Hampshire
County Council

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting	Employment in Hampshire County Council Committee
Date and Time	Thursday, 11th March, 2021 at 10.00 am
Place	Virtual Teams Meeting - Microsoft Teams
Enquiries to	members.services@hants.gov.uk

John Coughlan CBE
Chief Executive
The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UJ

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION
This meeting is being held remotely and will be recorded and broadcast live via the County Council's website.

AGENDA

1.   **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence received.

2.   **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore all Members with a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting should consider, having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, consider whether it is appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

3.   **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING** (Pages 5 - 8)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.

4.   **DEPUTATIONS**

To receive any deputations notified under Standing Order 12.

5.   CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive any announcements the Chairman may wish to make.

6.   PAY, POLICY AND LEGISLATION UPDATE (Pages 9 - 16)

To consider a report of the Director of Corporate Resources providing an update to EHCC on the National Pay Award and proposed employment-related legislative changes.

7.   INTERIM WORKFORCE REPORT - APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2020 (Pages 17 - 64)

To consider a report of the Director of Corporate Resources providing an Interim Workforce Report for April to September 2020 including the emerging impact of COVID-19 on Hampshire County Council.

8.   OPEN WORKPLACE POLICY (Pages 65 - 80)

To consider a report of the Director of Corporate Resources seeking EHCC agreement to implement a new Open Workplace Policy for Council members of staff.

9.   EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RECOMMENDATION:

That in relation to the following item the press and public be excluded from the meeting, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of proceedings, that if a member of the public were present during the item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exempt information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.

10.   FLEXIBLE WORKING (EXEMPT) (Pages 81 - 88)

To consider a report of the Director of Corporate Resources regarding flexible working.

ABOUT THIS AGENDA:

On request, this agenda can be provided in alternative versions (such as large print, Braille or audio) and in alternative languages.

ABOUT THIS MEETING:

The press and public are welcome to observe the public sessions of the meeting via the webcast.

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AT A MEETING of the Employment in Hampshire County Council Committee of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held virtually via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 12th November, 2020

Chairman:
* Councillor Stephen Reid

* Councillor Keith Evans	* Councillor Stephen Philpott
* Councillor Christopher Carter	Councillor Roger Huxstep
* Councillor Adrian Collett	Councillor Dominic Hiscock
Councillor Judith Grajewski	Councillor David Simpson
* Councillor Keith House	* Councillor Russell Oppenheimer
* Councillor Roy Perry	

*Present

79. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Grajewski. Councillor Oppenheimer as the conservative substitute member was in attendance in her place.

80. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore all Members with a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting should consider, having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, consider whether it is appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

81. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed

82. DEPUTATIONS

No deputations were received at this meeting.

83. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reported that the democratic support to the committee had changed from Kevin Greenhough to Marie Mannveille. He thanked Kevin for his support.

84. **PAY, POLICY AND LEGISLATION UPDATE**

The Employment in Hampshire County Council (EHCC) Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources providing an update on the National Pay Award and proposed employment-related legislative changes.

It was reported that the 2.75% pay award had been agreed and was being implemented for payment in November salaries backdated to April 2020. It was highlighted that the report was seeking approval for delegation to the Chief Executive to agree salaries of existing Departmental Management Team Members from time to time to reflect their experience in post.

It was noted that the cap on public sector exit payments of £95k came in on 4 November 2020. This new legislation caused a conflict with existing pensions regulations and guidance was awaited on how this should be resolved. The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government had also consulted on limits to redundancy payments and the consultation closed on 9 November 2020. The proposed changes would affect the County Councils Enhanced Voluntary Redundancy scheme for those staff with less than seven years of service.

Members asked questions for clarification. It was confirmed that up to 3% had been budgeted for the pay award so the outcome was within budget.

RESOLVED:

1. That EHCC notes the current position on the pay award and developments concerning employment legislation.

2. That EHCC agrees the delegation to the Chief Executive in respect of Departmental Management Team members as set out in paragraph 9.

85. **HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PAY STATEMENT - FINANCIAL YEAR 2021/22**

The EHCC Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive regarding the Hampshire County Council Pay Statement for the 2021/22 Financial Year. The Localism Act requires that a Pay Statement be prepared and approved by full Council prior to the financial year to which it relates. The EHCC Committee was being asked to recommend the Pay Statement on to full Council.

The Pay Statement sets out the County Council's policies regarding remuneration of employees, from the lowest paid employees to Chief Officers. It was noted that if there were any legislative changes implemented in the relevant period the pay statement would be updated accordingly.

RESOLVED:

1. That the EHCC Committee recommends to the County Council approval of the Pay Statement as detailed in the report and at Appendix A, setting out the County Council's policies in respect of pay accountability for the

financial year 2021/22 in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act.

2. That the EHCC Committee delegates authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairman of the EHCC Committee, to make any changes to the draft Pay Statement consequential upon any changes to legislative requirements or other statutory guidance or changes to renumeration of staff determined prior to consideration of the Pay Statement by full Council.

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Chairman,

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Committee:	Employment in Hampshire County Council
Date:	11 March 2021
Title:	Pay, Policy and Legislation Update
Report From:	Director of Corporate Resources

Contact name: Nichola Andreassen

Tel: 01962 847361   **Email:**   Nichola.andreassen@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to EHCC on the internal realignment of functions, National Pay Award and proposed employment-related legislative changes.

Recommendation(s)

2. That EHCC notes the internal realignment of functions, increases in the National Living and Minimum Wage and developments concerning the pay award and legislation.

Executive Summary

3. The National Living Wage will increase to £8.91 per hour from 1 April 2021 for those over the age of 23.

4. Government have announced a public-sector pay freeze for 2021/2022.

5. Government have announced that after extensive review of the application of the £95k cap, that the Regulations should be revoked. HMT Directions have been published that disapply the Cap until the Regulations have been revoked.

6. This report provides updates on the following legislation and Government consultation topics:

   - Additional bank holiday in June 2022

   - Support for domestic abuse survivors in the workplace

   - Migration Advisory Committee recommendation to the Shortage Occupation List

- The impact of Brexit

Contextual information

Internal Re-alignment of functions

7. As a result of a need for increased capacity and senior management expertise within Adults' Health and Care, the Director of Transformation and Governance has been undertaking a dual role in recent years, having taken on the additional role of Deputy Director Adults' Health and Care.

8. The time has now come to consolidate arrangements on a more permanent basis in order that the appropriate leadership is in place, both for Adult's Health and Care, and the functions within Transformation & Governance.

9. This means that the Director of Transformation & Governance will transition permanently to the Deputy Director of Adults' Health & Care, and that the functions within Transformation & Governance will be re-aligned to other parts of the Council to ensure ongoing stability of service delivery.

10. These changes will be undertaken in line with relevant policies and procedures and will not result in additional posts or increases in budgets.

National Living and Minimum Wage increases

11. Government have recently announced that the National Living Wage will rise from £8.72 to £8.91 on 1 April 2021, an increase of 2.2%.

12. The NLW, which currently applies only to those 25 or over, will be extended to 23 and 24-year-olds for the first time.

13. Since the hourly rate for staff at Grade A is £9.25 and therefore exceeds the new NLW, County Council staff are not impacted by the NLW increase.

14. However, any new County Council employees on a six-month Government Kickstart placement are affected. The April 2021 NMW increases range from 1.5% to 3.6%, with the highest rate rising from £8.20 to £8.36 for 21- and 22-year-olds. The Kickstart scheme funds 100% of the applicable National Minimum Wage for 25 hours per week for 16 to 24-year-olds on Universal Credit.

2021 Pay Award

15. In November, Government announced a public-sector pay freeze (for workers outside of the NHS) for 2021/22. In addition, the Chancellor announced that

public sector workers earning less than £24,000 a year would receive a minimum £250 increase.

16. Government does not set pay for most council staff and in February 2021 recognised Trade Unions submitted a pay claim to National Joint Council of at least 10% increase in pay for all council and school support employees. Nevertheless, in previous years such a government announcement has resulted in similar outcomes for Local Authority pay bargaining. Councils will be consulted on this to inform the National Employers' position.

17. Typically, a pay freeze would mean that there would be no national pay award applied to the EHCC salary framework i.e., the minimum and maximum (and step points) would not increase. As such someone on a salary at the top of their grade would not receive an annual pay increase. However, we anticipate that incremental increases within the salary grade would continue as normal.

18. Given that Government have said that whilst there is a pay freeze for those earning more than £24,000, those earning less than £24,000 will receive a minimum £250 increase, the budgeted pay provision held has been reduced to 1%, which will be held in contingencies until any pay award is agreed. Updates will be provided to EHCC as required.

19. Updates will be provided to EHCC as required.

Restriction of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations 2020 - £95k payments cap and wider exit reforms

20. As reported to EHCC in November 2020, new regulations were implemented on 4 November 2020, which stated that any payments made to an employee by way of their exit would be capped at £95k.

21. As a result, a conflict was created between these new regulations and existing Local Government Pension Schemes which would have continued until new regulations to amend the LGPS scheme were implemented.

22. The draft LGPS regulations were released and the County Council responded to a technical consultation on those regulations. This consultation closed on 18 December 2020.

23. Whilst the £95k cap regs were implemented the new LGPS regs were delayed pending the outcome of Judicial Reviews scheduled for late March 2021).

24. In February, Government announced that after extensive review of the application of the Cap, that they had concluded that the £95k cap may have had unintended consequences and the Regulations should be revoked. HMT Directions have been published that disapply the Cap until the Regulations have been revoked.

25. Government have also stated that it is still vital that exit payments deliver value for the taxpayer and employers should always consider whether exit payments are fair and proportionate. To this end, HM Treasury will bring forward proposals at pace to tackle unjustified exit payments.

26. Updates will be provided to EHCC as required.

Employment Legislation and Consultation updates

Additional bank holiday in June 2022

27. **Government have announced the creation of a Platinum Jubilee four-day weekend in June 2022. The late May bank holiday will be moved to Thursday 2 of June while an additional bank holiday will take place on Friday 3 of June 2022. The County Council's policies and procedures will be updated accordingly.**

Consultation updates

28. Government are considering responses to several consultations that have been reported previously to EHCC. At the time of writing, there is no update on the following consultations:
    - Ethnicity pay gap reporting
    - How to reduce ill-health related job losses
    - Measures to address one-sided flexibility
    - Sexual harassment in the workplace
    - Confidentiality clauses
    - Carers' leave
    - Proposals to rectify age discrimination in public sector pension schemes

Supporting domestic abuse victims in the workplace

29. Government have responded to the consultation on workplace support for victims of domestic abuse and have announced they will:

    - consult further to explore steps that can be taken for victims of domestic abuse, for example, how they can exercise their existing rights more effectively;

    - raise awareness and provide support during the current coronavirus pandemic and in the longer-term; and

    - establish a working group of Government, employers, representatives of domestic abuse victims and trade unions to establish practical solutions and best practice in the workplace.

30. Additionally, Government have announced within the consultation outcome that they intend to consult further to encourage flexible working and make flexible working the default unless employers have a good reason not to. This measure was initially consulted on as part of the Good Work Plan reforms in 2019.

However, Government has recognised that this proposal would also benefit domestic abuse victims to give them additional flexibility during working hours to access the support services they may need.

Shortage Occupation List update

31. In March 2020, the Home Secretary commissioned the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) to review the occupations it had placed on its Shortage Occupation List. The County Council submitted information to the consultation, following this the MAC recommended that 'senior care workers' were added to the Shortage Occupation List, an addition that the County Council requested through the consultation.

32. However, in October 2020, Government decided not to immediately accept any of the recommendations put forward by the MAC. This was on the basis that they wanted to assess the impact of the new Points-Based Immigration System introduced on 1 January 2021 and how the UK labour market develops and recovers following COVID-19. We are disappointed in the Government's decision, particularly since we had firmly advocated the inclusion of the senior care worker to the Shortage Occupation List in our response to the consultation and considering anticipated future recruitment challenges as a consequence of COVID-19.

33. The Government's aim of the new Points Based Immigration System is to provide 'simple, effective and flexible arrangements for skilled workers from around the world to come to the UK through an employer-led system' (Gov.UK). A sponsor license is required by employers to hire employees from outside of the UK, and which the County Council already has in place. Through the new Points Based Immigration System those applying to work in the UK will need to meet a specific set of requirements to be able to score points. Visas will then be issued if enough points are gained.

34. EU and non-EU citizens applying for roles will need to demonstrate that they have a job offer from an approved sponsor, that the job offer is at the required skill level, and that they can speak English. In addition, different criteria are applied to include: the salary of the role, whether it is on the Shortage Occupation List and the level of qualifications held by the applicant.

35. The County Council will keep the position under review, and this will form part of further work which is ongoing to fully understand the impact of the EU Exit, whilst also taking in to account the recent rise of unemployment (Office for National Statistics) and the increase in applications received for roles advertised.

Update on the County Council's nationality profile and impact of EU Exit

36. The nationality profile of EU nationals for the County Council and Hampshire schools is presented in the paragraph below. These figures are estimated, as

prior to February 2018 an employee was unable to record their citizenship within the SAP database.

37. In January 2021, the estimated number of EU nationals employed on temporary and permanent contracts by the County Council was 366 and 436 in Hampshire schools. Regular communications have been published to EU colleagues to advise them that they will need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme to protect the rights they currently have in the UK.

38. The recruitment profile of EU Nationals across the County Council has not changed significantly during 2020 from when previous figures were reported to EHCC in March 2019. Across 2020, where nationality data was captured, approximately 4.5% of those recruited were EU nationals (59 employees), a slight increase from 3% (50 employees) in the previous year.

39. The County Council continues to be actively engaged in the information coming out from Government regarding the EU exit and the impact on our labour pool to ensure that we are able to access, secure and retain skilled people to deliver essential public services. A further update will be provided to EHCC in July 2021 as part of an update on the action within the Annual Workforce Report.

Consultation and Equalities

40. It is not envisaged that an Equalities Impact Assessment will be required for any of the updates included in this paper.

Conclusions

41. Updates on the matters covered by this paper will be supplied to EHCC as further details and clarity are provided.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but potentially impacts the County Council's workforce strategy.

