

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10:00am, Thursday 22 August 2024

Our Strategic Workforce Plan 2024 – 27

Executive/routine
Wards

Executive

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Policy and Sustainability Committee approves the Strategic Workforce Plan, for the next 3-year period, from 2024 -27.

Deborah Smart

Executive Director of Corporate Services

Contact: Nareen Turnbull, Service Director, Human Resources

E-mail: nareen.turnbull@edinburgh.gov.uk

Report

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report makes a recommendation to approve our new Strategic Workforce Plan 2024 -27.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Strategic Workforce Plan enables the delivery of the City of Edinburgh Council's Business Plan (Our Future Council, Our Future City) which sets out an ambitious agenda. The Strategic Workforce Plan is aligned to the People Strategy and is underpinned by a refreshed Action Plan, detailing the workforce and people resources the organisation needs now, and in the future, and how the Council will bridge the gap.

4. Main report

- 4.1 Edinburgh has a 2050 City Vision, informed by our citizens saying that they want Edinburgh to be a fair, welcoming, thriving and pioneering city. The Council's focus is on tackling poverty, delivering a net zero carbon city, and promoting the wellbeing of residents which remains more important than ever
- 4.2 The Strategic Workforce Plan covers all Council services and sets out what we will do over the next three years to ensure we can deliver the priorities and actions set out. The actions committed to within the Strategic Workforce Plan are both strategic and tactical in nature. It should be noted that the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership have a standalone Workforce Plan which is a statutory requirement of Scottish Government and are not reflected in this Plan – this will be considered and reviewed by the Edinburgh IJB.
- 4.3 The Plan will ensure the Council addresses gaps to maximise and strengthen opportunities in our current workforce, to deliver the Business Plan. The approval and publication of the Plan is further intended to address findings and associated recommendations of Audit Scotland as part of its recent Best Value Workforce Planning audit. The Plan is underpinned with a clear action plan, outlining the required activities over the next 3 years.
- 4.4 The Plan further builds on and is complemented by the current People Strategy 2024 – 27.

- 4.5 The Plan considers feedback sought from colleagues and recognised trade unions. It considers horizon scanning that was undertaken to also gain external insight into the labour market, changing needs and expectations of our workforce, and demographic data for our residents and workforce.
- 4.6 The Strategic Workforce Plan is aligned to the strategic themes within the People Strategy, against which we will track progress and measure our delivery and success.

Theme	Key Actions Leading To:
Attracting the best people	Creation of refreshed 3 Year Workforce Plan Development of Recruitment, Talent and Attraction Plan Enhanced recruitment technology and platform Enhanced induction process Inclusive recruitment Development of our employer brand
Develop exceptional leaders	Embedding of Behaviours (Respect, Integrity and Flexibility) People centred culture Inspired, confident and empowering leaders Review of people manager roles and competencies
Foster a culture of equalities, diversity and inclusion	Refreshed Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter Mark Standards Enhance current and new Policy Development Strengthen and support Colleague Networks. Removing barriers
Grow and retain our talent	Career pathways, 'grow our own', employability strategy, development and progression across teams. Development of succession framework Skills development and enhancement and performance review framework review Enhance learning and development Developed skills in transformation, resilience and change Review of reward model and agency usage, in-sourcing.
Nurture a healthy workplace where our people can thrive	Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan Leadership wellbeing and role-modelling Employee voice pathway - internal Communication and Engagement Plan) Effective Trade Union partnerships Celebrating Successes

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Policy and Sustainability Committee approve the development of the refreshed People Strategy for 2024-2027

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 All programmes of work proposed within the Strategic Workforce Plan and associated Action Plan will be managed within budgets, both within the Human Resources Division and across Directorates. Consideration will be given to resources required for activity with appropriate business cases developed for consideration aligned to workforce spend.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 The Strategic Workforce Plan incorporates a specific theme in relation to Equality and Diversity and a key outcome will be the refresh of the Councils Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Plan and Gender Pay Gap commitments. In addition, a key aspect of year 1 activity will be the commencement of a review of the reward framework and application of the Fair Work principles for the whole workforce.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 The Strategy aligns with the Councils Business Plan and 3 key priorities including delivering a net zero carbon City. Focus will be given to how this is embedded in the redesign of services to ensure sustainable practices as part of Directorate workforce planning, as well as refreshed engagement practices in the Internal Communication and Engagement Plan.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 There are key risks in relation to recruitment of staff within the risk register and this Strategy sets out activity to mitigate that, and more widely seeks to improve retention, turnover and overall workforce engagement, capacity and capability. It will ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and seek to implement good practice in all that we do. It has considered the wider community impact in relation to employability strategies and engagement with our workforce of the future.
- 9.2 An Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the People Strategy of which the Strategic Workforce Plan is derived.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 Our People Strategy 2024 – 27
10.2 Our Business Plan 2024 - 27

11. Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix A – Strategic Workforce Plan 2024 - 27

Our Strategic Workforce Plan

2024-2027

Creating a great place to work together
for the people of Edinburgh



Our Strategic Workforce Plan 2024 – 27

Contents

Executive summary	4
1. Background	7
1.1 Introduction	7
1.2 Edinburgh Demographics	8
1.3 Stakeholder Engagement	9
1.4 Plan Development	10
1.5 Financial position	10
2. Our Workforce	11
2.1 Total Workforce	11
2.3 Turnover	16
2.4 Contract type	18
2.5 Workforce age profile	18
2.6 Gender	20
Our Workforce - Summary	21
3. Attract the Best People	22
3.1 Aligning our resources to meet demand	22
3.2 National workforce planning considerations	22
3.3 Recruitment	24
3.4 Redeployment	26
3.5 Contingent and agency workforce (flexible workforce)	26
3.6 Reward and recognition	27
3.7 Investing in new starts	28
Attract the Best People - Summary	29
4 Develop Exceptional Leaders	30
Develop Exceptional Leaders - Summary	30
5 Foster a Culture of Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion	31
5.1 Colleague engagement	31
5.2 Becoming a more inclusive employer	31
Foster A Culture of Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion - Summary	32
6 Grow and Retain our Talent	33

6.1 <i>Learning and Development</i>	33
6.2 <i>Learning and Development Plans</i>	34
6.3 <i>Digital Skills</i>	35
6.4 <i>Advances in Technology</i>	35
6.5 <i>Future workforce and Generation Alpha (Gen A)*</i>	35
6.6 <i>Digital ways of working</i>	36
6.7 <i>Future skills</i>	37
6.8 <i>Critical skills</i>	38
6.9 <i>Talent Pipelines</i>	38
6.10 <i>Apprenticeships</i>	39
6.11 <i>Grow Your Own</i>	39
6.12 <i>Career Ready</i>	40
6.13 <i>Succession planning</i>	40
<i>Grow and Retain our Talent - Summary</i>	41
7. Nurture a workplace where our people can thrive	42
7.1 <i>Colleague Availability</i>	42
7.2 <i>Sickness Absence</i>	42
7.3 <i>Flexible working</i>	46
7.4 <i>Fair Work</i>	46
7.5 <i>Employer Covenants</i>	47
7.6 <i>Trauma informed</i>	48
7.7 <i>Celebrating Success</i>	48
7.8 <i>Employee Voice</i>	48

Executive summary

Background

Our Strategic Workforce Plan 2024-27 will allow us to achieve the Council's Business Plan (*Our Future Work, Our Future Council 2023 -27*) aspirations, and underpins Our People Strategy 2024-27. The plan highlights and addresses the workforce themes that must be considered to meet our strategic business priorities.

Our workforce is a highly important asset for success. It's essential for us to employ the right number of colleagues with the right skills and put them in suitable roles to ensure the best quality delivery of our services to the citizens of Edinburgh.

Our Strategic Workforce Plan was developed using the Integrated Workforce Planning methodology, recommended as best practice by Audit Scotland. The plan considers feedback from colleagues across the Council, as well as our colleague networks and recognised trade unions.

The Council has predicted a financial shortfall, that is anticipated until 2029. This means that the Council will have to find new ways to become more efficient, reduce costs, or raise more money. It is anticipated that the workforce plan will be aligned to the annual budget cycle, as from 2025.

Directorate operational Workforce Plans will be compiled at a service level, against a consistent framework, which will be supported by a series of toolkits, templates and training and support for managers.

Our Workforce

The Council full time equivalence (FTE) is 16,165. Children, Education and Justice Services employ 51% of our workforce, Place 27%, Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership 13%, and Corporate Services 9%.

Our turnover, in comparison to a sample of other Scottish local authorities is low, at 7.7%. As a comparator, Glasgow City Council turnover rate is 7.5%.

The number of working days lost due to sickness absence was 208,246 for financial year end 31 March 2024. This equates to 10.2 days per employee. Patterns have emerged in sickness absence, with 'stress' being the top long term absence reason, followed by 'musculo skeletal'.

Leaver data shows the top two reasons for leaving are resignation, followed by retirement. Exit conversations are voluntary, however information gathered tells us that pay, and benefits is an area of focus.

The Council utilises use of a 'flexible workforce' such as casual and supply workers to fill gaps, however, analysis identified that existing colleagues could be offered additional contractual hours to reduce our agency and overtime expenditure. In addition, when Service Areas produce their workforce plans, consideration could be given to increasing permanent positions, to rely less on fixed term contracts, and provide stability for colleagues.

Analysis of historical workforce data identified a significant reduction in workforce (FTE) following a large-scale transformation and voluntary exit exercise in 2016, with 880 posts removed from the organisation. Key impacts of this were loss of knowledge, skills, and capacity, particularly across local government employee leadership and management grades. Services need to consider skills required to deliver future services and maximise technological advances to support this. This will ensure colleagues feel valued and delivery is as efficient and effective as possible.

Further analysis of our workforce data tells us that Directorates must focus on the types of roles that are needed to meet the needs of citizens; to achieve our strategic priorities.

The Council should adapt to changing ways of working and utilise technology to help colleagues manage volumes of work. This will further mean that Directorates will need to review the skills they require, and the service delivery models that are needed to make best use of our finances and resources.

Nationally, across Scotland, (*and England and Wales*), skills shortages exist in many of the same roles such as social work and building standards. For these 'hard to fill' roles, creative and innovative solutions will need to be identified, to make jobs attractive, and to ensure both internal and external talent pipelines are in place for ongoing 3-year periods. Solutions could include grade benchmarking and changes to the way we recruit people, to make the Council a more attractive employer.

