

Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee

20 May 2024

Report of the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development

Workforce Profile as at Quarter 4 2023/2024

Summary

1. This report provides the Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee (SMUC) with the workforce profile, covering the period of 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 (Quarter 4).

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 Q4 position in 2023 and 2024 are as follows;

	Q4 2023	Q4 2024	Trend
Headcount	2547	2605	Increase
FTE	2148	2212	Increase
Average Days Sickness	11.9 days	11.3 days	Decrease
New Starters	443	376	Decrease
Leavers	394	325	Decrease
Resignations	63%	73%	Increase
Retirements	17%	25%	Increase

5. Resignations are higher at the yearend position in 2024 compared to 2023, similarly retirements are also higher. New starters and leavers are lower in 2024 than 2023. The number of new starters are higher than leavers in 2024; these figures includes where agency staff have become employees in some services (place, children's and adults). It is notable that there are now only two agency social workers in children' services compared to over 25 in previous years (note that table 1.14 shows 6 - this is for the full year), other children and education assignments (table 1.15) include residential care cover where agency staff are key to providing cover arrangements at short notice.
6. Overall Work with York (WWY) assignments have continued to be used, and will continue to be used, albeit to a lesser extent in the future. Spend and usage of agency workers overall in the past year have been significantly reduced in comparison to previous years and agency placement numbers fall month on month.
7. There are also more starters than leavers as a result of the move to advertising more temporary contracts as direct employment opportunities rather than via agency placements, which also accounts for the reduction of longer-term agency workers engaged. Employee turnover is down overall from 16% (2023) to 13% (2024).
8. The Council will, in the next year, see further changes in the workforce profile as the need to downsize is required to meet a balanced budget and implement planned restructures. It is expected to also continue to reduce agency spend where we can.
9. **Table 1.11 and 1.12 in Annex 1** shows analysis of resignations by age and grades; trends are largely comparable between 2023 and 2024. 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.
10. 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 46 years old), and this age band makes up 46% of the Council's workforce, slightly higher than the percentage of Yorkshire and Humber (43%) and England from the Census data (41%).

11. 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.
12. Sickness absence figures are steadily declining. 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 absence continues to be part of the absence figures, this may in some cases distort absence figures in some directorates.
13. We continue to benchmark absence with neighbouring and regional councils and City of York Council are experiencing the same trends as other Councils.
14. The recent employee survey results had a focus on wellbeing. The survey had a 43% return rate, an improvement from previous rate of 37%. It is pleasing to report increase trends in results for the health and wellbeing questions, there remains further promotion of wellbeing support and ensuring that staff can ask for assistance and speak with their manager with regard to wellbeing – for example in terms of workload, the survey results are as follows;

Health and Wellbeing	2024	2023
I feel comfortable with the support in place to help me manage my health and wellbeing in the workplace	68%	60%
My work gives me a feeling/sense of personal achievement	70%	65%
I have a manageable workload	55%	53%
I feel our workplace enables me to lead a healthy lifestyle	52%	n/a

15. The employee survey also reported on equalities questions including;

Equalities	2024	2023
I feel I can be myself in the workplace	82%	76%
I think City of York Council respects individual differences e.g., cultures, working styles, backgrounds, ideas etc	75%	71%
I am treated fairly at work	78%	76%

16. 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) and disability.

17. 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.

18. In practical terms we are also working to ensure that our recruitment opportunities are sent to a wide range of community groups to attract and ensure that these are promoted to as many areas as possible of our community.

19. On reporting the council's gender pay gap in March this year, which is mandatory, the council also reported its first ethnicity pay gap. It is proposed that a similar calculation will also be undertaken for disability in the coming year with the same caveat as ethnicity that the calculation is only based on the data that we hold but hopefully promotion and awareness can encourage future completion and a greater representative calculation.

20. The Council has recently received a report from a commissioned Equality / Inclusion Consultant responding to the Council's position against the Equalities for Local Government (EFLG) Assessment. Several recommendations have been created alongside an action plan which are currently being assessed and built into the workforce plan and relevant service plans to aid further development of a diverse workforce.

Consultation

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

Council Plan

22. 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 and risks

23. There are no implications or risks associated with this report.

Risk Management

24. N/A.

Recommendations

25. Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee is asked to:

- i. Note the workforce profile provided in ***Annex 1***.

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

Contact Details

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**Report
Approved**

✓ **Date 8 May 2024**

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;

Quarter 1 2023/2024 (2nd October 2023)

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s170083/Workforce%20Profile%20Report%20SMUC%20October%202023.pdf>

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s170084/Annexe%20A%20-%20CYC%20Workforce%20Profile%20Report%202023-24%20Q1%20v1.pdf>

Quarter 2 2023/2024 (22nd January 2024)

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s172648/Workforce%20Profile%20Report.pdf>

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s172649/Annex%20A%20-%20CYC%20Workforce%20Profile%20Report%20Q2%202023-24.pdf>

Annexes

Annex 1 – Workforce Data 2023/2024 Quarter 4