Other Significant Links

Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
Title	Date
Policy and Legislation Update	9th March 2020
Pay, Policy and Legislation Update	9th July 2020

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents
The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document	Location
Interim Workforce Report 1 April - 30 September 2020	EHCC agenda item 11th March 2021
Office for National Statistics data	
Gov.UK - UK Points Based Immigration System: employer information	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. **Equality Duty**

   The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

   - Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);

   - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;

   - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

   Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

   - The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

   - Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

   - Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionally low.

2. **Equalities Impact Assessment:**

Equality objectives are not considered to be adversely affected by proposals in this report.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Employment in Hampshire County Council
Date:	11 March 2021
Title:	Interim Workforce Report - April to September 2020
Report From:	Jac Broughton

Contact: Jac Broughton, Assistant Director - HR and Organisation Development

1.   This paper introduces the Interim Workforce Report for April to September 2020; a six-month review of our organisational workforce data and pays specific attention to the emerging impact of COVID-19 on Hampshire County Council.

2.   EHCC are asked to:
   ● Note the content of the report in Annex One
   ● Review the COVID-19 specific implications that are presented in this covering paper
   ● Note the progress in relation to the actions and next steps contained in the 2019/20 Annual Workforce Report

Context

3.   The first Hampshire County Council's Interim Workforce Report, covering the period April to September 2020, can be seen in Annex 1. Within this paper where there are references to appendices these relate to those within Annex 1.

4.   The interim report has been produced by the HR+OD profession to formally monitor key workforce data and to review progress against previously agreed actions. The interim report includes the normal suite of data and analysis relating to our people that is published in the Annual Workforce Report and follows the same format as the recent Annual Workforce Report 2019/20 to reflect a typical employee life cycle.

5.   The interim report continues the more detailed analysis, at each stage of the employee life cycle, specifically in relation to Inclusion and Diversity as well as paying particular attention to the impact of COVID-19 on our people and services.

6.   An analysis of the organisational data has not shown significant change over the last six months in any area of reporting, however, does helpfully

start to identify insights that are likely to be linked to COVID-19. In addition, the report highlights work completed to provide Health and Wellbeing support across the organisation.

7. As well as the impact of COVID-19, the report details the County Council's response to the Black Lives Matter Movement and the work that has taken place with the BME Network.

8. The first half of this financial year has been far from normal because of the global Coronavirus pandemic, that said some important things remain constant for us as an organisation:

    - We continue to manage services to a high standard with a reduced headcount as compared to 2010.
    - We continue to have a high performing workforce evidenced through strong performance management.
    - We remain focused on good leadership.
    - We continue to have a keen focus on the inclusivity of our organisation, indeed, because of international racial tensions and the discriminative nature of the Coronavirus itself, our focus on inclusion and diversity has intensified.

9. In order to prioritise discussions at EHCC this paper specifically covers the COVID-19 findings.

Executive Summary

Impacts of COVID-19 – April 2020 – September 2020

Overview

10. Detailed in Annex 1 are the figures showing the number of staff furloughed across the reporting period April 2020 to September 2020. However, now that we are currently in another period of lockdown it felt important to detail further the up-to-date figures now available to us.

11. The data below shows the breakdown of staff on furlough across departments:

Number of staff placed on furlough across departments

Department	Number of staff placed on furlough prior to August	Number of staff on furlough end of August	Number of staff on furlough end of Sept	Number of staff on furlough end of Oct	Number of staff on furlough end of Nov	Number of staff on furlough end of Dec
Children's Services	139	99	93	89	42	71
CCBS	708	365	72	77	223	117
ETE					6	
Total	847	464	165	166	271	188

12.   The COVID-19 pandemic has required all County Council colleagues to change ways of working, rise to new challenges, and adapt to a fast moving, unprecedented situation. Results from a survey in October showed that 80% of staff said they had equipment needed to work from home in the longer term, up from 59% in June. 56% reported feeling more effective working from home, up from 38% in June. 60% felt comfortable in a County Council workplace, up from 52% in June.

13.   There was no change in people feeling comfortable about returning to County Council workplace (33% in June and in October) and there was a small increase in people enjoying working from home (65%, up from 62%).

14.   Areas of focus following the results continue around supporting staff with their mental health, which is an ongoing action from the Annual Workforce Report. This is documented further in paragraph 30. In October, 22% experienced low mental health, slightly up from 19% in June.

15.   62% feel they were able to take regular breaks, down from 69% and fewer staff felt they were keeping in touch with colleagues (down from 94% to 89%).

Attract

16.   Between the period April 2020 – September 2020 the Council (excluding schools) advertised circa 627 directly employed roles across all grades. This is a proportionate decrease from 2019/20 where 2,443 roles were advertised across the whole year. The decrease is not surprising in the context of COVID-19, particularly as data also shows that the number of leavers has reduced.

17.   10,527 applications were received, an average of 17 applications per role which is an increase from the average of 10 applications received per role in 2019/20. Again, this is not surprising as according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) the latest UK employment figures on 15 September 2020, revealed a rise in unemployment to a two year high of 4.1% (up from 3.9%).

18. During the first half of the reporting year, we have seen a slight reduction in the number of female applicants, again this can potentially be linked to COVID-19 with ONS reporting that over half of women have caring responsibilities, and we know that 'caring' has been an even more significant feature of life for many people in the first 6 months of this reporting year.

19. We have seen a 5% increase in applications received from applicants between the ages of 20 – 34, particularly in grades C-E. This increase can again potentially be linked to the global pandemic since there have been numerous reports about the impact of the virus on this age group and indeed on the sorts of work delivered at grades C-E. This is supported by the Office for National Statistics data that states that roles within hospitality and retail, which generally employ younger people, have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic which has led to large numbers of job losses and a potential increase in the pool of available talent for other roles.

20. Our data also shows a slight reduction in the number of applications being received from people declaring a disability. Again, this is perhaps not surprising considering the impact that COVID-19 has had on people with specific conditions that could be classified as disabilities. This is an area we will want to monitor to ensure that we don't experience any lasting reduction in applications from this particular talent pool.

Resource

21. During the pandemic Connect 2 Hampshire continues to play a fundamental role in the resourcing of County Council roles. Particularly an increase in demand has been seen for the roles of qualified social workers and administrative roles.

22. The number of people registering with Connect 2 Hampshire has increased too. The quality of applications received is also high, which has been attributed to people being made redundant from their roles and applying for temporary work. The increase in applications has been seen particularly for administrative roles, where there tended to be approximately 10 applications received per advert, this has increased to an average of 40 per role.

23. Less IT roles have been advertised due to projects being delayed and reprioritised and there has more recently been a reduction in the number of roles in Care being required as turnover has slowed. It is too early to say whether the slowing of turnover in this area directly links to COVID-19 and broader concerns about wider job availability, or whether as hoped, that the adoption of values-based recruitment particularly for care roles within HCC Care is having a positive impact on retention. This is an area we will continue to monitor as the reporting year progresses.

24. We have seen an increased demand, from the agency, for:
   - qualified social workers, with demand currently at circa 60 compared to an average of circa 30.
   - administrative workers, with demand currently at circa 60 compared to an average of circa 25.

   In both these instances there is a link to COVID-19 (can we say what specifically) and we continue to monitor.

25. Initially working from home had been a challenge for Connect 2 Hampshire. However, with the introduction of Microsoft Teams it has made it easier to contact hiring managers, more so than arranging face to face meetings. Challenges faced included managers arranging urgent interviews and responding to feedback requests for unsuccessful candidates.

   Onboard

26. We know that onboarding our staff has been particularly critical during the first half of the year with new starters in a great number of our roles no longer able to physically meet their new colleagues or managers. Unfortunately, we do not have any specific data to provide insight as to the impact that virtual induction has had compared to the more traditional face to face induction, however, anecdotally we know that managers and new staff have found it harder and have needed to invest more time in creating relationships and developing skills and knowledge of the organisation than in normal circumstances. Again, this is an area that we continue to monitor and are already providing additional support and guidance to managers taking on new staff in virtual circumstances.

   Develop

27. A planned launch later in 2020 of Microsoft Teams was brought forward to enable staff to work more effectively and efficiently remotely during the pandemic and the benefits of this have been seen also in the way we have been able to continue to develop our people, even though we have not been able to facilitate the bringing together of groups of people face to face.

28. In addition to ensuring that people had the information and skills needed to use the new IT functions available to them, two other specific themes for development in the first 6 months of the year have been inclusion and wellbeing, with wellbeing very specifically linked to COVID-19 and the situation in which our staff find themselves. Updates have regularly been provided to CMT on our well-being work however the below are examples of the work undertaken during this reporting period.

29. A Wellbeing site of pooled resources to make information more accessible was created because of the first lockdown, with the aim to support staff and their families through the COVID-19 pandemic. This has involved the

collating of wellbeing related information from departments in collaboration with Public Health England and Occupational Health and Wellbeing. Further engagement with staff has taken place through Yam Jams to include areas such as Sleep, Stress, Wellbeing, Resilience etc. In addition, Health Assured wellbeing speaker sessions took place to raise awareness of the ongoing benefits of the Employee Assistance Programme and the new app launched.

30. To provide further key information a set of employee and manager guides that provide focussed detail on support offered by assured organisations outside of the County Council have been designed with telephone numbers and web addresses. Appendix 2 shows page 1 of the support guidance for both staff and managers.

31. Whilst not specifically the purpose of this paper, EHCC may also be interested to see the development we have enabled in relation to inclusion. Following the Black Lives Matter Movement, we agreed to prioritise Race as it felt critically important that we listened and acted with a view to progressing at pace to improve the lived experiences of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues on a day-to-day basis.

32. Having considered several research articles and accounts from other organisations we know that the most effective means of understanding and addressing racism in organisations is to listen, talk and create new shared understanding. Annex 1 references the programme of Let's talk about….Race sessions which have been delivered over the last couple of months to educate managers on staff and to enable safe conversations about race.

33. The purpose of these sessions was to:
    • Improve the experience of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues within the organisation.
    • Support cultural change across the County Council.
    • Increase manager's confidence in being able to raise, discuss and where necessary 'manage' issues that they know or anticipate will be related to race.
    • Increase our people's awareness of cultural differences and their impact on the workplace based on their colleagues lived experiences within the County Council.
    • Help managers and people more widely to overcome the uncertainty of using different terminology.

34. Workforce Development has worked closely with the BME Staff Network to deliver focused Leadership and Management training sessions to members to support their development. Following this one-to-one mentoring has continued, on demand, for those that took part.

35.	Following Black History Month Directors' invited Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues to meet with them to share lived experiences both to celebrate positive stories but also learn from more difficult experiences.

36.	CMT agreed that our Inclusion and Diversity strategy, action plan and related policies and processes are reviewed, in partnership with our staff networks, to ensure they are meaningful, sufficiently robust and fit for purpose especially in the light of the Black Lives Matter context.

37.	The Leadership Development Programmes Firefly and the Transformative Leadership Programmes paused through lockdown and recommenced virtually in August. Recruitment of the next Transformative Leadership Programme cohorts will commence shortly, and this will be reported further in the Annual Workforce Report.

38.	The Hampshire Leaders Network has continued to meet virtually during the past six months with sessions focusing on strategic performance, inclusive leadership and Let's talk …. Race. This also includes senior management briefings, virtual breakfasts with the Chief Exec and joint CMT/DMT meetings.

39.	Apprenticeships are a key part of our development toolkit and COVID-19 has prevented the usual apprenticeship programme development and promotional activity, especially in the early part of the reporting year. Overall, by the middle of December we expect to have 100 new apprenticeship starts which is 55% lower than the same period of 2019.

40.	The good news is, despite COVID-19, most County Council apprentices on a programme have remained on a programme, which is testament to the apprentices, managers and teams supporting them, and the training providers who have adapted provision swiftly in response to COVID-19 measures.

Reward and Recognise

41.	This message feels even more important than when written in March. Never has the importance of saying 'thank you' been felt more profoundly across HCC than in this exceptional year we are having. There continue to be countless stories of performance through adversity, support for service users and each other and people generally 'going the extra mile'. All of which amount to huge levels of pride for the work that the entire workforce is delivering. Consideration is being given to how we can honour and recognise our shared achievements later in the reporting year.

42.	Reward for exceptional performance is typically through a Special Recognition Payment (SRP). Data for the full financial year of 2020/21 will

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be shown in the annual workforce report published next year as in previous years.

43.   During the first half of this year SRPs were awarded to staff mainly within Adults' Health and Care (1382 staff) and they were largely used as means of recognising the extra demands being placed on staff, i.e to cover absences and additional duties, during the period of COVID-19 response as opposed to our more traditional use of SRPs which tends to reward staff post event/delivery. A small number (92) of staff in other departments also received SRPs during this period for significant performance though not specifically linked directly to COVID-19. The total number of staff receiving an SRPs this year has significantly increased to 1,474 compared with 398 for the same period last year which is largely as a result of the use of SRPs in Adults' as described above.

Progress and Perform

44.   As in the previous section, the first and most important thing to say here is that throughout this difficult year people have continued to demonstrate high levels of commitment to the work of the council and to performance in their roles. The efforts and achievements of our staff group cannot be underestimated.

45.   In April it was recognised that departments with critical roles would need support through the pandemic. This was with additional pressures on their services where employees could not attend work due to reasons such as self-isolating, taking care of dependants or were unwell themselves. The Temporary Re-Designation Scheme was set up with many staff offering their help. Staff from across departments supported Adults' Health and Care through the first lockdown.   This re-designation scheme is something that the County Council's GOLD group has now decided to reactivate, and which will be in operation again from late January 2021 for as long as necessary. One key difference with this re-launch of the scheme will be an explicit ask of staff currently on Furlough to consider whether they have the skills to support in any areas of need with a view to returning to work.

46.   It was recognised through the pandemic that it was necessary to support staff in the workplace through a range of measures which were put in place. We have long managed performance against the delivery of outcomes and/or the achievement of key objectives rather than by attendance in the office and the pandemic has reinforced that, with managers continuing to measure performance against what is being delivered by their teams. We have provided toolkits and guidance to managers to help them shift their style and approach to support them as they have got used to new ways of working.

47.   A COVID-19 Self-assessment toolkit was launched in July to provide employees and managers with information and tools to help them assess

their risk of poorer outcomes of COVID-19. Through engagement with the BME Network a self-assessment was launched for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues alongside a self-assessment for other staff who felt particularly vulnerable for reasons, such as their age or an underlying health condition.

