Workforce Report Q1 2025-2026 Update

Employment Committee

Leicestershire County Council

2025/26 LCC Headcount and FTE

This includes employees on LCC terms and conditions, excluding maintained Schools.
August 2025 we have a headcount of 5841, which is a full time equivalent (FTE) of 4792.47

LCC Total Headcount

Change in August 2024 related to a TUPE of service out of LCC

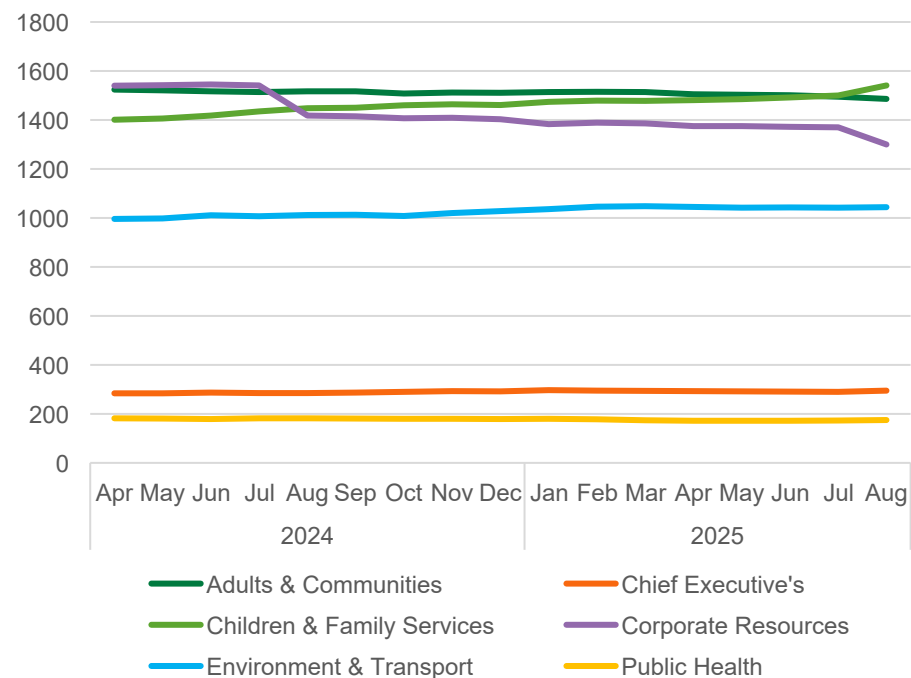Legend: 2024 — 2025

FTE

Legend: 2024 — 2025
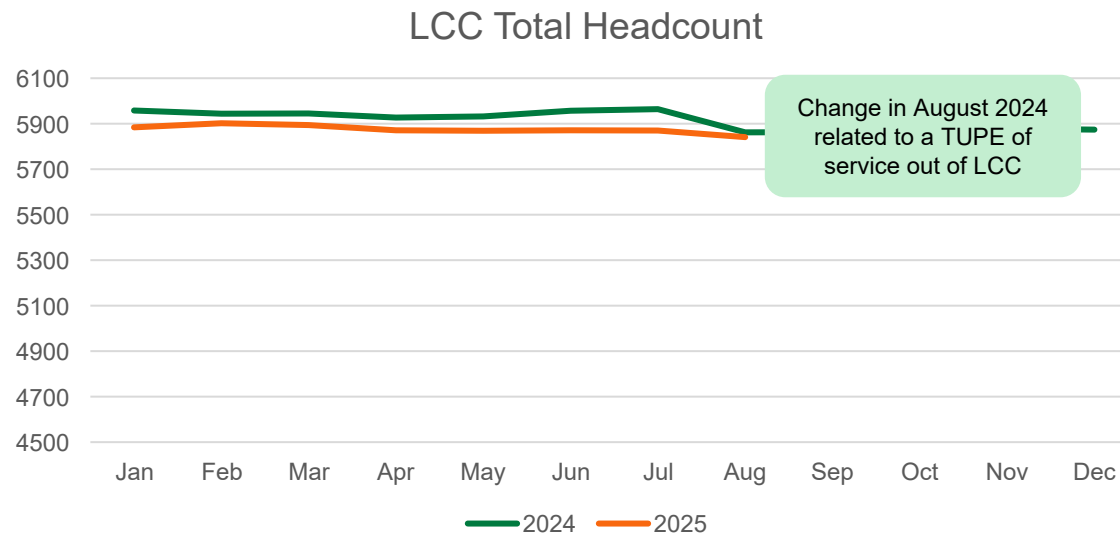
