

*Meeting:* **Employment Committee**

*Date/Time:* **Thursday, 26 September 2024 at 10.00 am**

*Location:* **Sparkenhoe Committee Room, County Hall, Glenfield**

*Contact:* **Damien Buckley (0116 305 0183)**

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### **Membership**

Mr. L. Breckon JP CC (Chairman)

Mr. P. Bedford CC    Mr. B. Harrison-Rushton CC  
Mrs. L. Broadley CC    Mr. T. J. Pendleton CC  
Mr. B. Champion CC    Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC

### **AGENDA**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Report by</u>
1. Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2023.	(Pages 3 - 8)
2. Question Time.	
3. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).	
4. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.	
5. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.	
6. Presentation of petitions under Standing Order 35.	
7. Employment Committee Work Programme.	Director of

Corporate  
Resources

There will be a powerpoint presentation for this item.

- |     |   |                                       |                 |
|-----|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 8.  | Attendance Management.  | Director of<br>Corporate<br>Resources | (Pages 9 - 16)  |
| 9.  | Pay Policy Statement.   | Director of<br>Corporate<br>Resources | (Pages 17 - 34) |
| 10. | JNC Chief Officer Pay Award 2024-25.                              | Director of<br>Corporate<br>Resources | (Pages 35 - 38) |
| 11. | Review of Employer Discretions - Pension Regulations.             | Director of<br>Corporate<br>Resources | (Pages 39 - 50) |
| 12. | Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2023-24.               | Director of<br>Corporate<br>Resources | (Pages 51 - 88) |
| 13. | Organisational Change Policy and Procedure: Action Plans.         | Chief Executive                       | (Pages 89 - 94) |
| 14. | Any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent. |                                       |                 |
| 15. | Date of Next Meeting.   |                                       |                 |

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to be held on 5 December 2024.



Minutes of a meeting of the Employment Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 23 May 2024.

PRESENT

Mr. L. Breckon JP CC (in the Chair)

Mrs. L. Broadley CC  
Mrs. H. J. Fryer CC  
Mr. D. Harrison CC

Mr. T. J. Pendleton CC  
Mrs. P. Posnett MBE CC  
Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC

1. Appointment of Chairman.

It was moved by Mr. D. Harrison CC and seconded by Mrs. P. Posnett MBE CC that Mr. L. Breckon JP CC be elected Chairman of the Employment Committee for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2025.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. L. Breckon JP CC be elected Chairman of the Employment Committee for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2025.

2. Election of Deputy Chairman.

Nominations for the position of Deputy Chairman were sought. Mr. P. Bedford CC was nominated by Mrs. P. Posnett MBE CC and seconded by Mr. R. Shepherd CC.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. P. Bedford CC be elected Deputy Chairman of the Employment Committee for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2025.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2024.

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2024 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

4. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 34.

5. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

6. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

7. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

8. Equal Pay Audit.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which presented the findings of an Equal Pay Audit which was conducted in April 2024. The report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. The audit had excluded data where information was incomplete, or where errors in data had made it impossible to analyse the data without significant further investigation. Members noted that this would include instances where a member of staff had left mid-year or had not disclosed information relating to their protected characteristics. The Council was committed to ensuring that data was reliable to ensure compliance with the recommendations outlined by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Members noted that staff continued to be requested to provide information relating to protected characteristics, which would allow the Council to improve its HR offer, but it was not mandatory for them to do so.
- ii. Members noted that in circumstances when a business case was proposed relating to additional payments for a particular role, such as market premia, a benchmarking exercise would be conducted against other Local Authorities, where possible.

The Director also provided the Committee with an update on the 2024/25 pay claims. It was reported that:

- iii. The National Joint Council (NJC) claim included an increase of at least £3,000 or 10%, whichever was greater, on all spinal column points. In addition to this, an additional day of annual leave for personal or well-being purposes, a two-hour reduction in the working week with no detriment, and a phased approach to reaching a minimum pay rate of £15 per hour within a maximum of two years. National Employers for Local Government Services had responded with an offer which included an increase of £1,290, which would be adjusted pro rata for part-time employees, to be paid as a consolidated, permanent addition on all NJC pay points 2 to 43 inclusive, and an increase of 2.5% on all allowances. National Employers for Local Government Services rejected the remaining elements of the pay claim.
- iv. The JNC claim included an increase that is no less favourable to Chief Officers than the NJC claim, as a step towards pay restoration. The National Employers responded with an increase of 2.5% on basic salary.

- v. The National Employers were committed to a redesigned of the national pay spine, as agreed in the 2023 NJC agreement. It was noted that a prompt settlement of both pay claims was recommended by all parties so that these negotiations could begin.
- vi. The three trade unions would consult with their members on the 2024/25 pay claims.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the findings of the Equal Pay Audit, particularly that the current job evaluation system (HAY) continues to ensure that pay is determined on an equal basis, be noted.
- b) That additional payments such as honoraria and premia payments would continue to be reviewed regularly to ensure that such payments were still justified and did not discriminate.
- c) That comparator data in respect of the Gender Pay Gap, be noted.
- d) That the update provided on the 2024-25 pay claims, be noted.

9. Staff Survey Action Plan.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided and update on key actions identified from the 2023 staff survey. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. The report planned for the meeting of Employment Committee in quarter 1 of 2025/26 would include progress as a result of the work which had been undertaken to address concerns such as bullying and harassment, and other areas where improvement was required.
- ii. Members noted that the results of the survey, and the associated action plan, would be well communicated with members of staff to ensure that the Council's strategy for addressing concerns identified from the survey was clear.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the update provided on key actions identified from the 2023 staff survey, be noted.
- b) That the approach being taken to address the findings of the survey, be supported.

10. Update on the People Strategy.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which presented the draft People Strategy (2024-28). A copy of the report, and the draft strategy, marked 'Agenda Item 11' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. Performance relating to the four themes within the Strategy would be measured against key performance indicators which had been specifically designed to enable the delivery of strategic outcomes. Performance indicators would be evaluated over the four-year period, but would also be reviewed as part of annual delivery plans.
- ii. Work had taken place to embed workforce planning within the strategy. This work included a focus on an ageing workforce, offering support to later life careers, supporting people to work for longer, and to promote the Council as a positive employer in order to appeal to a younger demographic also.
- iii. The People Strategy and associated plans would be communicated with staff to ensure that the measures in place to support them in all aspects of their employment were understood.

RESOLVED:

That the draft People Strategy 2024 – 2028, be approved.

11. Performance and Productivity.

The Committee received a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided an overview of how performance and productivity is managed within the context of the employment relationship across the Council. The report marked 'Agenda item 12' is filed with these minutes.

It was acknowledged that there were different views on the effectiveness of the hybrid working model which had been adopted by the Council. The Council would recognise both positive and negative feedback on the Ways of Working programme. In addition, Services would continue to receive support and advice on ways of working to ensure that they were able to deliver good quality services for residents alongside a positive working environment for staff. Managers would continue to be encouraged to exercise an appropriate level of engagement with staff in order to understand their individual needs and to ensure that the expectations of their role were clear.

RESOLVED:

That the overview of how performance and productivity is managed within the context of the employment relationship across the Council, be noted.

12. Organisational Change Policy and Procedure: Action Plans.

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive which presented the current Action Plans which contained provision for compulsory redundancy and details of progress made with their implementation. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the update provided on the current Action Plans which contain provision for compulsory redundancy, and details of progress in their implementation, be noted.

13. Attendance Management.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided an update on the Council's overall position on sickness absence, as at the end of March 2024 (quarter 4, 2023/24). A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 14' is filed with these minutes.

In presenting the report, the Director provided an update of the Council's overall position of sickness absence, as at April 2024. Members were pleased to note that the end of year figure for the total FTE days lost for Leicestershire County Council was 8.8.

Members requested that a comparison of the end of year data relating to the Council's sickness absence position, against comparator local authorities, be included in the Attendance Management report to be presented at the meeting on 26 September 2024.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Director be requested to include a comparison of the end of year data relating to the Council's sickness absence position, against comparator local authorities, be included in the Attendance Management report to be presented at the meeting on 26 September 2024.
- b) That the Council's overall position on sickness absence, as at the end of March 2024 (quarter 4, 2023/24), and the updated position as at the end of April 2024, be noted.

14. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on 26 September 2024.

Meetings of the Committee in 2025 would be held at 10:00am on the following dates:

- 6 February 2024
- 22 May 2024
- 18 September 2024
- 4 December 2024

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 26 September 2024.

Meetings of the Committee in 2025 would be held at 10:00am on the following dates:

- 6 February 2024
- 22 May 2024
- 18 September 2024
- 4 December 2024

15. Chairman's Announcement.

The Chairman reported that this would be the final meeting for Mr Gordon McFarlane, the Council's Assistant Director for People, Property and Transformation, as he would be leaving the Authority at the end of June. The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee thanked Gordon for his invaluable support and advice over the years and wished him well for the future.

16. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the remaining item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 10 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and that, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

17. Attendance Management - Focus on Environment and Transport.

The Committee considered an exempt report of the Director of Corporate Resources, the purpose of which was to provide an overview of the sickness absence position in the Environment and Transport Department, as at the end of March 2024, following a request made by the Committee at its meeting on 1 February 2024. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 18' is filed with these minutes.

The report was not for publication as it contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The Director responded to questions regarding the sickness absence position in the Environment and Transport Department, and the work which had been undertaken to mitigate the level of sickness absence within the Department. It was noted that a range of interventions had been introduced, and that sickness absence within the Department had reduced, as at the end of April 2024. The Department would continue to focus on sickness absence alongside colleagues in HR.

RESOLVED:

That the overall sickness position for the Environment and Transport Department, as at the end of March 2024, and the updated sickness absence position, be noted.

10.00 am - 12.25 pm  
23 May 2024

CHAIRMAN





## **EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 26 SEPTEMBER 2024**

### **ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT**

#### **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES**

##### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Employment Committee on the Council's overall position on sickness absence, as at the end of June 2024 (quarter 1, 2024/25).

##### **Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. The Attendance Management Policy supports this report. No changes to this policy are proposed.

##### **Background**

3. On 23 May 2024, the Committee considered the Council's absence position as at the end of March 2024 (quarter 4 2023/24).

##### **Sickness absence – current position**

4. The table below details the end of year sickness absence levels of the previous 4 years, and quarter 1, 2024/25.

	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25 Q1 Jun 24	Total FTE days lost 01/07/23– 30/06/24	Total cost of absence 01/07/23 – 30/06/24
Chief Executive's	4.41	3.13	4.14	5.91	5.57	1,427.89	£229k
Environment & Transport	7.04	8.34	11.44	10.21	9.17	7,834.77	£883k
Children & Family Services	7.94	10.44	10.14	8.91	8.19	10,212.95	£1,441k
Corporate Resources	5.54	9.92	8.84	9.57	8.38	9,551.85	£1,062k
Adults & Communities	10.18	8.24	8.84	10.06	10.31	12,355.80	£1,538k
Public Health	5.08	5.65	5.58	4.64	4.64	771.32	£101
<b>LCC total</b>	<b>7.51</b>	<b>8.87</b>	<b>9.27</b>	<b>9.27</b>	<b>8.67</b>	<b>42,154.58</b>	<b>£5,250k</b>

ESPO	6.80	8.64	8.28	7.87	8.18	2,647.29	£288k
EMSS	9.26	9.10	6.26	6.86	5.53	586.59	£65k

5. At the end of quarter 1 2024/25 the Chief Executive's and Public Health departments are below the corporate target of 7.5 days per FTE. Children & Family Services, Corporate Resources, Environment & Transport, the Chief Executive's department and EMSS, have all made improvements since the end of quarter 4, 2023/24.
6. The County Council total is at 8.67 FTE days lost per FTE, an improvement from quarter 4 2023/24 of 0.60 FTE days per FTE.
7. Attendance management activity is still required across departments to achieve and maintain the corporate target of 7.5 days per FTE.

### **Reasons for sickness absence**

8. Displayed in order of highest percentage of time lost, the table below details the main reasons for absence; plus the not disclosed category.

Percentage of FTE days lost 12 months cumulative	2021/22 Mar 2022 Q4	2022/23 Mar 2023 Q4	2023/24 Jun 2023 Q1	2023/24 Sept 2023 Q2	2023/24 Dec 2023 Q3	2023/24 Mar 2024 Q4	2024/25 Jun 2024 Q1
Stress/depression, mental health	28.4%	26.8%	27.8%	28.5%	30.0%	31.4%	28.7%
Other musculo-skeletal	8.8%	12.4%	12.9%	12.8%	13.1%	13.2%	14.0%
Combined covid-19 & cough/cold & flu	19.7%	17.3%	15.5%	13.4%	11.9%	11.5%	12.3%
Gastro-stomach, digestion	6.1%	6.1%	6.7%	7.4%	6.9%	6.2%	6.1%
Chest & respiratory	3.3%	6.0%	5.3%	5.4%	4.9%	4.6%	4.8%
Back and neck	4.1%	3.8%	3.8%	3.6%	4.3%	4.4%	4.3%
Neurological	4.6%	4.4%	4.4%	4.0%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%
Cancer	4.7%	4.3%	5.2%	5.4%	5.2%	4.7%	4.2%
Eye, ear, nose & mouth/dental & throat	4.3%	2.8%	2.9%	3.3%	3.6%	3.4%	3.2%
<i>Not disclosed</i>	5.7%	5.8%	5.0%	4.4%	3.0%	3.7%	4.0%

9. The table shows that the levels of mental health/stress/depression related sickness absence has improved from quarter 4, 2023/24 to quarter 1 2024/25, however this remains the highest reason for lost time due to sickness absence.
10. The tables below show the percentage of top 3 reason for sickness absence by department for the 12-month periods ending quarter 1 2024/25, quarters 1, 2, 3 and 4 2023/24 and the 12 month periods at the end of years 2022/23 and 2021/22.

**Chief Executive's department**

Percentage of FTE days lost 12 months cumulative	2021/22 Mar 2022 Q4	2022/23 Mar 2023 Q4	2023/24 Jun 2023 Q1	2023/24 Sept 2023 Q2	2023/24 Dec 2023 Q3	2023/24 Mar 2024 Q4	2024/25 Jun 2024 Q1
Stress/depression, mental health	19.92%	20.61%	18.44%	19.54%	22.0%	27.77%	29.81%
Other musculo-skeletal	20.40%	21.45%	26.14%	25.82%	20.5%	13.22%	7.73%
Combined covid-19 & cough/cold & flu	32.52%	25.51%	22.3%	16.48%	13.8%	11.72%	14.03%

**Environment & Transport**

Percentage of FTE days lost 12 months cumulative	2021/22 Mar 2022 Q4	2022/23 Mar 2023 Q4	2023/24 Jun 2023 Q1	2023/24 Sept 2023 Q2	2023/24 Dec 2023 Q3	2023/24 Mar 2024 Q4	2024/25 Jun 2024 Q1
Stress/depression, mental health	20.48%	21.04%	19.63%	23.54%	26.9%	30.50%	25.83%
Other musculo-skeletal	14.38%	17.23%	18.10%	16.86%	18.7%	17.06%	19.00%
Combined covid-19 & cough/cold & flu	23.74%	16.55%	15.26%	13.54%	11.8%	12.22%	11.78%

**Children & Families Services**

Percentage of FTE days lost 12 months cumulative	2021/22 Mar 2022 Q4	2022/23 Mar 2023 Q4	2023/24 Jun 2023 Q1	2023/24 Sept 2023 Q2	2023/24 Dec 2023 Q3	2023/24 Mar 2024 Q4	2024/25 Jun 2024 Q1
Stress/depression, mental health	39.73%	35.78%	41.25%	42.42%	43.6%	40.43%	37.68%
Other musculo-skeletal	5.64%	9.16%	8.20%	7.63%	8.0%	8.94%	10.66%
Combined covid-19 & cough/cold & flu	17.78%	15.68%	12.26%	10.99%	9.2%	9.36%	10.55%

### Corporate Resources

Percentage of FTE days lost 12 months cumulative	2021/22 Mar 2022 Q4	2022/23 Mar 2023 Q4	2023/24 Jun 2023 Q1	2023/24 Sept 2023 Q2	2023/24 Dec 2023 Q3	2023/24 Mar 2024 Q4	2024/25 Jun 2024 Q1
Stress/depression, mental health	18.58%	16.23%	17.41%	21.13%	23.46%	18.59%	19.16%
Other musculo-skeletal	11.09%	15.36%	16.67%	17.11%	16.25%	16.07%	15.02%
Combined covid-19 & cough/cold & flu	18.82%	14.70%	13.07%	11.21%	10.77%	10.35%	10.19%

### Adults & Communities

Percentage of FTE days lost 12 months cumulative	2021/22 Mar 2022 Q4	2022/23 Mar 2023 Q4	2023/24 Jun 2023 Q1	2023/24 Sept 2023 Q2	2023/24 Dec 2023 Q3	2023/24 Mar 2024 Q4	2024/25 Jun 2024 Q1
Stress/depression, mental health	33.52%	32.89%	30.49%	27.03%	26.54%	28.55%	30.34%
Other musculo-skeletal	6.63%	7.91%	8.38%	8.05%	9.37%	10.30%	10.61%
Combined covid-19 & cough/cold & flu	19.87%	21.63%	21.21%	17.63%	22.14%	13.30%	13.21%

### Public Health

Percentage of FTE days lost 12 months cumulative	2021/22 Mar 2022 Q4	2022/23 Mar 2023 Q4	2023/24 Jun 2023 Q1	2023/24 Sept 2023 Q2	2023/24 Dec 2023 Q3	2023/24 Mar 2024 Q4	2024/25 Jun 2024 Q1
Stress/depression, mental health	26.50%	30.03%	32.86%	32.88%	31.89%	12.05%	12.53%
Other musculo-skeletal	3.72%	10.06%	14.31%	17.06%	16.62%	32.82%	24.66%
Combined covid-19 & cough/cold & flu	21.07%	18.40%	16.54%	17.52%	19.85%	18.46%	22.97%

11. The key observation for quarter 1 2024/25 is the improvement in the percentage of mental health absence in Children & Families and Environment & Transport departments.

