

Report of the Chief Officer – HR and Support Services

Workforce Profile as at Quarter 4 2025/26

Summary

1. This report provides the Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee (SMUC) with the workforce profile, covering the period of 1st January to 31st March 2026, for fair comparison some figures are for a full or rolling 12 month period, where this is the case it will be stated.

Background

2. The data provided in this report is already available throughout the Council to both employees and managers. The workforce data provided through the performance framework, is discussed with Corporate Management Team, Directorate Management Teams and Trade Unions.

Analysis

3. **Annex 1** gives a full overview of key performance indicators directly linked to the Council’s workforce.
4. Headcount, FTE, new starters, resignations and leavers rates at the Q3 position in 2025/26 and the year 2024/25 are as follows:

	2024/25	Q4 2025/26	Trend
Headcount	2692	2736	Increase
FTE	2333	2387	Increase
Average Days Sickness	11.9 days	12.1 days	Increase
New Starters	100*	86	Decrease
Leavers	76*	71	Decrease
Resignations	56%	66%	Increase
Retirements	24%	22%	Decrease

*Figures for 2024/25 New Starters & Leavers are for the equivalent quarter period

5. Resignations as a reason for leaving is higher at year-end 2025/26 compared to year-end 2024/25.

In Q4 2025/26 there were slightly more new starters than leavers but both were less than the equivalent quarter in 2024-25.

The council continue to be successful at being awarded funding and adverts for new posts for fully funded posts continue to be appointed to. Funding success has been dominant in Education, City Development, Learning and Skills and there is also investment in the new Programme Management Office as part of the Council's transformation team.

Work with York (WWY) assignments will continue to be used but are a key part of the cost control. Agency assignment numbers have increased over the quarter, but are constantly reviewed and fluctuate to meet demands across the council directorates: finance directorate includes cleaning staff and transport and environment placements include project officers and operational waste staff. There is also additional agency staff appointed in adult social care as part of improvement work following the Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessment outcome published in December 2025.

6. Employee turnover remains at 12%.
7. The Council is continuing to restructure and there are further workforce changes both planned and in consultation. In some instances agency is being used as a temporary measure to support vacancies ahead of restructuring and mitigate change.
8. **Table 1.11 and 1.12 in Annex 1** shows analysis of resignations by age and grades; trends are largely comparable between 2025/26 and 2024/25 with a small increase in the percentage of leavers in younger age bands. More detailed information is not available on reasons for leaving other than information shown in **table 1.6**; the Council does not collect where an employee is moving to, for example to another local authority, private sector, to take up university / further education to spend time with dependents etc.
9. The age band of 50 to 64 is the highest workforce age band of the Council's workforce. The average age of the workforce has reduced slightly over the years (now 47 years old), and the 50 to 64 age band makes up 42% of the Council's workforce, slightly less than the percentage of Yorkshire and Humber (43%) and slightly higher than England from the Census data (41%).

This has reduced slightly over the years, with younger age bands increasing (as reflected by the lower average age of the workforce).

10. Cost control measures continue to challenge spend, when a post becomes vacant, some remain unfilled or alternative options are considered including acting up arrangements for existing members of staff. HR are working with relevant managers to ensure creative recruitment for hard to fill vacancies that need to be filled. Wellbeing is at the heart of all considerations, it is repeatedly reinforced that employees are not expected to work excessive hours to cover unfilled vacant roles, and decisions around priorities and ways of working have to be considered creatively.
11. Sickness absence figures have remained stable since the last year. The Council does have several employees who are on long term sickness with terminal illness, for these employees we explore ill health retirement options, but employee long-term absence continues to be part of the absence figures, this may in some cases distort absence figures in some directorates.
12. We continue to benchmark absence with neighbouring and regional councils and City of York Council are experiencing the same trends as other Councils. It is however, known there is not one common calculation method for absence. Some council's exclude maternity related absence, or absence during notice periods, or absence for apprentices, therefore comparing like for like is difficult. What is important is the management of absence and managers and employees using the tools and training available in a compassionate and constructive manner.
13. In terms of equalities profiling, the workforce gender and age distribution remain largely comparable year on year. Similarly, the declaration of sexual orientation and disability remains largely the same, as is the figures for employees declaring Black Asian and Racially Minoritised Community (BARMC).
14. We continue to promote and request that employees update their sensitive information (for example disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation) status to allow us to have a closer comparison with our local community.