48.   Compared to the same period last year we have seen a decrease in performance and misconduct cases and whilst the specific rationale for this is unknown, this may be linked to new working arrangements and increased volumes of work for managers during the pandemic.

49.   Of the 43 resolved misconduct cases the majority (37%) were due to behavioural issues and 2 of these related to individuals wearing PPE, one was resolved by way of a formal warning and one is still ongoing.

50.   Appendix 3 focusses on COVID-19 related absences with data showing the highest sickness absence recorded for these absences was in April.

51.   Over the last six months a higher level of absence was attributed to 'Isolating – non-working' for female employees, showing that they were absent for a higher percentage than male colleagues (Appendix 4). However, this higher level of absence will predominantly be due to the following:

- they were clinically extremely vulnerable and could not attend the workplace.

- a higher number of female employees working in roles where it was not possible to work from home.

- they were self-isolating because they or a family member were symptomatic.

- caring responsibilities: whilst this has not specifically surfaced as a cause for concern through our staff surveys, we know that ONS figures documented in paragraph 4.5 report that over half of women have caring responsibilities, and we know that 'caring' has been an even more significant feature of life for many people in the first 6 months of this year.

52.   During Q1 and Q2 20/21 there were 19 new 'resolving workplace issue' cases across Council departments one of which related to the employer's duty of care for an individual during the pandemic. No matter how successful the organisation there are issues that prompt an employee to submit a 'grievance' through the Council's Resolving Workplace Issues policy.

Retain and Exit

53. Since the beginning of the financial year there have been 623 leavers which is a decrease in number of leavers given 2,027 left during the full year of 2019/2020. It is however, too early to say if this is a direct impact of COVID-19 or otherwise.

Conclusions

54. A great deal of work has been undertaken in departments, with the support of the HR and OD Department during the first half of the reporting year to support the organisation and its people cope with the implications of COVID-19.

55. Unsurprisingly this has meant that some of the actions (bullet pointed below) identified in the annual report have not progressed as far as hoped by the mid-year point, however, all remain on-going.

    - Consideration of attraction and resourcing approaches for the local labour market for both under 25s and those with disabilities.
    - Development and Implementation of an HR Data strategy during 2020/21.
    - The development of 'conflict resolution' with a view to implementing in the Council.

56. Interesting, the pandemic has changed the employment market conditions and we have seen a rise in applications from under 25s and a decrease in applications from those with a disability. This action will remain under review in conjunction with the development of the Inclusion Strategy and until such time as we are able to determine what our workplace will look like.

57. In terms of conflict resolution this remains important to us and we will continue to explore ways to incorporate the principles of this work into our recovery work and will provide updates as this work progresses.

58. Creating an interim report has enabled us to monitor progress and seek to identify trends and issues for the organisation. This has been particularly interesting during this reporting period.

59. The full annual report will be produced in 2021 for consideration by CMT and EHCC.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision: To note the content of the report and propose any additional next steps ahead of the publication of the Annual Workforce Report in 2021.

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
Title EHCC Annual Workforce Report	Date July 2020

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents **The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)**

Document	Location
Equality Act 2010 Office for National Statistics Census 2011	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. **Equality Duty**

   The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

   - Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);

   - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;

   - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

   Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

   - The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

   - Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

   - Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionally low.

2. **Equalities Impact Assessment:**

   Due regard to the Equality Duty has been paid whilst compiling this report. For individual actions/next steps EIAs will be completed accordingly in line with the responsibility under the Equality Act 2010.

Annex 1

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

OUR PEOPLE

An Interim Workforce Report – 1 April to 30 September 2020

Contents

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1.0   Executive Summary

1.1   This report provides a high-level overview of key workforce data (excluding schools) and the relevant trends to inform the Council's workforce strategies and priorities.

1.2   This six-month report provides data up to and including September 2020, with a comparison of data from March 2020. As in previous annual reports the format of the report starts with an overall summary ahead of the detail. The format of the detailed section of this report follows the 'employee lifecycle' as reflected below:

Attract
Be an inclusive employer of choice

Resource
Facilitate all available talent to apply

Onboard
Make sure our people are welcomed and inducted

Develop
Support our people to grow, develop and learn

Reward and recognise
Ensure the efforts of our people are recognised

Progress and perform
Have regular conversations about performance

Retain and exit
Encourage our people to stay and learn from those who leave

People strategy

1.3   The first half of this financial year has been far from normal because of the global Coronavirus pandemic, that said some important things remain constant for us as an organisation:

- We continue to manage services to a high standard with a reduced headcount as compared to 2010.

- We continue to have a high performing workforce evidenced through strong performance management.

- We remain focused on good leadership.

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- We continue to have a keen focus on the inclusivity of our organisation, indeed, because of international racial tensions and the discriminative nature of the Coronavirus itself, our focus on inclusion and diversity has intensified.

1.4 The below table shows the make-up of the organisation and the minimal changes that we have experienced in the past 6 months.

A high level review of the changes from April 2020 compared with September 2020

		April 2020	September 2020	
Headcount		12,946	12,795	↓
Full-time employee		9,999	9,959	↓
Part-time	Male	729	710	↓
	Female	5,999	5,832	↓
Females (total)		9,997	9,744	↓
Under 25		588	561	↓
Over 55		3,472	3,499	↑
Declared ethnicity		95%	95%	=
Females in senior roles		57%	51%	↓
BME in senior roles		2.73%	2.3%	↓
Gender pay gap		17.1%	Data published in March 2021	
Overall external turnover		15.08%	13.1%	↓

2.0 OUR ORGANISATION – An Overview of the last six months

2.1 As already noted, COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the County Council as it will have every organisation across the UK, indeed the globe. As well as providing a general overview of our workforce, this report provides statistical data to show the direct impact COVID-19 has had on our staff over the last six months.

2.2 For furloughed employees, the Government paid 80% of their income up to £2,500 per month; however, the County Council continued to pay the difference between the government contribution and the employees' normal salary; i.e. they continued to received their normal pay whilst the County Council was able to be re-imbursed for 80% of this. Since the start of the scheme there have been 847 employees placed on furlough across CCBS and Children's Services. In August 383 had returned to work and by the end of September 682 had returned to work with the remaining 165 still on furlough.

2.3 Of course, the pandemic has also had a direct impact on the services we deliver for the residents of Hampshire. This report will not seek to cover these organisational impacts in detail, however, to not include reference to these as part of the context of the past 6 months would be remiss. Examples of those impacts include:

Adults' Health and Care

2.4 Staff within Adults' Health and Care (AHC) worked from home or virtually where possible, however, in some cases particularly as lockdown was eased there was a need for the return to the workplace. In HCC Care however, there has clearly been no scope to work remotely due to the nature of the role. Other staff moved working location to Nursing and Residential homes when day centres were closed because of COVID-19.

2.5 At the outset of the first lockdown AHC developed proportionate, however, effective ways to incentivise staff to ensure there was sufficient capacity/capability. Specifically, the 7-day working required by the newly established Welfare Team, the incentives to try and encourage HCC Care staff do more shifts where possible and the 7-day working in the Reablement team to support hospitals. There has also been significant engagement with the Trade Unions given the very dynamic environment staff have been working within and the natural concerns around issues related to COVID-19 e.g. sickness absence and personal protective equipment.

Children's Services

2.6 Staff within Children's Services have also been working from home where possible and the use of virtual and face to face working as transitioned over the 6-month period in accordance with changes to national guidance and restrictions. Some staff, particularly those working in children's residential and as school escorts, have continued to attend the workplace throughout the pandemic. To ensure the resilience of residential provision 3 homes have been temporarily closed and staff have been relocated to consolidate staffing across the remaining homes. These strategies have enabled the department in the main to continue business as usual, albeit working differently.

2.7 As noted above the department has been able to access some funding through the furlough scheme in areas where work has diminished as a result of the pandemic. This has focused upon some staff in Hampshire Music Service and others employed to work in areas such as study centres and outdoor education. The pandemic has brought some significant operational challenges including in the provision of home to school transport, support to

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schools and early years and school admissions processes. This has required significant agility, creativity, and flexibility from the workforce.

Community, Culture, Business and Services (CCBS)

2.8   During the pandemic, staff within CCBS have either worked from home/virtually where possible or from their normal place of work (circa 70%). This has largely been necessitated by the nature of their role and the diverse service provision, a significant proportion of which is front line.

2.9   Where appropriate and in direct response to the government restrictions placed on some services, eligible staff were furloughed under the Governments Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. As restrictions eased enabling services to re-open and schools were opened to all year groups from September 2020, the numbers of staff furloughed reduced significantly with staff returning to either their normal place of work or alternative duties where vacant posts exist. The latter of which was particularly prevalent within the catering profession which is recruitment 'hot spot'. Consequently, HC3S have sought to successfully redeploy and redesignate catering assistants to other catering activities and roles to retain this capacity and mitigate against any potential redundancies.

2.10   Significant guidance, infrastructure and leadership support has been put in place to support staff to adapt to new ways of working, whilst supporting their resilience, mental health and wellbeing and seeking to continuously drive high performance.

Corporate Services

2.11   Most staff in Corporate Services support our front-line services. From the beginning and continuing through the pandemic, most of our staff have been working from home as opposed to their normal office base. Performance has been consistently high and with the aid of IT, all activities / programmes of work have progressed well. Perhaps unsurprisingly, recruitment and retention challenges have reduced – less staff have been leaving and a higher number of applications have been received for the roles advertised during the last half year, likely due to the wider employment landscape. Increased efforts have been made in the context of leadership and managing performance in a virtual way, a key part of which has been to consider the health and wellbeing of staff and how to continue to get the best from them.

Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE)

2.12   It is important to recognise that the majority of frontline services have continued throughout the pandemic with approx. 60% of staff continuing to work from their normal office location given working from these locations remains a critical component of our service delivery. Services have had to adapt to different ways of working in response to restrictions and County Council and Government guidance. Despite this, performance has remained high and critical universal services have continued to be delivered.

2.13   The departments Driving Change programme, supported by the senior leadership team, has placed increased efforts on the leadership and management of our people in a virtual way to aid productivity, whilst helping people to maintain their mental wellbeing and a healthy work life balance during a period of unprecedented change.

2.14   This has been underpinned by the launch of ETE's Values which are a blueprint for how our people go about their work, how they treat each other, and our stakeholders and partners and how we go about our business. It will form a critical foundation for future recruitment, but also become an integral part of our daily work and feature in valuing performance discussions, service planning, and our work on inclusion and diversity and staff development and wellbeing.

2.15   **Trade Unions** are a consistent presence in our organisation, and we have continued to work closely with them throughout the pandemic in the shared best interest of our service users and the staff who provide those services.

2.16   **Staff Networks** likewise remain a critical part of our organisation, during the pandemic they have pulled together to support various well-being initiatives as well as directly contributing to various risk assessment activities that have sought to both keep staff safe and ensure continued delivery of key services to the residents of Hampshire.

2.17   In the last 6 months we have also seen an increase in the number of Staff Networks with the approval of a fourth network, the 'Carers and working parents' network.

Black Lives Matter

2.18   The Black Lives Matter movement has impacted our staff directly and this report will seek to explore some of the ways in which this is materialising.

2.19   Equally, the issue of racial inequality will have had a direct impact on our service users and indeed will be influencing the way we think about our services and how they are offered and accessed by the residents of Hampshire. This report will not seek to cover the detailed organisational impact, or the work being undertaken to address this however to not explicitly call out this context for the wider organisation would again be remiss.

2.20   Following communications from the Chief Executive to all staff affirming the County Council's support for the principles behind the Black Lives Matter movement, a significant response was received from staff across the County Council, thanking the Chief Executive for his communication, sharing stories and experiences both positive and negative.

2.21   This prompted further action which was agreed by the Corporate Management Team in July to "Develop tools to support the organisation to talk openly about protected characteristics". This work is detailed further in the report.

2.22   Of specific import is the fact that CMT have commissioned a review of the organisation's Inclusion Strategy, and the associated work programme, policies and processes. This covers not only our staff but also the services we provide and accessibility from a service user perspective.

**3.0   OUR PEOPLE – An Overview Summary of the Employee recovery surveys and the overall workforce data**

3.1   Before we provide an overview of our people from a data perspective, we are able to provide an overview of how many of our people are feeling during the first half of this year through the two 'engagement surveys' we ran in June and October. Although it should be noted that they do not reflect the views of our frontline staff who we engaged with for their views in different ways.

3.2   The COVID-19 pandemic has required all County Council colleagues to change ways of working, rise to new challenges, and adapt to a fast moving, unprecedented situation. The June 2020 COVID-19 Recovery Employee Survey was designed to help the County Council to understand the impact of these changes and thereby inform both immediate and longer-term 'recovery' planning, with a particular focus on:

- experiences of a changed working environment and conditions
- the level and range of concerns about returning to work in a 'usual' workplace setting.
- how mode of travel may change when colleagues return to work; and

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- how the County Council could further support colleagues to work safely and effectively in the coming months.

3.3 A follow-up survey was undertaken in October 2020 which aimed to track progress against the same areas, as well as understanding:

- support needed for continuing to work from home

- views on wearing face coverings at work

- progress made in distributing equipment to colleagues; and

- the value colleagues place on measures implemented to make County Council workplaces 'COVID secure'.

3.4 Results from the October survey showed that 80% said they had equipment needed to work from home in the longer term, up from 59% in June. 56% reported feeling more effective working from home, up from 38% in June. 60% felt comfortable in a County Council workplace, up from 52% in June.

3.5 There was no change in people feeling comfortable about returning to County Council workplace (33% in June and in October) and there was a small increase in people enjoying working from home (65%, up from 62%).

3.6 Areas of focus following the results continue around supporting staff with their mental health, which is an ongoing action from the Annual workforce report. In October, 22% of staff experienced low mental health, slightly up from 19% in June.

3.7 62% feel they were able to take regular breaks, down from 69% and fewer staff felt they were keeping in touch with colleagues (down from 94% to 89%). Once the results were available, they were acted on by Directors by increased communications emphasising the need to take breaks and keep in touch with colleagues.

Workforce data

3.8 The graph and table below show a comparison of our workforce by grade, reflected both in terms of 'Headcount' (each individual person) and full time equivalent (FTE) between 2010 and September 2020.

