date of application for unpaid leave		Employee Signature	
Approval			
Manager approval	Yes / No		
If no, please provide reason for not approving			
Manager Name		Date	

Please email this form to humanresources@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Appendix 3: Application to buy/sell Annual Leave for the Period 01 April to 31 March

The Line Manager should return this form by the **28 February 20xx** to humanresources@huntingdonshire.gov.uk so that arrangements can be in place (e.g. for deduction or payments over the coming financial year to be made).

Employee Part: Employee to complete first part of the application and share with manager for consideration	
Employee Name	
Employee/Payroll Number	
Job Title	
Service	
Name of Line Manager	
I have discussed this with my manager and I wish to buy an additional xxx days/hours annual leave	<input type="checkbox"/> I understand that this will be a salary sacrifice scheme and therefore by law that my gross pay (after the deduction for holiday bought must be greater than the national minimum wage). I agree that appropriate deductions are made from my salary. I agree that, should I leave HDC before 31st March any outstanding amounts owed in respect of this leave will be deducted from my final salary payment.
I have discussed this with my manager and checked I'm eligible and I wish to sell xxx days/hours annual leave	<input type="checkbox"/> I understand that the payment will be made as 1/12 th payments in my payroll and will be subject to income tax and NI deductions.
I understand it is my responsibility in applying to buy or sell leave: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To read and understand the policy • To consider the impact that buying or selling leave may have on my own finances, including tax liabilities, tax credits etc • to consider the impact of reducing or increasing my annual leave entitlement on my ability to take leave during the leave year. 	<input type="checkbox"/> I have read and agree with each of the responsibilities.
Employee Print Name	
Employee Sign Name (if submitting electronically, use E-signature or print name and email)	
Dated:	

Line Manager part:	
I've considered the request to buy or sell leave in line with the policy and the outcome of my decision is:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approve Full number of days requested to buy or sell <input type="checkbox"/> Approved partial number of days requested to buy or sell. Insert new number of days approved: <input type="checkbox"/> Decline days requested to buy or sell. Reason for rejection is:
	Where my decision is to reject either the full request or part of the request I have provided this feedback to the individual direct. <input type="checkbox"/>
Manager Name	
Date:	

Please send to Humanresources@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Revised - Time off for Trade Union Duties
Meeting/Date: Employment Committee – 21 June 2023
Executive Portfolio: Cllr Martin Hassall (MH)
Report by: Strategic HR Manager (NB)
Ward(s) affected: N/A

Executive Summary:

At the February 2023 Employment Committee meeting the new Time off for Trade Union Duties policy was brought to committee for review and approval. At the meeting there were was challenge around the wording of “reasonable” in relation to time off, so it was agreed that further defining would take place and the MD would have final sign off on the policy to reduce any delay between meetings. For information reasonable has been defined as:

For general trade union duties including but not limited to attending meetings, supporting members and taking part in official activities representatives are each allowed to take 1 working day (7.5 hours) per month up to a combined 60 days per year across all representatives, and where the needs of the council and the membership exceed this it will be agreed with the Strategic HR Manager.

In addition to this it is recognised to support the representatives in their roles they require specific training therefore each rep is entitled to 5 days for their initial training, 2 days for refresher training every 5 years. All other unions specific training to support the development of the representatives will be discussed and agreed with the Strategic HR Manager.

Policy is attached for your information.

Recommendation(s):

The Committee is asked to consider and endorse the new policy.

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report draws Committee attention to the new policy and ask for endorsement to implement the use of it.

2.2 WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- a. The reason for this policy is to ensure that HDC and UNISON have an agreed approach regarding time off for Trade Union Activities and to ensure that we meet the statutory reporting requirements regarding Time off for Trade Unions duties

2.3 KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

- a. It is a statutory requirement for HDC to report time off for Trade Union Duties and with having a policy in place it will ensure that expectations are set and our reporting is correct.

2.4 WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- a. The policy will be added to our employment policy section of the intranet and highlighted to relevant managers.

2.5 LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

[*\(See Corporate Plan\)*](#)

- a. To have an engaged and motivated workforce, as part of being a more efficient and effective council – through updated, clear employment policies.