The use of scenario planning should be considered to explore possible futures, and the impact on our workforce. The Council have signed up to multiple employer covenants to improve inclusion. It is also recognised that we want to recognise contribution, support wellbeing and give our colleagues a voice.

In line with Our People Strategy themes.

To **Attract the best people**, we will:

- Develop a Recruitment and Attraction Plan, with a focus on our recruitment practices, in specific Service Areas.
- Review our reward and recognition framework to ensure we can compete in a tight labour market, with low levels of unemployment in Edinburgh.
- Review of our employee value proposition and ensure we have a clear and aspirational identity.
- Implement a new recruitment platform within Oracle Fusion and improve reporting and data to help inform decision making, workforce planning and service transformation.
- Hold manager sessions and develop guidance and templates to help our managers and leaders plan for our future workforce.
- Review our induction and settling in process for all new starts.

To **Develop exceptional leaders**, we will:

- Continue to embed Our Behaviours and reflect on whether this captures all ambitions.
- Embed Our Behaviours in recruitment frameworks.
- Undertake further analysis and actions aligned to the 2024 Culture Check-In Survey.
- Launch an internal customer satisfaction survey in Autumn 2025.

- Consider 360 feedback outputs to our Inspiring Managers Programme.
- Review our leadership and management opportunities.

To **Foster a culture of equalities, diversity and inclusion** we will:

- Continue to implement our equalities, diversity and inclusion action plan for 2023/24.
- Develop and implement our new Equalities Strategy and Action Plan for 2025 onwards.
- Attain or maintain Equally Safe at Work, Stonewall UK Workplace Equality Index, Disability Confident Leader and associated actions.
- Join Race Equality Matters and prepare for Trailblazers benchmarking early in 2025.
- Develop and maintain a Sexual Harassment Policy.
- Develop inclusive recruitment practices.
- Develop frameworks to embed equalities and inclusion within career pathways and succession planning.
- Continue to roll out pilot projects to explore opportunities to introduce more part time and flexible working opportunities at management and leadership levels.
- Continue engaging with under-represented groups to understand barriers.
- Use workforce trend data to inform our Strategy and actions.
- Consider approaches and interventions in employee relations and support for those experiencing poverty.

To **Grow and retain our talent** we will:

- Develop a succession planning framework.
- Review and set our career pathways.
- Enhance our learning and development offer.
- Consider skills and knowledge gaps identified through workforce planning.
- Review our Grow Your Own Employability Models, maximising recruitment models and funding streams, targeting areas of unemployment across the city.
- Support services to consider digital and service enhancements, undertaking skills audits to understand learning requirements.

In conclusion, as part of workforce planning, we will embed operational workforce plans, underpinned with improved workforce data reporting from Oracle Fusion (*our new HR system*) to ensure Service Areas are able to achieve the actions within Our Strategic Workforce Plan. Progress will be monitored against the action plan.

1. Background

1.1 Introduction

Our Strategic Workforce Plan 2024-27 will allow us to achieve the Council's Business Plan (*Our Future Council, our Future City 2023-27*) aspirations and underpins Our People Strategy 2024-27. The Plan highlights and addresses the workforce themes that must be considered to meet our strategic business priorities.

The City of Edinburgh Council is the second largest council in Scotland, and the ninth largest local authority in the UK, with an annual budget of around £1 billion in revenue expenditure. Each year the Council must set a balanced budget that allows us to provide services to the people of Edinburgh, with the money we have available. The Council has already saved more than £400 million over the last decade in response to reduced funding. It is critical that we utilise our resources in the most effective and efficient way and that our workforce have the skills to do this now and in the future.

Our Business Plan outlines several factors that we must continue to plan for, with the ability to adapt quickly to change. These can include recovery from the Covid pandemic, Russia's war in Ukraine, climate emergency, cost of living crisis, housing emergency, and increasing pressure to Council finances.

The 3 strategic business priorities are:

- Creating good places to live and work.
- Ending poverty in Edinburgh.
- Becoming a net zero city by 2030.

The 5 key themes of the People Strategy are to:

- Attract the best people.
- Develop exceptional leaders.
- Foster a culture of equalities, diversity, and inclusion.
- Grow and retain our talent.
- Nurture a healthy workplace where our people can thrive.

1.2 Edinburgh Demographics

The population of Edinburgh in mid-2021 was estimated to be 526,470.

In common with other Scottish cities, the mid-year population estimate for 2021 showed a slight drop for Edinburgh, from 527,620 to 526,470. The most common moves within Scotland were from the largest cities, Edinburgh especially, to their neighbouring council areas.

For the first time, the national records project Scotland's population to fall in the next decade, starting around 2029, and if past trends continue, by 2045 Scotland will have a smaller and older population. 15.4% of the current population of Edinburgh are over 65.

Workforce Residence

Most of our workforce reside within the City of Edinburgh. Some of our colleagues also live within other local authority areas, such as Aberdeenshire, Lanarkshire, Lothians, Borders, Fife, Perthshire, Glasgow, and Highlands.

The average property price in Edinburgh in September 2023 was £343,520 which is higher than most other major UK cities outside London. The average property price in Edinburgh has increased by 3.4% over the year to September 2022. The growth has slowed or even decreased in most UK cities.

This can be a barrier when attracting people to live and work in the city, particularly those in lower grades who may have to travel across the city to a physical workplace to undertake their role.

Life expectancy and relative poverty in Edinburgh (comparison to other cities)

Female healthy life and life expectancy in Scottish Cities 2019-2021 (years)		
	Healthy life expectancy	Life expectancy
Edinburgh	66.3	82.4
Aberdeen	61.4	81.0
Dundee	59.5	79.1
Glasgow	56.0	78.0

Male healthy life and life expectancy in Scottish Cities 2019-2021 (years)		
	Healthy life expectancy	Life expectancy
Edinburgh	62.9	78.0
Aberdeen	60.2	76.9
Dundee	55.9	73.5
Glasgow	54.8	73.0

Economic status of Edinburgh residents

The proportion of people in Edinburgh who are economically inactive but want a job is lower than the average of major UK cities. Over four fifths (81.2%) of the Edinburgh population between 16 and 64 years are in employment, which is the highest percentage of the eight main cities in the UK (excluding London).

The main reasons for being economically inactive in Edinburgh: student (45.5%), long-term sick (22.8%), caring responsibilities (15%), retired (12%) and other (6%).

Unemployment rate

Edinburgh's unemployment rate, at 2.6%, is now under half what it was in 2014 (6.3%). By 2020 it had dropped to a low of 2.8%, followed by an increase in 2021 to 4.4% after which it fell back to 2.9% in 2022 and 2.6% in 2023. The median hourly pay has risen to £17.70 which is the highest of the major UK cities excluding London.

People in employment, by industry (2022)

As can be seen from the data below, The City of Edinburgh Council represents one the largest employers in the city.

People in employment, by industry			
Sector	Number employed	Edinburgh %	Scotland %
Health	53,000	14.7	15.0
Financial and insurance	41,000	11.4	3.2
Education	36,000	10.0	8.4
Professional, scientific, and technical	35,000	9.7	7.4
Accommodation and food services	34,000	9.4	8.2
Business administration and support services	26,000	7.2	7.8
Retail	25,000	6.9	8.7
Public administration and defence	24,000	6.7	6.2
Arts, entertainment, recreation	19,000	5.3	4.6

1.3 Stakeholder Engagement

Our Workforce Plan has been developed with contributions from across directorates and service areas within Place, Children, Education and Justice Services and Corporate Services. Single Points of Contact (SPOC's) were identified in each directorate to ensure continuity and to maintain momentum. Engagement has also taken place with our Colleague Networks and Trade Unions.

The workforce plan considers workforce information and requirements across the Council. The Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership (EHSCP) is not included within this Workforce Plan as the EHSCP have their own Workforce Plan, mandated by Scottish Government, although this is aligned to Our People Strategy and Our Workforce Plan.

1.4 Plan Development

Our Workforce Plan was further developed using the Integrated Workforce Planning methodology, with the following principles applied in support:

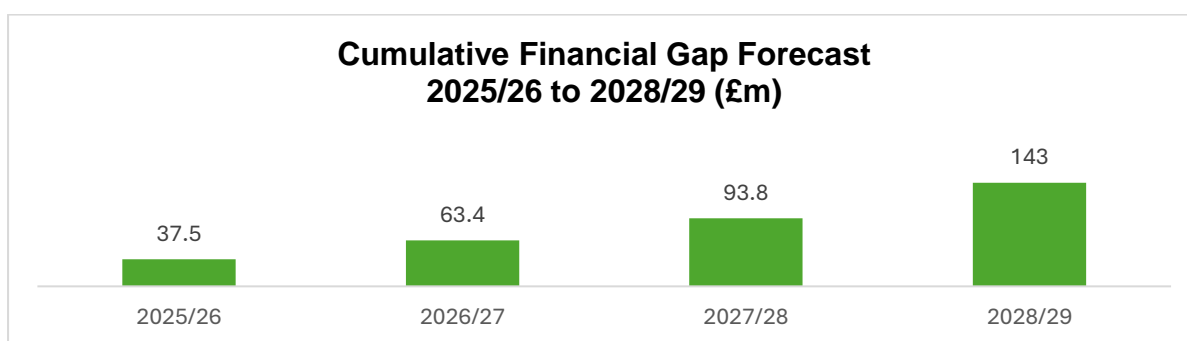
- Our Workforce Plan will be aligned to our projected budget from 2025.
- The plan has been developed at a strategic level, with supporting insights setting out both operational and corporate challenges.
- The plan is iterative in nature and will reflect the internal and external drivers of change.
- The strategic themes identified can be meaningfully translated into an action plan against which progress can be measured and evidenced as part of Our People Strategy monitoring and reporting framework.

In developing Our Workforce Plan, we analysed both our external and internal operating environment, to enable an effective response to the opportunities and challenges we currently face, and those which we may be likely to face over the next 3-5 years.

To enable the Council to continue to meet its statutory obligations, we must demonstrate agility and resilience. To do so, we must deliver a workforce which can meet the demands we face as a local authority, with projected limited finances. The Council is committed to supporting our colleagues to serve the citizens of Edinburgh, by championing their wellbeing and investing in their development.