Workforce headcount and FTE
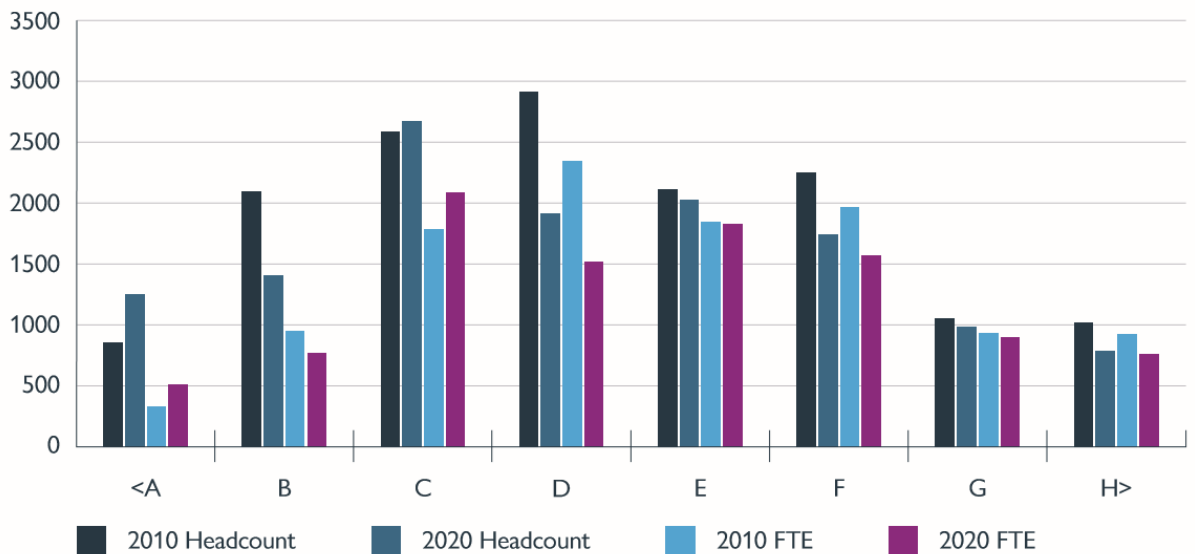
Workforce headcount and FTE

Grade	Headcount			Full-time employees		
	2010	2020	% Change	2010	2020	% Change
Below A	90	4	-95.6%	40.3	2.9	-92.8%
A	758	1,239	63.5%	285.4	507.9	78.0%
B	2,095	1,405	-32.9%	954.5	773.7	-18.9%
C	2,586	2,677	3.5%	1,786.4	2,092.8	17.2%
D	2,915	1,924	-34.0%	2,346.5	1,520.1	-35.2%
E	2,114	2,031	-3.9%	1,847.3	1,828.6	-1.0%
F	2,249	1,741	-22.6%	1,968.8	1,568.8	-20.3%
G	1,052	983	-6.6%	937.7	879.4	-4.3%
H and above	1,024	791	-22.8%	924.0	766.8	-17.0%
Total	14,883	12,795	-14.0%	11,090.9	9,959.0	-10.2%

Note: the table above includes staff employed on the EHCC grading structure as well as staff (circa 4%) paid on other terms e.g. School Teachers Pay / Soulbury terms and conditions).

3.9   This mid-year report will seek only to call out changes of note or that might seek to provide organisational insight and support decision making in the second half of the year.

3.10   As noted in the annual report, our overall workforce remains below the levels of 2010, and is currently circa 10% lower than 10-years ago. Of note is the continued reduction in H+ grades with a further reduction of circa 10% in the first half of the year.

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Diversity

3.11   We continue to encourage employees to declare their personal diversity information further communications will be published for us to reduce the gaps in the data, however it remains at their discretion whether they do so. For those not wishing to disclose their data they have an option to record 'prefer not to say' which we encourage them to use to support further confidence in our data.

Gender

3.12   The graph below reflects our headcount by gender and full/part time working profile as of September 2020. As previously reported our workforce remains predominantly female with a significant proportion of that workforce also being part-time.

3.13   This reaffirms the importance of our pro-active considerations as to how best to attract and retain staff who may require part time or flexible working. Indeed, the past 6 months have shown what it is possible to deliver in more flexible ways, without compromising on performance, and this will continue to be a feature of conversations across the organisation through the remainder of this financial year. A breakdown of the percentages is shown in Appendix 1.

Gender representation across grade, full-time and part-time roles
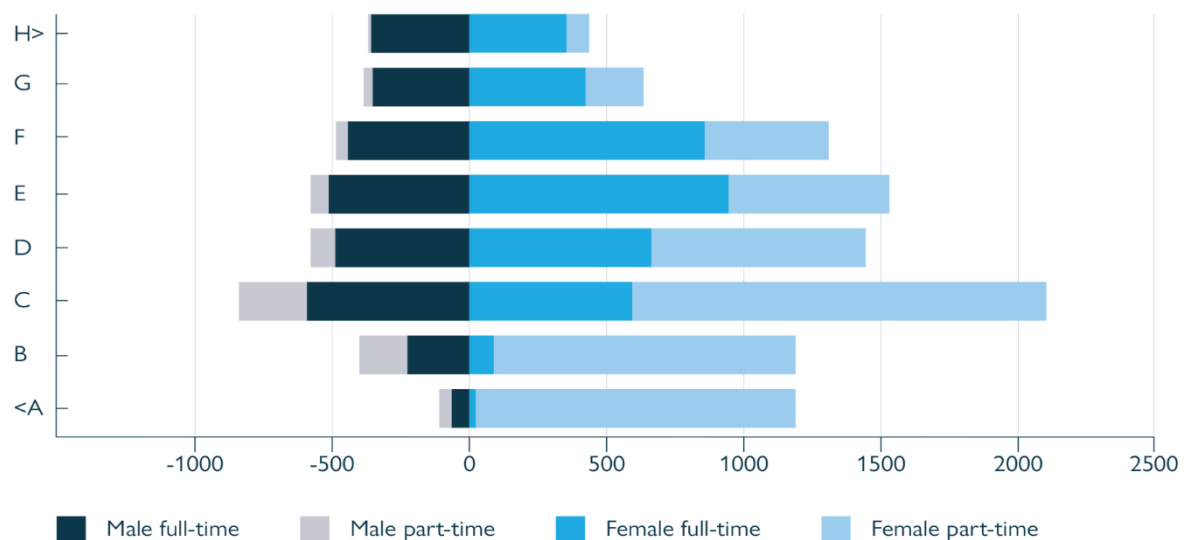
Ethnicity

3.14   We have already touched upon the profound impact that the BLM movement has had on our staff and following communications from the Chief Executive

to all staff, which triggered a significant outpouring of support (along with a small number of challenges), from our staff. Since these responses work has been underway to further educate managers and staff through the Let's talk…Race sessions. In addition, information has been published throughout Black History Month and Directors have met with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues to learn more about their experience of working at the County Council so that they could listen and learn from what is being said.

3.15   The workforce ethnicity profile is made up of 86.66% staff who classify themselves as White (White British or White Other) and 8.14% classify as being in one of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups. This continues to represent a small (less than 1%) increase in our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workforce from 2019 and March 2020.

3.16   The remaining 5.20% of staff have either not updated their personal information or have chosen not to declare their ethnicity. Following communications across the organisation this has further decreased by circa 0.5% since March 2020 – a marginal improvement.

3.17   The below table shows the ethnicity of our workforce across grades.

Headcount percentage of ethnicity of the workforce across grades

	<A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H>	Total
White	8.80%	9.91%	17.04%	13.23%	13.36%	11.90%	6.81%	5.61%	86.29%
BAME	0.62%	0.55%	2.84%	1.10%	1.45%	1.09%	0.31%	0.18%	8.04%
No data provided	0.30%	0.52%	1.04%	0.70%	1.06%	0.62%	0.56%	0.39%	5.67%
Headcount	9.71%	10.98%	20.92%	15.04%	15.87%	13.61%	7.68%	6.18%	100.00%

3.18   There is no significant change in past 6 months, which is not surprising. As stated in the Annual report our ethnicity representation is above the ethnicity representation in the Hampshire area (excluding Portsmouth and Southampton) which is currently 5% (ONS Census 2011). However, it will be interesting to compare this data with the next Census figures.
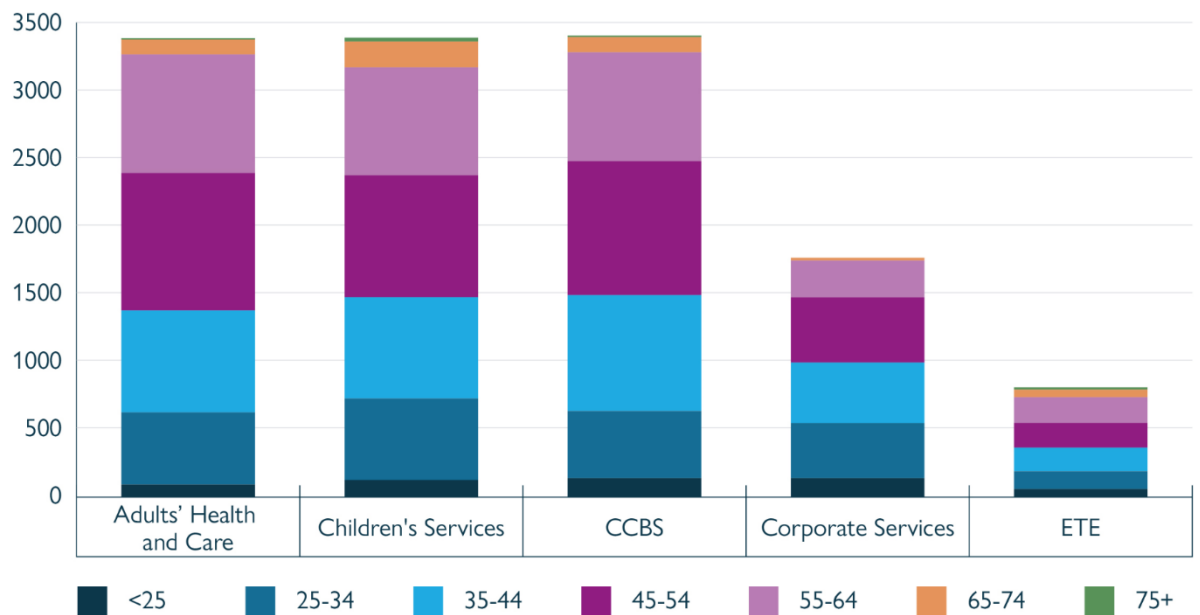
Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workforce representation trend
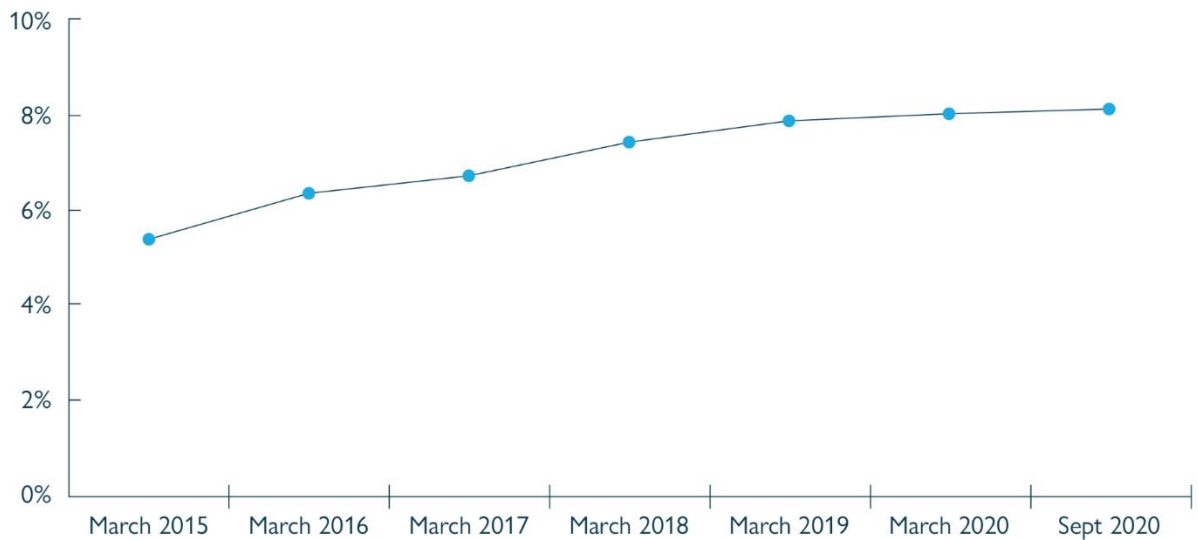
Age

3.19 The below graph shows our age profile across the Council.

Age profile across departments

3.20 We reported in our Annual Report an interest in following the age demographics of workforce over time since our workforce tends to be over the age of 35, particularly we noted an interest in the percentage of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workforce under the age of 35 (in that it was lower for this group than any other) and this continues to be a point of interest, although there has been a slight increase in Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation in this age bracket in the first half of the year.

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Disability

3.21 The chart below shows that the level of declared disability has increased since March 2015, with 3.77% (482) of employees now having recorded themselves as having a disability. This represents an increase from March 2020.