Headcount refers to the total number of employees within LCC at a given time. It provides a snapshot of workforce size, helping understand the number of people employed by LCC.
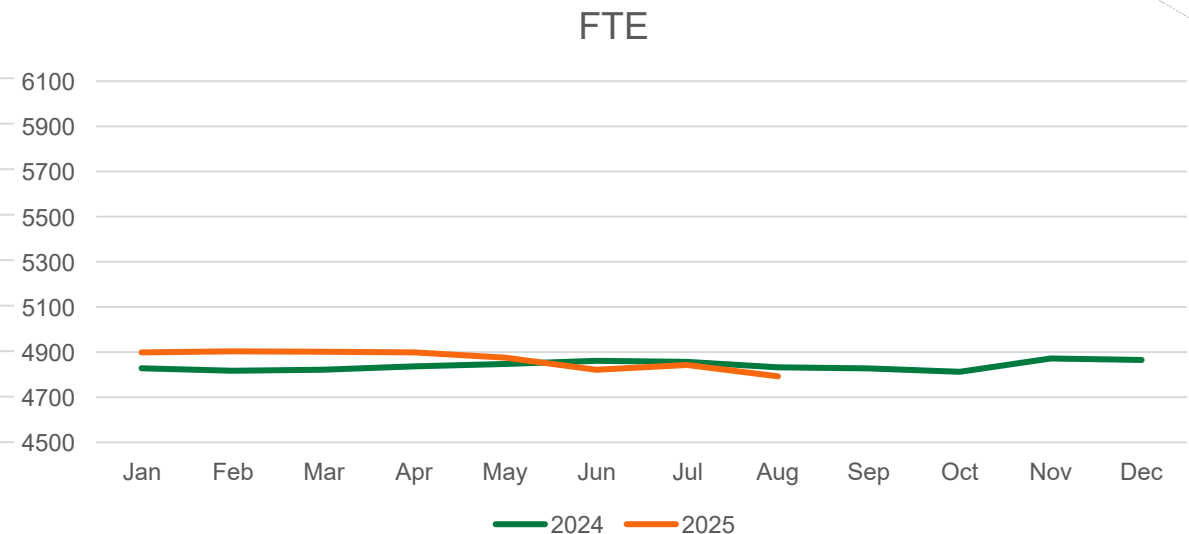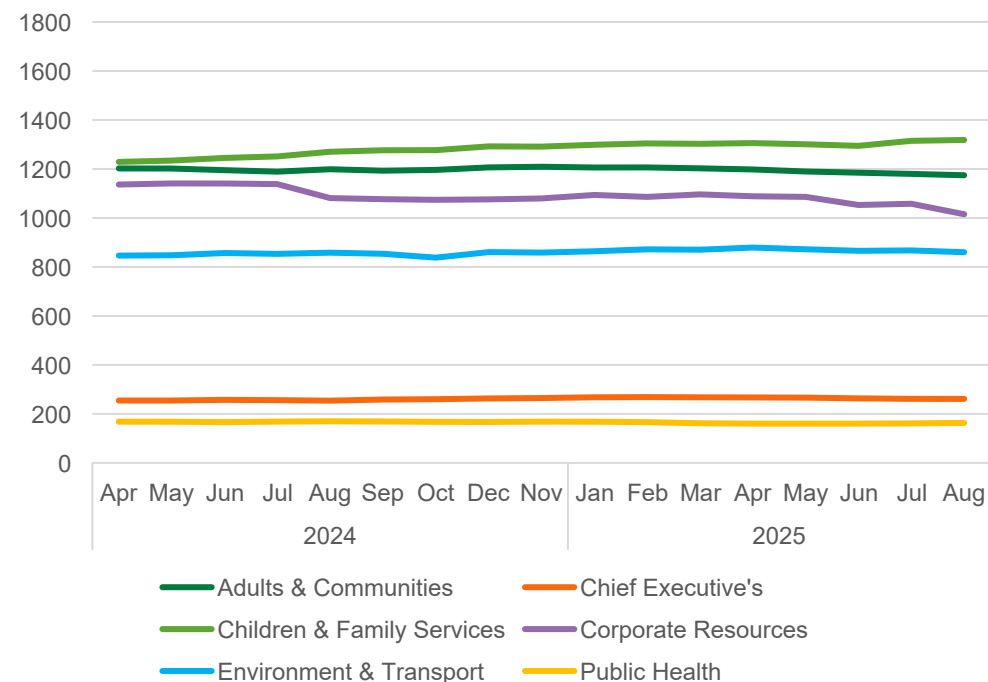
Full Time Equivalent (FTE) is a metric that represents the total number of hours worked by employees, converted into the equivalent number of full-time employees based on a standard 37 hour work week. This helps understand the actual workforce capacity, regardless of part-time or variable working hours.