1.5 Financial position

Each year the Council must set a budget that allows us to provide services to the citizens of Edinburgh, within the funding we have available to spend. Detailed below is the predicted shortfall that the Council is anticipating to 2029.



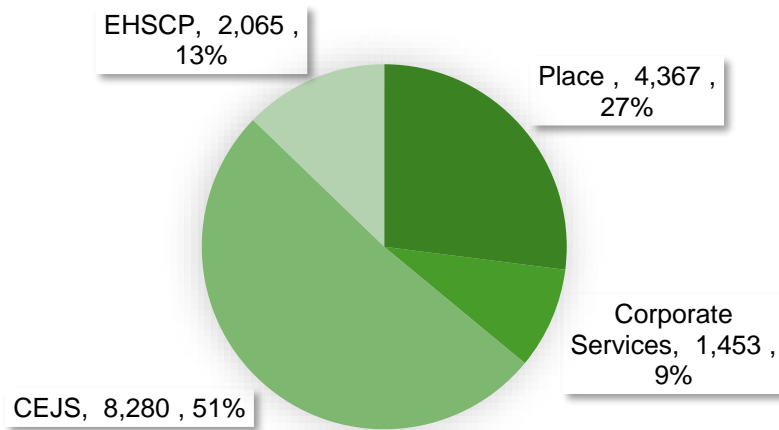
To address this shortfall, the Council must find new ways to become more efficient, reduce costs, or raise more money. This includes the transformation of services and associated resources to deliver these.

The Council's Medium Term Financial-Plan will aim to address these budgetary challenges, including the approach to identifying savings and efficiencies in both the near and longer term.

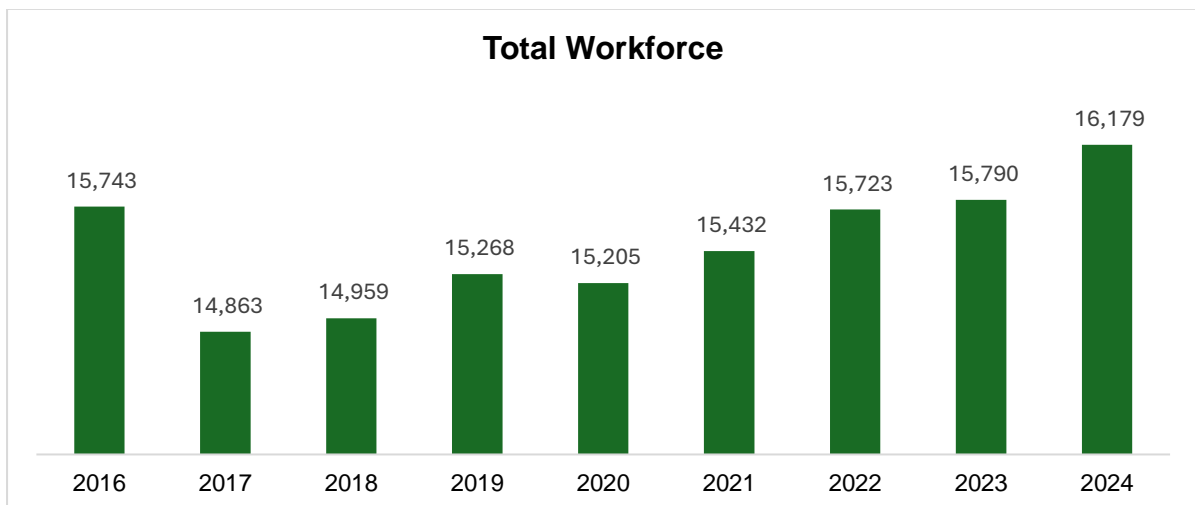
2. Our Workforce

2.1 Total Workforce

At 31 March 2024, the City of Edinburgh Council employed **16,165** (FTE – full time equivalence). The total headcount (the number of individual colleagues employed) was **20,416**.



There was a significant reduction in workforce (FTE) following a large-scale transformation exercise in 2016, with 880 posts removed from the organisation. Key impacts of this were loss of knowledge, skills, and capacity, particularly across administration and business support as well as leadership and management grades.



The table below shows the movement of workforce by directorate and grade in 2017 compared to 2024. It should be noted that assumptions have been made in relation to aspects of the Directorates as there has been structural movement over time, with services transitioning from one area to another.

Comparison of workforce 2017 and 2024 (FTE)

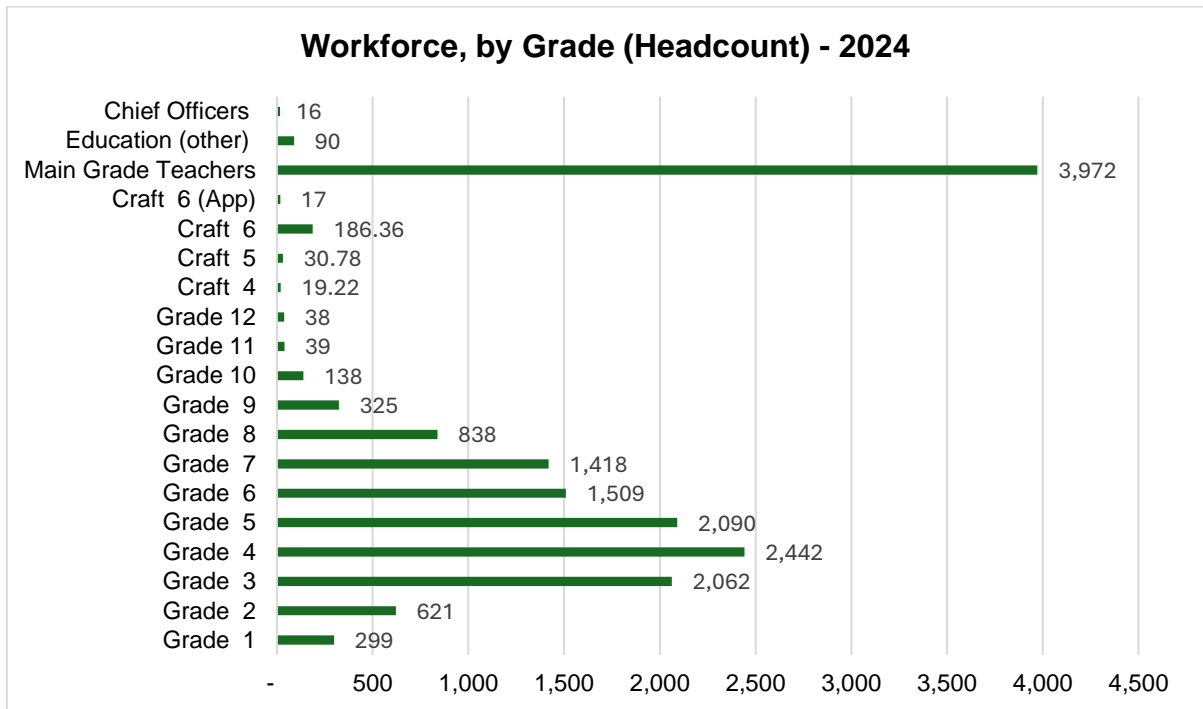
Children, Education and Justice Services	2017	2024	Variance
Grade 1	9	8	-1
Grade 2	45	65	20
Grade 3	1006	1281	275
Grade 4	426	341	-85
Grade 5	693	1078	385
Grade 6	477	546	68
Grade 7	558	548	-11
Grade 8	186	201	14
Grade 9	90	92	2
Grade 10	25	17	-8
Grade 11	0	1	1
Grade 12	13	8	-5
Teachers	3493	3972	479
Education (Other)	99	119	20
Total	7120	8277	1157

Place	2017	2024	Variance
Grade 1	543	212	-331
Grade 2	117	546	429
Grade 3	732	433	-299
Grade 4	363	819	456
Grade 5	490	630	140
Grade 6	341	577	237
Grade 7	323	409	86
Grade 8	204	297	93
Grade 9	76	126	50
Grade 10	24	42	18
Grade 11	16	14	-2
Grade 12	8	15	7
Craft 4	20	19	-1
Craft 5	38	31	-7
Craft 6	188	186	-2
Craft 6 (Apprentice)	13	17	4
Total	3496	4373	877

Corporate Services	2017	2024	Variance
Grade 2	26	10	-15
Grade 3	53	12	-41
Grade 4	549	471	-79
Grade 5	297	265	-32
Grade 6	191	228	36
Grade 7	153	115	-38
Grade 8	194	186	-8
Grade 9	95	71	-24
Grade 10	64	58	-5
Grade 11	21	21	0
Grade 12	15	12	-3
Total	1658	1449	-209

Summary	2017	2024	Variance
HSCP	2566	2064	-502
Chief Officers	22	15	-7

Summary	2017	2024	Variance
Grade 1	645	298	-347
Grade 2	206	621	415
Grade 3	2281	2062	-219
Grade 4	2508	2442	-66
Grade 5	1584	2090	506
Grade 6	1202	1509	307
Grade 7	1372	1418	46
Grade 8	687	838	151
Grade 9	302	325	23
Grade 10	123	138	15
Grade 11	40	39	-1
Grade 12	38	38	0
Craft 4	20	19	-1
Craft 5	38	31	-7
Craft 6	188	186	-2
Craft 6 (Apprentice)	13	17	4
Teachers	3493	3972	479
Education (Other)	99	119	20
HSCP	2567	2065	-502
Chief Officers	22	15	-7
Total	14863	16179	1316



It is recognised that any future transformation must consider a whole system approach, with key consideration such as coordinated strategic workforce planning, organisation design and strategic change capabilities, all working together.