Declared disability workforce representation trend
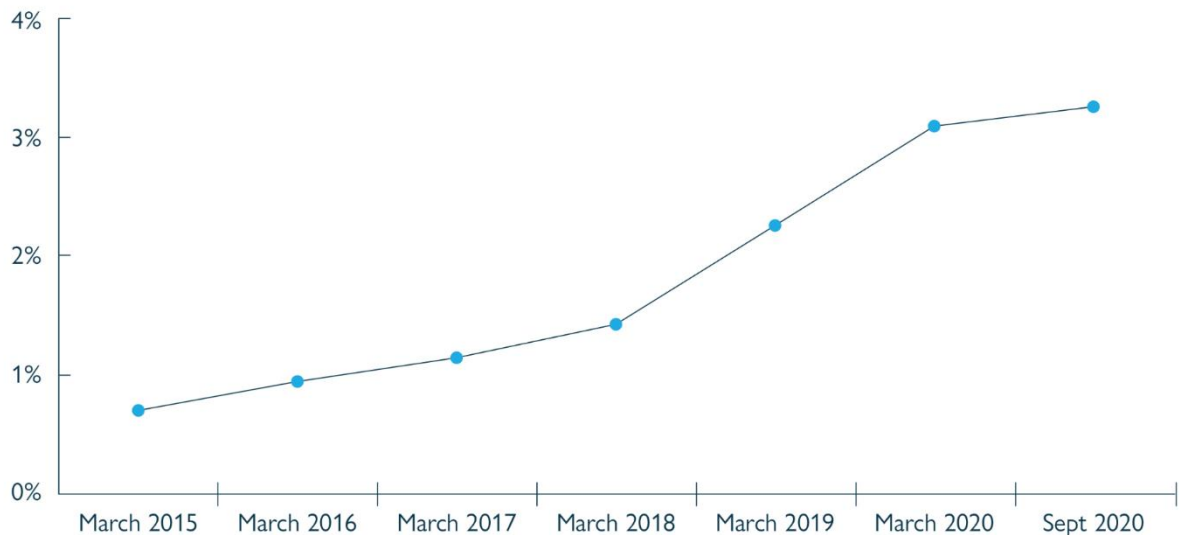
EMPLOYEE LIFE-CYCLE

4.0 Attract – Being an inclusive employer of choice.

4.1 Between the period April 2020 – September 2020 the Council (excluding schools) advertised circa 627 directly employed roles across all grades. This is a proportionate decrease from 2019/20 where 2,443 roles were advertised across the whole year. The decrease is not surprising in the context of COVID-19, particularly as in paragraph 10.2 it shows that the number of leavers has reduced in this period.

4.2 10,527 applications were received, an average of 17 applications per role which is an increase from the average of 10 applications received per role for the whole of 2019/20. Again, this is expected as according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) the latest UK employment figures on 15 September 2020, revealed a rise in unemployment to a two year high of 4.1% (up from 3.9%).

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4.3   Further analysis shows that circa 50% of applicants are shortlisted for interview or assessment which is in line with previously reported percentage.

Diversity of our applicants

4.4   59.28% of applications were received by female applicants and circa 62.16% of applicants shortlisted or called for assessment were female which is a slight reduction from reported numbers last year, however, still demonstrates that we remain more attractive as an employer in the female labour market.

Number of applications received and shortlisted

Gender	Application		Shortlisted	
Male	6,240	59.28%	3,311	62.16%
Female	3,607	34.26%	1,719	32.27%
No data provided	680	6.46%	297	5.58%
Total	10,527	100.00%	5,327	100.00%

4.5   Although slight, it is possible this reduction in female applicants could be attributed to the fact that the ONS report that over half of women have caring responsibilities, and we know that 'caring' has been an even more significant feature of life for many people in the first 6 months of this year.

4.6   48.52% of applications were received by applicants aged between 20 – 34 years of age, and predominantly these applications were received across roles graded C to E. This is an increase of 5% from March and again could be linked to the global pandemic since there have been numerous reports about the impact of the virus on this age range and indeed on the sorts of work delivered at grades C-E. This is supported by the Office for National Statistics data that states that roles within hospitality and retail which generally employee younger people have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic which has led to large numbers of job losses.

4.7   The ethnicity breakdown of applicants shows that 83.24% of applications received were from white applicants and 13% from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups with 3.75% of applicants choosing not to disclose their ethnicity at the application stage of the recruitment. This is broadly in line with the figures reported in the Annual report.

4.8   In terms of shortlisting, 84.17% of those shortlisted were white applicants and 12.33% from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups with 3.49% choosing

not to disclose their ethnicity. Again, this is broadly in line with data reported in the annual report.

Number of applications received and shortlisted with ethnicity

Ethnicity	Application		Shortlisted	
BAME	1,369	13.00%	657	12.33%
No data provided	395	3.75%	186	3.49%
White	8,763	83.24%	4,484	84.17%
Total	**10,527**	**100.00%**	**5,327**	**100.00%**

4.9   Of the total number (10,527) of applications received 5.91% declared a disability. Of those applicants shortlisted (5,327), 7.26% declared a disability. This would imply that during the pandemic we have not been attracting as many applicants with disabilities as we did when compared to last year and that our attraction rates for disabled candidates remains considerably below the known national representation. Again, this is not surprising considering the impact that COVID-19 has had on people with specific conditions that could be classified as disabilities.

4.10   Of the 627 advertised roles in April to September 2020, 495 (4.7%) of the applicants were internal, this has reduced from 9% in March suggesting that staff are choosing to remain in their current roles at this current time. Internal applicants also make up 6.6% of those shortlisted.

4.11   The roles which have been advertised continue to reflect the full range of services the Council delivers. Departmental workforce data tells us that the profile of recruitment 'hot spots' remains the same as in recent years, including, for example, care assistants, nurses, cooks, catering assistants and social workers. Adults' Health and Care advertised the largest number of roles in the last 6 months, however the restrictions placed on schools to transition to virtual learning, albeit with some specific exceptions defined by government during the first national lock-down, significantly impacted on the demand for catering assistants as fewer children were physically attending school.

4.12   In summary, where roles have been advertised the number of applications received has increased, this has particularly been seen in administrative roles. We have also seen that roles which have previously been hard to fill such as Educational Psychologists have been somewhat more easily filled, it is unclear at this stage if this is linked to the pandemic. However, whilst we

have received more applications for some roles our areas of recruitment difficulty in other areas remain consistent.

5.0 **Resource – Facilitate all available talent to apply**

5.1 Typical resourcing options available include recruitment of permanent or fixed-term employees, promotion or movement within and across departments, deployment of agency workers, casual workers and external contractors or consultants.

5.2 In regard to vacancies advertised by the County Council for permanent and fixed term contracts Nurses are still proving problematic to recruit and this can be attributed to it taking at least 3 years to qualify as a nurse which has created a competitive recruitment market. There are two areas that remain difficult to recruit to from an adult social work perspective, these are qualified social workers for older persons in the North/North east area and the Hospital teams across the County. Experienced children's social workers also continue to be a challenging area in terms of attraction, with a national shortage in this area. However, recruitment to the Children's Service Graduate Entry Training Scheme for children's social workers has continued successfully during the pandemic and overall substantive vacancies for children's social workers continues to decrease. The introduction of a market supplement for residential care workers at Swanwick Lodge at the start of the year has supported increased attraction to roles in this area, although overall resourcing of children's residential homes remains a challenge. Administrative roles continue to be easier to resource across the County Council and these positions have become even more attractive to applicants during the pandemic.

5.3 Another way in which we resource our workforce is to provide 'acting up' roles, secondments, and promotions. During the last 6 months there have been a total of 394 instances of people securing such roles. This figure is expected as over the full year 2019/20 this figure was 703.

5.4 During the pandemic Connect 2 Hampshire continues to play a fundamental role in resourcing for the County Council. Particularly an increase in demand has been seen for the roles of qualified social workers and administrative roles during the pandemic. For social work this is linked to an increase in demand upon services as a result of COVID-19.

5.5   The demand from people registering with Connect 2 Hampshire has increased too. The quality of applications received has improved, which has been attributed to people being made redundant from their roles and applying for temporary work. The increase in applications has been seen particularly for administrative roles, where there tended to be approximately 10 applications received per advert, this has increased to an average of 40 per role.

5.6   Less IT roles have been advertised due to projects being delayed and reprioritised and there has more recently been a reduction in the number of roles in Care being required as turnover has slowed, it is hoped that a reason that retention has improved is following the adoption of values based recruitment particularly for care roles within HCC Care. This could be attributed to a change in the way roles are recruited, with better responses to Care Assist adverts being received.

5.7   There is currently a demand for approximately 57 agency Qualified Social Workers, whereas the average demand tends to be approximately 30. These roles take longer to fill due to the national demand for Qualified Social Workers. There are currently 61 Administrative vacancies to fill as opposed to approximately 25. This demand is impacted by COVID-19 as the vacancies are predominantly for the Track and Trace project. Administrative roles are quicker to recruit to as they can be filled directly by Connect 2 Hampshire.

5.8   Working from home has been a key challenge for Connect 2 Hampshire initially. However, with the introduction of Microsoft Teams it has made it easier to contact hiring managers, more so than arranging face to face meetings. Challenges faced include managers arranging urgent interviews and responding to feedback requests for unsuccessful candidates.

5.9   In preparation for the EU Exit, each department has considered the roles that may be impacted because of a potentially reduced labour pool and any mitigations that could be put in place. In March 2020, the Home Secretary commissioned the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) to review the occupations it had placed on its Shortage Occupation List. The County Council submitted information to the consultation, following this the MAC recommended that 'senior care workers' were added to the Shortage Occupation List, an addition that the County Council requested through the consultation.

5.10   In October 2020, the Government decided not to immediately accept any of the recommendations put forward by the MAC with a view of assessing the impact of the new Points-Based Immigration System and how the UK labour

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market develops and recovers following COVID-19. We are disappointed in the Government's decision, particularly since we had firmly advocated the inclusion of the senior care worker to the Shortage Occupation List in our response to the consultation and in light of anticipated future recruitment challenges as a consequence of COVID-19.

5.11 Following the rise of unemployment detailed in paragraph 4.2 and a rise in applications received for roles advertised within the County Council the position will be kept under review and this will form part of further work which is ongoing to fully understand the impact that the EU Exit may have on the County Council which is an action from the annual workforce report.

Onboard

6.0   Onboard – Making sure people are welcomed and inducted.

6.1 If anything, since April 2020 onboarding has become an even more critical phase in the employee life cycle since it reflects how an employee is welcomed to the organisation. Clearly in the past we have largely welcomed new employees 'in person'.

6.2 In 2019/2020 there were 2,059 new starters, however within the six-month period of April to September 2020 this has reduced to 610 permanent and fixed term employees joining the County Council.

6.3 Onboarding through the pandemic has been challenging for new employees and managers. Feedback suggests that Microsoft Teams has been a key element of a successful virtual induction as new employees can visually meet the team and be shown documents and processes.

6.4 Work continues on the corporate induction with updated e-learning modules being developed.

6.5 A review of the virtual induction has also commenced as part of the People and Organisational Health and Effectiveness Process workstream to consider whether it is fit for purpose in our current virtual ways of working and to determine areas for improvement.

7.0 **Develop – Supporting our people to grow, develop and learn.**

7.1 Our investment in the development of our people has remained throughout the challenging first 6 months of this reporting year.

7.2 A planned launch later in 2020 of Microsoft Teams was brought forward to enable staff to work more effectively and efficiently remotely during the pandemic and the benefits of this have been seen also in the way we have been able to continue to develop our people, even though we have not been able to facilitate the bringing together of groups of people face to face.

7.3 Two specific themes for development for the first 6 months of the year have been Inclusion and Wellbeing.

7.4 **Inclusion:** A large focus of this half of the financial year has been on inclusion across the organisation by increasing awareness and understanding of cultural differences and their impact in the workplace.

7.5 To coincide with Black History Month the Chief Executive communicated by video message to staff about the County Council's position on racism and how as an organisation we will be taking the opportunity and commitment to take inclusion and diversity forward.

7.6 This message was followed by Let's talk….Race sessions which were delivered in October with a view of this being extended to other protected characteristics in due course. Feedback received indicates that those attended felt inspired by the speakers and there was a consistent view that those who attended wanted to be ambassadors of change in their Departments.

7.7 **Wellbeing:** An important focus has understandably been on wellbeing and supporting staff with new ways of working and providing them with information. Therefore, there is a continued approach of promoting the information available. In addition to this, further research is taking place into best practices around digital wellbeing and virtual working and engagement

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with staff and staff networks on experiences of 'isolation' to better understand issues.

7.8   A Wellbeing site of pooled resources to make information more accessible was created because of the first lockdown, with the aim to support staff and their families through the COVID-19 pandemic. This has involved the collating of wellbeing related information from departments in collaboration with Public Health England and Occupational Health and Wellbeing. Further engagement with staff has taken place through Yam Jams to include areas such as Sleep, Stress, Wellbeing, Resilience etc. In addition, Health Assured wellbeing speaker sessions took place to raise awareness of the ongoing benefits of the Employee Assistance Programme and the new app launched.

7.9   Work Force Development has developed two new initiatives for virtual delivery to Managing Remote Teams and Organisational Resilience. Managing Remote Teams will commence in December and will be programmed to run throughout 2021.

7.10   To provide further key information a set of employee and manager guides that provide focussed detail on support offered by assured organisations outside of the County Council have been designed with telephone numbers and web addresses. This will enable those employees without IT access to also be able to access the information. Appendix 2 shows page 1 of the support guidance for both staff and managers.

7.11   The Leadership Development Programmes Firefly and the Transformative Leadership Programmes paused through lockdown and recommenced virtually in August. Recruitment of the next Transformative Leadership Programme cohorts will commence shortly, and this will be reported further in the annual workforce report.

7.12   The Hampshire Leaders Network has continued to meet virtually during the past six months with sessions focusing on strategic performance, inclusive leadership and Let's talk…Race. This also includes senior management briefings, virtual breakfasts with the Chief Exec and joint CMT/DMT meetings.

7.13   Apprenticeships are a key part of our development toolkit and there have been 40 new apprenticeship starts between April and September 2020. The majority of those starts have been in the month of September. By the middle of December, we project these figures to rise to 100 starts, which will be 55% less than in the same period in 2019. COVID-19 has prevented the usual

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apprenticeship programme development and promotional activity, especially in the early part of the financial year, which has impacted new starts.

7.14 The good news is, despite COVID-19, most County Council apprentices on a programme have remained on a programme, which is testament to the apprentices, managers and teams supporting them, and the training providers who have adapted provision swiftly in response to COVID-19 measures.

7.15 Over the summer the apprenticeship team announced, the County Council had started its 1000th apprentice on a levy funded apprenticeship programme. All involved are absolutely delighted in achieving this milestone and are currently working on a 'good news story' that will be publicised internally and externally, demonstrating the County Council's investment and commitment in its employees.

8.0 **Reward and Recognise – Ensuring the efforts of our people are recognised.**

8.1 This message feels even more important than when written in March. Never has the importance of saying 'thank you' been felt more profoundly across the County Council than in this exceptional year we are having. There continue to be countless stories of performance through adversity, support for service users and each other and people generally 'going the extra mile'. These cannot be captured numerically but are no less rich in their organisational value.

8.2 Reward for exceptional performance is typically through a Special Recognition Payment (SRP). Data for the full financial year of 2020/21 will be shown in the annual workforce report published next year as in previous years.