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2025/26 Departmental Headcount and FTE

Headcount by Department

FTE by Department

Legend: Adults & Communities, Chief Executive's, Children & Family Services, Corporate Resources, Environment & Transport, Public Health
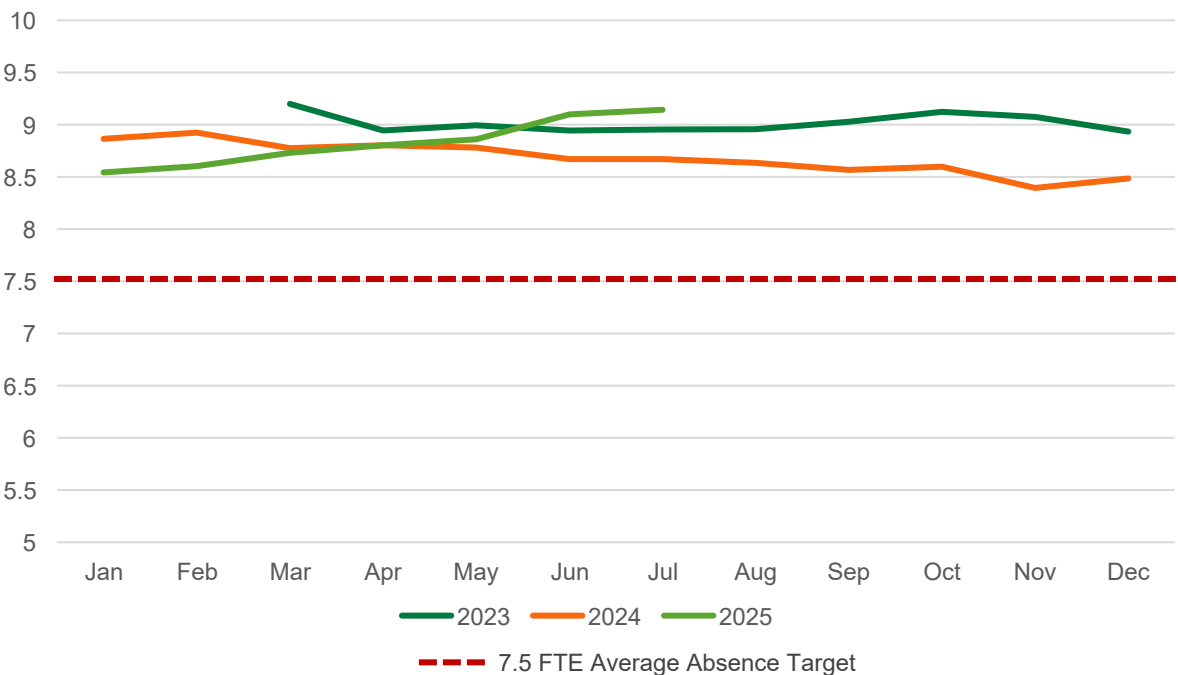
Overall, LCC has experienced a decrease in both Headcount (21) and FTE (39.95 FTE) compared to the previous year.

