

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

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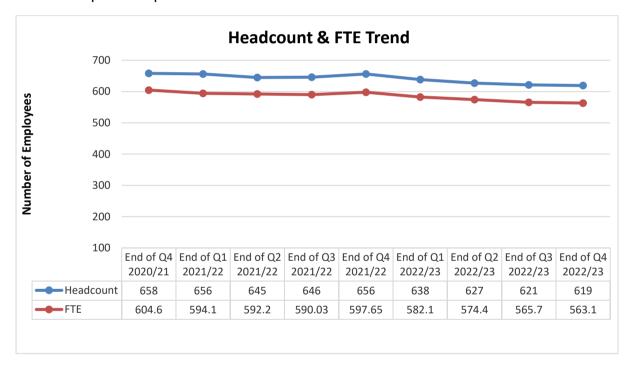
1.0 EMPLOYEE PROFILE

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 guarter 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 £75,0000. 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 - III Health		1	1
Leaver - Dismissal - III 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	

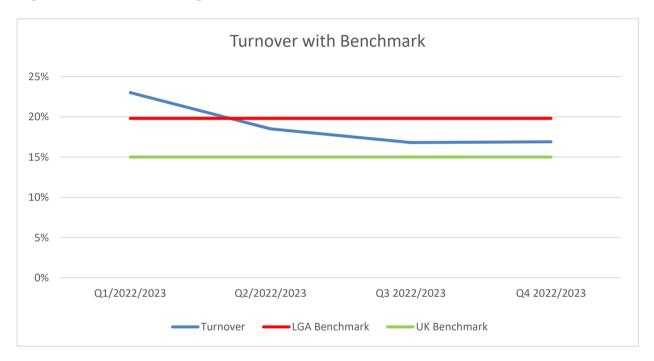
^{*} Turnover calculated by leavers against service size (head count, based on average size of the service across the quarter)

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)		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	Calendar Days. Note this may not be the full	18	17	18	20	18
Average time from Date Job Advertised to offer	days vacant on establishment but is the date when hiring	32	30	33	33	33
Average time from Date Job Advertised to employment start date	manager starts recruitment activity.	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 aide 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	Level	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.

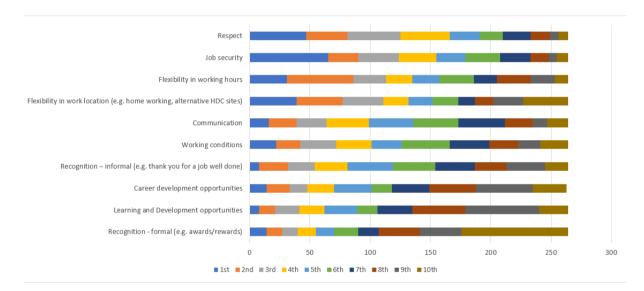
Results

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.

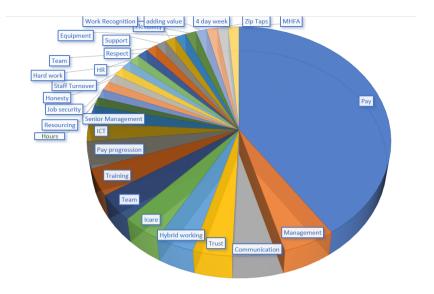
The graph below shows the overall ratings for each question and the rankings for what is most important for people at work. The highest scoring question about people's perception of working at HDC was being supported by my team which scored 4.06/5 and the lowest scoring question was around the perception 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**.

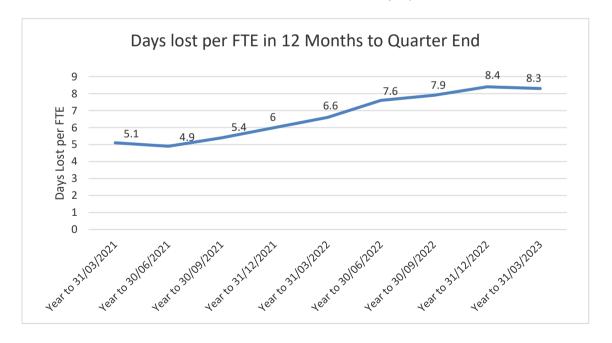
The absence data is calculated per full-time equivalent (FTE) as per the guidelines set out in the previous Best Value Performance Indicators (former statutory dataset) for sickness to account for adjustments in working hours.