8.3 During the first half of this year SRPs were awarded to staff mainly within Adults' Health and Care (1382 staff) and they were largely used as means of recognising the extra demands being placed on staff, i.e to cover absences and additional duties, during the period of COVID-19 response as opposed to our more traditional use of SRPs which tends to reward staff post event/delivery. A small number (92) of staff in other departments also received SRPs during this period for significant performance though not specifically linked directly to COVID-19. The total number of staff receiving an SRP this year has significantly increased to 1,474 compared with 398 for the

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same period last year which is largely as a result of the use of SRPs in Adults' as described above.

8.4   The Gender Pay Gap figures for the County Council will be published on 30 March 2021 in line with the statutory requirements.

8.5   The September figures continue to show that most of our highest earners (top 5%) are white with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic representation in this group below the profile of our representative area. Priorities within this space will be determined as part of the Inclusion Strategy which is currently being developed.

8.6   Our data tells us that of our top 5% of earners, those with disabilities are representative of our wider workforce profile and again this has not changed since March 2020.

9.0   Progress and Perform – Having regular robust conversations about performance to support growth and meet the needs of the business.

9.1   As in the previous section, the first and most important thing to say here is that throughout this difficult year people have continued to demonstrate high levels of commitment to the work of the council and to performance in their roles. The efforts and achievements of our staff group cannot be underestimated.

9.2   In April it was recognised that Departments with critical roles would need support through the pandemic. This was with additional pressures on their services where employees could not attend work due to reasons such as self-isolating, taking care of dependants or were unwell themselves. The Temporary Re-Designation Scheme was set up with many staff offering their help. Staff from across departments supported Adults' Health and Care through the first lockdown.

9.3   It was recognised through the pandemic that it was necessary to support staff in the workplace through a range of measures which were put in place. We have long managed performance against the delivery of outcomes and/or the

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achievement of key objectives rather than by attendance in the office and the pandemic has reinforced that, with managers continuing to measure performance against what is being delivered by their teams. We have provided toolkits and guidance to managers to help them shift their style and approach to support them as they have got used to new ways of working.

9.4   A COVID-19 Self-assessment toolkit was launched in July to provide employees and managers with information and tools to help them assess their risk of poorer outcomes of COVID-19. Through engagement with the BME Network a self-assessment was launched for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues alongside a self-assessment for other staff who felt particularly vulnerable for reasons, such as their age or an underlying health condition.

9.5   Managers tackle poor performance and misconduct issues in accordance with the Council's disciplinary policies. During Q1 and Q2 20/21 there were 16 new performance cases which is 0.13% of the total workforce and 33 new conduct cases (0.26%) across Council departments. Compared to the same period last year we have seen a decrease in performance and misconduct cases and whilst the specific rationale for this is unknown, this may be linked to new working arrangements and increased volumes of work for managers during the pandemic. In Q1 and Q2 2019/20 there were 26 new performance cases and 71 new misconduct cases.

9.6   In a high performing organisation such as ours we would not expect to see high numbers of formal performance management cases and of course our policies support the informal resolution of issues, including performance, where it is possible to do so.

9.7   Members of staff who are being managed because of poor performance will have their incremental progression withheld however numbers are not yet known.

9.8   During the first period of lockdown, we paused all casework. Management with advice from HR continued to log and determine appropriate action when new HR casework arose and undertake those aspects of casework that did not require face to face meetings or hearings.

9.9   At the point casework restarted there were 56 cases that were either completely paused or where preparatory work (e.g. to Quality Assure an Investigation report) was being undertaken.

9.10   Casework recommenced on 29th June and since then we have been progressing previously paused cases through face to face and/or virtual means as necessary and appropriate. The majority of cases that were paused due to lockdown have now reached a conclusion. Those that have not are being closely monitored and there is a clear strategy for progressing them through to resolution.

9.11   Of all performance cases resolved within Q1 and Q2 20/21 58% of these cases resulted in informal action. There were no dismissals due to performance during Q1 and Q2 20/21 although 2 employees left by way of a mutual / settlement agreement. This compares similarly to the same period last year.

Performance cases by resolution category

Resolution category	Number	Percentage
Informal advice given	6	50%
Mutual agreement	2	16.67%
Resignation	2	16.67%
Informal stage complete	1	8.33%
No further action	1	8.33%
Total	12	100.00%

9.12   Of the 43 resolved misconduct cases the majority (37%) were due to behavioural issues. The following table provides the detail of the reason categories for all the misconduct cases. 2 misconduct cases related to individuals wearing PPE, one was resolved by way of a formal warning and one is still ongoing. This is a slight decrease from 39% compared to the same period last year.

Reason for misconduct

Reason for misconduct	Number	Percentage
Behavioural	16	37%
Failure to follow policy or procedure	7	16%
Criminal allegation	5	12%
Other	5	12%
Failure to follow instruction	3	7%
Failure to follow prof codes of conduct	3	7%
Financial abuse	2	5%
Breach of data protection	1	2%
Inappropriate boundaries/relationship	1	2%
Total	38	100.00%

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9.13   40% of resolved formal conduct cases resulted in informal action. There were 3 dismissals due to misconduct during Q1 and Q2 20/21 and an additional 5 cases were resolved by way of a mutual/settlement agreement or they resigned mid-way during the process.

Misconduct cases by resolution category

Resolution category	Number	Percentage
Informal stage completed	12	27.91%
No further action	12	27.91%
Informal advice given	5	11.63%
Resignation	3	6.98%
Dissmissal – notice	2	4.65%
Formal warning – final	2	4.65%
Formal warning – written	2	4.65%
Mutual agreement	2	4.65%
Other	2	4.65%
Dissmissal – summary	1	2.33%
Total	43	100.00%

9.14   In respect of tackling absence and attendance issues, managers work in accordance with the Council's disciplinary policies. During Q1 and Q2 20/21 there were 75 new attendance cases across Council Departments.

9.15   Absence and attendance cases have been a mix of long term (73.3%), short term (17.3%) as well as health cases where the employee is not absent from work (9.3%), but where action and / or adjustments are required in order to sustain their attendance.

9.16   Of all absence cases which concluded within Q1 and Q2 20/21, 27 cases (36%) resulted in the employee terminating their employment with the Council. This includes 20 who left by way of a mutual / settlement agreement and 7 resignations as employees made the decision to leave the Council rather than undergo the full formal attendance management process. In the main this compares similarly to the same period last year.

Attendance cases by resolution category

Resolution category	Number	Percentage
Mutual agreement	19	25.68%
Informal advice given	16	21.62%
Return to work	16	21.62%
Resignation	7	9.46%
No further action	5	6.76%
Formal warning – written	4	5.41%
Formal warning – final	2	2.70%
Informal stage completed	2	2.70%
Appeal – not upheald	1	1.35%
Settlement agreement	1	1.35%
Other	1	1.35%
Total	**74**	**100.00%**

9.17 Within this report it is important to recognise the impact of COVID-19 on attendance within the County Council, this is demonstrated in the tables in Appendix 3. Attendance is broken down into percentages of all sickness absence, COVID-19 related sickness absence and absence due to self-isolating. The data shows the highest sickness absence recorded for these absences was in April.

9.18 Over the last six months a higher level of absence was attributed to 'Isolating – non-working' for female employees, showing that they were absent for a higher percentage than male colleagues (Appendix 4). However, this higher level of absence will predominantly be due to the following:

- they were clinically extremely vulnerable and could not attend the workplace.

- a higher number of female employees working in roles where it was not possible to work from home.

- they were self-isolating because they or a family member were symptomatic.

- caring responsibilities: whilst this has not specifically surfaced as a cause for concern through our staff surveys, we know that ONS figures documented in paragraph 4.5 report that over half of women have caring responsibilities, and we know that 'caring' has been an even more significant feature of life for many people in the first 6 months of this year.

9.19 Wherever possible staff who were self-isolating would work from home. However, not all roles could be carried out from home and or the member of

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staff did not have (particularly prior to the IT rollout) the necessary IT kit to be able to do so.

9.20   During Q1 and Q2 20/21 there were 19 new 'resolving workplace issue' cases across Council departments one of which related to the employer's duty of care for an individual during the pandemic. No matter how successful the organisation there are issues that prompt an employee to submit a 'grievance' through the Council's Resolving Workplace Issues policy.

9.21   Of the 'resolving workplace issue' cases the majority (9) were in Children's Services and Adults' Health and Care; and of these the highest category related to bullying or discrimination.

9.22   Of those cases that were resolved within Q1 and Q2 20/21, the majority 7 (35%) resulted in informal advice or resolution.

9.23   Work in the space of 'conflict resolution' is underway in order to build confidence in how to raise and resolve issues in a way that is 'healthy' and reaches positive conclusions for both parties as opposed to a traditional approach where typically one party continues to feel aggrieved. Conflict resolution remains important to the County Council, however, due to immediate priorities of a second lockdown the work is being reviewed in line with the Inclusion Strategy and more widely with our service provision.

10.0   Retain and exit   **Retain and Exit – Encouraging our people to stay and learning from those who leave.**

10.1   Retaining good employees is critical to the continued high performance of the Council overall.

10.2   Since the beginning of the financial year there have been 623 leavers which is a decrease in number of leavers given 2,027 left during the full year of 2019/2020. The reasons for leaving are shown in the table below. Of these leavers, 8.35% (52) were from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees and 3.53% (22) had declared a disability which is broadly comparable to our workforce data overall.

Leaver reasons across departments

Leaving reason	Adults' Health and Care	Children's Services	CCBS	Corporate Services	ETE	All departments
Dismissal	11	7	16	2	1	37
Other	58	85	90	18	9	272
Redundancy	21	2	1	6	0	30
Resign – Alternative Employment	55	52	45	29	5	186
Resign – Alternative LG Org	8	7	2	1	1	19
Resign – Dissatisfaction	8	10	2	0	0	20
Retirement	15	19	19	3	4	60
Total	**178**	**190**	**175**	**60**	**20**	**623**

10.3 Of the total 623 leavers since April, the largest proportion (272) left for 'other' reasons, these include to take career breaks, family commitments, education and health.

10.4 134 employees (21.5%) left within 12 months of joining which is a similar percentage to those leaving in the first 12 months of employment last year (24%). The reasons provided for leaving within the first 12 months include 49 leaving to go roles in other organisations; 62 recording a range of reasons such as due to health, returning to full time education, taking a career break, moving away, or simply did not give a reason and 5 recorded a reason of dissatisfaction.

10.5 One of the actions from the 2019/20 annual workforce report was to explore how to best capture information from those leaving the County Council. SAP development is underway to create a notification to managers and staff once the leaver action has been completed by the manager via the manager's portal. This notification will direct leavers and managers to information on the leaver process. An electronic leaver questionnaire and a leaver checklist were published in November and are available to staff across the County Council. Reporting of the data collected from the leaver questionnaire against the workforce profile will be at six monthly intervals which will be included in the Annual Workforce Report and interim reports next year.

10.6 All resigning employees are encouraged to have a leaver interview unless they choose to opt out. Departments will be able to respond to and action any outcomes from these meetings.

11.0   CONCLUSIONS

11.1   The Council continues to monitor and review all aspects of the workforce to ensure there are effective strategies and measures in place to meet the needs of its business. Most of the staff data has not changed considerably in the last 6 months. However, the main changes have been the number of applications received for roles advertised which has increased from an average of 10 applications per role to an average of 16 per role, which may be contributed to higher levels of unemployment. In addition, the reduction in staff leaving the County Council which is expected given the impact of the pandemic.

12.0   NEXT STEPS

12.1   We continue to progress the 'next steps' agreed in the Annual Workforce Report as follows:

12.2   *COVID-19 Actions:*

- *Support the physical and mental-health and well-being of our workforce, including a thorough review of the mental health provisions available to our front-line workforce. This work is ongoing, and paragraphs 7.7 onwards detail the progress.*

- *Understanding the diversity of our 'front-line' services to monitor attraction and retention more closely over the coming months. As part of the development of the Inclusion Strategy an understanding the key issues that are faced by 'front-line' services particularly where this relates to protected characteristics.*

- *Review how induction is delivered across the organisation with a view to ensure that it remain COVID-19 secure without detriment to the organisation or our new employees. Work has commenced to review the virtual induction.*

- *Review our Leadership and Management offer, both in terms of content and in terms of methods of delivery. Considerable amount of work has taken place to convert materials and sessions to be held virtually, progress is documented in paragraph 7.9.*

12.3   Delivery of the Inclusion, Diversity and Wellbeing Corporate Work Programme throughout 2020/21; prioritising:

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- The development of 'conflict resolution' with a view to implementing in the Council. This action remains important to us, however, as confirmed in paragraph 9.23 there are links and themes to conflict resolution within the recovery work that is ongoing. Due to further work required from the second lockdown there are more immediate priorities at this stage and so limited progress has been made. As part of the Inclusion strategy, we will be able to identify links to managing workplace conflict within the strategy, internally for staff and for the County Council's wider service provision which will feed into the review of managing conflict.

- Encouraging all employees to share personal information about their ethnicity, age, disability, race, sexual orientation. As documented in paragraph 3.11, further communications will be published to staff to encourage them to update their personal data on SAP.

- The development of 'flexible working' options for employees across the Council in accordance with business needs. To support business continuity, the roll out of IT equipment has been paramount in providing flexibility to employees across the organisation particularly with Microsoft Teams as detailed in paragraph 7.2.

- Consideration of attraction and resourcing approaches for the local labour market with disabilities and for those under the age of 25 – pursuing actions as agreed by the Inclusion and Diversity Steering Group. These actions will remain under review in conjunction with the development of the Inclusion Strategy and until such time as we are able to determine what our workplace will look like in order to consider attraction and resourcing approaches across all of the protected characteristics.

12.4   Delivery of the Wellbeing Action Plan throughout 2020/21; for example:

- Seek to better understand the impact of poor mental health on our workforce and necessary interventions that may support improved health – on-going. Engagement activities and research into wellbeing carried out in 2020 so far is referenced in Section 7 paragraphs 7.7 onwards.

- Actively explore further ways in which to reduce sickness absence across the Council. Clearly in this exceptional year little progress is likely however we continue to support engagement and well-being activities as referenced in paragraph 7.7.

