

CABINET REPORT

DATE 20 September 2022

**WORKFORCE REPORT AND STAFFING DATA Q1 2022/2023
APRIL TO JUNE 2022**

Report by Corporate Director

Customers, Organisational Development & Resources

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the report.

Executive Summary

2. Our workforce is the most valuable asset the council deploys. It is our people that make a difference to our residents and our communities. The very nature of the work, and the services we provide, is people intensive. Our residents and communities are reliant on the professionalism of our workforce to deliver high quality services and the future ambitions of the Council.
3. Agile and hybrid working continues, and during Q1 staff and teams continued their utilisation of offices both for business as usual activities and for team collaboration events.
4. This report provides an update for Quarter 1 on key HR activities along with a refreshed workforce profile at Appendix 1.

Quarter 1 overview of activity.

General Overview of the HR, OD and Corporate Health and Safety Team

Organisational Development Activities:

- Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion
- Apprenticeships

Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Resourcing

Q1 Staffing Data (1st April 2022 – 30th June 2022)

General Overview of the HR, OD and Corporate Health and Safety Team

5. The HR, OD and Corporate Health and Safety team is a team of professionals with a range of people expertise including HR Business Partnering, Employee Relations, Resourcing, HR Business Systems, Reward, Organisational Development, Learning and Development and Health, Safety and Wellbeing
6. The team regularly work from the office but continue to work in an agile manner relevant to the work being carried out. Some team members regularly work across a range of sites and this continues as part of their normal working routine as necessary.
7. The team continues to respond to both strategic and business as usual activities across the breadth of the employment relationship. A fortnightly manager's briefing is produced with a wealth of information and top tips, including supporting the workforce to adjust to the 'new normal' alongside the work being undertaken in the agile workstream of Delivering the Future Together
8. Informal meetings continue to take place every 4-6 weeks with the trade unions offering the opportunity for a regular dialogue on any matters that are of concern. Whilst initially focussed on the impact of Covid on our workforce, all parties recognise the value in continuing with these to work together to discuss and put in place plans to support any emerging issues whilst sharing information, maintaining good communication and enabling positive collaboration across Oxfordshire.

Organisational Development Activities:

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

9. Level 2 Maths and English - We are continuing to support staff to gain qualifications in maths and English. Following promotion of the opportunity in May 2022, the number of staff undertaking courses of study continues to rise. 37 people have now successfully completed a qualification in English or maths; an increase of 15 since quarter 4. 57 people are currently on programme or are due to start a programme. 83% of qualifications are undertaken by female staff. Further promotion of this opportunity will take place in quarter 2 along with targeted communications in services with significant numbers of female staff in the lower pay quartile, a focus driven by the outcomes of our Gender Pay Gap Report (2021/22). In addition, refresher training will be offered to staff who already have GCSE in maths and English.

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L2 English and Maths programmes	Quarter4 21-22			Quarter1 22-23		
	male	female	total	male	female	total
Completed programme	4	18	22	7	30	37
On Programme	3	16	19	3	17	20
Withdrawn	4	14	18	2	17	19
Due to Start / completing initial assessment	10	29	39	2	20	22
failed	0	1	1	0	7	7
recently expressed interest	1	13	14	4	11	15

10. Work has commenced to increase opportunities to offer Supported Apprenticeships across the council (please see apprenticeship update).
11. Inclusive Employers, a cross sector organisation specialising in equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace, have been commissioned to support us in the development of a best in class and comprehensive EDI training suite for all staff which will include induction training for all new staff plus best practice training for all managers. The work is due to complete in quarter 2 with training being rolled out early quarter 3 at the latest. Phase 2 of the reciprocal mentoring programme will be included in this training launch.

Apprenticeships

12. At the end of Q1 there were 269 Apprentices on programme, 58 of these were in schools. 81% of these are permanent staff undertaking an apprenticeship as Continuing Professional Development (CPD) or career progression.
13. During Q1 2022/2023 there were a total of 29 new apprenticeship enrolments compared to 41 for the same period last year. Despite having less enrolments, the actual spend has risen from £161,227 in Q1 2021/2022 to £228,644 in Q1 2022/2023. Spend has risen because we are utilising increasing numbers of higher level apprenticeships.
14. The committed spend for the Q1 2022/2023 for new enrolments is £189,279 compared to £237,486 in Q1 2021/2022, this reflects the slight reduction in enrolments for this quarter compared to last year. A contributing factor towards this is that a number of Directorates have been undergoing transformation and are currently in the process of confirming new apprenticeship roles and career pathways in their new structures. This has resulted in fewer enrolments in the short term but it's predicted to yield a greater number of enrolments throughout the year. Committed spend on enrolments is across the duration of the apprenticeship and these range from 1 - 5 years in duration subject to the apprenticeship standard. Committed spend is usually at its highest in September as this is when the majority of enrolments for higher level and degree apprenticeships enrol. These cost on average between £18 – 27,000 per candidate.