Detailed breakdown of the changes:

- Corporate Resources saw a reduction of 65.95 FTE since last year, primarily due to school kitchen staff transferring to new suppliers under TUPE arrangements.

- Children & Family Service reported an increase of 48.18 FTE since last year. This is largely due to efforts to convert agency social workers to permanent positions, in response to new regulations requiring agency workers to have three years of local authority employment. Additionally, the a new pay cap for agency rates, which will be fully implemented by 1 October 2025 (e.g. Senior social worker Level 3 capped at £38 per hour in our region) has influenced this change.

Q1 2025/26 LCC Absence

LCC Average FTE Absence

LCC Average FTE Absence by Month	2023	2024	2025
Jan	9.01	8.86	8.54
Feb	9.14	8.92	8.60
Mar	9.20	8.78	8.73
Apr	8.94	8.80	8.80
May	8.99	8.78	8.86
Jun	8.94	8.67	9.10
Jul	8.95	8.67	9.14
Aug	8.96	8.63	
Sep	9.03	8.57	
Oct	9.12	8.60	
Nov	9.07	8.39	
Dec	8.93	8.49	

Year	Quarter 1 Absence FTE Comparison
2017	9.72
2018	9.64
2019	9.26
2020	9.48
2021	9.51
2022	9.55
2023	8.96
2024	8.75
2025	8.92

The average number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) days lost to sickness per employee over a given timeframe is determined by dividing the total FTE days lost by the total number of FTE employees. This measure allows organisations to evaluate how effectively they manage sickness absence.

The LCC Average FTE Absence graphs indicate that after a period of decline (improvement), absence rates have been rising since the winter. We were anticipating fluctuations in absence rates, especially during the winter flu season, which we address by providing access to NHS vaccination programs, however the trend has continued. As part of our HR cases (slide 9). We are also seeing absence case management increasing proportionately, demonstrating we continue to actively review and manage individual absence to support departments and managers. But we need to understand the negative trend. Are employees actually less healthy? What could we do to manage absence more effectively? We need a deeper understanding of the health and organisational factors driving behaviour and attendance. The Committee will receive an update on this work in December.
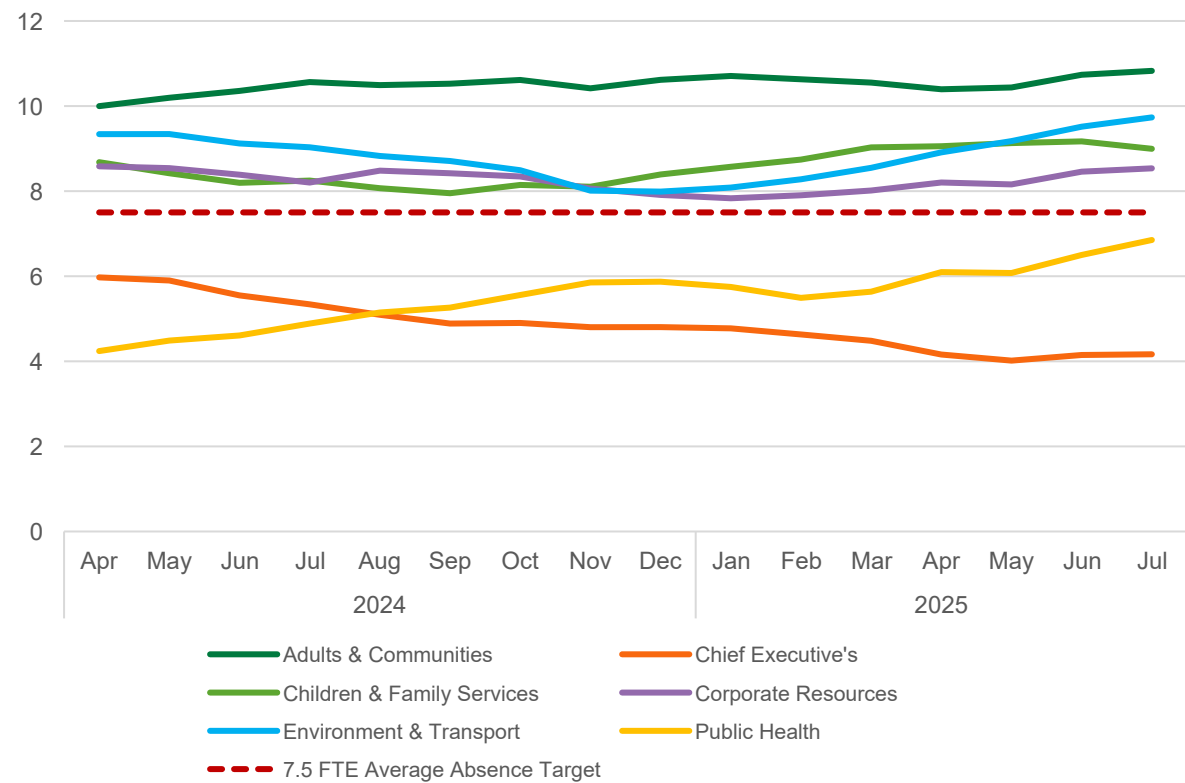
Chartered Institute for Personal Development is reporting that 2025, UK sickness absence has rose to 9.4 days per employee the highest in a decade and a 62% increase since 2019. Mental health, stress, and musculoskeletal issues being the leading causes.