2.2 Length of service

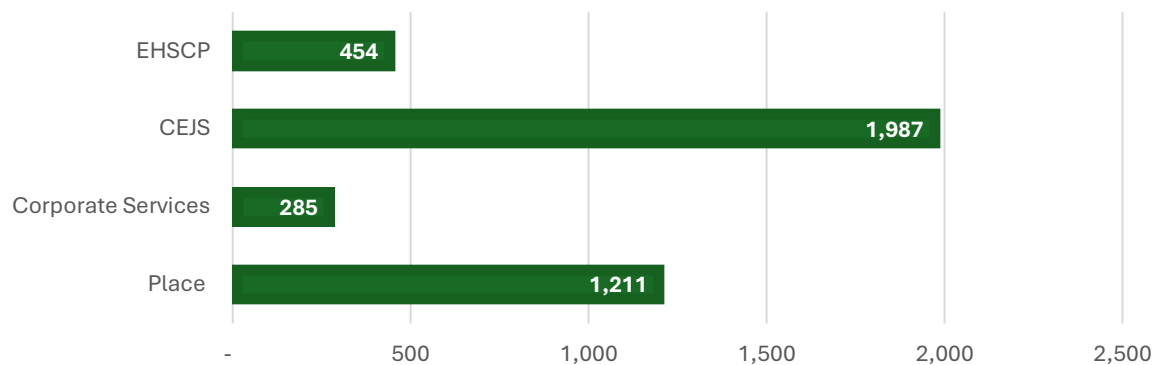
Within the Local Government Employee group, there are 3,504 colleagues with less than two years' service. There are 1,255 Teachers with between 5-9 years' service and 43 of our craft employees have less than 2 years' service. The highest number of our Chief Officers also have less than 2 years' service.

Length of service by job group (Headcount in years)	Local Government Employee	Teachers	Craft	Chief Officers
Less than 2	3,504	962	43	7
2-4	2,617	1,048	10	2
5-9	2,939	1,255	47	4
10-14	1,632	691	30	0
15-19	1,704	744	28	1
20-24	1,296	265	40	1
25-29	604	111	15	0
30-34	433	35	29	0
35-39	257	19	13	0
40 and over	73	5	2	0

The City of Edinburgh Council recognises the important of nurturing new colleagues once they are brought into the employment of the Council. We want to not only attract high calibre candidates but retain.

The following chart reflects the number of colleagues in each directorate, with less than 12 months service.

HEADCOUNT - LESS THAN 12 MONTHS SERVICE: DIRECTORATE



Children, Education and Justice Services (CEJS)

The highest numbers of new starts are consistently in Children, Education and Justice Services (CEJS). A key area that requires focus is the process of recruitment of supply teachers. These roles are recruited annually, along with high numbers of fixed term and part time roles in Education. Consideration needs to be given to more sustainable contracts and different recruitment practices as this is impacting on turnover rates but may be resulting in re-appointment of colleagues.

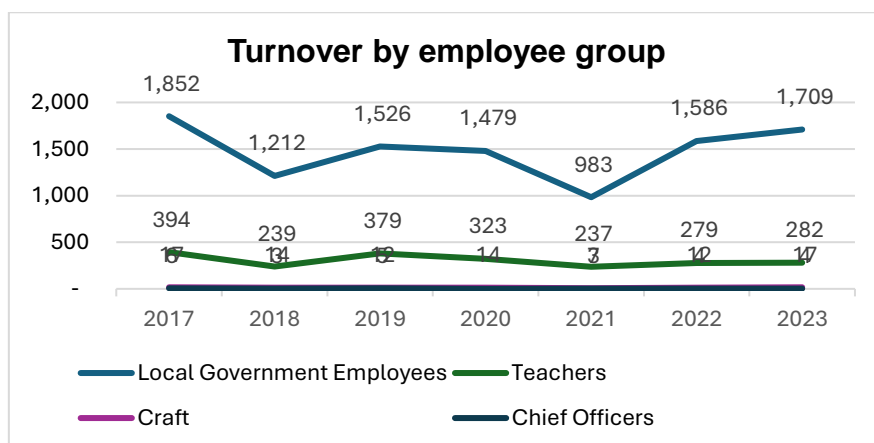
Place

Place and particularly facilities management continues to see higher levels of turnover, however, agency and overtime use in parts of this directorate is high due to absence, skills shortages, attraction, and retention issues facing many sectors. Consideration needs to be given to the longer-term recruitment model and ensure effective use of partnership working with agencies to revert temporary colleagues to permanent workforce.

Corporate Services

The directorate has expanded with the creation of the new Investigation Team following recommendations from the Tanner Review and Inquiry. Organisation reviews in Human Resources has allowed capacity within Organisational Development to be put in place to develop and embed 'Our Behaviours', with the aim of improving professional standards across the Council. Change specialists within our Change Delivery Team have been recruited to support senior leaders with transformation and delivery of the Change Programme. Finance have more recently created new senior posts to lead financial transformation, drive digital enablement, and foster a culture of prevention led strategies.

2.3 Turnover



Colleague turnover City of Edinburgh	2022/23	2023/24
	8.1%	7.7%

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development report that the average turnover rate for UK workers is 34%. The specific rates from public administration and defence are 25%, and education 28.2%. In comparison to the average UK turnover rate, the Council turnover rate is much lower.

Audit Scotland, as part of Best Value audit work were able to provide a sample of Scottish Local Authority turnover figures for 2023/24.

Based on the figures in the table below, in comparison, the City of Edinburgh Council turnover figure is lower than many other Councils. However, it is not comparable with mainly rural geographical areas such as Scottish Borders. A comparison with Glasgow City Council would be a fair comparison, as both Edinburgh and Glasgow are urban areas, as well as being the two largest Scottish cities.

Local Authority (Scotland)	Turnover
Glasgow City Council	7.5%
City of Edinburgh	7.7%
Dumfries and Galloway	8.6%
East Ayrshire	8.5%
West Lothian	9.5%
Perth and Kinross	10%
Eilean Siar	10.1%
Midlothian	10.4%
South Ayrshire	11%
Falkirk	11.1%
North Ayrshire	11.9%
Scottish Borders	15%

Turnover for the City of Edinburgh is also attributed to the ways in which we manage employment contracts in some areas, with the use of fixed term and supply arrangements. This is an area which requires focus to ensure that these are being used effectively.

Further consideration needs to be given to the skills and knowledge being lost from the Council through turnover and how this can be nurtured through succession planning and review of career pathways.

Exit conversations

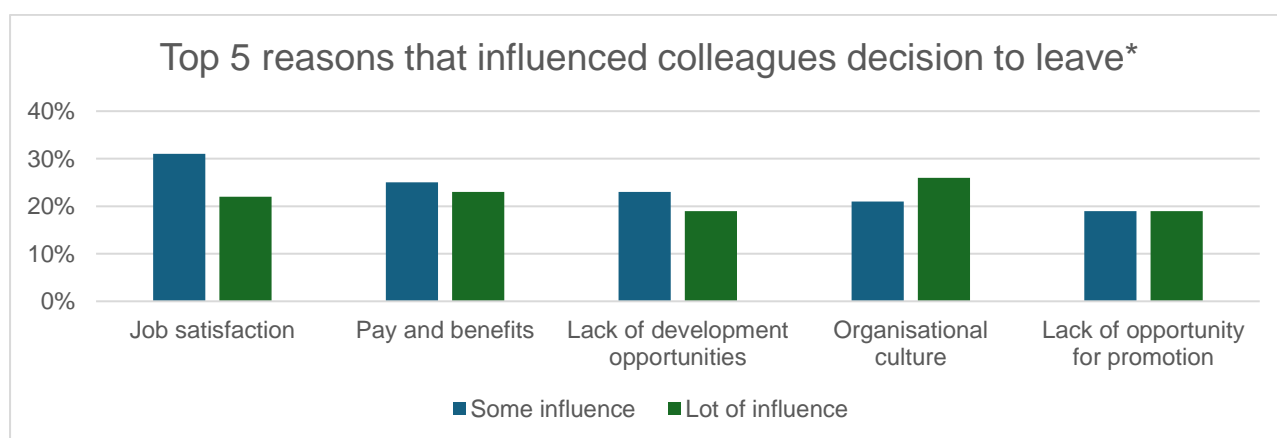
The City of Edinburgh Council has an Exit Conversation solution to gather insight into why colleagues chose to leave the employment of the Council. The process was also rolled out to analyse any trends, to enable interventions to be put in place to improve employee experience and to monitor the wellbeing of our workforce. Leavers are offered a face-to-face conversation with a dedicated HR Consultant, independent of the colleague’s reporting Team/Unit.

Reasons for leaving within the reporting period	Total (Headcount)	As a percentage of total leavers
Resignation	1189	75%
Retirement	255	16%
End of fixed term contract	71	5%
Dismissal	44	3%
Death in service	14	1%
Other	11	0%
Voluntary redundancy	9	0%
Total	1593	100%

The highest reason given for leaving is ‘resignation’ (75%), followed by ‘retirement’ (16%). This was summarised further through exit survey questionnaires.

The following chart shows respondents to an exit survey. 31% said that job satisfaction had ‘some influence’ on their decision to leave the Council. Followed by ‘pay and benefits (25%), ‘lack of development opportunities’ (23%), ‘organisation culture’ (21% and ‘lack of opportunities for promotion’ (19%).

26% of respondents said that ‘organisational culture’ had a ‘lot of influence’ in their decision. Followed by ‘pay and benefits’ (23%), ‘job satisfaction’ (22%), ‘lack of development opportunities’ (19%) and ‘lack of opportunities for promotion’ (19%).

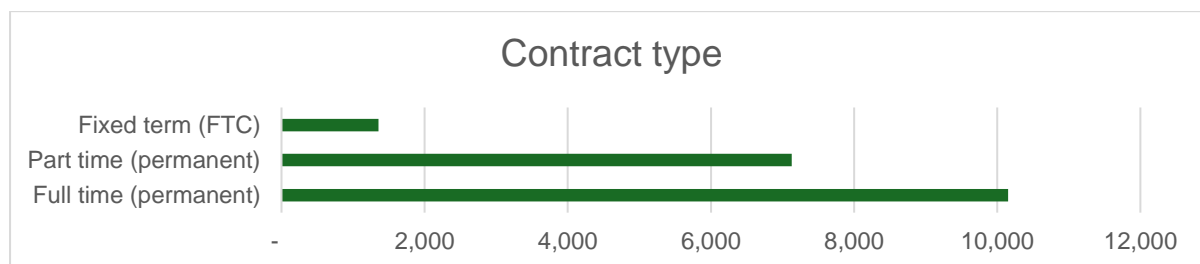


*Data is for a 12-month period between October 2022 to October 2023.

Pay and benefits is a focus for a number of areas including professional type roles, such as legal, finance etc, but there is also concern about pay parity across Scottish local authorities as a result of individually applied pay and grading points, such as social workers. Work underway will shortly commence as part of our People Strategy to review the overall reward and recognition package offered by the City of Edinburgh Council and benchmarking of this across functions.