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15. During Q1 2022/2023 there were 7 completions and 3 withdrawals
16. The Apprenticeship Hub is currently reviewing all withdrawal data to assess where withdrawal trends are occurring and how the strategy for 2022/2023 can look to minimise these. We are continuing to undertake monthly reviews with all training providers to manage the on-programme progression of learners with their managers to minimise withdrawals with early intervention.
17. The work with Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (OFRS) has continued with its development to prepare an internal Operational Fire Fighter Apprenticeship delivered directly by the OFRS. If this plan comes to fruition, Oxfordshire County Council will have the ability to draw down levy payments as an accredited apprenticeship supported provider.
18. The Firefighter apprenticeship is a Level 3 qualification and is equivalent to an A level. Being able to offer this qualification to potential employees could improve the attraction for the On-Call Firefighter system. With the anticipated number of on-call Fire Fighters that may undertake the apprenticeship it would have a positive impact on utilising our levy.
19. In 2021/2022 Oxfordshire County Council commenced its first two Supported Apprenticeships. Supported Apprenticeships have been designed for individuals who have a recognised learning difficulty and/or disability and are an alternative apprenticeship which allows learners with Educational Health Care Plans and learning difficulties/disabilities to access supported apprenticeship training. The supported route makes allowances for lower entry requirements and pass marks for English and maths. With the success of two ongoing Supported Apprentices currently enrolled at OCC, the Apprenticeship Hub are working in conjunction with colleagues throughout the organisation to identify further Supported Apprenticeship opportunities. This will support with access to work, skills development and employability within the county for candidates which may not have been able to access this form of training previously.
20. In Q1 2022/2023 we enrolled our 3rd cohort of 12 candidates for the L4 Business Improvement practitioner, this programme is fully supported by the Business Improvement team and is proving to be very popular and successful.
21. Final applications for incentive funding allocated to any new apprenticeship starting during COVID have now been submitted. Total funding received for these incentive payments in 2021/2022 was approx. £40,000 and it is estimated that we will receive a further £35,000 during 2022/2023. All COVID-19 apprenticeship incentive payments have or will be transferred back to the recruiting service.

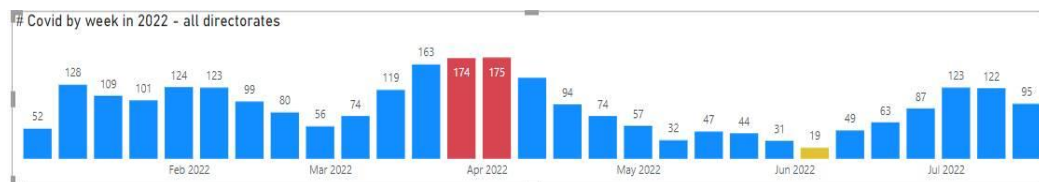
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22. Work has progressed in the Roads team in Environment and Place, Legal, Social Work, Town Planning, Facilities and HR to develop 'Grow Your Own' pathways within their staffing structures.
23. With a greater focus on a Grow Your Own approach, the Apprenticeship Hub are currently working with all Directorates to develop clear career pathways supplemented with apprenticeship training. In most instances these approaches have started to develop into Academies. The Apprenticeship Hub have standardised an approach to review structure charts and job roles in different service areas to identify appropriate apprenticeships that link to roles, levels, career progression and CPD. This work will help us to attract, retain, recruit and develop and links closely to the new draft Resourcing Strategy. Several areas currently in development with this approach include Social Care, Civil Engineering, Legal and Facilities Management. Working alongside the Delivering the Future Together programme, the Apprenticeship Hub will also support with Leadership and Management programmes across all of the Council.

Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing

COVID-19 Update

24. Most COVID restrictions have now been removed, however July has seen an increase in cases nationally and in Oxfordshire [COVID-19 Dashboard \(oxfordshire.gov.uk\)](#), and is also reflected in recent sickness absence rates.