Q1 2025/26 Departmental Absence

LCC Departmental Average FTE Absence

LCC Average FTE Absence by Month	Adults & Communities	Chief Executive's	Children & Family Services	Corporate Resources	Environment & Transport	Public Health
Apr 24	10.00	5.97	8.68	8.58	9.34	4.24
May 24	10.20	5.90	8.42	8.54	9.34	4.49
Jun 24	10.36	5.55	8.20	8.39	9.12	4.61
Jul 24	10.56	5.34	8.25	8.20	9.03	4.89
Aug 24	10.49	5.09	8.07	8.48	8.83	5.15
Sep 24	10.53	4.89	7.95	8.42	8.71	5.26
Oct 24	10.61	4.90	8.15	8.34	8.49	5.56
Nov 24	10.42	4.80	8.10	8.06	8.01	5.85
Dec 24	10.62	4.80	8.39	7.91	7.99	5.87
Jan 25	10.71	4.77	8.57	7.83	8.08	5.75
Feb 25	10.63	4.63	8.74	7.90	8.28	5.49
Mar 25	10.55	4.48	9.03	8.01	8.55	5.64
Apr 25	10.39	4.16	9.06	8.20	8.91	6.10
May 25	10.44	4.02	9.13	8.16	9.18	6.08
Jun 25	10.74	4.15	9.17	8.46	9.52	6.50
Jul 25	10.83	4.17	9.00	8.54	9.73	6.85

- Absence rates correspond to the size of the Department's FTE, meaning that a single long-term absence in smaller departments such as Public Health and Chief Exec can significantly impact their reported figures.
- Last year, we observed improvements in absence rates within Children and Family Services, Environment and Transport, and Corporate Resources. Subsequently performance in these areas has reduced, which would suggest that our position would be much worse had we not had put in place the improvement last year, compared with national trends.