### Long and Short-term absence split

12. The table below details the number of FTE days lost due to absence and the percentage split of FTE days lost as at the end of June 2024.

<b>2024/25 as at end of June 2024 (quarter 1)</b>						
<b>12 months cumulative</b>						
<b>Department</b>	<b>Long term</b>			<b>Short term</b>		
	FTE days lost	% FTE days lost	Individual occurrences	FTE days lost	% FTE days lost	Individual occurrences
Chief Executive's	938.79	65.75%	26	489.10	34.25%	156
Environment and Transport	5037.15	64.29%	138	2797.62	35.71%	800
Children and Family Services	7301.51	71.49%	203	2911.44	28.51%	759
Public Health	343.35	44.51%	13	427.97	55.49%	121
Corporate Resources	6316.52	66.13%	195	3235.33	33.87%	1430
Adults and Communities	8041.17	65.08%	271	4314.63	34.92%	1170

**Note: Long term is categorised as over 4 weeks of continuous absence.**

### Service level data

13. The table below provides details of the days lost per FTE at the end of the last 3 years and at the end of quarters 1, 2, 3 and 4 2023/24 and quarter 1 2024/25, for service areas by department.

<b>Department</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
<b>Days per FTE</b>	<b>Year end</b>	<b>Year end</b>	<b>Year end</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Q1</b>
<b>12 months cumulative</b>	<b>(Mar 21)</b>	<b>(Mar 22)</b>	<b>(Mar 23)</b>	<b>(Jun 23)</b>	<b>(Sept 23)</b>	<b>(Dec 23)</b>	<b>(Mar 24)</b>	<b>(Jun 24)</b>
<b>Chief Executive's</b>	4.41	3.13	4.14	4.41	6.05	5.90	5.91	5.57
Planning and Historic and Natural Environment	0.79	0.71	3.52	4.19	10.96	8.35	5.43	5.22
Regulatory Services	6.30	6.74	9.40	8.43	11.13	11.38	9.98	8.97
Strategy and Business Intelligence	3.86	1.87	3.47	3.95	5.08	4.95	6.91	6.84
Democratic Services	1.07	2.67	1.43	4.24	4.96	4.90	2.40	2.96

<b>Department</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
<b>Days per FTE</b>	<b>Year end</b>	<b>Year end</b>	<b>Year end</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Q1</b>
<b>12 months cumulative</b>	<b>(Mar 21)</b>	<b>(Mar 22)</b>	<b>(Mar 23)</b>	<b>(Jun 23)</b>	<b>(Sept 23)</b>	<b>(Dec 23)</b>	<b>(Mar 24)</b>	<b>(Jun 24)</b>
Legal Services	5.82	3.05	1.34	1.49	1.57	1.62	1.86	1.29
<b>Environment and Transport</b>	7.04	8.34	11.44	11.31	11.51	10.80	10.21	9.17
Highways and Transport	3.99	9.40	15.01	14.93	14.12	13.37	12.95	11.90
Environment and Waste Management	7.68	7.54	9.26	9.11	11.82	11.48	10.46	8.07
Development and Growth	n/a	n/a	5.49	5.32	5.70	5.20	4.65	4.55
<b>Children and Family Services</b>	7.95	10.44	10.14	10.01	9.88	9.31	8.91	8.19
Education and SEND	7.57	12.24	8.40	7.71	8.94	9.24	7.44	5.94
Children's Social Care & Targeted Early Help	9.15	10.11	10.52	10.31	10.14	9.90	10.00	9.16
<b>Corporate Resources</b>	5.45	9.92	8.84	8.64	10.50	10.72	9.57	8.38
Finance, Strategic Property & Commissioning	2.88	3.99	3.37	3.16	3.58	3.85	3.55	3.78
Corporate Services	4.07	7.83	5.07	5.55	7.48	6.64	7.39	6.23
IT, Comms & Digital, Commercial and Customer Services	6.77	11.69	11.31	11.02	13.44	13.95	13.83	11.95
<b>Adults and Communities</b>	10.18	8.24	8.84	8.61	9.27	9.53	10.06	10.31
Operational commissioning	n/a	n/a	9.74	11.31	11.13	11.67	11.06	10.87
Integration, access & prevention	n/a	n/a	10.27	8.11	7.66	7.78	11.21	12.82
Commissioning and Quality	4.66	11.90	10.83	6.11	6.12	5.57	10.22	10.58
Personal Care and Support	21.15	7.07	6.28	4.99	7.18	7.08	12.11	10.60
Communities and Wellbeing	4.65	5.38	5.41	5.16	5.57	5.73	6.25	6.24
<b>Public Health</b>	5.80	5.65	5.58	5.85	5.38	4.83	4.64	4.64

## 2023/24 Comparisons

14. As requested by the Employment Committee, the table below provides details of other Council 2034/34 end of year absence positions. Leicestershire County Council is highlighted in bold within the table.

<b>FTE per FTE</b>	<b>Main reasons for lost time</b>
7.32	Stress Anxiety Post surgery recovery
8.24	Mental Health – 21% Musculoskeletal – 19% Stress (not mental health) – 9%.
8.50	Stress/depression 34.06% Musculo skeletal 16.20% Infections 14.77%
8.90	Anxiety/stress/depression/other psychiatric illnesses 25.31% Musculoskeletal 18.35% Cold, Cough, Flu - Influenza 8.11%
<b>9.27</b>	<b>Stress, mental health, depression 31.4%</b> <b>Musculo skeletal 13.2%</b> <b>Cough/cold/flu/covid-19 11.5%</b>
9.84	Stress/mental health 35.05% Musculo skeletal 13.71% Other 13.49%
10.20	Stress, mental health, depression 31.4% Psychological/Mental Health – 34.46% Cough / cold - 8.06% Surgery – 8.02%
10.84	Psychological disorders 32.6% Musculo-skeletal disorder 18.9% Respiratory condition 11.7%
11.14	Stress/depression 27.28% Other 13.51% Op/Post Op recovery 12.32%
12.08	Stress/anxiety 21.37% Musculoskeletal 16.70% Operations post operative recovery & other hospital treatments 8%
14.55	Stress/Depression/Mental Health Musculo Skeletal Chest and Respiratory

## Recommendations

15. The Committee is asked to note the update provided on the Council's overall position on sickness absence as at the end of June 2024.

**Background Papers**

16. Report to the Employment Committee 23 May 2024 – Attendance Management  
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s182901/Attendance%20Management%20-%20Employment%20Committee%20-%202023%20May%202024.pdf>

**Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

17. None

**Equality Implications/Other Impact Assessments**

18. There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

**Human Right Implications**

19. There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

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## **EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE: 26 SEPTEMBER 2024**

### **PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2025/26**

#### **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES**

##### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Employment Committee to the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2025/26, attached as Appendix A.

##### **Background**

2. On 15th November 2011 the Localism Act received Royal Assent. Under Section 38 of the Act, local authorities in England and Wales are required to produce a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year which must be approved by the Full County Council.
3. This statement must set out the Council's policies in relation to:
  - (a) The remuneration of its chief officers;
  - (b) The remuneration of its lowest-paid employees; and
  - (c) The relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and the remuneration of its employees who are not chief officers.
4. For the purposes of this statement, remuneration includes basic salary, bonuses and other allowances or entitlements related to employment.
5. The Council is required to publish the Pay Policy Statement for 2025/26 on or before 1st April 2025.

##### **Key Points**

6. The proposed Pay Policy Statement attached sets out:
  - The Council's approach to job evaluation and grading of posts;
  - Additional payments that employees are eligible to receive, such as night enhancement, overtime;
  - The Council's pay multiple (the ratio between the highest paid employee and the median average salary of the Council's workforce, excluding schools but including ESPO) which is 1:6.92;

- That there is no distinction between chief officers and other employees in relation to pension entitlements and severance payments;
- The Council's approach to the re-engagement of former employees.

The most recently revised pay structure took effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, which ensured that the provisions set out by the National Joint Council (NJC) pay award for 2019/20 were met.

7. At the time of writing, the 2023/24 pay structure remains in place for employees on National Joint Council (NJC) terms and conditions and Chief Executive's terms and conditions, as the respective pay awards have not yet been agreed. A pay award for those on Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officer (JNC) terms and conditions was agreed in August 2024 and has been implemented.
8. The Employment Committee will be advised of the 2024/25 pay structure, incorporating the NJC pay award once agreement between the national employers and trade unions has been reached.

### **The 2024/25 Pay Award**

9. The National Employers met on 16<sup>th</sup> May and agreed to make the following one-year (1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025), full and final offer to the unions representing the main local government National Joint Council (NJC) workforce:
  - With effect from 1 April 2024, an increase of £1,290 (pro rata for part-time employees) to be paid as a consolidated, permanent addition on all NJC pay points 2 to 43 inclusive.
  - With effect from 1 April 2024, an increase of 2.50 per cent on all pay points above the maximum of the pay spine but graded below deputy chief officer (in accordance with Green Book Part 2 Para 5.41).
  - With effect from 1 April 2024 an increase of 2.50 per cent on all allowances (as listed in the 2023 NJC pay agreement circular dated 1 November 2023).
10. This offer would achieve a bottom rate of pay of £12.26 on the NJC pay spine with effect from 1 April 2024 (which equates to a pay increase of 5.77 per cent for employees on pay point 2) and everyone on the NJC pay spine would receive a minimum 2.50 per cent pay increase.
11. The main unions have responded as follows:
  - UNISON will conduct a ballot for industrial action that will run from 4 September to 16 October.
  - Unite will conduct a ballot for industrial action that will run from 27 August to 15 October.
  - GMB members voted to accept the offer.

12. The National Employers have also made a 2.5% offer on basic salary to the Joint National Council for Chief Executives.

### **Resource Implications**

13. Should the pay award be agreed as outlined above, it is estimated that this will increase the pay bill by around 3.9% which is within the forecasted budget for 2024/25.

### **Recommendations**

14. The Committee is asked to;

- (a) Approve the Pay Policy Statement at Appendix A.
- (b) Note the current position in respect of the National Joint Council and Chief Executives Pay offers.

### **Background Papers**

15. None.

### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

16. None

### **Equalities and Human Rights implications**

17. An Equal Pay Audit was presented to the Employment Committee in May 2024.

### **Officer to Contact:**

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## Appendix A

# a

## Pay Policy Statement - 2025/2026

### Contents

Purpose.....	1
Scope .....	2
Definitions .....	2
Pay and Grading Structure .....	3
Remuneration on Appointment .....	4
Market Premia.....	4
Incremental Progression .....	5
Additional Payments .....	5
Other Allowances .....	5
Bonus Payments .....	6
Pension Benefits.....	6
Honoraria .....	7
Salary Protection .....	7
Severance Payments.....	7
Re-Engagement of Employees .....	8
Publication and Access to Information.....	9
Appendix A - Senior Management Remuneration 2023/2024 .....	10
Appendix B - Pay and Grading Structure .....	12

## Purpose

As a responsible employer Leicestershire County Council is committed to delivering a fair, equitable and transparent policy covering pay and other employee benefits which improves flexibility in delivering services and provides value for money.

Within the framework of its terms and conditions of employment, the Council aims to develop and maintain appropriate pay systems and benefit packages to attract and retain motivated, flexible people who take responsibility, work as a team, improve performance and acquire new skills.

This Pay Policy Statement sets out the Council's policies relating to the pay of its workforce for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, in particular the:

- Remuneration of chief officers;
- Remuneration of the lowest-paid employees;
- Relationship between the remuneration of chief officers and employees who are not chief officers.

The statement meets the Council's obligations under the Localism Act 2011 and will enable the elected members of the Council to make decisions on pay.

The Council's Pay Policy Statement will be agreed by Full Council before the beginning of each financial year and will then be published on the County Council's website ([Click here](#)). The statement may also be amended by Full Council during the course of the year if necessary.

## Scope

This statement applies to all employees of Leicestershire County Council employed under the conditions of service of the following bodies:

- National Joint Council for Local Government Services;
- Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities;
- Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Authority Chief Executives;
- School Teachers' Pay and Conditions (for Centrally Employed Teachers);
- Soulbury Committee.

It is not applicable to employees based in schools and colleges with delegated budgets.

## Definitions

For the purposes of this Pay Policy Statement the following definitions will apply:

### Remuneration

This includes three elements:

- Basic salary;
- Pension;
- Any other allowances arising from employment.

### Chief Officers

Under the Localism Act 2011 a Chief Officer is defined as:

- The head of the Council's paid service designated under section 4(1) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989;
- Its monitoring officer designated under section 5(1) of that Act;
- A statutory chief officer mentioned in section 2(6) of that Act;
- A non-statutory chief officer mentioned in section 2(7) of that Act;
- A deputy chief officer mentioned in section 2(8) of that Act.

In Leicestershire County Council this definition would apply to the posts set out in [Appendix A](#).

### Definition of a Day's Pay

The definition of a day's pay is the hours worked on the day multiplied by the employee's hourly rate of pay.

### Lowest Paid Employees

This refers to employees on Grade 2, Pay Point 2. This definition has been adopted as it is the lowest level of remuneration attached to a post within the Council. The lowest pay point value with effect from 1 April 2023 is £ 11.59, which exceeded the projected National Living Wage rate at that date.

## Pay and Grading Structure

The grading of all posts in the Council, except Centrally Employed Teachers, is determined using the nationally recognised Hay Job Evaluation Scheme. This is in order to ensure that all posts are graded and therefore rewarded financially through a fair and non-discriminatory process, that there is consistency in treatment between posts and that the Council complies with equal pay legislation. The scheme is an analytical one that takes into consideration three key elements of a post:

- Know How - the levels of knowledge, skill and experience (gained through work experience, education and training) which are required to perform the job successfully;
- Problem Solving - the complexity of thinking required to perform the job when applying Know How;
- Accountability - the impact the job has on the organisation and the constraints that the job holder has on acting independently.

Part of the guidance from Hay when introducing the scheme was that there should be a minimum of a 33.3% differential between the Chief Executive and the highest paid Chief Officer.