2.6 CONSULTATION

- a. Senior Leadership Team and UNISON have been briefed and given the opportunity to review the proposed policy changes and support them.

2.7 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- a. Adoption of the policy will ensure that HDC is legally compliant in its reporting and has a clear guidance for all involved.

2.8 LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Time Off for Trade Union Duties Policy

CONTACT OFFICER

Name/Job Title: Nicki Bane
Tel No: 01480 388422
Email: nicki.bane@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Time off for Trade Union Duties

Version 1.1

Version Control			
Version	Author	Date	Changes
1	Nicki Bane	November 2022	New Policy
1.1	Nicki Bane	April 2023	Wording amended regarding reasonable time off

Name of Policy:	Time off for Trade Union Duties
Person/posts responsible:	Strategic HR Manager/UNISON reps
Date approved/adopted:	May 2023
Approved by:	Employee Committee
Review Date:	May 2024

1. Policy statement

- 1.1 This policy outlines the process for UNISON officials to take time off for recognised trade union duties and how this time will be captured and recorded for statutory monitoring purposes.

2. Scope of policy

- 2.1 The provisions of this agreement shall apply to accredited representatives of the union, who have been duly elected or appointed in accordance with the rules of the union.
- 2.2 The union agrees to inform Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) in writing of the names of all elected representatives at the earliest possible opportunity and provide notification of any subsequent changes. Persons whose names have been notified HDC shall be the sole representatives of the UNISON membership.

3. Principles

- 3.1 Accredited representatives will be permitted paid time off during working hours to carry out duties that are concerned with any aspect of consultation and representation of individual members, including:
- Terms and conditions of employment, including physical working conditions, hours of work, pay, holidays, sickness and other leave arrangements, learning and training, equality and diversity, and operation of digital equipment;
 - Engagement, termination, transfer or suspension of employment, including recruitment and selection policies, human resource planning, redundancy and dismissal arrangements;
 - Allocation of work or the duties of employment as between employees or groups of employees, including job grading, job evaluation, job descriptions, flexible working practices and work-life balance;
 - Matters of discipline, including disciplinary procedures, arrangements for representing or accompanying employees at internal interviews, arrangements for appearing on behalf of trade union members, or as witnesses, before agreed outside appeal bodies or employment tribunals;
 - Trade union membership, including representational arrangements and induction of new workers;
 - Facilities for union representatives' accommodation, including provision of equipment, names of new workers to the union;
 - Machinery for negotiation or consultation and other procedures; including grievances disputes, joint consultation, communicating with members and other trade union branch officers.

3.2 As part of fulfilling these duties, paid time off shall be permitted to:

- Prepare for negotiations, including attending relevant meetings;
- Inform members of progress and outcomes;
- Prepare for meetings with the employer about matters for which the union has only representational rights.

3.3 In addition, reasonable levels of paid time shall be permitted for wider activities of reps as part of their union, including:

- Branch, area or regional meetings of the union where the business of the union is under discussion;
- Meetings of official policy making bodies such as the executive committee or annual conference;
- Meetings with full time officers to discuss issues relevant to the workplace;
- Recruitment of new members;
- Distributing union literature.

3.4 As a guide for general trade union duties including but not limited to attending meetings, supporting members and taking part in official activities representatives are each allowed to take 1 working day (7.5 hours) per month up to a combined 60 days per year across all representatives, and where the needs of the council and the membership exceed this it will be agreed with the Strategic HR Manager.

In addition to this Representatives will also be granted appropriate time off for training, see section 6.1 for further details

Hours will be logged and submitted to the Strategic HR Manger for reporting and review.