Retention Payments

15. Rather than provide a separate report, retention payments will now be reported in this overview report. There are currently 7 retention payments paid covering 7 posts. Retention payments must meet set criteria, be led by market data and are closely monitored. Retention payments are up to a 10% addition on the substantive salary.
16. There has been one renewed application for a retention period extending the allowance for a further year up to June 2027, this is exceptional circumstances. The extension was assessed and approved by Management and the Trade Unions at CCNC in June 2026. There have been a further 6 new retention applications approved by management and unions. These retentions are for noting by the Committee only, and as officers would be identifiable if further details were provided hence, an overview only. Retention payments are for a 12-month period unless stated otherwise:

Grade of post	Number of job holders	Effective date
12 (extended)	1	1.6.24 to 31.03.27
12 (new)	6	30.9.25 to 30.9.26 <i>(approved in Feb 2026 backdated)</i>

Chief Officer Market Supplement

17. This Committee approved a market supplement of £17,825 in June 2025 for the Corporate Director of Children and Education Services.
18. It was agreed that the Committee would be presented with an update of the market supplement when the pay award for 2026 has been approved by National Joint Council employers and trade unions. The 2026 Chief Officer pay award was approved on 2nd June 2026, awarding 3.3%. The following table is the impact on the officer's salary based on awarding the agreed market supplement (market supplement amount remains the same) and the new pay award. The Committee are requested to note as part of the agreed update over the four-year period of the agreement.

It was confirmed by the outgoing Chief Operating Officer in March 2026, that there were no performance matters which would warrant not awarding the supplement.

Corporate Director of Children's Services	Substantive Salary	Supplement Value	Total Package
Current Salary	126,641	17,285	143,926
Pay award from 1 st April 2026 3.3.%	130,821	17,285	148,106

Consultation

19. The contents of the report and Annex 1 have not been consulted on as the data is factual and already available through different sources.

Council Plan

20. The content of the report and annex are not material to the Council Plan but are valuable information to contribute to relevant workforce data evidence and the profile of the workforce has been included in the Council Plan 2023-2027.

Implications

21. There are no implications associated with this report.

Risk Assessment

22. There are no risks associated with this report.

Recommendations

23. Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee is asked to:
- i. Note the workforce profile provided in **Annex 1** and this covering report including addition of retention payment details as per **paragraphs 15 and 16**.
 - ii. Note the ongoing impact of the agreed market supplement for the Corporate Director of Children's and Education following the pay award confirmation for Chief Officers on 2nd June 2026 (**paragraphs 17 and 18**).

Reason: In order to provide an overview of the workforce profile.

Contact Details

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Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

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Chief Officer - HR and Support Services

Report Approved

Date

16 June 2026

Specialist Implications Officer(s):

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Previous Workforce Profile Reports:

Full Year 2024/2025 (2nd June 2025)

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/g15157/Public%20reports%20pack%20Monday%2002-Jun-2025%2017.30%20Staffing%20Matters%20and%20Urgency%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

Workforce Profile Report 2025/2026 to Quarter 1 (1st September 2025)

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/g15158/Public%20reports%20pack%20Monday%2001-Sep-2025%2017.30%20Staffing%20Matters%20and%20Urgency%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

Workforce Profile Report 2025/2026 to Quarter 3 (8th January 2026)

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/g15160/Public%20reports%20pack%20Monday%2026-Jan-2026%2017.30%20Staffing%20Matters%20and%20Urgency%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

Annexes

Annex 1 – Workforce Profile report 2025/2026 to Quarter 4