Basic pay is paid in accordance with the evaluated grade of the post. Each grade comprises a range of pay points. A copy of the Council's pay and grading structure is attached at [Appendix B](#).

The introduction of the National Living Wage with effect from 1 April 2016 had a substantial impact upon the Council's pay structure, in particular the lowest pay grades. This was further compounded by the implementation of subsequent pay awards which followed the national pay awards made by the NJC. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, a revised pay structure was established which ensured that the provisions set out by the NJC pay award for 2019/20 were met. The Council's revised pay structure also addressed several other priorities including the introduction of meaningful progression, addressing some of the Council's recruitment and retention challenges, and some ability to accommodate future pay awards as appropriate.

Annual pay awards for all employees except Centrally Employed Teachers and those employed on Soulbury Committee conditions will be agreed by Employment Committee having regard to any agreement reached by the relevant national negotiating bodies. The current pay award for all employees up to and including Grade 17 follows the national award made by the National Joint Council for Local Government Employees and covers the period up to 31 March 2024.

A pay award covering the same period was agreed for employees on Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) terms and conditions for Chief Executives.

For employees on JNC terms and conditions for Chief Officers, a pay award of 2.5% was agreed for the period up to 31 March 2025.

Annual pay awards for centrally employed teachers and those on Soulbury Committee conditions will be in accordance with those agreed by the respective national bodies.

Details of the national pay scales for Centrally Employed Teachers are available on the [Department for Education's website](#).

Employees in post when a pay award is due but who subsequently leave the Council before it is implemented are entitled to receive the difference in pay. To claim backdating from their date of leaving they must contact the Employee Service Centre.

Details of senior management remuneration are published annually on the Council's website as part of this Pay Policy Statement and in the [Council's Statement of Accounts](#). A copy of the information for 2023/2024 contained in the Pay Policy Statement is attached at [Appendix A](#).

The 'pay multiple' - the ratio between the highest paid full-time equivalent (FTE) salary (Grade 22) and the median average salary of the Council's workforce - is 1:6.92 (excluding schools).

## Remuneration on Appointment

All employees are usually appointed to the minimum pay point applicable to the grade of the post. If the employee is already being paid above the minimum pay point, managers have discretion in some circumstances to appoint to a higher pay point, subject to the maximum of the grade.

Where it is necessary for a newly appointed employee to relocate in order to take up a post, the Council may make a contribution towards the reimbursement of relocation expenses in line with the Relocation Policy.

Employment Committee is given the opportunity to consider salary packages over £100,000 before new posts are established and advertised.

## Market Supplements

There is provision for the award of market supplements where a job has been evaluated under the Hay Job Evaluation Scheme and the resulting salary is proven to be out of step with the market rate for the job. The award of market supplement is subject to the agreement of the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Employment Committee. If approved, market supplements are awarded for a period of up to three years. Details of the scheme can be found in the Council's Recruitment and Retention Incentives Policy.



## Incremental Progression

### Centrally Employed Teachers

A locally agreed Pay Policy for Centrally Employed Teachers has been in place since April 2014.

### Soulbury Employees

Employees covered by the Soulbury Agreement are eligible to receive annual increments on 1<sup>st</sup> September each year until they reach the maximum for the grade of their job.

### Other Employees

Subject to one year's satisfactory service in the grade, employees are eligible to receive annual increments on 1<sup>st</sup> April each year until they reach the maximum pay point for the grade of their job. Where circumstances warrant, accelerated increments may be granted by a Chief Officer.

### Career Graded Posts

Employees subject to career grade schemes will progress in line with the arrangements for that post.

## Additional Payments

Employees are eligible to receive a flat-rate enhancement for working at night.

Employees are eligible to receive enhancements for working on public holidays.

Employees in posts graded 1-9 who work additional hours are eligible to receive payment at plain time rate for hours worked; employees in Grades 10-14 who work additional hours are not eligible to be paid, but may receive time off in lieu (other than in exceptional circumstances, as set out in the Council's Smarter Working Policy); and for employees in Grades 15 and above, there is no entitlement to pay or time off in lieu for working additional hours. Details of these provisions are set out in the Council's Pay Arrangements Policy.

Employees required to "sleep in" on the premises receive an allowance as agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.

Employees required to participate in a standby rota due to the nature of their job will receive an allowance as set out in the Council's Policy on Standby.

## Other Allowances

All senior officers on grade 18 and above receive allowances as detailed in the Conditions of Service of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities and the Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Authority Chief Executives.

However, where these conditions are silent, or do not cover an allowance or process, the Chief Executive and senior officers receive the same as those employees covered by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.

A copy of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document can be found on the [Department for Education's website](#). Copies of the conditions of service for all other employees covered by this statement can be requested from the [Local Government Association](#).

### **Professional Fees**

The Council reimburses annual registration or comparable fees to employees who are unable to practise their professions unless such fees are paid. Professional fees are also paid to employees who are being sponsored to undertake training leading to a professional qualification. However, once the qualification has been gained, the individual will become responsible for paying their own professional fees.

The Council pays the annual subscription for Chief Officers to Societies of Chief Officers and similar organisations.

### **Car Allowances**

All posts, including Chief Officers, within Leicestershire County Council may claim mileage paid at HRMC rates for business travel. The Council operates a car benefit salary sacrifice scheme, open to all eligible employees.

### **First Aid Allowances**

Employees who are classified as a 'designated first-aider' are eligible to receive an allowance.

All designated first-aiders (but not appointed persons) will receive an allowance of 1% of the salary for pay point 5, pro rata to hours worked. The allowance will not be used in calculating any enhancements.

## **Bonus Payments**

The Council does not pay any group of employees a bonus.

## **Pension Benefits**

### **Centrally Employed Teachers**

All Centrally Employed Teachers are eligible to join the Teachers' Pension Scheme. Employees within Leicestershire Youth Service and Leicestershire Adult Learning Service may also join if their role gives eligibility to join the scheme. The scheme is a statutory scheme with contributions from employees and employers. Details of the scheme can be found on the [Teachers' Pension Scheme website](#).

### **Other Employees**

All employees under the age of 75 are eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme. The scheme is a statutory scheme with contributions from employees and

employers. Details of the scheme can be found on the [Leicestershire County Council Pension Fund](#) site.

The scheme allows for the exercise of discretion on the enhancement of retirement benefits. The Council will consider each case on its merits but has determined that its usual policy is not to enhance benefits for any of its employees.

The scheme provides for flexible retirement. To be eligible to request flexible retirement, the Council requires that an employee must either reduce their working hours by a minimum of 40% and/or be appointed to a post on a lower grade. In applying this provision no distinction is made between employees.

Under the Local Government Pension Scheme, employees who return to work after drawing their pension will not have their pension abated (i.e. reduced or suspended) except where they have been previously awarded “added years”.

The Council does not award “added years” to employees and has not done so since 2006.

## Honoraria

Subject to certain conditions, employees (excluding Centrally Employed Teachers) who are temporarily required to undertake some or all of the duties of a higher graded post are eligible to be paid an honorarium. Details of the scheme can be found in the Council’s Honorarium and Acting-Up Policy and Procedure.

## Salary Protection

Details of the Council’s salary protection provisions that apply to employees who are redeployed into a new post as a result of organisational change can be found in the Council’s Organisational Change Policy and Procedure.

Details of the Council’s salary protection provisions that apply to employees whose post is downgraded as a result of a grading review can be found in the Council’s Job Evaluation Guidance.

The provisions relating to safeguarding (pay protection) set out in the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document apply to centrally employed teachers. Other Council employees are eligible to receive salary protection for a period of up to one year if they are redeployed into a lower-graded post, with the amount of protection depending on the difference between the grades of their former job and new job.

## Severance Payments

### **Early Retirement (Efficiency of Service)**

The Local Government Pension Scheme allows employers certain discretionary powers but the Council’s usual policy is not to enhance pension benefits for any

employee. Therefore, there are no provisions for employees to seek early retirement on the grounds of efficiency of the service.

### **Redundancy**

The Council has a single redundancy scheme which applies to all employees. Redundancy payments are calculated in accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1996 and the 2006 Discretionary Compensation Regulations and are based on the employee's age, length of continuous local government service and salary. Details of the redundancy scheme can be found in the Council's Organisational Change Policy and Procedure.

The Council does not provide any further payment to employees leaving the Council's employment other than in respect of accrued annual leave.

Employees who have TUPE transferred into the Council on redundancy terms which are more favourable than those detailed above will retain these provisions as per TUPE legislation.

Full Council will be given the opportunity to vote on severance packages over £100,000 before they are approved.

### **Special Severance Payments**

Special severance payments (additional, discretionary sums paid on top of statutory and contractual redundancy or severance terms including, any payments reached under a settlement agreement and certain PILON payments) of £100,000 and above must be approved by a vote of full council.

Special severance payments of £20,000 and above, but below £100,000, must be personally approved and signed off by the Head of Paid Service, with a clear record of the Leader's approval and that of any others who have signed off the payment.

Special severance payments below £20,000 must be approved according to the Council's scheme of delegation.

## **Re-Engagement of Employees**

Where employees have left the Council's employment due to voluntary redundancy (with or without release of pension benefits) or settlement agreement within the last 12 months, re-engagement will only be considered in exceptional circumstances where there is a business critical reason. Details can be found in the Council's Policy on the Re-Engagement of Former Employees<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that the term voluntary redundancy does not apply to those employees who have volunteered to be made compulsorily redundant.

The above restriction does not apply where an employee was dismissed on the grounds of voluntary redundancy but without an entitlement to a redundancy payment and/or pension benefits, or where an employee was made compulsorily redundant.

Where it is agreed that a former employee should be offered re-employment with the Council during the 12 month non re-engagement period, the individual will be required to repay either all or a proportion of the severance payment received from the Council. The amount to be recovered will depend on the time that has elapsed since they received the payment. The individual must be advised of this requirement when they are provisionally offered the post.

Any necessary adjustments to pension would be made in accordance with the scheme regulations.

Employees who are offered another post with any organisation covered by the Modification Order Act prior to their redundancy leaving date and commence this post within 4 weeks of that date are not eligible to receive their redundancy payment.

## **Publication and Access to Information**

This Pay Policy Statement will be published on the Council's website, together with the Council's pay and grading structure and information relating to senior management remuneration.

## Appendix A - Senior Management Remuneration 2023/2024

The information below shows the total pay received by Senior Officers (as defined in the Localism Act) within the County Council for the financial year 2023/24. It does not include Head Teachers. The figures include taxable benefits i.e. lease car payments made for these positions during the year 2023/24.

All the jobs listed below have been ranked in terms of level of responsibility within a job evaluation framework applied to all County Council employees (excluding teaching staff). Rates of pay have then been determined with reference to market rates within similar local government authorities.

Post title	Total Pay £'000
<b>Chief Executive's Department</b>	
Chief Executive	221
Director of Law and Governance	148
Assistant Chief Executive	105
<b>Public Health</b>	
Director of Public Health	148
Assistant Director - Delivery	97
Assistant Director - Commissioning	97
<b>Corporate Resources</b>	
Director - Corporate Resources	134
Assistant Director – Corporate Services	130
Assistant Director – IT, Comms, Commercial & Customer Services	130
Assistant Director – Finance, Strategic Property & Commissioning	116
<b>Children and Family Services</b>	
Director of Children & Family Services	148
Assistant Director - Targeted Early Help and Children's Social Care	130
Assistant Director – Education, SEND and Commissioning	97
<b>Adults and Communities</b>	
Director of Adults and Communities	148
Assistant Director - East	105
Assistant Director – Strategic Commissioning	93
Assistant Director - Access Integration and Prevention	97
<b>Environment and Transportation</b>	
Director of Environment and Transportation	148
Assistant Director - Development and Growth	119
Assistant Director - Highways and Transport Operations	105
Assistant Director - Environment and Waste Management	105
<b>Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO)</b>	
Director of ESPO	148
Assistant Director – Business Development & Growth	93

Assistant Director - Operations	105
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## Appendix B - Pay and Grading Structure

### Leicestershire County Council Grade Structure

April 2023 - March 2024

Grade	Pay Point	Salary from 1 April 2023	Hourly Rate 1 April 2023
2	1	£22,374	£11.59
	2	£22,374	£11.59
3	3	£22,374	£11.59
	4	£22,530	£11.67
4	5	£22,743	£11.78
	6	£22,932	£11.88
5	7	£23,118	£11.97
	8	£23,505	£12.17
6	9	£23,898	£12.38
	10	£24,300	£12.59
7	11	£24,708	£12.80
	12	£25,125	£13.01
	13	£25,551	£13.23
	14	£25,983	£13.46
8	15	£26,427	£13.69
	16	£27,339	£14.16
	17	£27,807	£14.40
	18	£28,776	£14.91
9	19	£29,784	£15.43
	20	£30,300	£15.69
	21	£31,371	£16.25
	22	£32,004	£16.58
10	23	£33,060	£17.12
	24	£34,185	£17.71
	25	£35,373	£18.32
	26	£36,660	£18.99
11	27	£37,410	£19.38
	28	£38,235	£19.80
	29	£39,123	£20.26
	30	£40,083	£20.76



12	31	£41,208	£21.34
	32	£42,396	£21.96
	33	£43,671	£22.62
	34	£45,054	£23.34
13	35	£46,404	£24.04
	36	£47,808	£24.76
	37	£49,284	£25.53
	38	£50,865	£26.35
14	39	£52,413	£27.15
	40	£54,084	£28.01
	41	£55,857	£28.93
	42	£57,774	£29.93
15	43	£59,580	£30.86
	44	£61,485	£31.85
	45	£63,477	£32.88
	46	£65,550	£33.95
16	47	£68,085	£35.27
	48	£70,782	£36.66
	49	£73,662	£38.15
	50	£76,854	£39.81
17	51	£80,175	£41.53
	52	£83,652	£43.33
	53	£87,303	£45.22
	54	£91,134	£47.20

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## **EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE: 26 SEPTEMBER 2024**

### **JNC CHIEF OFFICER PAY AWARD 2024-2025**

#### **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES**

##### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to implement the nationally negotiated (JNC) pay award for the period 2024 - 2025 for all employees on Grades 18 – 21 inclusive, which includes Chief Officers.

##### **Background**

2. Whilst the Council has adopted local rather than national pay scales, it has remained part of the national pay bargaining machinery and is committed to applying Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) pay awards to employees on grades 18 to 21 inclusive. In order to implement these, it is necessary to seek approval from the Employment Committee.

##### **Key Points**

3. The JNC for Chief Officers has announced agreement on the pay award to increase the individual basic salaries of all officers within scope of the JNC for Chief Officers of Local Authorities by 2.50 per cent with effect from 1 April 2024. Pay scales for Chief officers can be found at Appendix 1.

##### **Implementation**

The JNC pay award has been implemented in August pay following approval from the Committee Chairman and Spokesperson.