2.4 Contract type

The below chart shows that the Council employs 1,354 colleagues on a fixed term contract, 7,128 colleagues on a part-time permanent contract and 10,153 colleagues on a full-time permanent contract.



Over 898 of fixed term contracts are within Education. Consideration needs to be given to whether there are options for sustainable contract solutions to reduce turnover and recruitment processing, as well as stability for the workforce and better experiences for stakeholders. Consideration should also be given to a creating and resourcing a supply bank to focus on high supply workforce and recruitment required to support this model.

We have 7,853 part-time contracts, primarily across Education, and Waste and Cleansing. Consideration should be given to whether there is an option to increase hours which will reduce ongoing recruitment campaigns, for example, there are 1,530 Pupil Support Assistants with an average FTE of 0.67 and ensure more stability and increased income for colleagues who are interested in this This is against a backdrop of high volumes of overtime and agency usage. Consideration should be given to the contracts in place across a number of service areas.

2.5 Workforce age profile

Headcount, by age	16 - 21	22-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 & over
LGE Grade 1	10	84	148	150	139	30
LGE Grade 2	72	270	292	294	360	151
LGE Grade 3	72	694	837	740	755	139
LGE Grade 4	50	512	567	728	885	176
LGE Grade 5	36	598	684	611	556	86
LGE Grade 6	6	357	415	489	394	52
LGE Grade 7	1	300	416	439	337	37
LGE Grade 8	1	88	286	273	232	26
LGE Grade 9	0	19	85	109	110	9
LGE Grade 10	0	5	35	56	41	3

Headcount, by age	16 - 21	22-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 & over
LGE Grade 11	0	0	3	21	13	1
LGE Grade 12	0	0	5	21	12	0
Craft 4	0	2	4	3	9	2
Craft 5	0	7	5	4	10	5
Craft 6	0	53	42	41	46	7
Craft 6 (Apprentice)	16	1	0	0	0	0
Main Grade Teachers	0	1740	1513	1164	619	99
Education (other)	0	22	39	41	48	15
Chief Officers	0	1	1	7	5	1

The above table reflects Local Government Employee (LGE) and Teacher grades having a large amount of post holders between the ages of 55-64 (3,771 posts). Across areas of the Council, the workforce mix reflects an ageing demographic, however, further detailed analysis is required at service area level.

Within LGE Grades 1-9 there are high numbers of colleagues who are over the age of 65 (706 posts). Whilst we welcome retention, we must identify posts at service level and whether the roles are technical or specialist, to put in place succession plans to allow the transfer of knowledge and expertise. The aim of this will be to reduce skills gaps and minimise disruption to service delivery.

Against the backdrop of an ageing workforce and population, the Council must nurture and upskill its existing workforce to ensure retention of colleagues with valuable knowledge, skills, and experience. We must accept there is likely to be future gaps within our workforce. Harnessing technology to help us will be critical to job-redesign, both now, and into the future.

This is comparative with overall Edinburgh demographic data where there is an older profile of citizens and this needs to be considered as part of the longer-term workforce planning challenges facing the Council; more so for roles which could be deemed more physically demanding.

Across Craft 4 and 5, 19 post holders are aged between 55-64, with 7 post holders over the normal retirement age. Evidence reflects there are skills shortages within trades such as plumbing and electrical. Future gaps are anticipated, with a requirement to continue to develop and nurture talent pipelines such as apprenticeships.

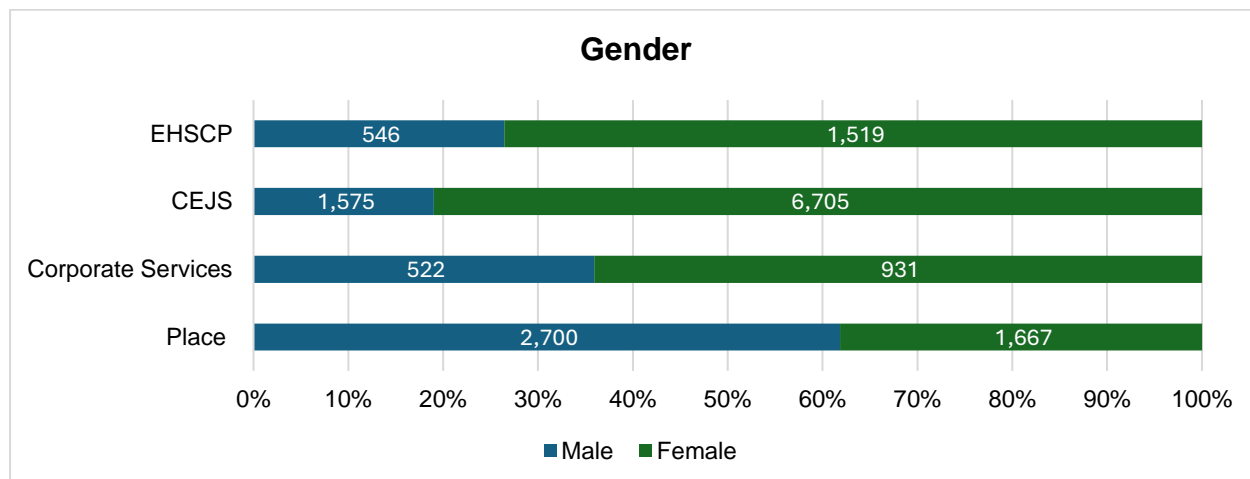
Main Grade Teachers show a mixed age demographic which is spread across the age ranges of 21 and above. The highest number of teachers are aged between 22 and 34. There are 99 Teachers that are over 65.

Further detailed analysis is required to identify the job roles and locations to assist with service area succession planning.

2.6 Gender

The following chart reflects the total FTE for our female (10,829) and male workforce (5,350).

Children, Education and Justice Services (CEJS) comprises (81%), followed by Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership (EHSCP) (74%), Corporate Services (64%) have higher male colleagues, than Place (38%) which has roles traditionally filled by men, such as road workers and waste and cleansing operatives.



Gender Pay Gap

As outlined in the 2023 gender pay gap report:

- The gender pay gap for the City of Edinburgh Council reduced to 2.4% (from 3.2% in 2022)
- The ethnicity pay gap, excluding white minority populations, increased to 16.2% (from 15.2%)
- The ethnicity pay gap, including white minority populations, is 11.4% (new reporting for 2023)
- The disability pay gap increased to 8.7% (from 5.0%).

We recognise that:

- In general, our workforce profile is not adequately reflected at senior levels of the organisation.
- Women, minority ethnic colleagues, and disabled colleagues, are often concentrated in part-time roles; and part-time working tends to be concentrated in lower paid roles.

There is a lack of availability of part-time working opportunities at more senior levels of the organisation. Longer-term, we want to make a commitment to implement strategic actions to improve our position in respect of:

- Representation in leadership roles and positions of influence
- Availability of part-time roles at the senior level.

Our Workforce - Summary

- We will reflect demographic data for the city in our Workforce and Recruitment Plans recognising that over 15% of Edinburgh citizens are aged over 65. Unemployment rates are decreasing and those not working are predominantly students, have long term sickness or have caring responsibilities.
- We further develop our “Grow Your Own Model”, attracting school and further education leavers into the organisation. We will also ensure that we maximise our Employability offering across all services and groups.
- We will further consider flexible opportunities to welcome those with caring responsibilities into the organisation.
- We will ensure that workforce planning is embedded in any transformation and organisational review work and Service Workforce Plans required to be developed, as well as developing manager skills in workforce planning and use of data and workforce metrics to proactively close future workforce gaps and consider skills required for roles.
- We will undertake a review of our flexible workforce to include casual, fixed term and part time contracts to ensure the most appropriate arrangements are in place and opportunities for current colleagues are available.
- We will review the annual recruitment process for Education and consider most appropriate model and contract type, including Supply Teacher arrangements – consider appropriateness of an in-house resourcing bank.

3. Attract the Best People

The City of Edinburgh Council's future depends upon attracting people with the capabilities needed to deliver and enable first-class services for our citizens. Our recruitment practices will leverage what the city has to offer, so we attract the best people in a competitive jobs market. Without skilled people we simply cannot deliver the right outcomes for the public.

Our priority is to attract people in service areas identified as having current or likely future skills gaps. We seek to attract people with potential and relevant experience from a range of sectors and all walks of life. This requires us to review not just how we bring people into the Council, but also where and how we source people and how we induct new joiners into our culture.

It is recognised as good practice for local authorities to move towards a preventative operating model. This will require workforce modernisation in terms of job redesign and the reconfiguration of ways of working, to ensure both the people and technical aspects of change are delivered effectively.

A review of skills (professional, technical and digital) needs to be undertaken to ensure that all services are being delivered in the most effective and efficient way. Total reward benchmarking is required to position the Council as a competitive employer within a tight labour market, against a backdrop of low levels of unemployment in Edinburgh.

We want to best utilise our skilled and experienced colleagues where they are most needed, and where their skills and expertise help us to deliver great services to the citizens of Edinburgh. To achieve this, we must embed a workforce planning structure and associated framework, both at a strategic and operational service level.

3.1 Aligning our resources to meet demand

It is recognised as best practice that organisations monitor and measure demand for services. Customer Services have adopted this practice, underpinned with technology, allowing the department to better service the citizens of Edinburgh. It is recognised that the model could be replicated across other Council service areas, with the aim of projecting future demand and deploying resources to meet that demand.

