



To: Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board
Date: 11 February 2026

Subject: Workforce Insights

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 This report provides the current workforce analytics from numbers employed, turnover, starters, leavers, sickness absence, right through to agency workers. Where possible historical data has been included for comparative purposes.
- 1.2 This report enables members to have a comprehensive overview and explanation of the workforce and related metrics.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board are recommended to:
 - a) Note the contents of the report and some of the current workforce challenges.
 - b) Acknowledge how the workforce data is being used to inform decision making and measure to increase impact.
 - c) Identify any relevant recommendations for the Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources)

3 Information and Background

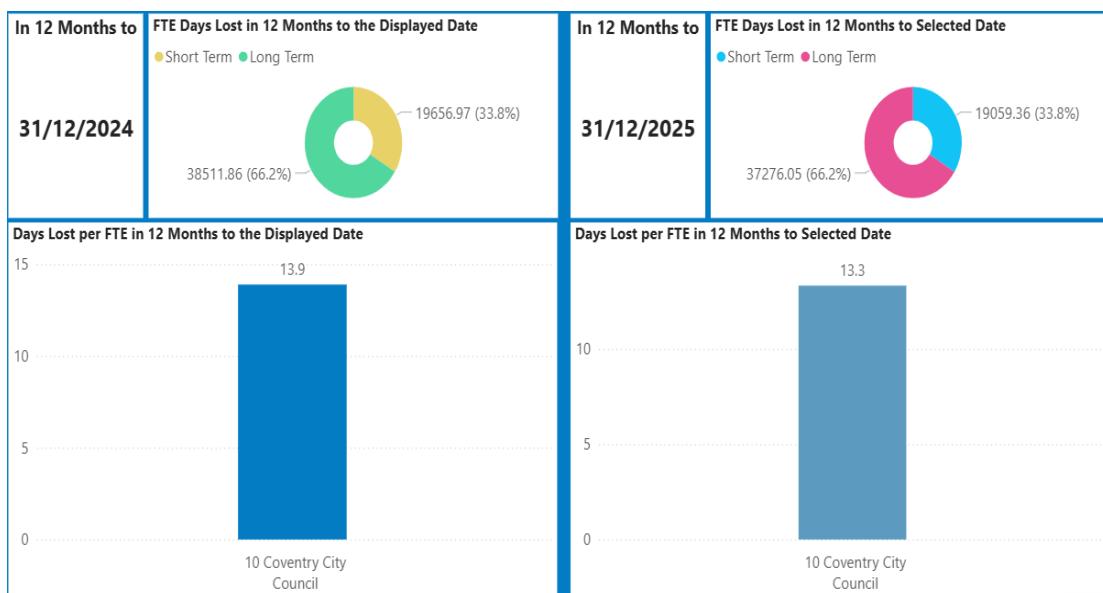
- 3.1 The Council currently employs 5,251 people which equates to 4253.53 FTE, with 5,548 contracts in operation. The turnover rate which constitutes the number of leavers in the last 12 months over the average headcount at the 31st Dec 2025 is 12.89%. This is a reduction from the previous year which was 14.12% in December 2024.
- 3.2 The largest service areas are Childrens and Education Services at 1501 employees, followed by Adults, Housing and Public Health at 1053 employees and then City Services at 759 employees. It should also be noted that the grades 3 and 5 are the most populated grades, with 1153 employees and 964 employees respectively.
- 3.3 Majority of employees are full-time at 63.18% and 36.82% are part-time, 83.81% are permanent with the remainder either being fixed term or casual roles. 84.91% posts are filled with the current vacancy rate being 15.09%.

3.4 In the last year we have had 669 leavers and 694 starters. We do encourage exit questionnaire completion and monitor the results with the next quarter is due shortly. However, less than 10% of leavers complete the form and we are actively reviewing how we can improve this.

3.5 In terms of declaration of protected characteristics, we have a completion rate of 89.1% for disability, ethnicity is 91.1% and sexuality is 78.9%. These areas are focused on groups that are underrepresented at work compared to census data.

3.6 Statutory and Mandatory training completion rate is 79%. The target is 85%.

3.7 Sickness absence is currently at 13.3 days per FTE. This a reduction from the previous year where absence had been 13.9 days per FTE. Work continues to be undertaken to improve this position and remains a corporate priority to address.