4. Time off for Health and Safety Representatives

4.1 HDC will observe the legal duty to permit accredited health and safety representatives such time off with pay as necessary for the purposes of:

- Engaging in consultation over making and maintenance of arrangements which will enable him and his employees to co-operate effectively in promoting and developing measures to ensure the health and safety at work of the employees, and in checking the effectiveness of such measures;
- Investigating potential hazards and dangerous occurrences at the workplace (whether or not they are drawn to his attention by the employees he represents) and to examine the causes of accidents at the workplace;
- Investigating complaints by any employee he represents relating to that employee's health, safety or welfare at work;
- Making representations to the employer on matters arising out of such investigations;

- Making representations to the employer on general matters affecting the health, safety or welfare at work of the employees at the workplace;
 - Representing the employees he was appointed to represent in consultations at the workplace with inspectors of the Health and Safety Executive and of any other enforcing authority, including receiving information and attending meetings as part of such consultations;
- 4.2 In addition, reasonable levels of paid time shall be permitted for wider activities of health and safety reps as part of their union, as per decision 3.3 above.

5. Time off for Union Learning Representatives

- 5.1 Accredited Union Learning Representatives shall be entitled to take reasonable paid time off for the following specific purposes:
- Analysing learning or training needs;
 - Providing information and advice about learning or training matters;
 - Arranging learning or training;
 - Promoting the value of learning or training;
 - Consulting the employer in relation to such activities;
 - Preparation in relation to such activities.
- 5.2 In addition, reasonable levels of paid time shall be permitted for wider activities of union learning reps as part of their union, as per decision 3.3 above.
- 5.3 Accredited Union Learning Representatives shall be entitled to take reasonable paid time off for the following specific purposes:
- Analysing learning or training needs;
 - Providing information and advice about learning or training matters;
 - Arranging learning or training;
 - Promoting the value of learning or training;
 - Consulting the employer in relation to such activities;
 - Preparation in relation to such activities.
- 5.4 In addition, reasonable levels of paid time shall be permitted for wider activities of union learning reps as part of their union, as per decision 3.3 above.

6. Training

- 6.1 It is recognised to support the representatives in their roles they require specific training therefore each rep is entitled to 5 days for their initial training, 2 days for refresher training every 5 years. All other unions specific training to support the development of the representatives will be discussed and agreed with the Strategic HR Manager.

- 6.2 HDC recognises that newly appointed union reps should receive initial basic training as soon as possible after their appointment and updates to training will be necessary at suitable intervals, but particularly where the rep takes on special responsibilities, changes occur in legislation and recommended practices, or in response to major organisational changes.

7. Level of time off permitted

- 7.1 Accredited representatives will be given reasonable paid time off during normal working hours to carry out the functions related to their representational responsibilities.

8. Payment for time off

- 8.1 Where paid time off is granted, the union rep will receive the amount they would have earned had they worked during the time taken or, where earnings vary with the work done, an amount calculated by reference to the average hourly earnings for the work they are employed to do. This amount will include average bonus or overtime payments where these are contractual.
- 8.2 Travelling and subsistence costs will be reimbursed to accredited representatives for periods of work approved in accordance with this agreement.
- 8.3 Where representatives attend meetings called by management, management will always try to ensure that the meetings take place while the appropriate representatives are on duty, either by adjusting dates of meetings or amending rotas with the agreement of the individual concerned.
- 8.4 However, when representatives, other than those with full-time secondment, attend meetings called by management during their normal working hours which extend beyond normal finishing time, they will be paid at plain time rates for the additional hours worked, except that, where earnings vary with the work done, the amount will be calculated by reference to the average hourly earnings for the work they are employed to do, including average bonus or contractual overtime payments.
- 8.5 If a meeting is to take place on the representative's day off or while the representative is not on duty, an equivalent amount of time off in lieu will be given at a time agreeable to both parties, subject to the contingencies of the service.
- 8.6 Part-time employees who are required to attend recognised training courses as detailed above will be paid for the whole of their attendance time, even if it exceeds their normal working hours.

9. Time off procedure

- 9.1 Before taking time off, the accredited representatives must obtain the permission of their manager, informing the manager in writing of the general purpose of the time off, the intended location, the expected timing and duration of time off required, as soon as practically possible.
- 9.2 Representatives will be required to complete and submit facility time-recording sheets on a regular basis to the relevant Branch Secretary/Senior Representative, who will forward the recording sheets to the Strategic HR Manager.

- 9.3 UNISON will give adequate advance notice of training course dates in writing to relevant line-managers alongside any calendar of major union meetings, such as regional meetings or annual conferences that representatives would seek to attend.