##### **Recommendations**

4. The Committee is asked to;
  - Approve the implementation of the JNC pay awards for employees on grades 18 – 21.

##### **Background Papers**

5. None.

##### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

6. None

**Equalities and Human Rights implications**

7. None

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## Appendix 1

Grade	Pay Point	Salary from 1 April 2023	Hourly Rate 1 April 2023	Salary from 1 April 2024	Hourly Rate 1 April 2024
18	55	£93,279	£48.32	£95,613	£49.52
	56	£97,191	£50.34	£99,621	£51.60
	57	£101,253	£52.45	£103,785	£53.76
	58	£105,504	£54.65	£108,144	£56.02
19	59	£116,169	£60.17	£119,073	£61.68
	60	£119,088	£61.68	£122,067	£63.23
	61	£124,602	£64.54	£127,719	£66.15
	62	£130,542	£67.62	£133,806	£69.31
20	63	£134,622	£69.73	£137,988	£71.47
	64	£138,897	£71.94	£142,371	£73.74
	65	£143,421	£74.29	£147,009	£76.14
	66	£148,281	£76.80	£151,989	£78.73
21	67	£145,800	£75.52	£149,445	£77.41
	68	£152,412	£78.94	£156,222	£80.92
	69	£159,330	£82.53	£163,314	£84.59
	70	£166,572	£86.28	£170,736	£88.44

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## EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 26 SEPTEMBER 2024

### REVIEW OF EMPLOYER DISCRETIONS - PENSION REGULATIONS

#### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

##### Purpose

1. This report seeks the Committee's agreement to the policy decisions afforded to the County Council as a scheme employer under the provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

##### Background

2. The pension regulations require the County Council to formulate, publish and keep under review its policies in respect of certain areas of the Scheme where it may exercise its discretion. There are numerous mandatory discretions but they fall under four main areas:
  - (i) Additional pension;
  - (ii) Flexible retirement;
  - (iii) Switching on Rule of 85 (R85); and
  - (iv) Waiving of Early Retirement Reductions actuarial reduction.
3. Details of the discretions and the Council's current policy in relation to how they are exercised are set out in Appendix 1. These were agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 13 September 2018, and it is returning to Employment Committee following a review against the update and publication of the Leicestershire Pension Fund – Employers Discretions Guide (Appendix 2).
5. Whilst there is no requirement to have a written policy on all discretions, the report sets out a review of further three regulations (Appendix 3) which the Council has agreed, in order to provide clarity for LGPS members. These were also highlighted in the report to the Committee in 2018, and no changes are proposed in relation to:
  - (i) Election to transfer and aggregate pension within 12 months;
  - (ii) Allocation of contribution pension band and review period;
  - (iii) Assumed pensionable pay.
6. In addition to the review of the mandatory and non mandatory discretions, there is a position statement around the County Council's operational approach to pension (Appendix 4). It is not classed as a requiring the Employment

Committee's approval, the Committee is asked to note that they are occasionally used in the spirit of being open and transparent around the operational use of LGPS Regulations. This specifically relates to:

- (i) Dismissal on the grounds of business efficiency

### **Recommendation**

7. The Committee is asked to:
  - a) Note that a review has been undertaken with regard to pensions discretions.
  - b) Approve the mandatory discretion under LGPS Regulations as set out in Appendix 1 to this report;
  - c) Approve the non mandatory discretion under LGPS Regulations as set out in Appendix 3 to this report;
  - d) Note the County Council's operational approach to Pensions Regulations as set out in Appendix 4 to this report.

### **Background Papers**

8. LGPS Discretions Paper - 13 September 2018  
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=212&MId=5566&Ver=4>

### **Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedures**

9. None.

### **Officer to Contact**

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### **Equality and Human Rights Implications**

10. There are no equality or human rights implications as a result of agreeing these pensions discretions.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations Policy statement on all eligible employees



Appendix 2 – Leicestershire Pension Fund Employer Discretions Guide

Appendix 3 – Non-Mandatory discretion under LGPS Regulations

Appendix 4 - LCC operational approach to Pensions Regulations

## Appendix 1 – Mandatory discretion under LGPS Regulations

As per LGPS Regulations Policy statement on all eligible employees. This statement is applicable to all employees of Leicestershire County Council who are eligible to be members of the LGPS.

There is a requirement to publish the following mandatory discretion under LGPS Regulations.

Requirement	Explanation	Employer's Policy
<b>Additional pension</b>	<p>An employer may resolve to award a member additional pension of not more than £8,344 as at 1 April 2024 (The limit increases annually in line with the cost of living) a year within 6 months of leaving to a member whose employment was terminated on the grounds of redundancy or business efficiency.</p> <p>Discretions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether, how much, and in what circumstances to contribute to a shared cost APC scheme.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council previously agreed there are no normal circumstances in which the Council would contribute to a Shared Cost APC scheme</p> <p><b>No change to LCC discretions</b></p>
<b>Additional pension</b>	<p>An employer may resolve to award a member additional pension of not more than £8,344 as at 1 April 2024 (The limit increases annually in line with the cost of living) a year within 6 months of leaving to a member whose employment was terminated on the grounds of redundancy or business efficiency.</p> <p>Discretions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether, at full cost to the Scheme employer, to grant extra annual pension, up to the LGPS additional pension limit (reviewed annually) to an active member, or within 6 months of leaving to a member whose employment was terminated on the grounds of redundancy or business efficiency.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council will not normally grant any additional pension.</p> <p>Exceptions may be considered where</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is a cost or waive reduction in a potential redundancy situation</li> <li>• where a reduction may occur through redeployment; or</li> <li>• in other exceptional circumstances supported by a business case.</li> </ul> <p><b>No change to LCC discretions</b></p>

Requirement	Explanation	Employer's Policy
<b>Flexible Retirement</b>	<p>An active member who has attained the age of 55 or over who reduces working hours or grade of an employment may, with the Scheme employer's consent, elect to receive immediate payment of all or part of the retirement pension to which that member would be entitled in respect of that employment if that member were not an employee in local government service on the date of the reduction in hours or grade, adjusted by the amount shown as appropriate in actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State.</p> <p>As an employer you need to determine the conditions under which you would approve a flexible retirement taking place.</p> <p>Discretions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether all or some benefits can be paid if an employee over 55 reduces their hours or grade (flexible retirement).</li> </ul>	<p>The Council has previously agreed to release pension where there is no cost and not to waive any reduction.</p> <p>Members must reduce their hours by a minimum of 40% and/or reduce their grade</p> <p><b>No change to LCC discretions</b></p>

Requirement	Explanation	Employer's Policy
<p><b>Switching on "Rule of 85" (R85)</b></p>	<p>R85 is a complex protection for scheme members who were in the LGPS before 1st October 2006. A member will satisfy R85 when their age plus length of LGPS membership (in whole years) adds up to 85.</p> <p>For most scheme members R85 only protects pension benefits accrued from their membership before 1st April 2008. Ordinarily where a member has met R85 and is retiring and drawing their pension after 60, it applies automatically.</p> <p>However, where a member has met R85 and is retiring and drawing their pension between age 55 and 60, the employer has the power to "switch on" R85 at a cost.</p> <p>Discretions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether to "switch on" the 85 year rule for a member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60 (active members and leavers since 1st April 2014).</li> <li>• Whether to "switch on" the 85 year rule for a deferred member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60 (leavers between 1st April 2008 and 31st March 2014).</li> <li>• Whether to "switch on" the 85 year rule for a deferred member voluntarily drawing benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60 (leavers between 1st April 1998 and 31st March 2008 plus councillors).</li> </ul>	<p>The Council has previously not adopted this discretion.</p> <p><b>No change to LCC discretions</b></p>

Requirement	Explanation	Employer's Policy
<p><b>Waiving of Early Retirement Reductions</b> (Actuarial reduction)</p>	<p>An employer has the discretion, under a number of retirement scenarios, to waive actuarial reductions on compassionate grounds. The cost of which would fall upon the employer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether to waive, in whole or in part, actuarial reduction on benefits which a member voluntarily draws before normal pension age (active members and leavers since 1st April 2014).</li> <li>• Whether to waive, in whole or part, actuarial reduction on benefits paid on flexible retirement (active members and leavers since 1st April 2014).</li> <li>• Whether to waive any actuarial reduction on pre and/or post April 2014 benefits paid early on compassionate grounds (active members and leavers since 1st April 2014).</li> <li>• Whether to waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to deferred benefits paid early (leavers between 01/04/2008 – 31/03/2014).</li> <li>• Waive, on compassionate grounds, the actuarial reduction applied to deferred benefits paid early (leavers between 01/04/1998 – 31/03/2008 and councillors).</li> </ul>	<p>The Council previously agreed there are no normal circumstances in which to waive early retirement reductions</p> <p>Exceptional circumstances require the Employment Committee and the Director involved will consider any cases and will decide whether the actuarial reductions should be waived. In all cases the financial position of the County Council must be considered.</p> <p><b>No change to LCC discretions</b></p>

## **Appendix 2 – Leicestershire Pension Fund Employer Discretions Guide**

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-01/Leicestershire-pension-fund-employer-discretions-guide.pdf>

### Appendix 3 – Non-Mandatory discretion under LGPS Regulations

There is a recommendation to publish the following non-mandatory discretion under LGPS Regulations.

Requirement	Explanation	Employer's Policy
<p><b>Election to transfer or aggregate within 12 months</b></p>	<p>This discretion allows the Employer extend the 12 month limit a member has in which to elect to transfer other pension rights into the LGPS. This has to be with the agreement of the Administering Authority.</p> <p>Discretions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether to extend the 12-month limit a member has in which to elect to transfer other pension rights into the LGPS. This must be with the agreement of the Administering Authority.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council as the Administering Authority will not normally allow an extension of the 12 month limit.</p> <p>Extenuating circumstances may apply where evidence exists that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an election was made within 12 months but his was not received by the administering authority</li> <li>• the member was not aware of the 12 month limit due to maladministration</li> </ul> <p><b>No change to LCC discretions</b></p>
<p><b>Allocation of contribution pension band and review period</b></p>	<p>This discretion allows the Employer to determine which contribution band is allocated on joining the scheme and at each April. It also determines the circumstances when an employee's band may be reviewed.</p> <p>Discretions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether to determine which contribution band is allocated on joining the scheme and at each April. It also determines the circumstances when an employee's band may be reviewed.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council previously agreed this would be based on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Base pay on actual pay in April plus previous years overtime</li> <li>• Run an exercise half yearly as a check and re-band up or down where necessary</li> <li>• Re-band on all contractual changes, but not ad hoc hours changes and re-band upon a pay award.</li> </ul> <p><b>No change to LCC discretions</b></p>

<p><b>Assumed pensionable pay</b></p>	<p>This discretion allows the Employer to determine whether to include in the calculation of assumed pensionable pay the amount of any “regular lump sum payment”.</p> <p>This is in cases where an employee’s pay needs to be calculated where their pay has been reduced due to certain absences in order that they are not unduly advantaged or disadvantaged.</p> <p>In practice such decisions are made by the pensions team as part of the processing of an individual case.</p>	<p>The Council previously agreed this would be based on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individual cases where necessary to establish in a fair, equitable and justifiable way what the members likely pay would have been but for the absence, and</li> <li>• cases where this pay is to be used for future enhancements whether that level of pay would have been received every year to normal retirement age.</li> </ul> <p><b>No change to LCC discretions</b></p>
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### Appendix 4 - LCC operational approach to Pensions Regulations

In addition we have are the following position statements around LCC operational approach to pensions. They are not classed as a requiring the Employment Committee’s approval, the Committee is asked to note that they are occasionally used. As per previous Employment Committee reports theses are published in the context of being open and transparent around our operational use of LGPS Regulations.

Requirement	Explanation	Employer’s Policy
<p><b>Dismissal on the grounds of business efficiency</b></p>	<p>Where an active member who has attained the age of 55 or over is dismissed from an employment by reason of redundancy or business efficiency, or whose employment is terminated by mutual consent on grounds of business efficiency, that member is entitled to, and must take immediate payment of -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) retirement pension relating to that employment payable under regulation 16 (additional pension contributions), adjusted by the amount shown as appropriate in actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and</li> <li>b) any other retirement pension relating to that active member's pension account payable under these Regulations, without reduction.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council will not normally retire someone who is dismissed on the grounds of business efficiency.</p> <p>Exceptional circumstances may apply where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is an agreed business case</li> <li>• termination is on the grounds of business efficiency</li> <li>• there is mutual consent of termination on the grounds of business efficiency.</li> <li>• any cost for the release of early payment must be paid in full by the Council.</li> </ul> <p><b>No change to LCC discretions</b></p>

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## **EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 26 SEPTEMBER 2024**

### **HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024**

#### **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES**

##### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to present to the Employment Committee the Annual Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report for 2023-24. This details the council's overall position on Health, Safety and Wellbeing and provides an update on the performance of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service. A copy of this report is attached at Appendix 1.

##### **Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. The County Council is required, under the Management of the Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, to have in place an occupational health and safety management system. This system requires the council to have a Health and Safety Strategy, and to consult and communicate with all interested parties on health and safety performance.
3. The Council's Health and Safety Strategy 2020-2025 details key performance indicators for the Council, progress for which is included in this Health, Safety and Wellbeing annual report.
4. This report is presented annually to the Employment Committee for information only.

##### **Background**

5. The health, safety and wellbeing of staff, service users and customers is of paramount importance to the Council. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service continuously monitors, so far as is possible, performance in this area to ensure the council meets its legal requirements and, where necessary, improves standards.
6. The report, attached as Appendix 1, highlights the work that has been undertaken within the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service during the financial year of 2023-24. It identifies the risk and hazard areas that impact upon the council and where improvements need to be made to ensure improved compliance and staff safety. Each department has a

departmental annual report with a detailed specific plan to improve compliance.

7. The report is written in summary format to give an overview of the issues. The following aspects of Health, Safety and Wellbeing are covered in the report:
  - Accident Data
  - RIDDOR Incidents (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013)
  - Health and Safety Audits
  - Enforcement Action
  - Wellbeing Service Annual Report
  - Corporate Wellbeing Update
  - Training Statistics
  - Legislative changes
8. The number of injuries has remained approximately the same compared to the previous year. The number of near misses has increased by 33%, which is positive as the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team continue to remind teams across the authority to report them. It is positive to see that the number of RIDDOR incidents has significantly reduced by 28%, following the spike in 2022-23. A 70% reduction in RIDDORS was achieved in the Environment and Transport Department, however the Adults and Communities Department reported 4 RIDDOR's compared with 0 in the previous year.
9. The number of slips and trips, and injuries caused by violent or challenging behaviour has remained approximately the same, although the overall number of violent incidents (including verbal abuse) has increased. A campaign on violence and aggression in the workplace including hate crime is being planned for the year 2024-25.

### **Recommendations**

10. It is recommended that the Employment Committee notes the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2023-24 and endorses the work, undertaken in partnership with departments, by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service to keep the council compliant in this area.

### **Background Papers**

11. None.

### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

12. None.

### **Equality and Human Rights Implications/Other Impact Assessments**

13. There are no equalities and human rights issues arising directly from this report.

### **Appendix**

Appendix 1 - Health Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2023 - 2024

### **Officer(s) to Contact**

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**Leicestershire County Council**

# **Appendix 1 - Annual Health, Safety & Wellbeing Performance Report**

## **April 2023 – March 2024**

**Author: Amy Walling (Senior HS&W Advisor)**

**Contributions by: Oonagh Martin (Wellbeing Advisor)**



## Table of Contents

Key Facts .....	3
Accident Data Analysis for Leicestershire County Council April 2023 – March 2024 .....	4
Accidents by Service Area .....	5
RIDDOR Reportable Incidents and Incidents of Significance .....	6
Health and Safety Audits .....	11
Enforcement Action .....	12
Training Statistics.....	14
Recent and Forthcoming Changes .....	18
Guidance and Information .....	18
Conclusion .....	19
The Wellbeing Service Annual Report .....	21
Corporate Wellbeing Update .....	33





**Key Facts**

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) Team endeavour to continually monitor HSW performance within the authority in order that improvements can be made to ensure legal compliance, financial savings and most importantly the safety of staff, clients, pupils, service users, volunteers, and contractors. This annual report highlights some of the work that has been undertaken in the past year to put in place proactive measures, to address compliance issues and to raise awareness of the appropriate hazards and risks. The report also highlights the action that departments have taken to mitigate risks.