25. All Directorates – During 2022, cases appeared to have peaked around the last week in March (174) and the first week in April (175). The numbers then went down for the next few weeks until the Jubilee weekend when a further 19 cases were reported. After the Jubilee weekend, the cases rose again to reach 123 in the week ending 3 July, 122 in the week ending 10 July. In the week commencing 11 July, there were a total of 95 staff off work due to Covid which represents a reduction in numbers from the previous weeks, but it is not yet clear whether the cases are on a more permanent and steady downward trend.
26. HSE Inspections of Schools (asbestos management): The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) will be carrying out a programme of inspections to primary and secondary schools in England, Scotland and Wales from September 2022 onwards. The inspections will be assessing how schools are managing the risks from asbestos within the school estate and meeting the 'duty to manage' (DTM) requirements under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR).

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27. Under H&S legislation the Council (as the employer) is responsible for community schools, community special schools, voluntary-controlled schools, maintained nursery schools.
28. In preparation for the inspections the Council has provided advice and guidance to Headteachers and Business Managers who have shared delegated duties to ensure asbestos is managed on the site. Further support will be offered once inspections commence and colleagues in Property and Facilities are procuring a new contract for Asbestos Re-inspection's by a Specialist Contractor in the Autumn which will include maintained schools. Where identified, essential works will be completed as a priority. These actions will be further managed and maintained following improvements to the Facilities Management works management system later in the year and will improve corporate assurance around school remedial work in this area.

Health and Safety (H&S) Priorities for 2022/2023

29. Our focus remains on promoting a strong and positive health and safety culture and to continue to strive for continual improvement wherever possible. Our current corporate H&S priorities are:
30. Improve corporate assurance of H&S in fleet management: The Council has launched the 'One-Fleet' project which will improve H&S assurance, management and compliance of council owned fleet and grey fleet. Grey fleet is the term used to described employees' vehicles used for business travel on behalf of the Council.
31. Monitor compliance to ensure effectiveness of systems and controls: The H&S Team are programmed to carry out H&S inspections during 2022/2023 of selected service areas including; the Music Service, Coroners, Museums, Children's Residential Homes and Daytime Support.
32. Improvements to system for reporting safety events: We are in the detailed scoping phase of a new ICT project to replace the existing H&S reporting system. The new system will provide an improved user experience with improved data and management information for trend analysis and reporting. Target date for implementation is April 2023.
33. Engage with Trade Unions: During the past year we have regularly met with the trade unions and staff representatives which has proven essential in maintaining employer relations during difficult times throughout the pandemic. Building on these strong links we will maintain engagement and consultation in particular with the development of the agile working strategy.
34. Provide safe and compliant buildings: Property Investment and Facilities Management continue to make operational improvements to

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ensure the Council fulfils its responsibilities as a corporate landlord, recent activity includes:

- Conducting a detailed Health Safety and Compliance Review
- Identified requirement for a Health and Safety Management System, which can be integrated and aligned to existing and systems such as SHIRE (aka Pirana) and the new Concerto system planned for go live later in 2022. This will ensure that greater assurance and reporting on compliance issues, monitoring of work orders and safety critical elements.
- In addition, the CoSHH (Chemical Safety) Management System has been re-assessed and agreement has been sought to implement as soon as practically possible, primarily within the cleaning service but can be applied across the organisation.
- The Property Service compliance work plan has been fully assessed identifying in excess of 35 active Workstreams covering 68+ active tasks such as developing safe systems of work, improve assurance and reporting, supporting responsible premises managers. The overall aim is to ensure that all county council buildings are maintained in a safe and satisfactory condition, suitable for the purpose for which they are being used. As well as Property Services who are strategically responsible for managing the portfolio it is essential that occupying services i.e. the local responsible premises manager, has the competence and tools necessary to ensure day to day management and safety of the building.
- The H&S Team has also supported Children's Social Care in assessing suitability and safety of accommodation for emergency placements of looked after children

35. Competent workforce: We have expanded our corporate H&S learning offering via Learning Pool including:

Updated Courses	New eLearning Courses
<p><u>Health & Safety in Care Catalogue</u> Epilepsy Awareness Handling of Medicines Moving and Handling STOMP – Stop Over Medication of People with learning disabilities (Adults eLearning) Visual Impairment</p> <p><u>Health & Safety – Team Members</u> Lone working COSHH Display Screen Equipment Driving Safety Fire Safety Introduction to Health and Safety Manual Handling Personal Safety RIDDOR Working at Height</p> <p><u>Health & Safety – Line Managers & Organisation</u></p>	<p><u>Health & Safety in Care Catalogue</u> Infection Prevention and Control Resuscitation</p> <p><u>Health & Safety– Team Members</u> Introduction to First Aid</p> <p><u>Health & Safety– Line Managers & Organisation</u> Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPs) Asbestos Awareness New and Expectant Mothers Security measures in the workplace</p>

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Risk Management Emergency Planning The Principles of Risk Assessment Drug and Alcohol Awareness	
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36. Implement the Lone Worker Monitoring App/Device for lone workers identified by Services who are delivering services in higher risk situations: Following the roll out of the lone working mobile safety app in Children's Social Care we are currently working to expand to onboard Adult Services in a phased approach during Sept and October.