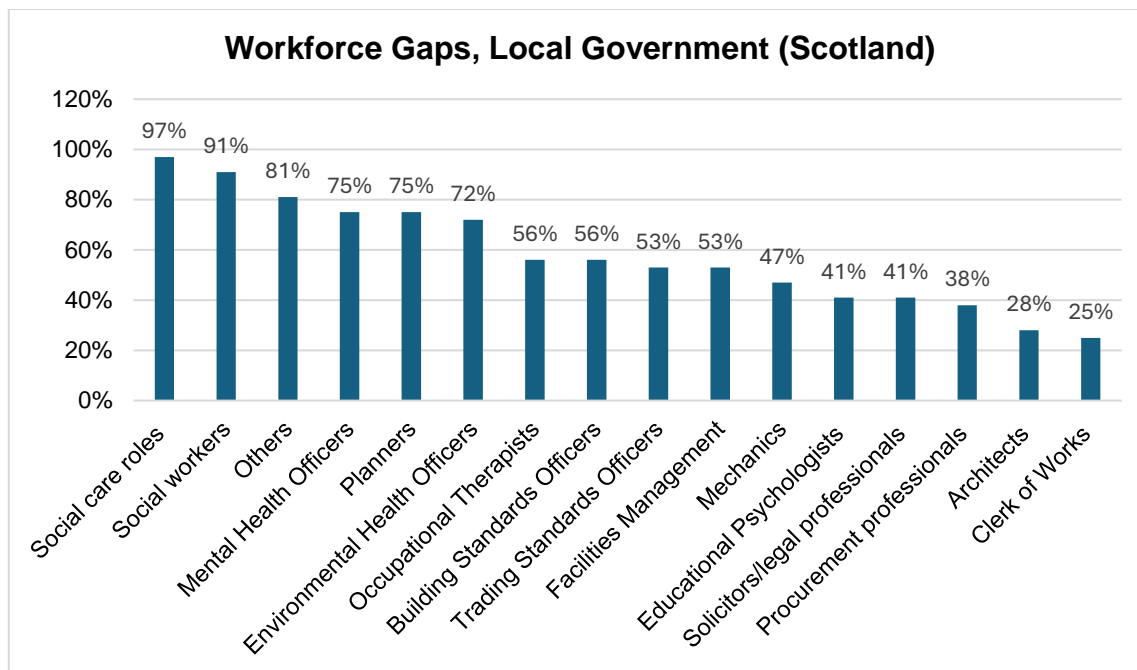
As part of operational workforce planning practice, services areas will be able to identify the best ways of measuring demand for service to inform their local operational workforce plans.

3.2 National workforce planning considerations

The Scottish Branch of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE), and The Society of Personnel and Development Scotland (SPDS) commissioned a survey between September and November 2023.

A comprehensive workforce survey was undertaken across 32 Local Authorities in Scotland to gather data on workforce challenges and opportunities. There was a focus on 8 areas, including workforce planning practice, good practice and workforce gaps. The report highlights the urgent requirement for all 32 Local Authorities to identify solutions to meet current and future workforce gaps.

The following chart demonstrates workforce gaps:



The most critical gaps are within Social care roles (97%), Social workers (91%), Mental health officers (75%), Planners, also (75%) and Environmental health officers (72%).

It is recognised that all Scottish Local Authorities are equally facing a complex range of challenges:

- Shortage of skilled and qualified professionals across a range of statutory disciplines.
- Ringfenced budgets and continued pressure to make savings directly impacting on workforce capacity.
- Recruitment challenges, namely pay not being competitive.
- Most Local Authorities have an ageing workforce in key service areas.
- Lack of available workforce and skills funding sources.
- There is an urgent need to attract a new generation of younger employees.

There are many similarities with workforce gaps, therefore attracting talent within these roles and across the UK will remain a challenge, now, and into the future. Identifying solutions will likely involve collaborative working with national workforce planning forums, to share knowledge, best practice, and innovative approaches that service areas can take forward.

National Care Service (NCS)

The creation of the NCS will be a fundamental change for the workforce and will have an impact across the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership. As such it is vital that colleagues are supported through this significant change programme.

The scope of the NCS is much wider than only adult social care delivery and includes a potential shift in accountability for other care services. A number of the core principles within the NCS consultation are already at the heart of the Integration Joint Board's (IJB) direction and decision making, including a rights-based approach to care, a focus on prevention and empowerment, valuing the workforce and supporting carers.

It is vital that the strong relationships are sustained that there is coherence across the Council and the IJB. The inter-dependencies and mutual support provided across the complex system of care must not be underestimated and must also be built upon.

Specific areas of improvement will be potential drivers for change and will also provide an early indication of the expectations of the new organisation. Clarity is required on service delivery plans for a whole systems approach to service redesign and quality improvement. This will allow service areas to address both capacity and capability to improve services to the citizens of Edinburgh.

3.3 Recruitment

From 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024, there were 2,854 recruitment adverts across the City of Edinburgh Council. There were 117 bulk recruitment campaigns (over 10 vacancies for the same position) predominantly in Children, Education and Justice Services and Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership.

The following recruitment data shows transactional recruitment activity over the past 3 full calendar years, and, as from January to 31 March 2024.

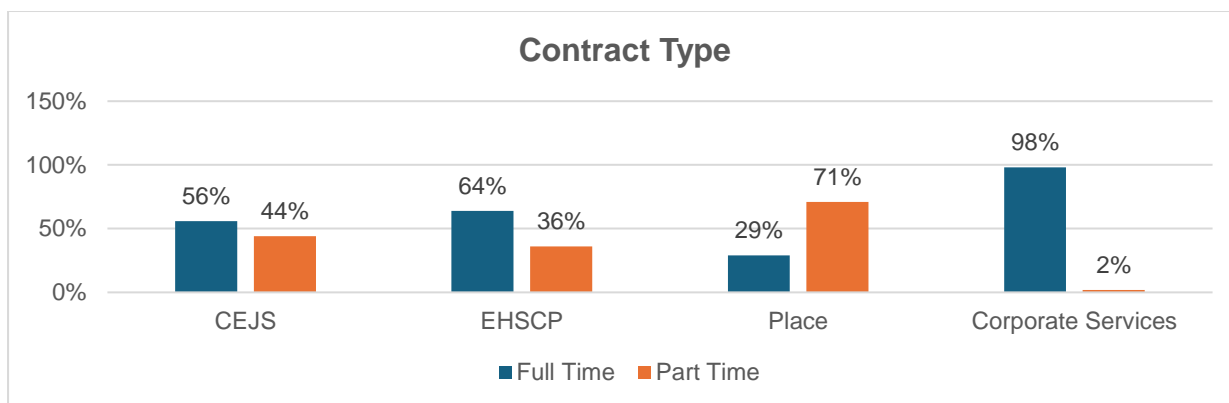
The data shows that a high number of posts were advertised, however the conversation rates (i.e. those applicants who were successfully recruited to become employees) are much lower. The reasons for this may include bulk recruitment activity across educational establishments, when 200 posts are advertised at a time. In addition, different contracts are advertised, to include fixed term, permanent, supply, casual and relief. As contracts are advertised individually, this may also increase the number of posts that are advertised.

It is important to note that recruitment activity is led locally by line managers within Service Areas, with administrative support provided by a centralised Recruitment Team in Human Resources. Recruitment do not centrally coordinate individual vacancy adverts or recruitment campaigns across the Council.

2021-2024	2021	2022	2023	2024 (to end March 2024)
Number of Posts Advertised	6761	8173	8346	2854
Number of Applicants	60567	49476	56151	13685
Number Recruited	4890	5159	4829	698

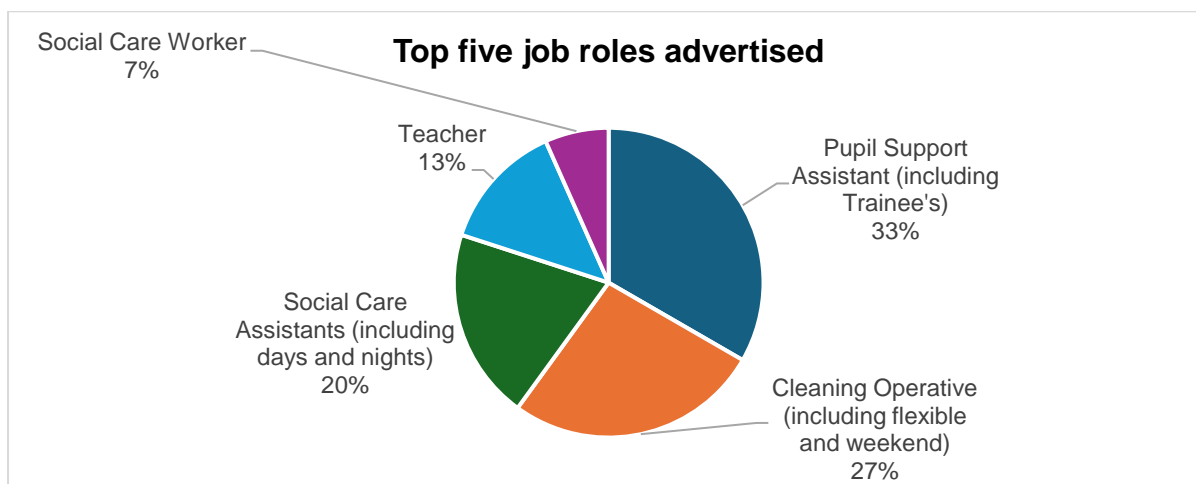
2024	Number of Posts Advertised	Number of Applicants	Number Recruited
CEJS	2150	7613	418
EHSCP	201	1104	71
Place	437	3487	181
Corporate Services	66	1481	28
Total	2854	13685	698

We are seeing high numbers of candidates for vacancies whilst conversion rates to those recruited are low. This could be as a result of casual and supply arrangements being utilised and consideration needs to be given to the effectiveness of this approach for all involved parties. 2024 data is also live, and a number of recruitment processes are still ongoing.



A high proportion of roles advertised were for part time hours*. Whilst this is positive in terms of flexibility, there are areas where there are high agency usage and overtime as a result of vacancies and absence. Consideration should be given to the hours being advertised for part time roles and whether current colleagues would prefer increased hours prior to advertising.

The following chart shows the following job roles in rank order, by volume of roles advertised:



*For context, the role of Pupil Support Assistant is a part time only role, as educational establishments do not routinely employ colleagues in the post on a full-time basis. 1 post is full time within Facilities against 1,529 that work part time.

Consideration should be given to the resourcing function within the Council, which is mainly transactional. With the implementation of the new Oracle system, consideration should be given to the creation of a targeted campaign team which would deliver focussed recruiting across volume recruitment and specific campaigns. This approach proved successful when utilised across social care and social work recruitment during 2024.

As part of our move from TalentLink (our applicant tracking system) to Oracle Fusion Recruiting (in first quarter 2025), we will have further insight and data to enable enhanced reporting and trend analysis. It will also provide further insight to internal movement, secondments to support succession planning.