Injuries



RIDDOR Incidents



Counselling sessions



Audits



Near Misses Reported



Injuries caused by slips trips and falls



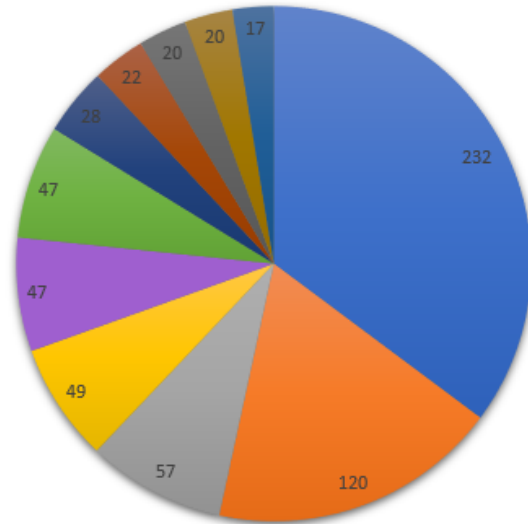
Injuries caused by physical assaults and challenging behaviour



Health, Safety and Wellbeing Training Courses Completed by Staff



## Accident Data Analysis for Leicestershire County Council April 2023 – March 2024



- Slip, trip or fall
- Challenging behaviour
- Contact with sharp object
- Struck by object
- Collision
- Contact with stationary object
- Manual handling
- Unknow cause of service user injury
- Physical Assault
- Trapped by object
- Contact with hot surface

**NB: All data less than 17 has been omitted to enable clarity in the pie chart.**

Incident Type	2023/24	% Change	2022/23	% Change	2021/22
Injury	801	+0.1%	800	-8%	876
Near Miss	432	+33%	325	+21%	269
Property Damage	172	+10%	157	+16%	135
Violent Incident	147	+21%	121	-3%	125
Illness/Disease	10	-38%	16	+23%	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>1562</b>	<b>+10%</b>	<b>1419</b>	<b>+0.1%</b>	<b>1418</b>
<b>RIDDOR</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>-28%</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>+38%</b>	<b>26</b>

Information within this report has been gained from Leicestershire County Council's (LCC) accident and incident reporting system, AssessNET on 03/06/2024.

The number of injuries has remained approximately the same compared to the previous year. The number of near misses has increased by 33%, which is positive as the H&S Team continue to remind teams across the authority to report them. It is positive to see that the



number of RIDDOR incidents has significantly reduced by 28%, following the spike in 2022/23. A 70% reduction in RIDDORS was achieved in Environment and Transport Department (E&T), however Adults and Communities Department (A&C) reported 4 RIDDOR's compared with 0 in the previous year.

The number of slips and trips, and injuries caused by violent or challenging behaviour has remained approximately the same, although the overall number of violent incidents (including verbal abuse) has increased. A campaign on violence and aggression in the workplace including hate crime is being planned for the year 2024/25.

### **Accidents by Service Area**

The council uses the AssessNET system to report all accidents and incidents. The information below shows those services / establishments that have reported more than 10 injuries.

A significant increase in injuries can be seen at Beaumanor, however this can be attributed to better reporting of pupil related injuries. In addition, the Head Teacher at Moira Primary School noted that the rise in injuries at the school can be attributed to the increase in pupils with specific needs they have seen at the school, and their incident reporting procedure has become more robust.

Department	Service Area	N° of Accidents (resulting in injury) (2023/24)	N° of Accidents (resulting in injury) (2022/23)
CFS	Children Family Wellbeing Centres	90	73
CR	LTS Catering	76	70
E&T	Recycling and Household Waste Sites	44	33
CR	Beaumanor Hall > Outdoor Learning Activities	<b>41</b>	<b>5</b>
A&C	Provider Services	38	50
LA Sch	Sketchley Hill Menphys Nursery	36	21
LA Sch	Thorpe Acre Junior School	27	25
E&T	Passenger Fleet	27	24
E&T	Highway Operations	18	32
ESPO	ESPO	16	19
LA Nursey	Wigston Menphys Nursery School	17	21
LA Sch	Moira Primary School	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>
LA Sch	Little Bowden School	15	21
LA Sch	Whetstone Badgerbrook Primary School	15	8
LA Sch	Newbold Verdon Primary School	14	5
LA Sch	Greenfield Primary School	14	12
LA Sch	St Botolph's Church of England Primary School	12	7
CR	Country Parks	12	10
LA Sch	New Swannington Primary School	11	11



## **RIDDOR Reportable Incidents and Incidents of Significance**

The council is obliged to comply with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). It is a requirement that certain incidents that are more serious are reported to the HSE. The council's policy states that all RIDDOR reportable incidents are to receive a full investigation by the HS&W Team. The investigation report identifies the root cause, along with remedial measures to prevent recurrence. The following information outlines the incidents by department that have been reported under the RIDDOR regulations during 2023/2024.

### **Corporate Resources (CR) reported 3 RIDDOR incidents within 2023/2024.**

#### **1. Country Parks > Beacon Hill Country Park, Upper Playground > 07/04/2023**

It was reported that a member of the public (6-year-old child) was playing on the playground at Beacon Hill when she tripped and fell into the fence causing injury to her face. The investigation found that the likely cause of the fall was due to uneven surfaces within the playground. Recommendations were identified to help improve the management of the playgrounds and change the fencing around the area.

#### **2. Commercial Services > Leicestershire Traded Services Catering > Brookside Primary School > 20/06/2023**

An employee trapped her finger when putting away folding tables sustaining a finger injury. The investigation found that the area when the tables are stored is restricted which creates a trapping risk. It was recommended that the storage arrangements are reviewed.

#### **3. Commercial Services > Leicestershire Traded Services Catering > Elizabeth Woodville Primary school > 04/10/2023**

An employee sustained a back injury from lifting and handling folding tables. The investigation found that the cause of the injury was likely due to overstretching and twisting while carrying out this activity. It was recommended that manual handling training is refreshed.

### **Local Authority Schools reported 11 RIDDOR incidents within 2023/2024.**

#### **4. Belvoirdale Community Primary School > 09/01/2024**

A member of staff sustained a fractured hand from an incident that occurred on a bus during a school trip. The Injured Person (IP) stood up to help a pupil who had called for assistance, as she did, the bus driver braked causing the IP to catch her right hand on the built in refreshment area hurting her right hand. Following an investigation, it was recommended that the school have staff placed in strategic locations on the bus to avoid staff having to leave their seats while the bus is in motion.



### **5. Newbold Verdon Primary School > 04/10/2023**

A member of staff was kicked by a pupil with specialist needs causing a knee injury. Although the pupil was known to have specialist needs the incident was not foreseen. The school were recommended to review the EHCP.

### **6. Ashmount School > 12/09/2023**

A member of staff was injured when they were pulling a gym mat trolley that tipped over and caused injury to the IP's foot. It was unknown how the incident occurred; however, the school were recommended to ensure that all staff have received instruction on how to operate the trolley and manual handling training is revisited.

### **7. Ashmount School > 08/09/2023**

A member of staff was injured while a student was in crisis and banging their head on the floor. The member of staff attempted to assist by placing a cushion on the floor however their heads collided causing the member of staff to momentarily lose consciousness. It was recommended that the school revisit the training that staff have in relation to dealing with students in crisis.

### **8. Ashmount School > 05/09/2023**

A member of staff was injured while attempting to assist a student in crisis. The staff member was attempting to get the student's protective helmet however the student kicked the member of staff on the wrist causing a fracture. It was recommended that the school review the associated EHCP and risk assessments.

### **9. Moira Primary School > 04/07/2023**

A pupil was dysregulated in the classroom, the pupil was kicking and wrapped his leg around the back of the fire extinguisher stand and resulted in the fire extinguisher falling over and causing injury to a staff member's foot, resulting in fracture. The injured person was a sports apprentice with limited experience dealing with pupils in crisis. It was recommended that the school review the training arrangements for apprentices.

### **10. Ashmount School > 19/06/2023**

A student was in crisis and was assisted into another room by two members of staff. Another member of staff attempted to assist by opening a door, however the student kicked them causing injury to the breast/chest. It was recommended that all staff are reminded on the protocols to follow while a student is in crisis.



### **11. Sketchley Hill Primary School > 07/06/2023**

A member of staff tripped and fell on the school field. She tripped on a hole in the ground where a goal post used to be. The area had previously been filled in however the students had dug the area out again using sticks. The IP sustained a back injury. It was recommended that the school implement a robust inspection and defect reporting process.

### **12. Burbage Church of England Infant School > 12/05/2023**

A member of staff sustained a knee injury after they were hit by a chair that was thrown by a pupil. Following the incident, the school reviewed the EHCP and were taking advice from Oakfield on how to managing the student's behaviour.

### **13. Martinshaw Primary School > 26/04/2023**

The Premises Officer was attempting to unblock the drains which run from the EYFS/KS1 toilets. This has been a recurring issue over the years, so the IP used the rods which she ordinarily uses to shift such blockages. The force with which she was attempting to dislodge the blockage led to pain in her neck, however the IP was experiencing similar pain at the start of the working day. It was recommended that a risk assessment was put into place for the Premises Officer, also that defects are properly reported through to Property Services.

### **14. St Cuthbert's Church of England Primary School > 19/04/2023**

The IP (9-year-old student) was playing football when the ball was kicked over a fence and the IP opened a gate to retrieve it. The mechanism was very stiff as the gate had slightly dropped, when it came free suddenly the IP wasn't expecting it and the tip of her smallest finger on her right hand was banged/crushed against the gate. Following investigation, it was recommended that an inspection and defect reporting system is implemented for this area.

**Children and Family Services (CFS) reported 1 RIDDOR incident within 2023/2024.**

### **15. Safeguarding and Performance > 21/06/2023**

A Social Worker was assaulted by a young person who was dysregulated during a home visit. The employee sustained multiple bruises. The investigation identified gaps in de-escalation and conflict management training, also gaps in their lone working procedures.

**Adults and Communities (A&C) reported 4 RIDDOR incidents within 2023/2024.**

### **16. Home First and Access and Digital > Crisis Response Service > 15/06/2023**



An employee fell over while crossing the road / speed bump at County Hall Car Park near Anstey Frith Building. Following this incident, the speed bump was checked for safety however it was deemed that no action was necessary.

**17. Communities and Wellbeing > Adult Learning > Enderby Adult Learning > 16/08/2023**

An employee fell and broke their wrist while walking across the car park at David Lloyd Leisure. The employee was delivering Adult Learning brochures at the time. As the site is not owned by LCC the defects were reported to the relevant landlord for further investigation and action. The Adult Learning service were advised to update their risk assessment to cover off site activities.

**18. Home First and Access and Digital > Hart > 11/09/2023**

An employee sustained a shoulder injury following an incident whereby a service user fell, and the IP caught their weight to help prevent a fall. This was not in line with training however it was an instinct to prevent injury to the service user.

**19. Home First and Access and Digital > Hart > 06/01/2024**

A Home Care Assistant sustained an injury to her hip from repositioning a service user's bed with the help from the family. The investigation found that the IP was rushing and may not have been using the correct manual handling methods. It was recommended that the service refresh their manual handling training for the team.

**Environment and Transport (E&T) reported 3 RIDDOR incidents within 2023/2024.**

**20. Highway and Transport Delivery > Highway Operations > 17/10/2023**

An Operative sustained a lacerated hand caused by a chainsaw incident. The Operative was attempting to cut a tree branch at height. The undercut was not deep enough resulting in the Operative attempting to catch the branch to stop it falling. The chainsaw swung and caused the laceration to the hand. The investigation found that there was an element of human error however it was recommended that chainsaw gloves are trialled to prevent future injury.

**21. Highway and Transport Technical Support > Fleet Services > 08/06/2023**

During routine maintenance of applying grease to a vehicle using a grease gun an employee suffered a torn muscle in his arm, leading to time on light duties. The IP was using the handheld grease gun to apply grease to the rear axle when he felt his muscle twinge causing stiffness and a lack of feeling in his fingers. The investigation found that the injury was likely caused by repetitive strain, and this could be avoided by moving to battery operated grease guns.



## **22. Highway and Transport Delivery > Highway Operations > 11/05/2023**

Whilst getting out of vehicle, the IP's left foot hit the ground, slipped, and twisted the left ankle, this resulted in swelling and bruising. Following investigation, it was recommended that a safe system of work was developed to demonstrate how to safely egress a vehicle using three points of contact.

**Chief Executives (CE) reported 1 RIDDOR incident within 2023/2024.**

## **23. Registration Services > South Wigston > Bassett Street Car Park > 08/04/2023**

An employee was pulling open the car park gate, the gate swung and hit her ankle. It was later confirmed that the employee has chipped a bone in her ankle. The Registrars will access the area using the pedestrian gate in future if outside of normal office hours.

**ESPO reported 3 RIDDOR incidents within 2023/2024.**

## **24. ESPO > Warehouse > 05/12/2023**

An employee cut their hand while using a safety knife to cut a piece of cardboard. Following this incident, a safety alert was re-issued to staff who use knives to take care and follow the safe system of work.

## **25. ESPO > Customer Site Location > 02/10/2023**

An employee was delivering items to site using a sack barrow. As he tried to negotiate through a closed door he caught his hand, bending his fingers backwards. Following investigation, staff were reminded of the importance of good manual handling techniques.

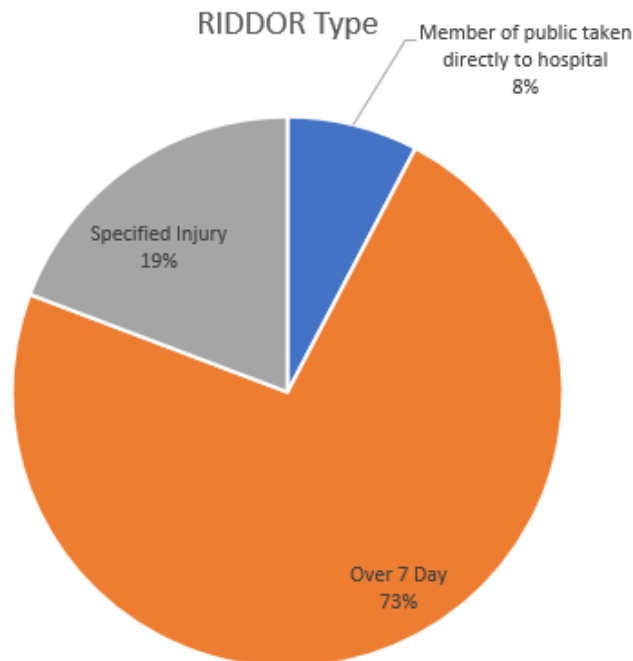
## **26. ESPO > Warehouse > 15/06/2023**

An employee suffered a manual handling related injury during her shift. The CCTV footage was reviewed and there was no direct cause identified, however staff were reminded of good manual handling techniques.





Over 70% of the RIDDOR reportable incidents triggered the regulations due to the number of days lost by the employee, rather than the type of injury. See the chart below.



## Health and Safety Audits

The following services were audited in 2023/2024.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. E&T > Transport Strategy and Policy | 21. CFS > Safeguarding & Performance                                 |
| 2. E&T > Notice processing             | 22. CFS > Safeguarding Partnerships<br>Business Office               |
| 3. E&T > Business Support              | 23. Birch Wood Special School - Melton<br>Mowbray                    |
| 4. E&T > Environment Policy & Strategy | 24. Little Bowden School   |
| 5. E&T > Contracts and Compliance      | 25. Burton on the Wolds Primary School                               |
| 6. E&T > Passenger Transport           | 26. Thorpe Acre Infant School  |
| 7. Public Health > First Contact Plus  | 27. Griffydham Primary School  |
| 8. CR > People Services > HR/OD/L&D    | 28. Hose Church of England Primary<br>School                         |
| 9. CR > LTS Catering                   | 29. Heather Primary School   |
| 10. CR > Beaumanor activity centre     | 30. Whitwick St John the Baptist Church<br>of England Primary School |
| 11. CR > Country Parks                 | 31. Buckminster Primary School                                       |
| 12. CR > Forestry Service              | 32. New Swannington Primary School                                   |
| 13. CR > Internal Audit                | 33. Stathern Primary School  |
| 14. CR > Strategic Property            |  |
| 15. A&C > Commissioning and Quality    |  |
| 16. A&C > Business support             |  |
| 17. A&C > Direct Services              |  |



- 18.CE > Planning, Historic and Natural Environment
- 19.CE > Strategy and Business Intelligence
- 20.CFS > First Response Assessments & Screening & Vulnerability hub

- 34. Westfield Infant School
- 35. Ellistown Community Primary School
- 36. Burbage Church of England Junior School
- 37. Worthington School
- 38. Wymeswold C of E Primary School
- 39. Kegworth Primary School

### **Common Findings**

The audits undertaken in 2023/24 identified a range of major and minor nonconformities. Individual reports were sent to Service Managers upon completion of the audits. The common findings are briefly outlined below.