Q1 2025/26 LCC Absence reasons by Financial Year

% of FTE days lost by absence reason	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Q1 25/26
Stress/depression, mental health	25.40%	26.80%	31.40%	25.78%	29.32%
Other Musculo-skeletal	17.90%	12.40%	13.20%	12.77%	14.26%
Combined covid-19 & cough/cold & flu	18.20%	17.30%	11.50%	11.83%	10.19%
Gastro-stomach, digestion	6.30%	6.10%	6.20%	8.09%	7.74%
Chest & respiratory	6.20%	6.00%	4.60%	4.98%	4.19%
Back and neck	11.10%	3.80%	4.40%	4.39%	3.94%
Neurological	4.30%	4.40%	4.30%	4.43%	4.20%
Cancer	4.50%	4.30%	4.70%	3.52%	5.20%
Eye, ear, nose & mouth/dental & throat	3.00%	2.80%	3.40%	3.01%	5.10%
Not disclosed	4.40%	5.80%	3.70%	6.63%	5.43%

- **Stress/depression, mental health** continues to be our highest long term sickness absence reason. Within departments - lowest is reporting at 27.55% in Public Health with highest 39.81% in Chief Execs.
- **Combined covid-19 & cough/cold & flu** is our highest short term sickness absence reason. Although when broken down some departments this can be Gastro-stomach related absence.
- **Not disclosed** is use when the absence is not given at the time of reported or where absence reason needs to be kept confidential and not maintained on payroll record.

Wellbeing support

We provide a lot of support in relating to staff health and wellbeing. All of which is available to staff and their managers via the intranet.

Counselling
Staff can request professional assistance via council's Wellbeing Service either via email or telephone.

**Access support as an individual**
There are learning activities that staff can benefit from to expand your knowledge and understanding, these include:

- Managing stress pathway | Learning Hub
- Personal resilience | Learning Hub digital learning
- Unpacking your stress container workshop | Learning hub

MHFA
Managers and staff can get trained as an accredited Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)
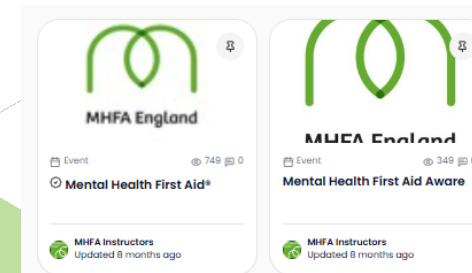
Wellbeing support (cont.)

We provide additional support to people in the event of an emergency or incident. All of which is available to staff and their managers via the front page of the intranet.

Violence and aggression	Support with hate crime and incidents	Tackling unacceptable behaviour	Following the grievance policy and procedure
Accidents and injuries	Deal with a first aid situation	Prevent slips, trips and falls	Report an accident
Emotional distress	Preventing suicide	Support with mental health	Support with stress
	Support with substance misuse	Support with domestic abuse	
Bereavement	Support with bereavement	Take emergency, bereavement or unplanned leave	Manage the death of an employee
Damage to property	Fire and emergency procedures	Reporting an issue on council premises	
Terrorist activity	Report a security issue	Information security incidents	
Fraud and bribery	Fraud	Working for us - Code of conduct	

Emergencies and traumatic incidents
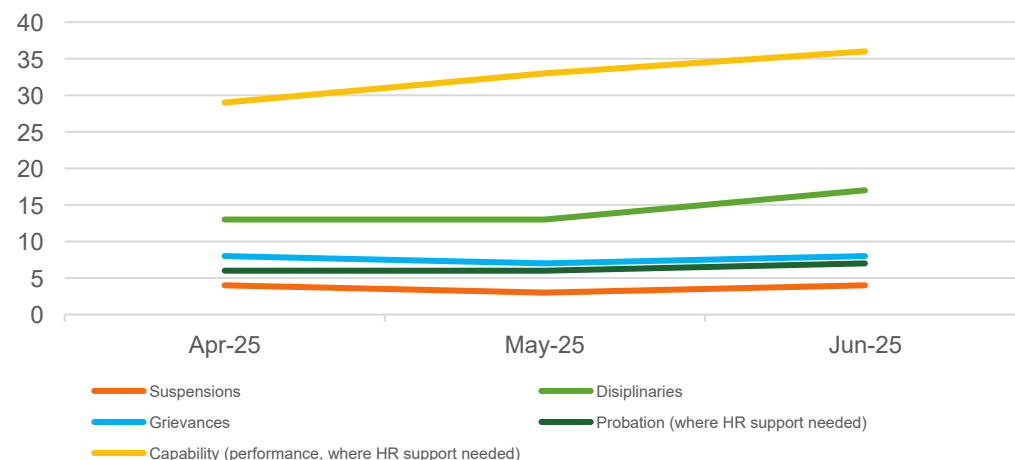Understand the support available →