As part of strategic resourcing, to assist with a reduction in the time it takes to hire, several public sector organisations put in place 'select lists' or talent banks. This approach allows candidates who have passed a competitive selection process to be held in reserve pending future vacancies (usually within a 12-month period). This approach reduces the cost of running a new recruitment campaign and can be used for volume, specialist, and technical roles. As part of a campaign team, the Council could consider this approach to improve vacancy management, as part of strategic resourcing.

3.4 Redeployment

As a result of organisational review, colleagues can sometimes become displaced if the post they are deployed into is no longer required. The Council provides support and advice to help colleagues secure a meaningful alternative role within the Council.

Redeployment is a process to help match a displaced colleague with another job role, matching their skills, knowledge, experience, and qualifications. Displaced colleagues are given priority to express an interest in applying for all permanent vacancies prior to them being advertised internally and externally.

As of June 2024, there were 11 colleagues on the redeployment list who are currently engaged in meaningful work. The Council has a non-compulsory redundancy pledge in place however consideration should be given to the overall approach as part of the managing change process to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

3.5 Contingent and agency workforce (flexible workforce)

We have an ongoing requirement to provide temporary agency workers across the organisation to support services throughout the year and to provide an additional flexible resource for service areas.

In addition to substantive posts, we require a flexible element to how we deploy our workforce, and this includes the use of overtime, casual workers, and agency workers. The use of this flexible workforce enables us to maintain high quality services at peak time such as the Edinburgh Festival or to cover short term absence e.g supply teachers in schools.

At any time, we have circa 4,000 casual workers available and 85% of these workers are assigned to our Children, Education and Justice Department covering roles such as teachers and pupil support assistants.

We know that the use of a flexible workforce will continue to be required by some of our service areas and there are areas where it works well, for example The Culture Service utilises a small cohort of casual workers who support the delivery of events and activities in cultural venues. This enables the service to adapt to fluctuations in demand and enables the service to provide consistent, customer focused service delivery across all of the city's cultural venues.

Outwith this the majority of agency spend is within Waste and Cleansing, and Customer Contact and Transactions. There are agreed models in place to allow the movement from agency to permanent workers which has proven to work well and could be expanded further to support recruitment processes or reviewed to ensure that still fit for purpose.

Work is predominantly underway within EHSCP in relation to agency reduction and this will be reflected in ongoing updates from the IJB, and within their own Workforce Plan. The top 4 areas of agency spend:

Area	Agency spend percentage
EHSCP	63%
Waste and Cleansing	24%
Customer and Business Support	9%
Residential Care Officers	4%

Consideration also needs to be given to contracts of agency workers who have been employed for an extended period of time. The framework for agency workers is due for renewal in 2025 and the process to review this, and any required enhancements to the model, are underway.

3.6 Reward and recognition

The City of Edinburgh Council is a member of COSLA. The COSLA Employers' Organisation:

- manages the delivery of strategic workforce priorities for Scottish local government,
- negotiates salaries, wages and conditions of service for local government employees in Scotland,
- deals with industrial relations and employee development issues for all 32 Scottish local authorities and
- develops the national strategic framework for pay, pensions and employment contract activity.

The Council are not only competing with private industry when it comes to remuneration, but also other public sector organisations which are also based in and around the centre of the City of Edinburgh (where individual local authority grading structures may differ).

To attract and retain people, the Council should review its total reward offer to ensure it remains competitive and adequately rewards colleagues for their contribution. This is a priority of our People Strategy 2024-27; It is also important to recognise where jobs may have changed and need to be redesigned to better meet the needs of our citizens.

As a Council we must consider approaches to improve our value proposition, within the scope of national terms and conditions.

3.7 Investing in new starts

The Council holds regular welcome events for new colleagues, with an opportunity to meet our Chief Executive and Council Leader. The aim is to integrate new starts into the Council as quickly and effectively as possible. There are also Setting You up for Success induction checklists which cover key induction activities that new colleagues need to complete, including essential learning. Consideration will be given to strengthening our approach to induction of new recruits, creating a more inclusive induction process focused on Our Behaviours and containing all the relevant detailed information that new starts require at the start of their journey into the Council. It should also set out all learning and development opportunities, as well as required Essential Learning. This should be separate from specific learning and development for new people managers.

Consideration should also be given to those transitioning from education into the workplace, and those returning to the workplace for a variety of reasons (e.g. extended career break or family friendly leave).

Attract the Best People - Summary

- We will develop a **Recruitment and Attraction Plan**. This will set out how we will prioritise recruitment campaigns, utilising modern and varied forms of attraction. We will also consider creation of a talent bank to support both internal and external succession planning.
- We will consider **recruitment practices**, as well as contract offering arrangements for the top 5 advertised roles within the Council. This may lead to review of roles and skills, as well as recruiting models. Consideration will be given to customer demand and workforce resource as part of this.
- We will review our **reward and recognition framework**, benchmarking across local authorities in Scotland and considering what matters most to colleagues to scope this and engage with Trade Union colleagues.
- We will review our **employee value proposition** and the **brand** that we want to create, to position ourselves as a leading employer.
- We will implement a **new recruitment platform** within Oracle Fusion, to improve candidate and hiring manager experience.
- As part of the work to develop our **Workforce Plan**, we will hold manager sessions, and develop guidance, toolkits and templates to help our managers and leaders plan for our future workforce.
- We will review our overall **induction and settling-in process** for all new starts, to assist them in their roles, and ensure we set the correct tone in relation to Our Behaviours and our culture.
- We will review our **redeployment** principles.

4 Develop Exceptional Leaders

It is recognised that the relationship between a colleague and their line manager is critical to successful performance and effective delivery of services. By investing in our managers and leaders, to lead effectively, in line with Our Behaviours, we want to make the City of Edinburgh Council a great place to work.

To develop exceptional leaders, we are committed to the following:

- Developing impactful strategic leaders as well as strengthening line management capability.
- Ensuring people leaders have the time to fulfil their role in developing their teams and have the skills to do so.
- Recognising the way our leaders lead, living and role modelling Our Behaviours and leading effectively through change.
- Developing an inclusive approach to leadership so we can identify and grow our leaders at all levels to drive leadership excellence and capability.

Our 2024 Culture Check-In highlighted the importance and impact of our managers across the organisation. It is important that we ensure that our managers have the resources, skills and time to engage with their teams. Accountability is critical, as is consistent and constructive performance management across all teams – our leaders and managers are vital in the success of this and developing our culture.

Develop Exceptional Leaders - Summary

- We will continue to embed **Our Behaviours** with senior leaders.
- We will embed Our Behaviours within our **recruitment frameworks**.
- We will undertake further analysis of our **2024 Culture Check-In Survey** at a Corporate Directorate level and develop local actions plans with frontline teams.
- We will undertake a full internal **customer satisfaction survey** in Autumn 2025, with a robust campaign to achieve high completion rates.
- We will consider **360 feedback** outputs to inform our Inspiring Managers Programme.
- We will consolidate and review all **leadership and management opportunities**, with the aim of identifying gaps, with a focus on inclusive leadership, role modelling behaviours and wellbeing. This will be aligned to our Leadership Framework.
- We will review **people management competencies** to ensure that colleagues are equipped before they take on these roles and continue to be supported to drive an effective continuous improvement culture. We will undertake a skills audit of current people managers to inform this.

5 Foster a Culture of Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

5.1 Colleague engagement

Inclusion is central to the success of the Council's People Strategy. We firmly believe that everyone is unique and should be respected for their differences and our Strategy focuses on making this a reality.

Building a diverse workforce means we can leverage different skills and perspectives to improve decision-making and better meet the needs of the citizens we serve.

Increasing our diversity and building an inclusive workplace will also help the Council become more creative and innovative, as well as increasing our ability to keep attracting, retaining and growing talent from different backgrounds and with different characteristics.

We recognise our workforce profile is not adequately reflected at senior levels of the organisation. Women, minority ethnic colleagues, and disabled colleagues, are often concentrated in part-time roles; and part-time working tends to be concentrated in lower paid roles.

There is a lack of availability of part-time working opportunities at more senior levels of the organisation.

Longer-term, we are committed to implementing actions to improve these findings and these will be reflected in the new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy being developed during 2024.

5.2 Becoming a more inclusive employer

As a Council, we will continue to improve our ability to become data-informed and evidence-based. Ways in which we do this include:

- Working with our 6 colleague networks supporting individuals who share a common protected characteristic. Each network aims to: develop strong, productive working partnerships with managers and colleagues; help inform our approach to ensuring respect and equality in the workplace; tackle barriers to progression and create a more inclusive working environment.
- Working closely and in partnership with our recognised trade unions.
- Using real data from our HR system - there is self-service functionality to allow colleagues to self-declare their protected characteristic. Human Resources Division continues to raise awareness of protected characteristic disclosure, with the aim of reducing the number of colleagues who leave the field blank or select 'prefer not to say'.

We aim to develop our understanding further to allow accurate analysis of, and identify potential trends and constraints connected to, for example flexible working requests, promotion, retention patterns for women following maternity leave and reasons for leaving.

We will always respect the reasons for colleagues not wishing to disclose, however, we hope to provide a safe environment, where colleagues feel able to be their authentic selves.

Foster A Culture of Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion - Summary

- We will continue to implement our **equalities, diversity and inclusion action plan** for **2023/24** and any recommendations highlighted through benchmarking, research and engagement.
- We will develop and implement our new **Equalities Strategy and Action Plan for 2025** onwards
- We will seek to attain or maintain **Equally Safe at Work, Stonewall UK Workplace Equality Index, Disability Confident Leader** and associated actions.
- We will join **Race Equality Matters** and prepare for Trailblazers benchmarking early in 2025. We will consider Carer Positive and Autistica.
- We will develop and maintain a standalone **Sexual Harassment Policy**.
- We will further develop **inclusive recruitment practices** and ensure these are reflected in hiring manager training and toolkits.
- We will **develop frameworks** to embed equalities and inclusion within career progression pathways and succession planning.
- We will continue to roll out **pilot projects** to explore opportunities to introduce more part-time and flexible working opportunities at management and leadership levels.
- We will continue **engaging** with under-represented groups, people with lived experience and sectoral experts to understand barriers to improve our recruitment and attraction strategy.
- We will use **workforce trend data** to inform our Strategy and actions, and also allow focused concentration and action on potential areas of discrimination.
- We will consider approaches and interventions in employee relations and support for those experiencing poverty.