3.8 Absence levels are regularly reviewed by Leadership Board and deep dives are undertaken in high level areas to review the issues and ensure appropriate and timely action is being taken. In the last 12 months we have undertaken 568 Enabling attendance cases.

3.9 Occupational Health and Wellbeing continue to support employees and managers in managing attendance and facilitating timely returns to work. The recent centralisation of reasonable adjustments is helping ensure quicker access to equipment and support. Activity levels are detailed below;

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND COUNSELLING
OHSW Service Annual Statistics

Activity	April – June 2025	July - September 2025	October – December 2025	Total
Pre-Employment health assessments	225	209	203	637
Sickness absence health assessments	616	510	480	1606
Health surveillance assessments (HAV, Audio, HGV, Spiro)	75	51	19	145
Musculoskeletal assessments	61	68	58	187
Healthy Lifestyle appointments (including Menopause Clinics)	73	89	52	214
Vaccinations	30	20	541	50
Counselling appointments	609	467	492	1568
Mental Wellbeing Clinic appointments	291	198	186	675
First Aid Training – employees trained	193	97	122	412
Health and Safety Audits, inspections and monitoring	35	12	17	64
RIDDOR reportable incidents investigated	4	3	3	10
Health and Safety training attendance	101	282	232	383
Number of Incidents, Accidents, Violence and Aggression reported (inc. schools)	306	223	362	891

The above figures do not include advice and guidance, telephone enquiries, wellbeing activities, developing policies and guidance notes, quality standards etc.

4 Case Work

4.1 In the last year so 24/25, there have been 91 Disciplinary cases, 32 probationary cases 11 Capability Cases and 75 Dignity at work / Grievances.

4.2 We are required to report on our case work figures as under the Public Sector Equality Duty so casework outcomes are reviewed on a regular basis. Children's & Education and City Services consistently show the highest case volumes across the board. Analysis of casework against workforce demographics highlights disproportionality in some areas, for example Global Majority employees and men (legal sex) are overrepresented in disciplinary processes, while women who make up 87% of those identifying their gender raise more grievances but receive fewer disciplinary sanctions.

4.3 A new Disciplinary Policy has been agreed with trade unions for rollout in March. Additional actions include strengthening decision-making, diverse panels, deep-dive reviews, bias training, and quarterly monitoring.

5. Learning and Development

5.1 Learning and development activity remains positive, and opportunities are available to all employees via the Corporate Learning and Development Hub and the Staff App, ensuring accessibility for both office-based and frontline employees. In 2024/25, a total of 24816 learning opportunities were completed.

5.2 Some key highlights:

- Owning and Driving Performance has been attended by 416 managers grade 9 and above, with 218 grade 8 managers currently booked to attend in 2026. It is a culture change programme with an emphasis on performance improvement using a coaching approach and is a 2-year commitment.

- There have been 1670 visits to the Corporate Learning and Development Hub, to seek learning opportunities and that is both online and available on the Staff App.
- 750 Coaching Culture modules have been completed by 151 employees on the Coaching Culture Platform.
- Two bespoke talent development programmes were delivered for LGBTQ+ employees and employees with a disability, with a limited number of places available: Elevate, which was attended by 7 employees and Aspire, which was attended by 8 employees
- Wezesha, which means ‘empower.’ is a dynamic and supportive programme that sits alongside the Council’s new Race Equality Position Statement and celebrates Global Majority experiences, encourages authenticity, and creates space for growth, connection, and collective action. There are 10 employees undertaking the programme.
- The first cohort of the Council’s Synergy talent development programme was delivered. 34% of the participants were from the Global Majority, 4.7% LGBTQ+ and 17% have a disability.
- Corporate statutory and mandatory training completion increased by 8.7% compared to 2023/24, following the rollout of 32 face-to-face sessions of Corporate Mandatory Training for City Services where 481 employees attended.

6. Appraisal

6.1 A 95% completion rate for the 2024/2025 appraisal window was achieved including those for colleagues on maternity leave, long-term sickness, or other extended absence.

6.2 This is the same figure as the previous year, next steps are for us to improve on the quality of the feedback and ensure objectives set are SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound. This links to the work being undertaken on Owning and Driving Performance, 360 feedback will also be taking place this year for senior leaders to track the impact of the programme.