12.5 Development and Implementation of an HR Data strategy during 2020/21, including references to:

- Improved options for gathering diversity data in relation to Leadership and Management development, turnover and Employee Relations casework including Misconduct and implementing changes as necessary. Work has continued with gathering diversity data across Leadership and Management development and this will be reported further in the 2020/2021 annual workforce report due to timings of programmes. As part of the work to create a leaver questionnaire detailed in paragraph 10.5 diversity data captured will also be reported to assess the turnover of our staff with an inclusive lens. Further consideration is ongoing to explore options to report data from the casework database.

- Developing options to enable the capture of feedback from new starters and leavers to inform strategies across the whole of the employee life cycle. With the corporate induction being updated a survey will be introduced following the induction review and progress of this work will be captured in the annual workforce report 2020/21.

12.6 Ongoing consideration of the impact of the new EU immigration on attraction and resourcing. This continues to be monitored and further information has been provided in paragraph 5.9 in relation to the MAC findings.

13.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Gender workforce headcount and FTE

Grade	Male			Female			
	Male FT	Male PT	Total male	Female FT	Female PT	Total female	Overall total
Below A	20	45	65	23	1,155	1,178	**1,243**
B	52	175	227	88	1,090	1,178	**1,405**
C	346	248	594	588	1,495	2,083	**2,677**
D	403	90	493	657	774	1,431	**1,924**
E	449	66	515	936	580	1,516	**2,031**
F	401	43	444	849	448	1,297	**1,741**
G	322	32	354	420	209	629	**983**
H and above	348	11	359	351	81	432	**791**
Total	**2,341**	**710**	**3,051**	**3,912**	**5,832**	**9,744**	**12,795**

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Appendix 2

Page 1 of support guidance for staff and managers shown below:

Mental Health and Wellbeing Support Guide for Staff

What's in this guide and who is it for?

This guide provides an overview of the health and wellbeing support available to you as an employee of Hampshire County Council along with further information on where to find specific support and urgent care if needed.

Information and support available from Hampshire County Council to all staff

Having good mental health and wellbeing helps us relax more, achieve more, and enjoy our lives more.

Our partners Health Assured have created a free app for smartphones. 'My Healthy Advantage' provides access to wellbeing tools and confidential in the moment counselling support by phone, call-back request, email or live chat. Download the app 'My Healthy Advantage' from the Google Play Store or Apple AppStore. Register using the employer ID code: MHA000090

Our staff mental health and wellbeing resources have been aligned to the Five Ways to Wellbeing themes and contains a range of helpful tips and resources and links to internal and external support resources.

For advice on medical conditions and adjustments in the workplace for managers and individuals the Occupational Health duty line 023 8062 6600 is available from 8am to 4pm weekdays.

The Employee Support Line is a free phoneline giving you 24/7 365 day, in the moment, confidential support from qualified counsellors and legal advisors with any issue you may be struggling with, including financial difficulties. Also, request a call back from a nurse for medical advice. Call freephone 0800 028 0199 or email: support@healthassured.co.uk A live chat option is also available via the 'My Healthy Advantage' app. This service can also be accessed by partners and children (aged 16 – 24) living in the same household.

Visit the Learning Zone for a range of mental health and wellbeing training courses available for staff, from improving resilience and wellbeing to specific departmental courses aimed at particular roles. You can also visit the corporate mental health and wellbeing website for additional external courses.

Hampshire County Council

hants.gov.uk

Mental Health and Wellbeing Support Guide for Managers

What's in this guide and who is it for?

This guide is for managers and provides an overview of the health and wellbeing support available internally to staff, along with further information on where to signpost to specialist external support and urgent care if needed. An all staff version of this Mental Health and Wellbeing Support Guide is available to share with staff.

Information and support available from Hampshire County Council to all staff

Having good mental health and wellbeing helps us relax more, achieve more, and enjoy our lives more. The following support is available to all staff working for Hampshire County Council.

Our staff mental health and wellbeing resources have been aligned to the Five Ways to Wellbeing themes and contain a range of helpful tips and resources. This includes a page for managers, as well as links to internal and external sources of support.

Our partners Health Assured have created a new app for smartphones. 'My Healthy Advantage' provides free easy, inclusive access to wellbeing tools and confidential counselling support by phone, call-back request, email or live chat. Download the app 'My Healthy Advantage' now from the Google Play Store or Apple AppStore. Register using the employer ID code: MHA000090

The Employee Support Line is a free phoneline giving you 24/7 365 day, in-the-moment, confidential support from qualified counsellors and legal advisors with any issues you may be struggling with, including financial difficulties. You can also request a callback from a nurse for medical advice. Call freephone 0800 028 0199 or email support@health assured.co.uk. A live chat option is also available via the 'My Healthy Advantage' app. This service can also be accessed by partners and children (aged 16-24) living in the same household.

For advice on medical conditions and adjustments in the workplace for managers and individuals the Occupational Health duty line 023 8062 6600 is available from 8am to 4pm weekdays.

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Appendix 3

Overall hours lost

Absence type: all sickness absence

Indicative % hours lost of available FTE hours

Department	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	Aug 2020	Sept 2020
Adults' Health and Care	8.88%	6.48%	5.17%	4.18%	3.78%	3.22%
Children's Services	2.15%	1.65%	1.94%	1.78%	1.92%	2.09%
CCBS	2.04%	1.39%	1.86%	2.08%	1.97%	3.46%
Corporate Services	1.90%	1.56%	1.90%	1.41%	1.39%	1.38%
ETE	1.38%	1.04%	1.53%	1.19%	1.09%	1.75%
Total	3.97%	2.93%	2.82%	2.45%	2.31%	2.60%

Sickness reason: COVID-19

Indicative % hours lost of available FTE hours

Department	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	Aug 2020	Sept 2020
Adults' Health and Care	4.86%	2.71%	1.33%	0.90%	0.50%	0.37%
Children's Services	0.64%	0.20%	0.14%	0.10%	0.10%	0.12%
CCBS	0.80%	0.42%	0.39%	0.40%	0.12%	0.34%
Corporate Services	0.61%	0.22%	0.15%	0.13%	0.00%	0.04%
ETE	0.42%	0.30%	0.31%	0.14%	0.11%	0.14%
Total	1.87%	0.98%	0.55%	0.41%	0.20%	0.23%

Absence type: isolation-nonworking

Indicative % hours lost of available FTE hours

Department	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	Aug 2020	Sept 2020
Adults' Health and Care	1.45%	1.01%	0.91%	0.55%	0.12%	0.11%
Children's Services	2.10%	2.35%	2.42%	1.46%	0.22%	0.10%
CCBS	4.09%	2.06%	1.44%	0.61%	0.51%	0.56%
Corporate Services	0.60%	0.42%	0.25%	0.21%	0.15%	0.08%
ETE	6.29%	5.63%	3.93%	1.52%	0.05%	0.37%
Total	2.42%	1.81%	1.53%	0.82%	0.24%	0.22%

Appendix 4

Overall hours lost by gender

Absence type: all sickness absence
Indicative % hours lost of available FTE hours

Department	April 2020 Male	April 2020 Female	May 2020 Male	May 2020 Female	June 2020 Male	June 2020 Female	July 2020 Male	July 2020 Female	Aug 2020 Male	Aug 2020 Female	Sept 2020 Male	Sept 2020 Female
Adults' Health and Care	8.71%	8.93%	5.97%	6.64%	4.66%	5.33%	3.92%	4.26%	2.85%	4.08%	2.61%	3.41%
Children's Services	1.59%	2.27%	1.38%	1.71%	1.69%	2.00%	1.72%	1.79%	1.52%	2.00%	1.30%	2.26%
CCBS	1.88%	2.10%	1.23%	1.45%	1.33%	2.07%	1.58%	2.28%	1.18%	2.29%	1.80%	4.14%
Corporate Services	1.67%	2.06%	1.52%	1.58%	1.86%	1.93%	1.28%	1.49%	1.15%	1.56%	1.06%	1.59%
ETE	0.67%	2.50%	0.49%	1.90%	0.56%	3.06%	0.24%	2.67%	0.80%	1.54%	1.30%	2.45%
Total	**3.29%**	**4.23%**	**2.37%**	**3.14%**	**2.21%**	**3.05%**	**1.93%**	**2.65%**	**1.57%**	**2.60%**	**1.68%**	**2.95%**

Sickness reason: COVID-19
Indicative % hours lost of available FTE hours

Department	April 2020 Male	April 2020 Female	May 2020 Male	May 2020 Female	June 2020 Male	June 2020 Female	July 2020 Male	July 2020 Female	Aug 2020 Male	Aug 2020 Female	Sept 2020 Male	Sept 2020 Female
Adults' Health and Care	5.10%	4.79%	2.92%	2.64%	1.75%	1.19%	1.16%	0.82%	0.76%	0.42%	0.51%	0.33%
Children's Services	0.85%	0.60%	0.33%	0.17%	0.31%	0.11%	0.33%	0.05%	0.20%	0.07%	0.18%	0.11%
CCBS	0.96%	0.73%	0.40%	0.42%	0.42%	0.38%	0.44%	0.39%	0.12%	0.12%	0.13%	0.43%
Corporate Services	0.35%	0.79%	0.07%	0.32%	0.12%	0.16%	0.19%	0.08%	0.00%	0.00%	0.09%	0.01%
ETE	0.46%	0.35%	0.32%	0.26%	0.22%	0.45%	0.02%	0.31%	0.00%	0.27%	0.00%	0.35%
Total	**1.75%**	**1.92%**	**0.92%**	**1.00%**	**0.63%**	**0.52%**	**0.49%**	**0.38%**	**0.24%**	**0.18%**	**0.20%**	**0.24%**

Absence type: isolation-nonworking
Indicative % hours lost of available FTE hours

Department	April 2020 Male	April 2020 Female	May 2020 Male	May 2020 Female	June 2020 Male	June 2020 Female	July 2020 Male	July 2020 Female	Aug 2020 Male	Aug 2020 Female	Sept 2020 Male	Sept 2020 Female
Adults' Health and Care	1.66%	1.38%	1.10%	0.98%	1.05%	0.86%	0.60%	0.54%	0.13%	0.12%	0.08%	0.12%
Children's Services	1.43%	2.25%	1.53%	2.53%	1.81%	2.55%	1.13%	1.53%	0.31%	0.20%	0.03%	0.11%
CCBS	1.61%	5.09%	1.33%	2.35%	1.03%	1.61%	0.61%	0.61%	0.51%	0.51%	0.43%	0.61%
Corporate Services	0.34%	0.77%	0.19%	0.57%	0.14%	0.32%	0.12%	0.27%	0.57%	0.52%	0.00%	0.13%
ETE	3.82%	10.14%	3.40%	9.12%	2.42	6.28%	1.16%	2.07%	0.08%	0.00%	0.21%	0.62%
Total	**1.62%**	**2.73%**	**1.35%**	**1.99%**	**1.17%**	**1.67%**	**0.67%**	**0.88%**	**0.34%**	**0.25%**	**0.16%**	**0.25%**

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Committee:	Employment in Hampshire County Council
Date:	11 March 2021
Title:	Open Workplace Policy
Report From:	Director of Corporate Resources

Contact name: Andy Bailey

Tel: 0370 779 0443   **Email:**   andy.bailey@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. Staff have responded excellently during the pandemic and have continued to perform effectively, and deliver services, regardless of whether they are working in the workplace or from home.

2. The Council seeks to maximise the benefits of flexible working, as demonstrated over the last 12 months, by formalising our approach to some of these changes for the future – we do not simply wish to return to how things were before.

3. The purpose of this report is to seek EHCC agreement to implement a new Open Workplace Policy for Council members of staff.

Recommendation(s)

4. That EHCC agree that:

• The Council implements an Open Workplace Policy as attached at appendix A to this paper.

• Delegate to the Director of Corporate Resources the authority to make any final amendments to the Open Workplace Policy that are agreed following consultation with trade union representatives and any ongoing amendments that arise from the future application of this policy.

Contextual Information

5. The Council entered a period of 'lock-down', in late March 2020 due to the global Coronavirus Pandemic.

6. Staff across the organisation responded excellently to the challenges brought about by the Pandemic, adapting to and in many instances welcoming new ways of working including working from home. Staff continue to perform very effectively regardless of whether they are working in the workplace or from home.

7. The Council aims to provide modern, efficient, and productive ways of working to better support the needs of the service and members of staff. The Council expects that there will be a permanent shift in the future use of corporate accommodation moving towards staff returning from lockdown, but to a different configuration and use of workspaces that reflects the best of remote working and hybrid arrangements to better support the needs of the service and members of staff.

Organisational Benefits

8. The advantages of taking a new, and more modern, approach to working would be:

a) Improved productivity, for example, through reduced time a staff member spends travelling to, or between, offices to attend meetings.

b) Optimisation of the Council's investment in IT equipment.

c) More efficient and effective use of office space and reduced need for office accommodation.

d) Recruitment and retention of staff, through being able to offer improved ways of working that benefit staff as well as the organisation.

e) A more resilient and adaptable working culture that can respond to future challenges.

f) Contribution towards the Council delivering its Climate Strategy by reducing business travel and employee commuting.

Staff Benefits

9. Members of staff would also benefit from a more modern approach to working. Benefits include:

a) Increased productivity, for example, being able to work in the best place to achieve the required outcomes.

b) Improved health and wellbeing for example working from home eliminates the need to commute to work.

c) Better work/life balance, for example, staff that would have had to commute will now be able to use that time for themselves giving the basis for a better work-life balance.

d) Many staff will save time, and costs by reducing the need to travel when they are able to work from home, or from another Council premise, or an alternative location.

10. Many members of staff have welcomed new ways of working and the increased flexibility that comes from working flexibly including working from home for all or part of the time.

11. The Council has significantly invested in enabling staff to be able to work effectively from home or alternative locations. This includes providing all staff who have been required to work from home due to COVID restrictions with a flexible device, peripherals (monitor, keyboard etc.), chair and up to a £100 contribution towards the purchase of a desk approved in advance by the relevant Head of Service. All equipment (except for the £100) is returnable when the individual leaves the organisation or moves into a role that no longer supports home working. This approach is expected to continue in support of the Open Workplace Policy.

12. The EHCC 2007 collective agreement includes a working from home allowance to be paid to eligible employees who are contractually to work from home. Those members of staff would continue to be eligible to receive a home working allowance under the new policy. The allowance covers the cost of a chair / desk as well as utilities when working from home. Staff who are contractually required to work from home will be provided with a flexible device and peripherals (monitor, keyboard etc.) to be able to work from home.

