



EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE: 21 MAY 2026

WORKFORCE REPORT 2025 – 2026 UPDATE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on workforce information and performance measures for 2025/2026. This includes details relating to headcount, Full Time Equivalent (FTE), absence rates and reason, and reported completion of Annual Performance Reviews (APR).

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. These procedures are governed by employment legislation and HR policy and procedures.
3. The Committee considered the Annual Workforce Report 2024/2025 on 22 May 2025, the Workforce Report Q1 2025-2026 Update on 18 September 2025 and the Workforce Report Q2 2025-2026 Update on 04 December 2025.

Background

4. Background figures along with current performance is contained within Appendix A of this report.

Headcount and FTE

5. This includes employees on Leicestershire County Council terms and conditions, excluding Maintained Schools and ESPO. As of March 2026, the Council's headcount was 5905, which is a full time equivalent (FTE) of 4937.91.
 - Environment and Transport (1048 headcount, 915.72 FTE)
 - Children and Family Services (1478 Headcount, 1424.61 FTE)
 - Public Health (385 headcount, 345.23 FTE)
 - Corporate Resources (1386 Headcount, 1017.92 FTE)
 - Adults and Communities (1514 Headcount, 1231.43 FTE).
6. The Council has experienced an increase in both headcount (11) and FTE (36.45 FTE) compared to this time last year.

7. In addition, a graphical representation of the changes at organisational level, along with a description of the headcount and FTE definition, can be found within Graphs 1 and 2 of Appendix A. Key points of note are as follows:
- Corporate Resources has seen a reduction in 70.54 FTE since April 2025. This is due to the gradual transfer out of School Food Kitchens over time.
 - Children and Family Service has increased in by 118.96 FTE. This is due to the concerted effort to recruit to permanent positions, such as social work, to reduce the reliance on agency workers.
 - Public Health incorporated a number of services from the former Chief Executive's department and therefore saw a rise in both headcount and FTE.
8. Further detail on the departmental changes can be found at Graphs 3 and 4 within Appendix A.

Absence

9. As of March 2026, the Council's sickness absence rate was 3.5%, which equates to an average of 8.92 days lost per full-time employee. This remains above the Council's target of 7.5 FTE days lost (approx. 2.88%).
10. The Council is performing better than the NHS (4.07%) and public sector employers (3.8%), but above private sector services (2.80%) and UK employers overall (3.3%) sickness absence averages. Further information can be found at Graph 5 and Tables 1 and 2 within Appendix A.
11. The Council's departmental performance is as follows:
- Adults and Communities- 4.21%
 - Children and Family Services- 3.26%
 - Corporate Resources- 3.58%
 - Environment and Transport- 3.30%
 - Public Health 2.56%.
12. Managers continue to actively manage any absences, conducting return to work interviews, monitoring the time, length and reasons for absence, referring individuals to Occupational Health, and following the informal and formal elements of the Council's Attendance Management Policy.
13. Stress, depression, and mental health remain the leading causes of long-term sickness absence within the organisation and the Council is committed to continuing to provide current targeted support and counselling interventions. Short-term absences are most frequently attributed to Covid-19, coughs, colds, and flu and viral infections.
14. As of March, the Council had 547 employees being actively managed within attendance management process. Further detail can be found within Graph 8 of Appendix A.

Employment Relations

15. The Council continues to report anonymised numbers of open case management activity from 01 April 2025. It shows that the Authority has a low number of formal cases i.e.

grievance and disciplinary and is proactive in managing capability i.e. performance and attendance cases. Further detail can be found at Graphs 7 and 8 within Appendix A.

Annual Performance Reviews (APR)

16. As of March 2026, the online recording process is reporting a 58.9% APR completion rate. This is likely to be an under-representation of the number of staff who have had their yearly performance review as the APR paperwork and meeting is not recorded on a system, however managers are asked to update an employee's HR record with the date that the meeting took place. As this is a separate task, unfortunately some managers forget to complete the final part of the process. Departmental performance is shown below:
- Adults and Communities – 54.4%
 - Children and Family Services – 65.9%
 - Corporate Resources – 43.9%
 - Environment and Transport – 70.9%
 - Public Health – 73.6%.
17. These figures highlight where there is a need to focus improvement. Further detail can be found at Graphs 9 and 10 within Appendix A.
18. In order to address this issue, HR is working towards a solution to simplify both the recording and reporting processes. This includes the implementation of automated reminders, which will help ensure all APRs are promptly and accurately captured in the system. The aim of this initiative is to enhance compliance and offer a more streamlined and effective approach to managing performance reviews. In addition, Department Management Teams are updated on a monthly basis as to their completion rates.

Resource Implications

19. There are no resource implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Timetable for Decisions

20. Not applicable.

Recommendations

21. It is recommended that Employment Committee note the content of the Workforce Report 2025-2026.

Background Papers

22. People Strategy 2024-2028 paper – 23 May 2024
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=212&MId=7424&Ver=4>
23. Workforce Report – Annual Report 2024/2025 – 22 May 2025
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=212&MId=7897&Ver=4>

24. Workforce Report - 2025/2026 Quarter 1 – 18 September 2025
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=212&MId=7898&Ver=4>
25. Workforce Report- 2025/26 Quarter 2- 04 December 2025
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s193472/Workforce%20Report%202025-26%20Quarter%202%20Update%20-%20Employment%20Committee%20041225.pdf>
26. Workforce Report- 2025/26 Quarter 3- 05 February 2026
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s194460/Workforce%20Report%202025-26%20Quarter%203%20Update%20-%20Employment%20Committee%20050226.pdf>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

27. None.

Equality Implications

28. A breakdown of workforce by protected characteristic was reported in February 2025 and is reported annually to the Employment Committee as part of a Workforce Update, following 1 January each year, along with other statutory Equality reporting requirements.

Human Right Implications

29. The Department has worked on reporting HR cases from 01 April 2025 which is now included within the report.

Appendix

Appendix A - Workforce Data Analysis and Trends

Appendix B - Workforce Report Q4 2025-2026 Update (Presentation)

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