- Missing or insufficient risk assessments
- Poor control over staff competency and training.
- Missing or outdated DSE assessments
- Missing or insufficient health and safety induction, and/or missing records
- Insufficient implementation of safety controls including safe systems of work, PPE, or emergency procedures
- Insufficient lone working systems
- Lack of PAT testing
- A range of missing internal compliance checks or monitoring

### **Enforcement Action**

In August 2023 the Environment and Transport Department received an email from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) regarding a dust complaint made by a member of public. The Operatives working in an unsafe condition were contractors hired by LCC Highways. A full investigation was undertaken by the H&S team and an action plan produced. The HSE confirmed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023 that they had concluded their enquiries and no further action was required.

In October 2023 the HSE visited LCC in relation to the storage and use of Pesticides and associated compliance with the Plant Protection Product (PPP) legislation. In preparation for the visit, each site that stores pesticides was visited by the H&S Team and an action plan was issued. Associated actions included improvement of COSHH paperwork, disposal of banned substances, updating of risk assessments, improvement of spraying records and council wide registration via the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).



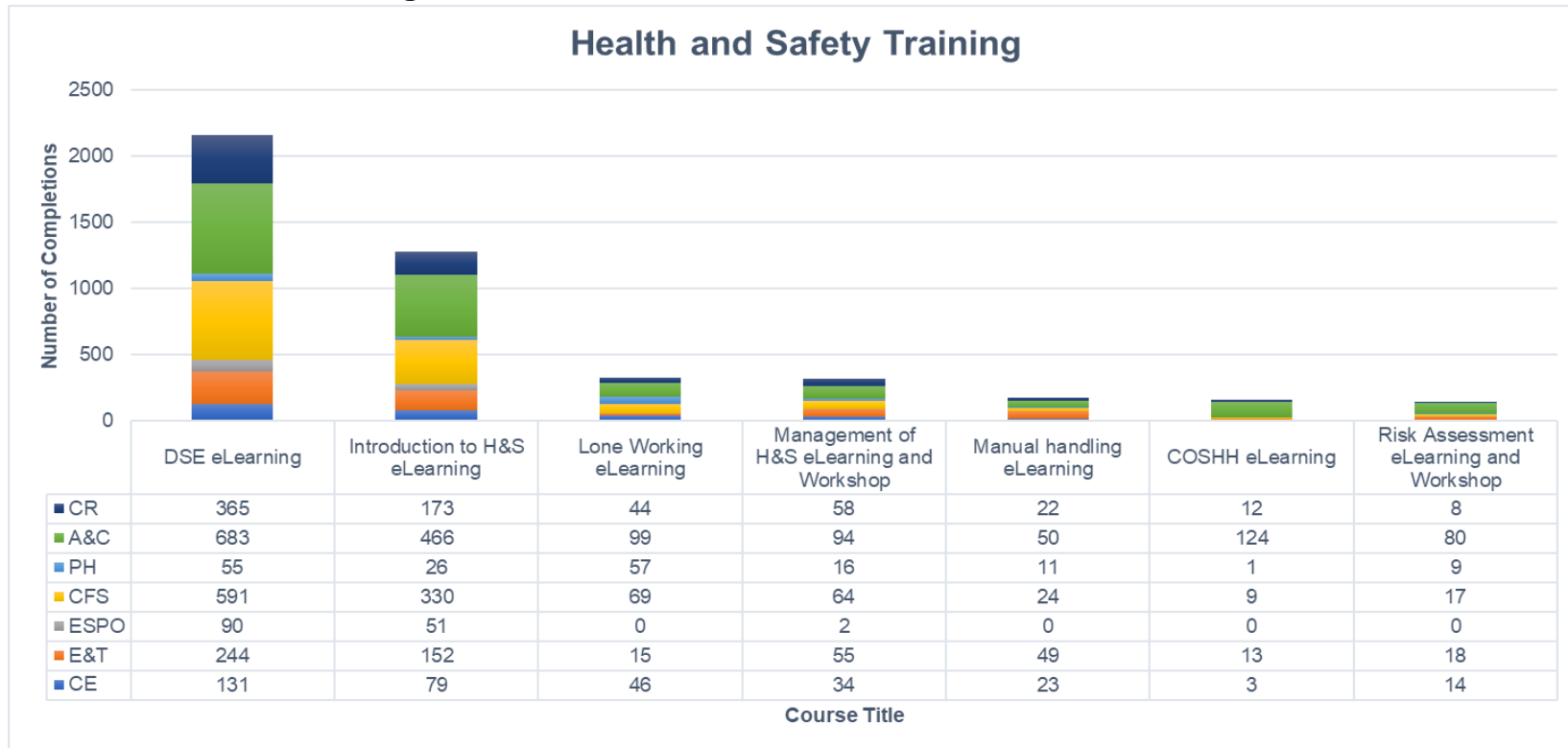
The inspector visited Melton Highway Depot and Bosworth Battlefield (Country Park Ranger activities) only verbal advisories were given at the time of the inspection. Following the visit health and safety guidance has been developed for the use and storage of pesticides.

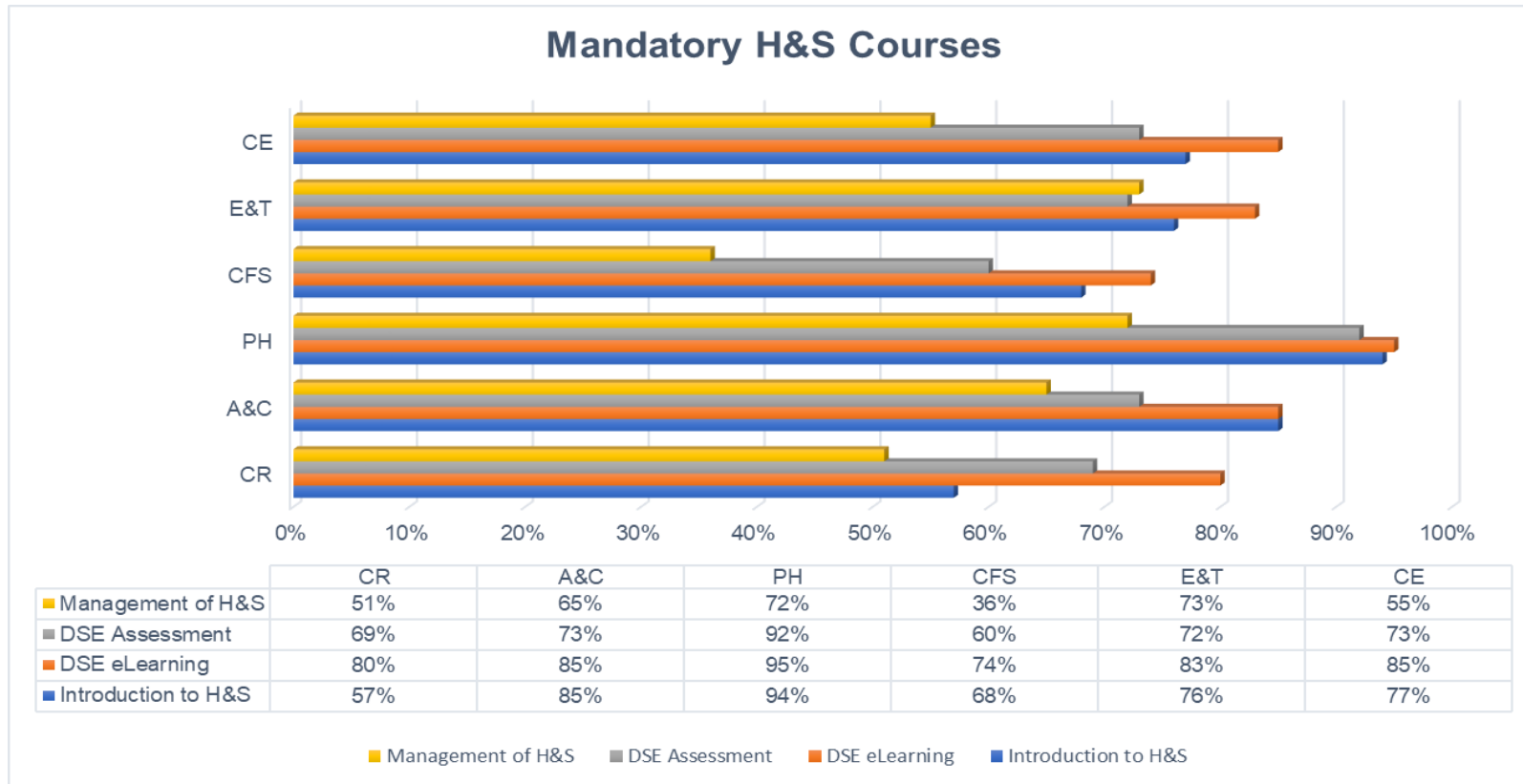
No enforcement action resulted.

## Training Statistics

The following section reports on the numbers of delegates who have attended or completed corporate Learning and Development courses provided by the HS&W Team. Note: Figures exclude job specific training which may have a safety consideration and any training which may have been arranged directly by managers within a department.

**This chart shows the top 7 attended courses in 2023/2024. The full list of courses offered by the HS&W Team can be found on the Intranet and Learning Hub.**





Data correct from April 2024

Most departments have seen a gradual increase in compliance, however compliance rates for the Management of Health and Safety have risen significantly in;

- A&C department which rose from 44% in Q1 to 65% at the end of Q4.
- CE department which rose from 23% in Q1 to 55% at the end of Q4.
- CR department which rose from 36% in Q1 to 51% at the end of Q4.



## Key Performance Indicators

The following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were set out in the 2020 – 2025 Health and Safety Strategy to monitor improvements in Health, Safety and Wellbeing across the council. The table below details the performance.

### Annual Performance

No.	Key Performance Indicator	2023-2024 Performance
1	Improve health and safety compliance so that there is a 10% reduction in the number of major nonconformities identified in audits each year.	4 audits identified major nonconformities compared to 10 in 2022-2023. (2 additional nonconformities were identified outside of audits)
2	All audit report and action plans are developed within 5 working days from the completion of the audit.	This was achieved 100% of the time.
3	Achieve a 10% reduction in workplace accidents resulting in injury year on year.	A marginal increase of injuries was observed. (0.1%)
4	A 10% reduction in RIDDOR reported incidents year on year	The number of RIDDOR incidents reduced by 28%
5	All accidents / incidents which are RIDDOR reportable will be subject to an accident investigation.	100%
6	To achieve a 10% increase in the number of Managers trained in Health and Safety.	April 2022 – 54% April 2023 – 39% April 2024 – 59%



## Wellbeing Activity

The Wellbeing Service annual report can be found [on page 21](#).

The data below is in relation to the usage of the internal Wellbeing Service (Counselling Sessions).

Department	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
	New referrals	No. of Sessions	New referrals	No. of Sessions	New referrals	No. of Sessions	New referrals	No. of Sessions
<b>Adults and Communities</b>	18	124	5	116	12	100	12	131
<b>Chief Executives</b>	3	21	2	11	4	30	2	21
<b>Local Authority Schools</b>	8	78	1	34	4	71	8	81
<b>Children and Family Service (Non Schools)</b>	18	232	8	247	21	239	12	233
<b>Corporate Resources</b>	4	104	8	80	7	94	6	96
<b>Environment and Transport</b>	2	31	1	40	5	62	6	53
<b>Public Health</b>	3	12	2	14	5	20	1	27
<b>ESPO</b>	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	5
<b>Academy Schools</b>	21	95	14	57	20	59	13	47
<b>Totals</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>694</b>

Overview	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
<b>Total new referrals</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>258</b>
<b>Total sessions</b>	<b>2552</b>	<b>2664</b>	<b>2863</b>	<b>2666</b>

18% decrease in number of referrals compared to 2022/23.

7% decrease in number of sessions compared to 2022/23.



## **Recent and Forthcoming Changes**

Managers and staff within the Department are advised to be aware of the recent updates that could impact on service delivery.

### **Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill (Martyn's Law)**

Martyn's Law is pending UK wide legislation that will place a requirement on those responsible for certain publicly accessible locations to consider the threat from terrorism and implement appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures.

## **Guidance and Information**

The HS&W Team have been actively engaged in reviewing all the LCC policy and guidance documents available on the Intranet and developing further guidance. This ensures that the policy and guidance given to Managers remains relevant, concise, and appropriate to the changing circumstances of the Authority. The following table outlines the policies that have been reviewed or developed within the 2023/24 financial year. Managers are advised to ensure that they are familiar with those that are applicable to their operations.

Reviewed Guidance Documents
Lone working
Infection Prevention and Control &BBV
Manual handling
Winter gritting
Inspection checklist
Accident investigation guidance
First aid record form
First Aid Guidance
Glazing
3 Points of Contact for Assess and Egress of a Vehicle - Safe System of Work
Whole Body Vibration
Work Equipment
Asbestos Management Plan
DSE Guidance
Fire Safety Guidance
LOLER Guidance
Safety whilst Smarter Working Guidance





Managers Guide to DSE Assessments
<b>New Guidance Documents</b>
Violence and aggression safety alert
Dust safety alert
CE to UKCA guidance
Knife safety alert
Finger entrapment safety alert
Shelving/Racking Guidance
Crush incident safety alert
Bed Rails Safety Alert
Finger Entrapment in Doors and Gates
Fatal Barrier Crush Safety Alert
Dog Safety Guidance

## **Conclusion**

This report has shown that the number of injuries reported within the council has stayed approximately the same compared to the previous year. However, a significant decrease in RIDDOR's has been observed.

In addition, there has been a steady increase in the number of near misses reported over the last 3 years. This demonstrates that the council's health and safety culture is improving as staff increasingly understand the importance of reporting these types of incidents.

Mandatory Health and Safety training compliance has also improved in all departments, however more work is needed to improve further in this area.

A huge amount of proactive work has taken place over the last 12 months by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team, including:

- Delivering the roll out of the Solo Protect app.
- Launching a new online Stress Audit Tool.
- Launching a CDM training course.
- Implementing AssessNET Single Sign On.
- Supporting and delivering on various wellbeing initiatives.
- Carrying out health and safety audits and inspections as planned.
- Responding to the HSE during the pesticides inspections and working with departments to improve H&S management in this area.
- Maintaining our ISO 45001 certification.



Priorities for the year ahead include:

- Launching the reviewed H&S Induction Training.
- Launching revised Fire Safety and Management of Health and Safety Training.
- Launching revised health and safety management system guidance, which will have a stronger emphasis on a risk-based approach.
- Launching an online audit tool using the AssessNET system.
- Maintaining and reviewing our suite of Health and Safety Guidance available on the Intranet.
- Maintaining our ISO 45001 certification.



## The Wellbeing Service Annual Report

### What is the Well-being Service?

The Well-being Service consists of a stable team of five counsellors and two trainee counsellors, trained in a variety of therapeutics approaches. The service offers employees the opportunity to access a free, safe, and confidential service, where they can explore both work-related and personal concerns. When it becomes challenging to manage issues alone, the Well-being Service is there to talk to. Employees can expect: to see someone that will listen and support without judgment; sessions tailored to meet individual need; a space to explore thoughts and feelings, and to find ways to manage during difficult times. The service offers fast access to one off advice and support sessions ('Pause to Talk' slots) and operates a waiting list to access short-term counselling.