13. The Open Working Policy would not result in members of staff who have been temporarily working from home due to the Covid restrictions, or who opt to work from home in the future, becoming eligible for a home working allowance as they are not contractually required to do so.

14. In future, most staff will, due to their role continue to be required to work from their designated workplace, or other Council premises for all or part of the time to be able to carry out their role effectively.

15. However, many staff have roles that can, at times, be effectively carried out from home or an alternative location. Indeed, prior to the pandemic many staff have at times, with the prior agreement of their manager, worked flexibly including working from home on an ad hoc basis. The implementation of an Open Workplace Policy would regularise such working practices and ensure that such arrangements were agreed within a policy framework.

Policy Principles

16. The new policy is based upon the following key elements / principles:

a) Work takes place at the most effective location and at the most appropriate time, depending on the needs of the role and the requirements of the service. The needs of the service will always be the paramount consideration and it is for managers to determine how those needs will be best met, including through applying additional flexibilities that benefit staff as well as service.

b) The service will be responsible for determining whether roles, or activities, should be carried out at designated workplaces, other Council premises or could be carried out from home or an alternative location for some of the time.

c) There are real benefits for staff to come into the workplace to carry out activities that may be performed equally well remotely. These benefits include team cohesion, staff wellbeing, or for collaborative work. As such the service will require members of staff to periodically attend the workplace for these purposes

d) Within the needs of the service, the requirements of the role, and with agreement from a Senior manager, a member of staff can opt to work at or from their preferred workplace.

e) The Council seeks to maximise its investment in mobile technology through modern ways of working.

f) Flexible working, and staff working out of the manager's line of sight, relies on a culture of mutual understanding, trust and a respect for staff's well-being and work-life balance.

g) A staff member's performance is results-focused and is measured through the achievement of performance outputs and objectives. This is determined and evaluated through the Valuing Performance process.

h) Regular communications, keeping in contact, and a focus on health and wellbeing is essential, especially within teams that are working flexibly across a number of locations.

17. The amount of time that a member of staff can work at any location will depend on the role and it is the senior manager's role to define the degree of flexibility that can be allowed. Within those parameters the individual may opt to work from their designated workplace, other council premises, alternative locations or from home. Unless contractually required to do so, any arrangement for working from home would continue to be voluntary on the part of the member of staff and only at the discretion of the service.

18. A copy of the proposed Open Working Policy is attached at appendix A to this paper.

Next Steps

19. Subject to EHCC approval of the Open Working Policy it is intended to engage with trade union representatives at the Council's Joint Consultative Group meeting on the 17 March 21. Any minor adjustments arising from engagement with trade unions would be subject to agreement by the Director of Corporate Resources. Trade union representatives are expected to welcome the modern working practices and increased flexibility for members of staff.

20. The new policy would be implemented following completion of the engagement with trade union representatives. It is anticipated that the policy will be implemented in April 2021.

21. The Council's HR team will develop additional manager and employee guidance documentation and resources as appropriate to support the effective implementation of the policy.

Conclusions

22. Implementation of the Open Workplace Policy will enable the County Council to provide modern, efficient, and productive ways of working to better support the needs of the service and members of staff.

Open Workplace Policy

Policy statement

Hampshire County Council aims to provide modern, efficient, and productive ways of working to better support the needs of the Council and members of staff.

This policy sets out the key requirements and considerations that will enable both managers and staff to work from Council premises, home, or other suitable alternative locations (as agreed). If you are required or allowed to work from home or an alternative location, you must comply with this policy.

The policy recognises that most staff will be required to work from their designated workplace, other Council premises, or site they need to be at, all, or part of the time to carry out their role effectively.

Many staff have roles that can also, at times, be effectively carried out from home or an alternative location as well as at or from Council premises. The amount of time that a member of staff can work at any location will depend on the role and it is the senior manager's role to define the degree of flexibility that can be allowed. Within those parameters the individual may opt to work from their designated workplace, other council premises, alternative locations or from home. Unless contractually required to do so, any arrangement for working from home should be voluntary on the part of the member of staff.

It is critical that any workplace arrangement put in place does not impact detrimentally on the quality and continuity of service provision, the functions, and activities of the Council.

This policy can only be at its most effective when it is built on mutual understanding and trust between the Council and its staff.

Individuals may request changes to their work pattern, location, or other working arrangements under the Flexible Working Policy. Where that request includes a request for homeworking on an individual rather than a role basis the request will be dealt with under the Flexible Working Policy.

Contents

1.   Check which policy to use

- You can find information relating to requests to change working arrangements (such as working hours/days) in the Flexible Working Policy.
- Any changes to contracts of employment that are led by the Council must be managed though the Managing Workforce Change Policy.

2.   Scope

The scope of this policy applies to
- employees
- casual workers and
- volunteers, who have been appointed by Hampshire County Council

It is not applicable to Staff employed by schools.

3.   Definitions

- **Designated workplace:** Council premises or specific site (such as a school or country park) where the service determines the member of staff must carry out their role, all, or part of their time.

  This should be detailed in the member of staff's statement of particulars and may also be referred to as 'work base' or contractual location.

- **Other Council premises:** This includes all other Council premises or site where the member of staff may need to, or it is agreed that they can, work from to carry out their role for some of the time.

- **Home address:** The permanent home address of the member of staff, as it is recorded in SAP.

- **Alternative location:** A non-Council location, with suitable work facilities, where the member of staff may be allowed to carry out their role some of the time.

- **Senior Manager:** the level of manager as detailed in the department scheme of delegation with authority to determine the appropriate workplace at which roles and/or activities in their department need to be carried out to meet service requirements.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

It is the role of the Senior Manager to:
- determine whether the role, or work activities of the member of staff, should be carried out at a designated workplace for some, or all, of the time.
- determine whether, and how much, of the role can be carried out at other Council premises or site, from home or an alternative location.
- manage any request that cannot be agreed or resolved through the application of this policy in accordance with the formal application for flexible working process in the Flexible Working Policy.
- approve, in advance, any requests for equipment or contributions to the cost of equipment as detailed in this policy.

5. Overarching Principles

There are several overarching principles that have been agreed as part of the Council's approach to adopting a flexible approach to a staff member's workplace as follows:

- Work takes place at the most effective location and at the most appropriate time, depending on the needs of the role and the requirements of the service. The needs of the service will always be the paramount consideration and it is for managers to determine how those needs will be best met, including through applying additional flexibilities that benefit staff as well as service.

- The service will be responsible for determining whether roles, or activities, should be carried out at designated workplaces, other Council premises or could be carried out from home or an alternative location for some of the time.

- There are real benefits for staff to come into the workplace to carry out activities that may be performed equally well remotely. These benefits include team cohesion, staff wellbeing, or for collaborative work. As such the service will require members of staff to periodically attend the workplace for these purposes

- Within the needs of the service, the requirements of the role, and with agreement from a Senior manager, a member of staff can opt to work at or from their preferred workplace.

- The Council seeks to maximise its investment in mobile technology through modern ways of working.

- Flexible working, and staff working out of the manager's line of sight, relies on a culture of mutual understanding, trust and a respect for staff's well-being and work-life balance.

- A staff member's performance is results-focused and is measured through the achievement of performance outputs and objectives. This is determined and evaluated through the Valuing Performance process.

- Regular communications, keeping in contact, and a focus on health and wellbeing is essential, especially within teams that are working flexibly across a number of locations.

6. Benefits

There are significant benefits for staff, and the Council, when adopting a more flexible approach to the workplace. These include:

Benefits for staff:
- Increased productivity, for example, being able to work in the best place to achieve the required outcomes.
- Improved health and wellbeing for example working from home eliminates the need to commute to work.
- Better work/life balance, for example, staff that would have had to commute will now be able to use that time for themselves giving the basis for a better work-life balance.
- Many staff will save time, and costs by reducing the need to travel when they are able to work from home, or from other Council premises, or an alternative location.

Benefits for the Council:
- Improved productivity, for example, through reduced time staff members spend travelling to, or between, offices to attend meetings.
- Optimisation of the Council's investment in IT equipment.
- More efficient and effective use of office space and reduced need for office accommodation.
- Recruitment and retention of staff, through being able to offer improved ways of working that benefit staff as well as the organisation.
- A more resilient and adaptable working culture that can respond to future challenges.
- Contribution towards delivery of the Council's Climate Strategy by reducing business travel and employee commuting.

7. Types of roles

Most staff will be required to work from their designated workplace or other Council premises all, or part of the time, to be able to carry out their role effectively.

For many staff, their roles can, at times, be effectively carried out from home or an alternative location.

The amount of time and how often a member of staff can work from home or an alternative location, other than their designated workplace or other Council premises, will depend on the requirements of their role. This may be subject to change over time depending on the needs of service.

A member of staff does not apply or choose to be a particular type of worker. Their status is determined by the Senior Manager and defined by the requirements of the role.

Depending on the role the member of staff has, they will broadly fit one of the following types of workers:

Contractual home worker
Members of staff who are appointed to a role that needs to be carried at, or from, home. They will be contractually required to work at, or be based at home, and this will be detailed in their statement of particulars on appointment. A contractual home worker does not have a dedicated Council workplace.

Patch worker
Members of staff who do not have a single permanent dedicated workplace, but whose duties are defined by reference to a particular geographical area.

Fixed workplace worker
Members of staff who are appointed to a role that requires them to be at their designated workplace or site to fulfil a majority, or all, of their duties. Due to the requirements of the role, the member of staff generally does not have the flexibility to work from home or an alternative location.

Open workplace worker
Members of staff who have a dedicated workplace but will, due to the nature of their role, be able to choose to work for some of the time from other Council premises, from home or alternative locations as agreed with their manager. An Open Workplace worker may be required to attend their dedicated workplace, without formal notice to do so, should the role or the activity necessitate this.

Any worker, working from home or an alternative location remotely, is still covered by the legal and contractual arrangements on working time.

In the unlikely event that arrangements in respect of an open workplace worker are not operating effectively, the department and senior manager reserves the right to require a person who is working from home, or alternative locations to undertake their work, without notice, at their designated workplace or another Council premise on a temporary or permanent basis instead.

8. Equipment / Working environment if working regularly from home

To enable a member of staff to work from home, or alternative locations, they must ensure that they have access to reliable broadband and suitable facilities to do so.

A flexible device and peripherals (monitor, keyboard etc.) will be issued to contractual home workers and open workplace workers who are regularly working from home.

In addition, open workplace workers will be provided with the following support:
- an office chair (where required) and
- up to £100 non-taxable contribution towards the purchase of a desk approved **in advance** by the relevant senior manager, and which is supported by a receipt.

All equipment, except for a purchased desk, remains the property of the Council and is insured by the Council against accidental damage, loss, or theft.

All equipment, except for the £100 contribution towards the purchase of a desk must be returned when the member of staff leaves the organisation or moves into a role that no longer supports home or flexible working.

A contractual home worker will be eligible to receive a home working allowance which is intended to cover the cost of working from home including the provision of a suitable chair and desk (see section 10).

The member of staff must ensure that their home or alternative working environment is set up to enable them to work effectively and complete a working from home checklist where required to do so.

9. Travel expenses and other costs

Travelling expenses for open workplace and fixed workplace workers will be reimbursed in accordance with the Council's Expenses Policy. This includes the HMRC requirement to deduct home to work mileage for each business journey undertaken from home during the day. Due regard should be made of the dual workplace guidance as detailed in the Expenses Policy.

Members of staff will seek to avoid unnecessary travel.

Contractual home workers can claim in accordance with the Council's Expenses Policy from their home address, if they are required to travel to attend for work, except that, where their home is a considerable distance from such premises (e.g., because they live outside Hampshire), a maximum mileage limit may be set by their line manager.

Hampshire County Council is not responsible for any incidental costs that result from the member of staff choosing to work from home or alternative location, for example, but not limited to, broadband, heating, or electricity.

10. Home working allowance and tax relief

Employees who are contractual home workers and are required to work from home will receive a home working allowance to cover the additional costs of working from home (including periods of annual leave). This will be applied pro-rata for part time members of staff and will be paid monthly.

Open workplace workers, who have opted to work from home, may be entitled to make a claim directly to HMRC for tax relief to cover the cost of home working if they work from home on a regular basis. It is the member of staff's responsibility to check the requirements on the HMRC website and apply if eligible.

11. Access to a member of staff's home

Members of staff are not expected to accommodate colleagues, managers, or customers at their home for meetings or any work-related activity. Such activities should be conducted at Council, customer, or alternative premises.

12. Insurance, mortgage, and lease considerations

It is the responsibility of the member of staff to inform their insurance provider, mortgage lender, or landlord of their intention to work from home.

Any additional costs incurred in relation to home insurance, a mortgage or lease agreement is the responsibility of the member of staff.

13. Keeping information safe while working from home or an alternative location

Hampshire County Council has guidance and policies in place to help staff remain compliant, and keep information safe, while working from home or an alternative location.

Members of staff who are working from home, or an alternative location, must work in accordance with the guidance on handling data safely. This is available in the Safe Information Handling Policy, and the Data Protection Policies.

Members of staff must use Council IT systems in accordance with the Corporate Acceptable Use Policy.

14. Health and safety issues

Members of staff who are working from home or alternative locations must follow the process and associated guidance, including any training and mandated checklists, that is published on the Corporate Health and Safety Display Screen Equipment SharePoint page.

15. Related documents

To help with the application of this policy it may be useful to read the following:
- Managers how to guide: Workplace Policy.

16. Support

Employees:

All queries should be directed to your line manager.

Access to free, confidential, and impartial Employee Support is available to all employees. Please visit the webpages for further information https://extra.hants.gov.uk/employee/policy-guidance/occupational-health/employee-support

Your trade union or professional association may be able to provide you with additional support.

Managers:

Further information is available in the How to Guide: Workplace Policy and advice and support on remaining queries can be directed to HR Operations, by email on hradvice@hants.gov.uk

All:

Guidance on supporting employees can be found on the Learning Zone.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but potentially impacts the County Council's workforce strategy.

Other Significant Links

Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
Title	Date

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents
The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)
Document   Location
None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. **Equality Duty**

    The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

    - Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);

    - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;

    - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

    Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

    - The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

    - Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

    - Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionally low.

2. **Equalities Impact Assessment:**

Equality objectives are not considered to be adversely affected by proposals in this report.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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