Most staff that access counselling service are in work and are accessing the service for additional support to remain at work (over 80%).
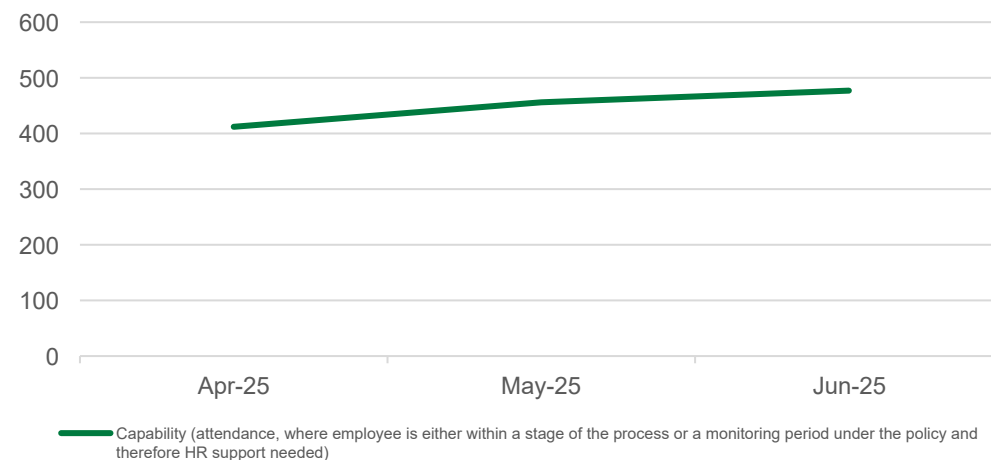
Q1 2025/26 LCC HR Open cases

Open HR Cases (excluding attendance)

Legend:
- Suspensions
- Disiplinaries
- Grievances
- Probation (where HR support needed)
- Capability (performance, where HR support needed)

Open HR Cases (attendance)

Legend:
- Capability (attendance, where employee is either within a stage of the process or a monitoring period under the policy and therefore HR support needed)

We are now reporting annoymised numbers of open case management activity from 01 April 2025. It shows we:

- have a low number of formal cases i.e. grievance and disciplinary
- Proactive in managing capability i.e. performance and attendance cases. Especially attendance in line with 448 people on average, with 8% or the workforce under a formal stage in the absence process.

For information the majority of suspensions relate to substance misuse/nonnegative testing for drugs and alcohol in safety critical roles.

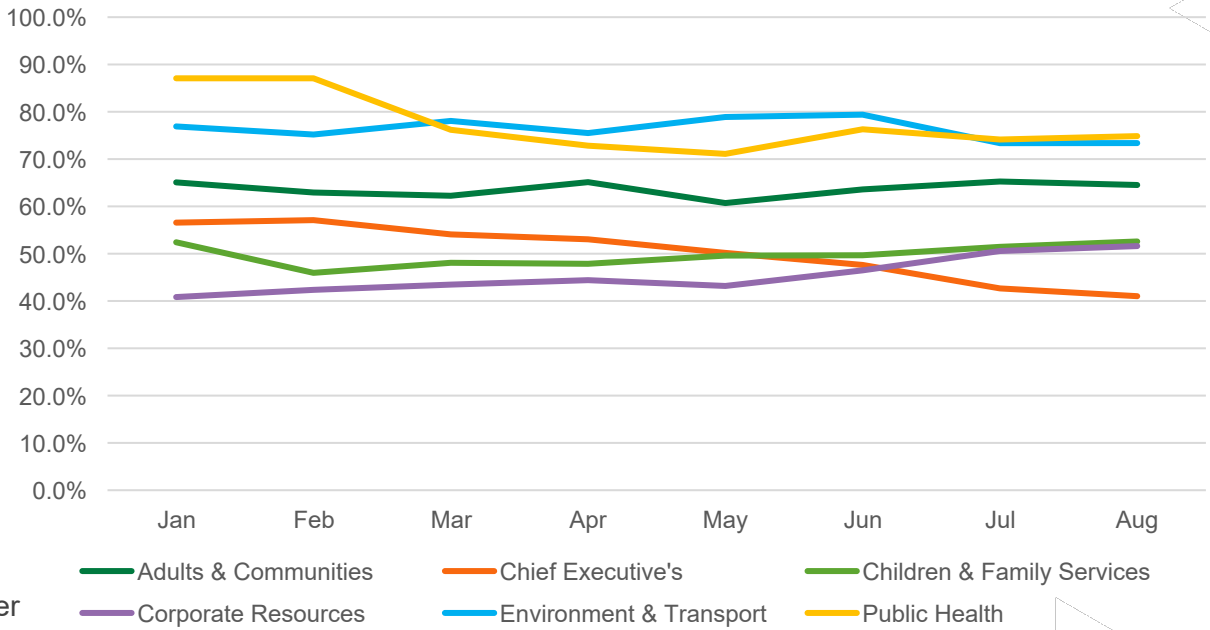# Q1 2025/26 LCC and Department APR Compliance rates