Occupational Health

37. A total of 273 referrals were made to PAM Occupational Health in Q1. Fifteen referrals requested support from the wellbeing service to support psychological health. There has been a 15% decrease on referrals from Q4 to Q1. Reasons for referral are highlighted below. As per Q4 the age ranges from 51 – 60 accounted for the highest proportion of referrals made.
38. The top three reasons for referral to Occupational Health in Q1 account for 143 of all referrals. The referrals were primarily from the following areas:
- Children's services
 - Schools
 - Adults and Housing

1. Anxiety, Stress, Depression and Other Psychiatric illnesses	
Stress	35
Anxiety	29
Depression	28
Bipolar, Personality Disorder, PTSD	7
Total	99
2. Musculoskeletal	
Inflammatory conditions	2
Lower body	8
Upper body	8
Other musculoskeletal	5
Total	23
3. Covid	
Long Covid	11
Post Covid	9
Risk Assessment	1
Total	21

Employee Assistance Programme

39. A total of 76 calls were made to the Employee Assistance Programme (Vita) in Q1. Personal reasons were cited as the main reason

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employees rang into the service. The calls primarily came from the following groups;

- Children's services
- Adults and housing
- Schools

40. Reasons for the calls can be categorised as follows:

- Emotional support – 56
- Legal and Information - 13
- Information and advice – 5
- Management support – 2

Wellbeing

41. The Council provides a range of wellbeing initiatives and the following webinars, workshops and health promotion took place during Q1.

- Men's Health
- Neurodiversity X 2
- Vita/EAP awareness – for Schools
- Occupational Health training for Schools
- Financial Wellbeing
- Positive Health
- Healthy Ageing
- Healthy at every size

Sickness Absence

42. This quarter's continued reduction of sickness absence may be due to the continuation of an absence management project where HR Advisers are working closely with managers to improve their skills and understanding of absence management processes and the support available to both managers and employees. The data would indicate there are early signs of a positive impact of this project and further work is continuing.

43. The project aims to reduce absence throughout the organisation (with a particular focus on short term absence), refreshing policy and procedure guidance and upskilling managers' knowledge of both the process and resources available to them to support employees. The focus this quarter has been on 'return to work' meetings and management guidance has been provided to ensure employee support is optimised and processes which are known to reduce absence levels are fully embedded.

Resourcing

44. The Council has a small in-house resourcing team who advise and lead on specific resourcing campaigns across the Directorates. The system

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used for recruitment and transactional recruitment services is provided by the IBC Hampshire Partnership.

45. There are increasing levels of recruitment activity which has caused pressure within the system whilst managing an increasingly competitive labour market with candidates often having multiple job offers to consider. Figures are generally on the increase which is usual for Q2 due to the start of the new financial year (April) and a key time towards the end of the quarter (June) to attract graduates into public sector roles.
46. The team have been supporting a range of key resourcing needs across a range of Directorates including Children's Services, Adult Services, Environment and Place and Legal and Democratic Services.
47. Work has commenced on a resourcing strategy to establish a three to five year plan to determine and initiate a programme of change and transformation for resourcing with the aim to create a high performance resourcing function to improve our ability to attract and retain the right people to secure Oxfordshire's success. The draft resourcing strategy will be presented to the Senior Leadership Team in August 2022. Running in parallel is the production of an IT requirements document to establish system needs.

Q1 Staffing Data (1st April – 30th June 2022)

48. Appendix 1 of this report provides staffing data relating to the workforce profile including sickness absence, turnover, apprenticeship numbers and agency spend.
49. Workforce data and trends are published in more detail on the Council's intranet. This includes a breakdown of staffing numbers and trends over the past five quarters by Directorates and Schools, including temporary and part time employees, turnover and sickness rates along with diversity and salary profiles. This data provides information by service and includes the spend and use of agency workers.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

50. Equality and inclusion implications are considered across all our workstreams as identified in the section above.

Sustainability Implications

51. There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

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52. There are no risk management issues arising from this report.

CLAIRE TAYLOR

Corporate Director Customers, Organisational Development and Resources

Annex: Appendix 1 - Workforce Profile Q1

Background papers: Nil

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August 2022