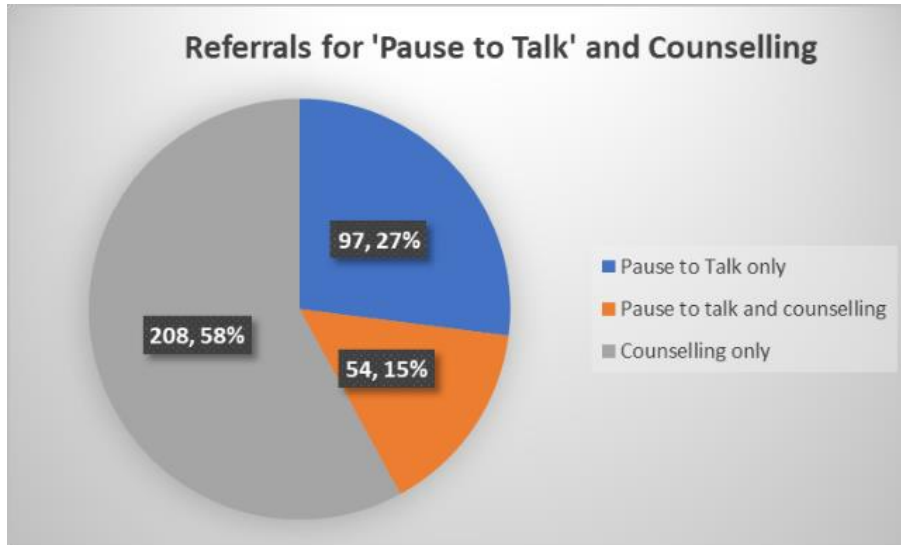
Last year, we set out to bring more diversity to the team and we are pleased to say that the service now offers counselling in Polish, Urdu and Hindi.

Over the past year, a second member of the team has been undertaking clinical supervision training, to ensure that we can continue to attract and support trainee therapists, expand this part of the service, and strengthen the offer to employees.

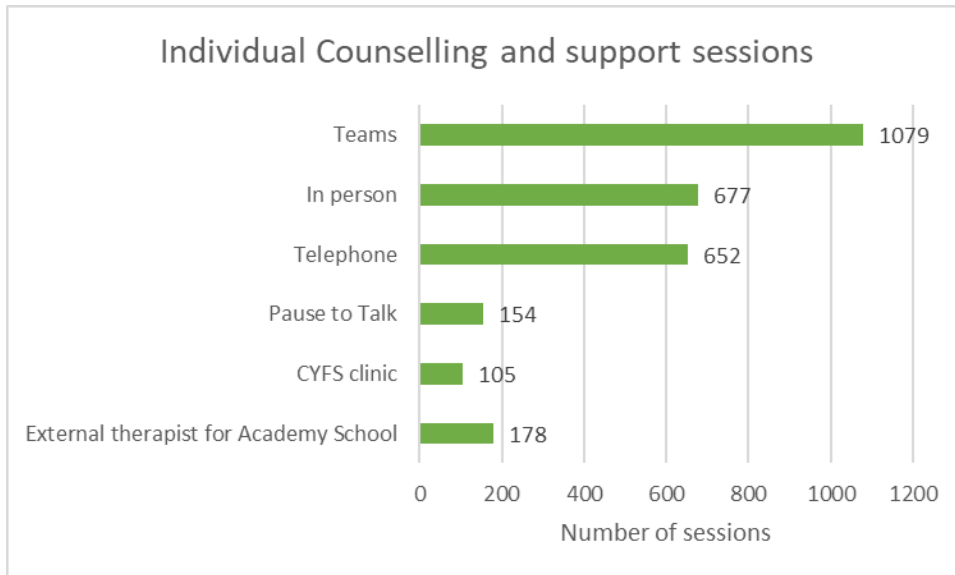
The Well-being Service continues to make use of external therapists to meet the demand from Academy School employees seeking counselling. The external counsellors are qualified and accredited therapists, practicing as members of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy. This has enabled the service to continue to focus on corporate employees and maintain a stable waiting list.

### Service Usage

The Well-being Service received **referrals from 359 employees** from April 2023 to March 2024. This figure includes requests for 'Pause to Talk' slots as well as counselling referrals, (see chart below):



Over that same period, the service provided LCC employees, and employees from the traded services, with **2845 individual counselling or support sessions**. This figure has remained stable compared to the previous year. The breakdown of how these were provided can be seen below:



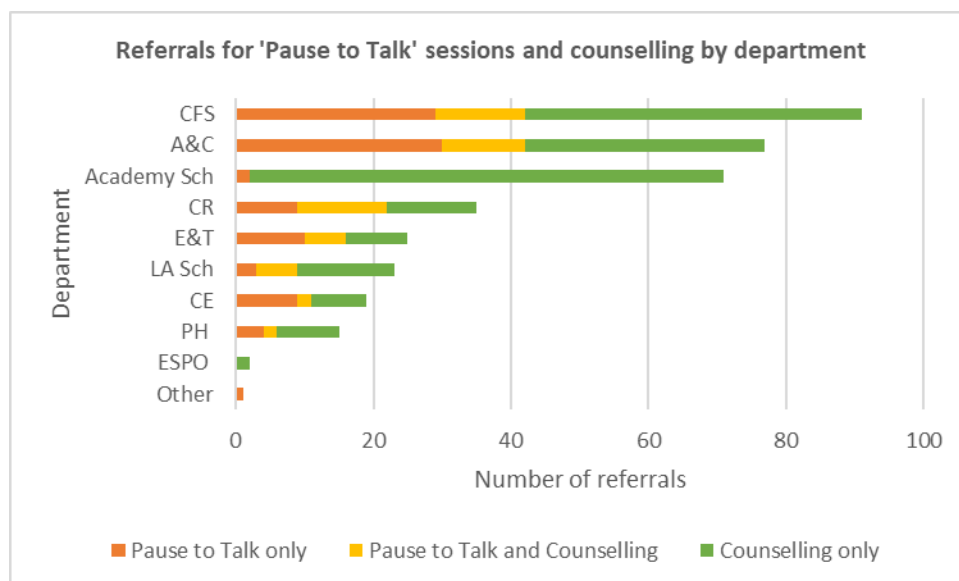
As hybrid working has become embedded into the organisation, the service has seen an increase in requests for counselling to take place online, allowing clients the opportunity to see their counsellor, without the need to lose work or family time travelling to County Hall. However, a significant number of employees prefer to access in person counselling, and the team ensure that this choice is supported and understand that for some employees, seeing another person face-to-face is extremely important and beneficial for their mental wellbeing.



The last year has seen an increase in the number of one-off advice and support sessions (Pause to Talk). This has proved a popular choice for individuals that don't necessarily need to access 6 sessions of counselling or for those that need immediate advice and support. These sessions are usually provided within a few days of initial contact and can be crucial in supporting individuals to talk through their concerns and consider the most appropriate next steps to address challenges to wellbeing. Following the pilot of a clinic for the Children and Family Service (CFS) Department in 2022 - 2023, the team decided to continue with this provision for a further year and offered 105 sessions, mostly focusing on work-related issues pertinent to CFS social care staff and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) team.

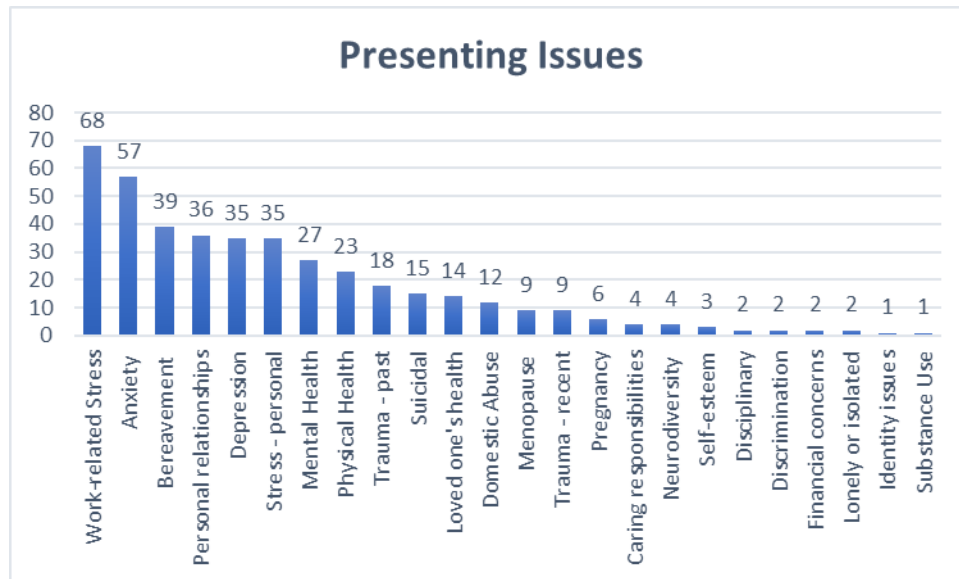
There has been an increase in the use of external therapists, employed to meet the demand from the Traded Service offered to Academy School clients. This has allowed the team both the time and opportunity to focus on delivering groupwork opportunities for corporate clients, whilst ensuring the waiting time to access counselling has not increased.

As has been the trend over the last 5 years, the highest number of referrals were from the CFS and Adults and Communities (A&C) Departments (see chart below), with both departments making good use of the Pause to Talk sessions, as well as the counselling provision.



### Presenting Issues – counselling clients only

Employees use the Wellbeing Service to talk about any issue they're finding difficult to manage. At point of referral, clients are invited to give a brief description of what they are seeking help with, and clients often present with more than one concern. The chart below shows the range of different presenting issues and the numbers reporting these concerns at point of referral.



Over the past four years, the top 5 presenting issues remain the same. Whilst the statistics show a fall in the reporting of Anxiety, Bereavement, Personal Relationship Issues and Depression, Work-related Stress continues to rise.

Considering the backdrop of financial concerns, squeezed resources and the uncertainty brought about by organisational change and restructures, these figures are unsurprising. The stressors identified by staff using the Wellbeing Service cover a range of issues, including lack of role clarity; lack of autonomy and feeling micro-managed; high pressure brought about by huge workloads and perceived unrealistic deadlines; lack of line-management support and supervision; challenging relationship dynamics and concerns around how processes of change are communicated and managed. In some teams, particularly where there is a statutory duty to meet targets, there continues to be a culture of working beyond paid hours and subsequently reports of stress and burnout. Reports of Work-Related Stress are often accompanied by high levels of anxiety, whereby employees begin to experience distressing physiological symptoms, which impact many aspects of their life including sleep; leaving their homes; confidence in meetings; and challenges performing everyday duties. Where employee reports of work-related stress are not responded to, well-being can often decline rapidly and in many cases, result in sickness absence or a decision to leave Leicestershire County Council, which inevitably leads to the loss of a wealth of skills and experience and additional costs for the organisation in recruiting and training new staff.

Despite high demand and expectations on employees, work-related stress can often be mitigated by line managers who take steps to help the employee feel supported and valued. These line managers:

- Are willing to make time to listen to the experience of the employee
- Are available for regular support and supervision
- Communicate compassion and empathy



- Feel confident to tailor the response to the individual and make necessary temporary adjustments to enable the employee to move out of the stress response and resume a more efficient way of working.
- Foster an environment of trust and respect.

It should be noted that work-related stress and anxiety only account for part of the overall picture around staff well-being. In addition to work, employees are often managing;

- Long term mental health conditions (including suicidal thoughts and ideation)
- Long term physical health conditions
- Learning difficulties and neurodiverse conditions
- Additional caring responsibilities
- Financial commitments
- Experiencing unexpected events i.e., relationship breakdowns, illness, or bereavement.

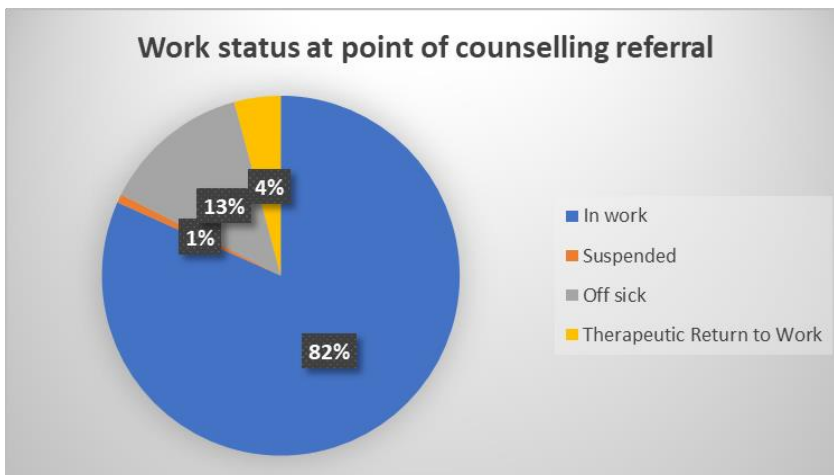
All present challenges that can be very distressing and overwhelming at times and trying to manage these challenges alongside the demands of work can be a difficult balancing act.

We have been supporting the work on LCC's Inclusion Commitment for managers and employees to give additional guidance to support this balancing act. This is welcome addition to the resources already available to support individual wellbeing, particularly the recognition that symptoms and external unpredictable factors can fluctuate from day to day, and efforts to improve wellbeing may need to be flexible to account for this.

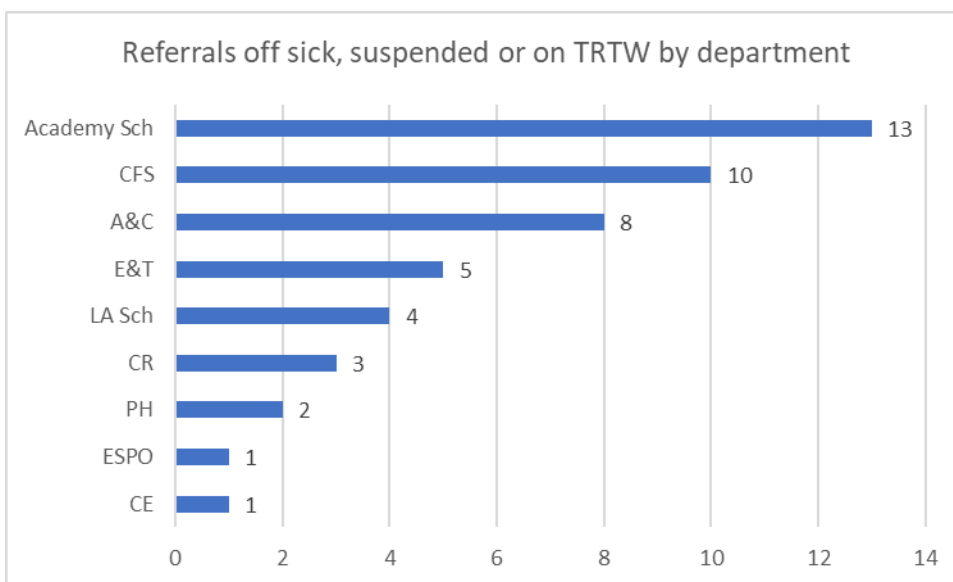
Employees can manage their workload well, despite external demands, if given the opportunity to work in a way that also allows them to make use of flexible working arrangements to attend to personal demands such as caring responsibilities or health appointments, and work at times when their performance is likely to be more efficient. Whilst it is acknowledged that business need must be prioritised, where possible, supporting individual requirements and trusting employees to fulfil their duties is preferable.

### **Work Status and Support plans – Counselling clients only**

Whilst 82% of referrals for counselling were from employees who were attending work, 18% (47 referrals) were received from individuals either absent from work due to sickness; suspended or undergoing a therapeutic return to work (TRTW), see chart below.



Referrals from employees off sick, suspended, or on a therapeutic return to work were from the following departments:



The main presenting issues for this group were *'Mental Health'* – including Depression and Suicidal Ideation (21%) *'Work-related Stress'*; (20%); and *'Anxiety'* (11%). Although the numbers are small, there were reductions in the number of employees in this group presenting with work-related stress and anxiety, but no reduction in those presenting with depression/suicidal ideation. Whilst the Wellbeing service has developed both online and group resources around Stress and Anxiety to support employees to stay in work. Further development work to support with Depression will take place in 2024/25.

The Wellbeing Service, alongside the Health and Safety Advisors, continue to be available for generic conversations with employees, line managers and the Human Resources Department, to consider helpful steps to take in cases where an individual's underlying mental health difficulty/disability may, at times, impact on their ability to perform their job role. However, client confidentiality will always take precedence.





Of those that used the Well-being Service last year, 17% (46 referrals) reported that they were subject to a sickness absence and/or capability support plan. Support plans are an important tool for the organisation to demonstrate that appropriate measures have been put in place to support an employee to improve their attendance or performance. Often these tools are used to good effect by managers, with the best examples setting out SMART manageable goals and detailing clear timescales, so that the employee is confident that they are aware of exactly what steps they need to take to demonstrate a sufficient change; what their line manager will offer to support them; and, exactly what will happen once those goals have been met.