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)

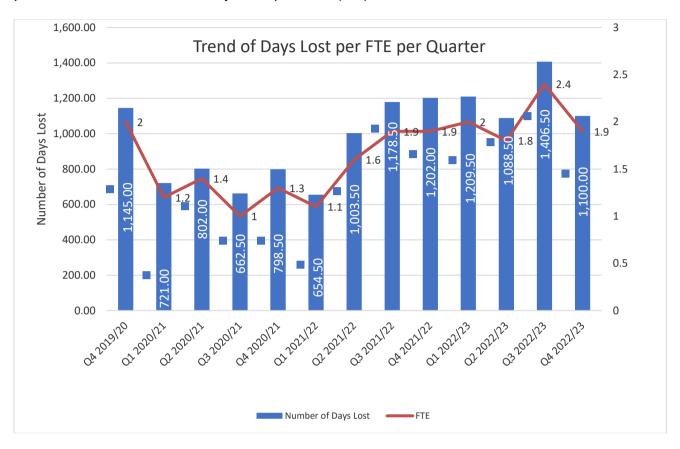
2.1 TREND OF WORKING DAYS LOST ACROSS HDC

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: -

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

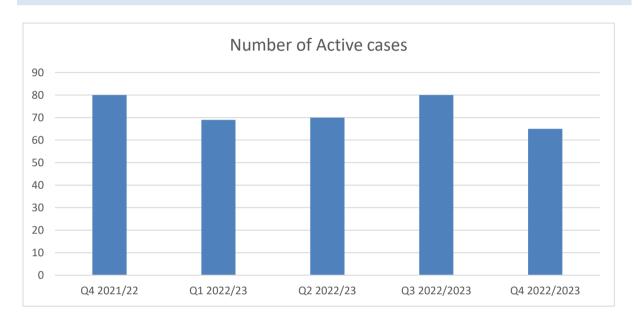
Service	Number Employees absent in Quarter 4	Total days sick Q4	Total days sick Q3	
Chief Operating Officer	46	479	733.5	+
Corporate Services	11	39	34	^
Digital & ICT Services	21	55.5	49.5	^
Executive	0	0	6	¥
Growth	2	10	11	→
Leisure and Health	24	99.5	129	→
Operations	49	284	309.5	¥
Planning	9	80	40	^
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.

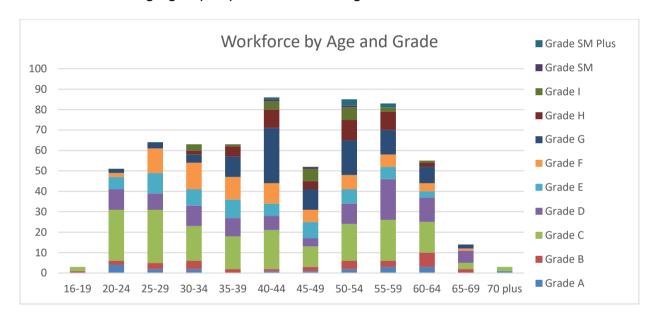
Type of Case	Informal Cases	Formal Cases	Total Q4	Previous Quarter
1Appeals	0	0	0	1
Capability – Sickness	29	8	37	54
Capability – Performance	2	1	3	8
Consultations (including TUPE)	1	0	1	0
Bullying and Harassment	0	1	1	0
Disciplinary	5	3	8	9
Employment Tribunals	0	0	0	0
Flexible Working Requests	6	0	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.

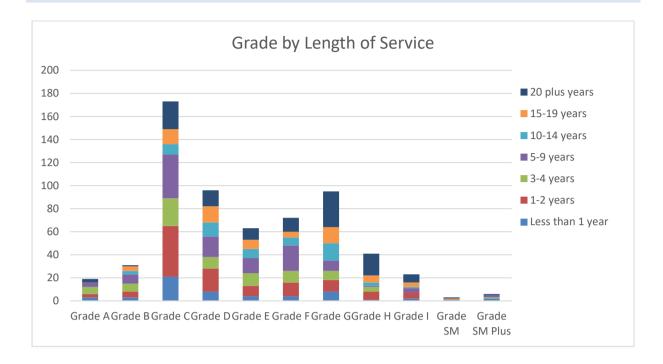
4.1 WORKFORCE BY AGE AND GRADE

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.

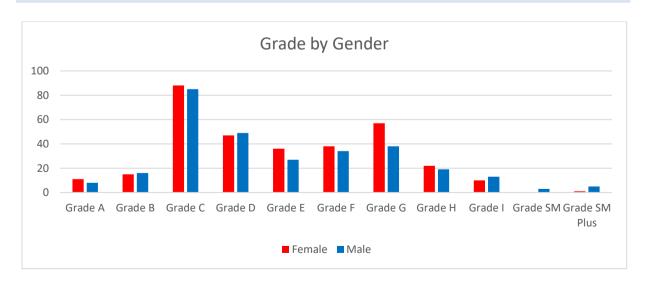
4.2 WORKFORCE BY GRADE AND LENGTH OF SERVICE



4.3 WORKFORCE BY GENDER



4.4 EMPLOYEES BY GRADE AND GENDER



4.5 WORKFORCE BY ETHNICITY

	% of
Ethnicity	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%