LCC APR Compliance rates
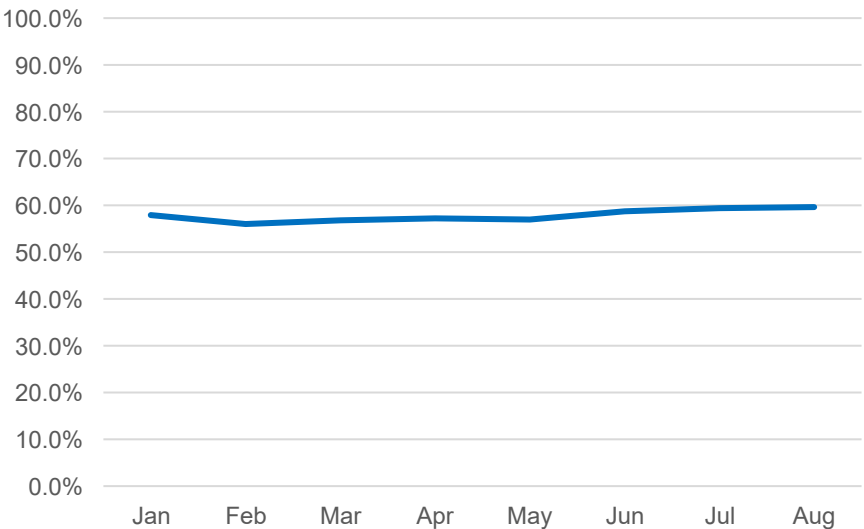
Departmental APR Compliance rates

Annual Performance Reviews (APR) should be completed once a year. A higher compliance rate shows that most employees are receiving regular feedback, which can help improve their performance and development. Conversely, a lower compliance rate might suggest that many employees are missing out on valuable feedback, potentially impacting their growth and the overall effectiveness of the organisation.

We have begun reporting this from Q4 2024/2025 as agreed at February 2025 Employment Committee.

We have identified that APR's are being conducted; however, there completion is not consistently being recorded on our central recording system. To address this issue, the HR is working on a solution to simplify the recording and reporting process. This includes implementing automated reminders to ensure that all APRs are promptly and accurately recorded in the system. This initiative aims to enhance compliance and provide a more streamlined and efficient way to manage performance reviews.

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People related activity in last quarter

- Review of 'Smarter Working' Policy.

- Implemented the pay award in August.

- Preparation of review of Employment Rights Bill to ensure we are taking reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment.

Chief Executive Recruitment

- Appointment panel determined

- Advertising permanent role

- Working with Starfish to support with executive search and selection

- Advert planned in MJ – 18 September

- Closing date – 19 October

- Final interviews – w/c 17 November

- Full Council – 5 December. Required to approve the appointment of the Head of Paid Service in line with The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 Schedule 1 Part II paragraph 4(1).