6.3 Performance conversations are being actively encouraged to take place on a regular basis, enhanced by the launch of a new one to one form in April 2025. Managers can upload this to a central portal, which helps identify take up and usage. Since the launch, 2600 one to one forms have been uploaded to the platform. The form encourages meaningful conversations around wellbeing, recognition, objectives, talent development and career aspirations.

The new appraisal platform introduction was postponed from April 2026 to 2027.

7. Apprenticeships

7.1 A procurement exercise has taken place for the introduction of a new AI Academy. The academy model involves 200 level 3, 150 level 4, and 50 level 6 apprenticeships,

providing opportunities at all levels for colleagues across the organisation to develop the AI skills.

7.2 The contract was awarded at the end of January, with further work to take place with the training provider (QA) to co-ordinate a Council-wide launch.

7.3 An 'apprentice recruitment window' is being introduced for all Council apprenticeship vacancies, running from April to the end of May for September starts. This provides a clear timeline for services and applicants and allows us to focus our engagement with schools, residents and partners. This change supports higher-quality candidate attraction, improved consistency across service areas, and a more sustainable pipeline of future talent for the Council.

7.4 A breakdown of traditional apprentices in post at January 2026 is detailed below;

Apprenticeship Title and Level	Number
Accountancy Taxation Professional – Level 7	3
BEMS (Building Energy Management Systems) – Level 4	1
Building Control Surveyor – Level 6	2
Business Administrator - Level 3	16
Chartered Town Planner (degree) – Level 7	4
Civil Engineering Senior Technician – Level 4	1
Civil Engineering Technician - Level 3	1
Early Years Educator - Level 3	11
Early Years Practitioner - Level 2	10
Environmental Health Practitioner – Level 6	3
Facilities Manager – Level 4	1
Finance Assistant – Level 3	1
Funeral Team Arranger – Level 2	1
Heavy Vehicle Service and Maintenance Technician - Level 3	2
Highways Maintenance Skilled Operative – Level 2	2
Horticulture Operative – Level 2	2
Paralegal – Level 3	1
Payroll Administrator – Level 3	1
People Professional – Level 5	2
Plumbing and Domestic Heating Technician - Level 3	1
Property Maintenance Operative – Level 2	1
Regulatory Compliance Officer – Level 4	3
School Business Professional – Level 4	3
Solicitor – Level 7	8
Sports Coach – Level 4	4
Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools - Level 3	55
Trading Standards Practitioner/Professional – Level 6	3

The numbers of apprentices who secured roles within the Council is 24 (68%) and those securing external roles were 7 (20%) with an overall told of 31 (88%)

8. Diversity and Inclusion

8.1 The Council has launched its new Workforce D&I Strategy 2025 to 2028 with a clearly defined set of actions and has launched its first Race Equality Position Statement 2026/2028 and Action Plan.

8.2 In the last year, 143 line managers have attended the Disability Inclusion Programme and so are now better informed on how to support colleagues with disabilities. This training is mandatory for all managers and is run once a month. There is also additional learning from sessions held by Legal Services and Occupational Health

8.3 The inclusive recruitment pilot has taken part in 59% of the Council's interview panels for posts which were Graded 8 and above. We have recently trained an additional 20 employees to participate in the inclusive panel initiative. The initiative started in September 2025. The impact of the pilot can be seen below:

Inclusive Panel Data:

Global Majority	Jan – Dec 2024	Jan – Dec 2025
Applications %	40.9%	41.8%
Interview %	37.5%	40.6%
Hired %	22.4%	27.8%

Disabled	Jan – Dec 2024	Jan – Dec 2025
Applications %	7.3%	9.6%
Interview %	11.8%	16.1%
Hired %	7.1%	10.7%

LGBQ+	Jan – Dec 2024	Jan – Dec 2025
Applications %	4.5%	4.7%
Interview %	5.5%	5.8%
Hired %	7.7%	7.5%

9. Finally, work is underway on the People Plan 2026-2028 with a focus on:

- Strengthening performance and accountability
- Improving, staff engagement
- Workforce planning and future capability
- Modernising recruitment and resourcing

The plan will be available in April 2026.

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