### Online and Groupwork Resources

Employees are able to access 4 different **online** interventions to support their wellbeing. One of these includes resources around 'Loss and Bereavement' that employees can browse in their own time, without a requirement to complete a course. Other e-learning interventions include Personal Resilience; Anxiety Awareness and Managing Stress. Employees can choose to complete the e-learning course or simply browse the resources available. The Service also currently offers 3 face-to-face **groupwork** interventions for employees. Completion/attendee numbers are shown below:

Online course	Completions	Groupwork	Attendees
Anxiety Awareness	134	Mindfulness Now	40
Stress Management	77	Bereavement Support Group	19
Resilience	46	Managing Stress	24

### Service Developments

#### Work-related Stress

In September 2023, the service launched a new face-to-face workshop style course to support employees to find ways to better manage Stress, Pressure and Wellbeing. In addition to the pre-existing online 'Managing Stress' modules, this course offers employees an alternative resource for learning new ways of taking responsibility for managing feelings of stress and promotes access to support for those employees that find it challenging to learn via online methods. This four-week course aims to enable employees to understand what stress is and how to stop it; manage wellbeing to beat stress; manage stress at work and improve the ability to manage stress using resilience. Each session includes tuition and exercises to reinforce learning. Group numbers are kept small to ensure a safe and comfortable environment to engage with the course. Over the last year, 4 courses were delivered from September 2023 and in total, 24 employees attended. One delegate said, *"One of the best training courses I've attended. Really interesting and informative."*



The Well-being Service will raise the profile of this course to maximise attendance and encourage line-managers to support staff to access this pro-active and preventative resource.

Going forward, the Well-being Service has decided to change the way we collect data around work-related stress, to create a more detailed picture of the issues that clients of the service are experiencing. Stressors will be recorded in line with the HSE Management Standards: Demands; Control; Support; Relationships; Role, Remote/Hybrid Working and Change, as well as collecting further qualitative data detailing employees' specific concerns. It is hoped that this data will be used to highlight patterns and help departments to target their response to reduce stressors for their teams.

### **Anxiety**

In September 2023, the Wellbeing Service launched the online Anxiety Awareness course. This course helps employees and managers to understand the causes, symptoms and consequences of Anxiety and sets out practical steps that employees can take to begin managing their symptoms. This has been a popular resource and over a 6-month period, 134 employees completed the course. 67 individuals chose to complete the evaluation and 100% of those that provided feedback said that they would recommend this e-learning to others. One person said, *"I have never experienced such a thorough course about anxiety. There are so many different aspects to learn and understand and also things which can help. I have found it fascinating but most of all very helpful for me"*. This course is a very useful starting point for anyone experiencing anxiety and the service would encourage managers to give team members the permission and time to complete the course if they are reporting symptoms of anxiety.

### **Bereavement**

Over the past year, the Bereavement Support Group has become well embedded into the Well-being Service provision and employees are increasingly aware of this as a support option when facing the struggle of coping with bereavement. This course is a combination of psychoeducation and facilitator led peer support, offering employees the opportunity to talk about their own grief and share this experience with other people navigating their own unique journey through this painful process.

The aim of the bereavement support group is to bring together employees that have experienced the death of a loved one or close person. The group is a safe, supportive and confidential environment and meets once a week for 6 sessions. The group is designed to give individuals an understanding of the 5 main stages of grief and the grieving curve and employees are invited to share their experiences of death in different cultures and the importance of family rituals. The group has proved to be an extremely valuable resource. One person that attended said, *"Just want to say how wonderful the session was on Friday. It's such a lovely thoughtful group"*.



Recently, the Well-being Service has taken steps to develop a further support provision in the form of 'Bereavement Listeners'. Bereavement Listeners are employees that understand grief from their own lived experience and have been trained in listening skills to support colleagues across Leicestershire County Council and have been given permission by their manager to undertake this role. Employees that have experienced bereavement and are seeking support will be offered the opportunity to spend some time talking with a bereavement listener, who will be able to help them to understand the support options available both within Leicestershire County Council and external agencies and the steps required to access this support.

### **Intranet Pages**

Over the past year, the Wellbeing Service has been liaising with the Digital Services Team, who are taking the lead, to update the Wellbeing intranet pages to reflect the range of resources available and to offer employees a user-friendly guidance on a variety of common topics that impact mental well-being, along with clear guidance on how to access the various streams of support. Significant progress has been made and this work will continue so that employees feel confident about taking the necessary steps to help themselves or ask for help.

### **Sudden Death Guidance**

Sadly, each year, a number of employees die whilst in service with Leicestershire County Council. Inevitably, this can have a significant impact on individuals within the deceased employee's team and their manager. The Wellbeing Service are currently working in conjunction with Human Resources to create a guide for managers that are faced with managing death within the organisation. One aim of the document is to coach managers through the process and the steps they need to take, reducing the anxiety associated with uncertainty and supporting managers to support their staff.

### **Equality and Diversity**

Over the past year, a therapist within the Well-being service has undertaken training to join the network of Equality and Diversity champions across the council. In addition to this role, the therapist is available to offer Wellbeing support to the Children and Family Service Race Champions. Race Champions offer their time to talk to employees who experience oppression and racism. This work can be upsetting, and these staff benefit from having a wellbeing advisor to support them, if and when the need arises.

### **Duty Line**

The Service regularly asks for client feedback and whilst this is overwhelmingly positive, there has consistently been a request to offer support more quickly. Whilst the team have chosen to maintain a waiting list for counselling, so as not to compromise on the expected quality of the therapeutic interventions and to adhere to ethical guidelines of the governing body, we recognise that there is a growing call for quick access to wellbeing advice and



support. In response to this need, the service recently launched a telephone duty line. This line is available for a two-hour period each day, offering employees and managers multiple opportunities each week to talk to a therapist; receive a triage assessment if required; discuss available support options and plan any next steps to access support. The duty line will be trialled this year and continue if it proves popular with employees.

## What's next?

### Depression and Suicide

The Service recognises that some employees with long standing mental health issues or recurrent periods of depression may struggle to show noticeable improvement over 6 sessions of counselling. Some of these individuals also express frequent thoughts of suicidal ideation and thus require ongoing support to manage risk or they repeatedly return to the service for further support. In response to the need of this client group, a therapist within the Well-being service is currently being trained to deliver Dynamic Interpersonal Therapy (DIT), an approach approved by NICE to treat individuals with depression. This is also a relational therapeutic approach and so will be useful in treating clients that present with depression or anxiety related to difficult relationship dynamics, whether they be at home or work. It is hoped that this intervention will be available to suitable clients next year.

In addition, the service will develop an online course to support employees experiencing depression and thoughts of suicide; increase awareness of the *Managing Suicide in the Workplace* training; and, contribute to the development of a webpage to support employees experiencing suicidal thoughts, (and their managers), to access appropriate support.

### Putting Stress at the top of the agenda

Work-related stress is causing employees distress and putting a huge strain on Leicestershire County Council resources. Tackling this issue is paramount. The Well-being Service will be considering ways that we can support the organisation to respond to this growing challenge and encourage early intervention to prevent escalation to burnout.

### Supporting managers

The Service recognise that managers are under incredible pressure to lead their teams to meet increasing demand in a climate of reduced resources, whilst also supporting staff who themselves are experiencing pressure and expressing feelings of stress. Investing in the health and wellbeing of line managers is crucial, as they in turn play a key role in maintaining the health and wellbeing of their team. The well-being service will be considering the development of training resources that can help managers to maintain healthy work boundaries and approach difficult team challenges with confidence and compassion.



## Fibromyalgia

The Team have noticed an increase in clients reporting diagnoses of Fibromyalgia. A therapist within the service will begin to explore research in this area and develop a resource to support employees that are struggling with the condition.

### What do employees say about the Well-being Service?

In a recent Corporate Resources Staff Briefing, Wellbeing support was highlighted as one of the top 5 strengths of Leicestershire County Council and this is reflected in what clients say too. Following counselling sessions, clients are offered the opportunity to feedback to us about their experience of using the Well-being Service, in the form of a confidential survey. Over the past year, 60 employees completed the survey. This is what they told us:

- **99% agreed** that the well-being team listened to them and treated their concerns seriously.
- **99% agreed** that the service helped them to better understand and address their difficulties.
- **99% agreed** that they received the help that mattered to them.
- **99% agreed** that they had confidence in their therapist and his/her skills.
- **90%** told us that personal difficulties were having an impact on their ability to perform their job.
- **64%** told us that work-related difficulties were having an impact on their ability to perform their job.
- **68%** told us that the counselling sessions helped them to stay in work and avoid taking sick leave.
- **95%** said they were 'very likely' to recommend the well-being service to colleagues if they needed support.

As part of the survey, clients are given space to tell us what they think in their own words. The responses reflect the true value of the Well-being Service, and we believe stand as testament to Leicestershire County Council's investment in employee well-being. Here is a flavour of what employees had to say:

"The referral and assessment is very easy to use. I had a session with a worker, and this went very well and they suggested I have further sessions. I felt very supported and listened to."



“I was so grateful to receive pause to talk sessions due to the waiting time for counselling. I found this service exceptionally useful and instrumental at this moment in my life.”

“It provided a much-needed window of time for me to focus on myself and prioritise that over the other demands in my life. I wasn't sure whether i would find it helpful, but it has enabled me to look at things differently, and to be accepting of, and kind to myself”.

“Best counselling therapy I've ever had. (Counsellor) was super helpful and it's changed my life for the better long term. Thanks very much for the help at every step of the way. Made such a massive difference compared to my past experiences with therapy”.

“I have been on such a journey over the last few months and these counselling sessions have been so valuable in helping me find my path forward in such a short space of time. I felt able to open up about things I had pushed down for so long. I felt listened to, validated and valued throughout. I have learnt so much about myself and I am so grateful for the experience that I have had.”

“I found the service to be very helpful and helped me to check in and reflect on my thoughts and mental Health which in return helped me to continue to remain at work, maintain a good mental health and remain focused.”

“The Wellbeing team were incredibly supportive, understanding, and helpful. Offered alternative support while I was waiting for counselling. They were so approachable and caring.”

“I see the service as a vital council resource. I was given the time to talk through my concerns in a non-judgemental way. It felt like someone within the council was finally listening to me.”

“I felt that I had a generous offer of the space and time needed at a very difficult time in my life which enabled me to receive advice and guidance that was integral to my moving through grief and conflict. I felt cared for, and my situation valued which enabled me to stay afloat and keep going and also to come through stronger and equipped to manage things better.”

“Extremely pleased with the sessions I had; went into them not believing I could be helped and have come out with improved resilience, self-belief, and self-worth. (Counsellor) made me feel heard and safe; definitely glad I did it.”



## Corporate Wellbeing Update

### **Key Achievements- last 12 months:**

Over the last twelve months, the People Services Wellbeing Delivery Team with support from the Wellbeing Board have been continuing to work on the delivery of the Wellbeing Action Plan 2023-2024.

The focus areas of the action plan include understanding sickness and absence data, training data and other measurement indicators in relation to identified topics which were:

- Stress and mental health
- Improving compassionate leadership, supervision, and management
- Depression, mindfulness, and resilience
- Hard to reach staff and health conversations.
- Physical exercise

The aim of this plan is to develop identified wellbeing initiatives and communications under these areas to raise awareness, support employees and help to break down stigma attached to mental health.

Progress on the action plan is regularly reported to the Wellbeing Board on a quarterly basis and feedback is also obtained from Departmental Wellbeing Representatives on current wellbeing related priorities.

Some of the key achievements have included:

- New stress survey tool was launched.
- Wellbeing bulletin data and popularity data has been reviewed quarterly.
- Delivery of face-to-face stress workshops.
- Workplace health needs assessment was launched.
- Able Futures launched.
- Pause to talk sessions were promoted and delivered.
- Burn out training and workshops were promoted throughout the year.
- A suicide workshop was developed by the Wellbeing team.
- Reasonable adjustments guidance updated and shared.
- Creation of department Wellbeing Representatives.



- Wellbeing Offer summary shared across the LCC.
- Consolidation of wellbeing information on the intranet – this work is continuously ongoing to improve the accessibility of information.
- Work is ongoing to improve communication of wellbeing information to staff members that do not have regular access to the LCC intranet.

### Going forward:

Going forward, a new wellbeing action plan is in place, which has a strong focus on:

- Supervision and stress
- Diet and healthy eating
- Sleep
- Physical exercise

These topics were developed from the Workplace Health Needs Assessment supported by Public Health. The ongoing data collection and measurement indicators will be reviewed.

We will continue to build even stronger networks with the Departmental Wellbeing Representatives and Equality Group Leads, working alongside the Wellbeing Board to create a wellbeing offer which applies to all employees across the Council.

We shall also continue to tackle the ongoing challenge of engaging with hard to reach and front-line employees.





## **EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 26 SEPTEMBER 2024**

### **ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

#### **SUMMARY OF ACTION PLANS**

#### **REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

##### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to present the Employment Committee with an update of the current Action Plans which contain provision for compulsory redundancy and details of progress on their implementation.

##### **Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. At its meeting on 11 February 2010, the Committee approved a new Organisational Change Policy and Procedure (replacing the 'Policy in the Event of Redeployment and Redundancy') together with revised arrangements through which the Committee would exercise its oversight of the implementation of that procedure. In accordance with that decision, summaries of current Action Plans are attached to this report.

##### **Background**

3. Following the decisions made on 11 February 2010, the arrangements also involve presenting a summary of any outstanding comments or concerns raised by members of the Committee.
4. There are no outstanding comments or concerns on this occasion.
5. Members are asked to indicate where they wish a representative of the department concerned to be present to answer any questions in relation to any particular Action Plan, if they have not already done so.

##### **Recommendations**

6. That the update provided on the current Action Plans which contain provision for compulsory redundancy, and details of progress in their implementation, be noted.

##### **Background Papers**

7. None

**Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

8. None.

**Equality Implications/Other Impact Assessments**

9. The Organisational Change Policy and Procedure is designed to ensure that changes which impact on employees are implemented in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

**Human Right Implications**

10. There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

**List of Appendices**

Appendix A – Summary of Current Action Plans - Implementation Completed.

Appendix B – Summary of Current Action Plans - Implementation Underway.

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EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 26 SEPTEMBER 2024

SUMMARY OF CURRENT ACTION PLANS - IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETED

Action Plan	Date Approved	Actual Completion Date	Outcome Number of compulsory redundancies
Adults & Communities - HART	24/11/2023	31/05/2024	0
Children & Families - Practice Excellence/Frontline/Safeguarding/Quality Assurance AP	17/04/2024	31/08/2024	0
Corporate Resources - Property Services- Reception & Security	01/05/2024	01/08/2024	0
Adults & Communities - Adult Social Care Finance Management	23/02/2024	06/04/2024	0
Adults & Communities - Mental Health and Reablement Hinckley and NWL	09/07/2024	01/08/2024	0

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**EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 26 SEPTEMBER 2024**  
**SUMMARY OF CURRENT ACTION PLANS - IMPLEMENTATION UNDERWAY**

<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Current Position</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>	<b>Predicted Compulsory Redundancies</b>
Adults & Communities - Melton Short Breaks/Supported Living and Day Services	01/08/2024	Now live 3 employees in scope, all have comparable jobs		0
Environment & Transport - RHWS Future Service Offer	26/06/2024	Consultation started 01/07/2024 - 2 cohorts.	1-1 meetings, comparability challenges, job preference forms, comments/questions/proposals.	0
Public Health - Active Together Relocation	12/04/2024	Action Plan launched on 26.03.24 - running for 6 weeks to allow everyone to participate fully considering the easter break. Mid consultation meeting 16.04.24. Individual meetings to take place during the consultation period. Move to CH to take place 01.10.24 the latest.	Individual meetings to take place to consider individual circumstances.	0
Children & Families - Music Services 2024	29/08/2024	Launched on 29 August 2024	Consultation until 30 September 2024	0

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