10. Time off following transfers of Employment

- 10.1 Where a transfer of staff takes place through contracting out or internally to wholly owned subsidiaries, proportionate time off arrangements will be retained to allow representation of affected staff.
- 10.2 Reps shall be permitted to continue representing affected staff until new arrangements among transferred staff have been established for representation.

11. Workload Adjustments

- 11.1 During the approved absence of reps under this policy, HDC will endeavour to make appropriate workload arrangements, in line with the ACAS code which recommends:
- The allocation of duties to other employees;
 - Rearranging work to a different time
 - A reduction in workloads.
- 11.2 It is acknowledged that forward planning will not always allow adequate cover for demands on reps at short notice. Therefore, managers will be resourced to enable them to respond to such situations and clear procedures set in each workplace for short term demands.
- 11.3 Where major projects require sustained time off for workplace reps, fully funded backfill shall apply for the duration of the project.

12. Trade Union Facilities

- 12.1 HDC agrees to provide defined facilities to union representatives to enable them to discharge their duties, including provision of:
- A Unison official shall be granted reasonable access to the workplace for the purpose of advising, assisting and/or representing his/her members, should Unison wish to invite a full-time officer they should inform HDC in advance:
 - Union Representatives, who are employed by HDC will be issued with, where not standard for the role, a HDC email address and full access to the intranet.
 - Access to meeting rooms, secure storage and notice boards for union reps to undertake their duties;
 - Access to, and use of, a notice board at each of the main sites as a way of communicating to branch members;
 - Meetings of Union members may be held on HDC's premises outside working hours (but within normal opening hours of the building) and there shall be no restriction on the frequency or duration of such meetings, within the ability of facilities staff to provide support. Such meetings will be open to all staff members who are Unison members.
 - Where it is necessary for the Union to hold meetings with members during working hours, it should try to agree the arrangements with management at the earliest opportunity. UNISON shall provide HDC with a timetable of regular Union meetings or give at least three working days' notice of the intention to hold a meeting. Where these

meetings will involve a large number of employees, management and the union must agree on a time that will minimise the effect on the council's services. Authority for this must be sought from the Strategic HR Manager.

- Where necessary for the purposes of informing and consulting the workforce, meetings of members may be organised by the Union on HDC's premises outside working hours, but within normal opening hours of the building. Such meetings will be open to all employees.

13. No Detriment and Confidentiality

- 13.1 Individuals will not be discriminated against during the course of their employment for membership of a trade union or activities as a union representative.
- 13.2 In line with the ACAS code HDC will respect the confidential and sensitive nature of communications between union representatives and unions members.
- 13.3 HDC shall provide transparency about the organisation's monitoring and storage of electronic communications There shall be no monitoring of union emails other than in a highly exceptional circumstance, as defined by the Information Commissioner. If HDC believes such exceptional circumstances apply, its reasons shall be set out to union reps for their consideration.

14. Disputes

- 14.1 HDC and UNISON agree to make every effort to resolve disputes in relation to time off for trade union duties and activities.
- 14.2 However, it is recognised that it is not possible to be prescriptive about all duties, activities and the time required to carry them out, therefore disputes may arise in interpretation of this agreement.
- 14.3 It is agreed that requests for time off will not be unreasonably refused. But where permission to take time off is withheld, an explanation for the reason(s) will be given by the appropriate representative of management.
- 14.4 If UNISON is dissatisfied with the decision, the matter may be referred to the Strategic HR Manager.
- 14.5 If agreement cannot be reached, the matter may be referred to ACAS.

15. Reporting

- 15.1 Reporting and collection of facility time data will be limited solely to those details required under section 13 (3) of the Trade Union Act;
- 15.2 HDC will ensure confidentiality for union reps in publication of paybill information by avoiding the naming of individual reps and applying the provisions of section 4 (3) of the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 for substituting notional hourly rates for actual hourly rates where an individual might be identified if the actual hourly rates were published.

16. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually between HDC and UNISON and will remain in place for the duration of the Trade Union agreement.