6 Grow and Retain our Talent

It is recognised that we need to put in place frameworks to grow our own talent and to retain talented colleagues across all Council Directorates. With this in mind, we will focus on a number of areas to help us achieve that, as highlighted below.

6.1 Learning and Development

A key driver of delivering great services and transformation is the strength of an organisation's approach to learning. As part of our ambition as a learning organisation, we will continue to enhance the culture for effective learning and growth through formal in-person learning, blended with digital resources, experience on the job and through cross team relationships.

Learning at work is everyone's responsibility. Individuals and people leaders have a key role to play. The Council's Learning and Development Team are a key enabler of learning, as well as local learning teams within Place, Children, Education and Justice, Customer, and Finance services who assist with role-specific and technical learning.

Learning provision within the Council is blended: in-person (in a classroom or virtually on MS Teams), digital through the Council's learning platform myLearning Hub, or on-the-job through mentoring, coaching and shadowing.

Role Specific Learning

Essential role-specific learning in specialist areas including First Aid, Manual Handling, Challenging Behaviour (CALM), Essential Learning for Care, Customer Service, Management of Medicines, Dealing with Stress and Distress, Personal Safety and Lone Working is provided.

Essential qualifications for specific roles are also supported by the Council's Learning and Development team e.g., Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs). This enables colleagues to meet their conditions for full registration with the professional body.

Colleagues who wish to undertake the Mental Health Officer role within the Council are supported to complete the Mental Health Officer Award with a higher education establishment. This is done in tandem with an annual process which enables the Council to maintain a pool of Mental Health Officers.

Annually we support groups of social workers to undertake further study in Adult and Child Protection. This is also provided by a higher education establishment. Registered colleagues in care roles can also apply to study for an HNC in Health and Social Care. Recruitment to the programme takes place annually.

The Council's Learning and Development team also provide accredited learning in First Aid and Food Hygiene.

Specific service areas support colleagues to access accredited learning which is specialised for roles. This includes Finance, Trading Standards and Education (e.g. Standard for Headship).

Leadership Learning

To support our people leaders further develop their confidence in leading self, teams and service, a programme of learning is available to all leaders. This includes Policy into Practice sessions, Building Relationships with Respect, Integrity and Flexibility, People Leader sessions and Conversation Spotlights. Leaders can also access a coach from the internal Coaching Bank.

Core Essential Learning

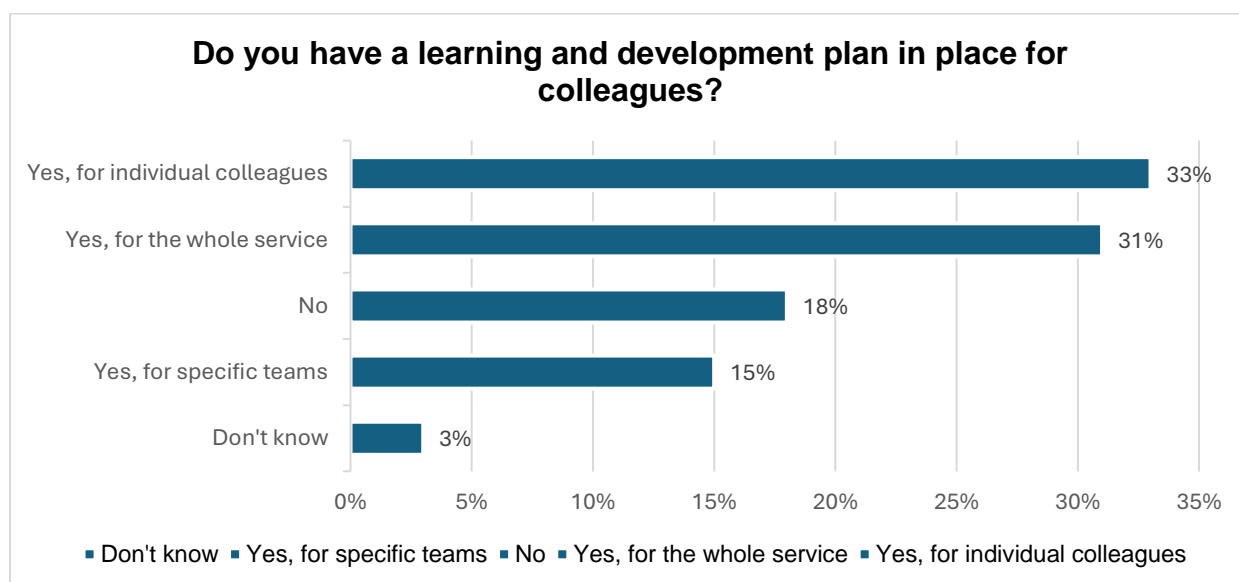
The Council's Learning and Development team lead the Essential Learning Governance Board. The role of the Governance Board is to review and make recommendations about the core essential learning, all colleagues and people leaders are asked to complete. This includes learning which supports key policy information, the Council's Business Plan priorities and Health and Safety.

Learning Experience Platform

The Council's online platform - myLearning Hub is the main portal for colleagues to book learning events and to complete digital learning. The team design, curate and manage digital learning resources which are available to colleagues on myLearning Hub. Digital learning resources cover areas including leadership, key policies, role and service-specific activities, wellbeing, health and safety, public protection, equality, diversity and inclusion.

6.2 Learning and Development Plans

In May 2024, Services were asked in a survey, "***Do you have a learning and development plan in place for colleagues?***" Responses were 'Don't know' 3%, 'Yes, for specific teams' 15%, 'No' 18%, 'Yes, for the whole service' 31% and 33% responded 'Yes, for the whole service'.



A consistent approach to colleague development is an identified need within learning and development planning.

6.3 Digital Skills

Our Digital and Smart City Strategy 2024–27 outlines how Digital Technology and Smart City Innovations can be used to transform the Council whilst supporting Our Business Plan strategic priorities.

We aspire that all our Leaders will be Digital Leaders and aim to create a digital culture, building change around current and emerging digital opportunities.

The skills required for digital leadership:

- Digital learning
- Communication
- Strategic thinking
- Adaptability
- Innovation.

The City of Edinburgh Council supports and promotes the appropriate and effective use of digital technology. An example of this is within Education; to give all City of Edinburgh learners the opportunity to improve their educational outcomes and to develop digital skills that will be vital for life, learning and work in an increasingly digital world.

6.4 Advances in Technology

The Internet of things (IoT) describes devices with sensors, processing ability, software and other technologies that connect and exchange data with other devices and systems over the Internet or other communications networks.

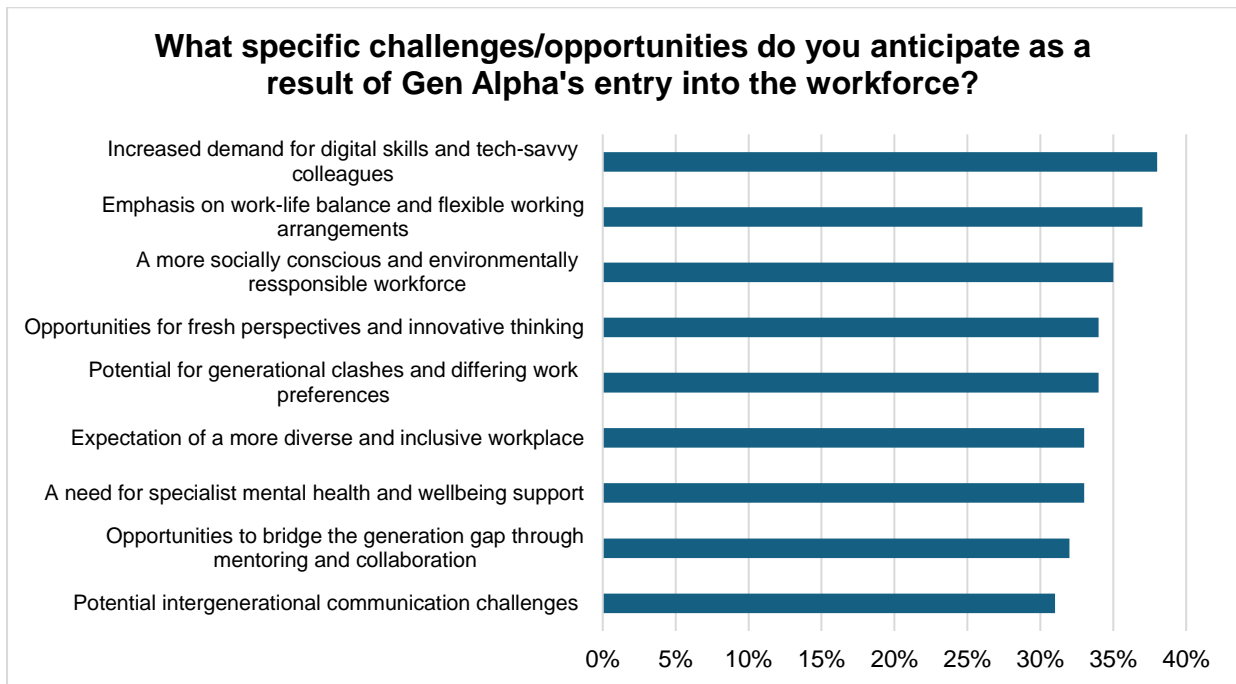
Artificial intelligence (AI) is the intelligence of machines or software, as opposed to the intelligence of humans.

The Council has already introduced some sensor and AI technologies and new AI systems such as ChatGPT have the power to automate and improve some of our frontline service offerings. These technologies can drive efficiencies and improved data, going beyond the current scope of our Smart Cities programme and be used, for example for energy use and monitoring across council buildings to reduce waste and help to meet carbon reduction targets.

To ensure the secure and ethical use of these technologies and to ensure that the Council can leverage business change through their use, Customer and Digital Services will prepare a standard for their use within the Council.

6.5 Future workforce and Generation Alpha (Gen A)*

Unmind, a leading mental health platform produced an annual report highlighting workplace trends for HR in 2030. They concluded a survey of HR leaders within large organisations across the US, UK and AU.



It is vital that when considering our future workforce that the Council changes and adapts through a planned and organised way. By not preparing for this there is a risk that we will not be able to attract and retain our future workforce. The chart below highlights these individuals' expectations which the Council must consider.

**Generation Alpha, or Gen A is the generation born between 2010 – 2024.*

6.6 Digital ways of working

The Council introduced MS Teams during the pandemic. However, this platform could be better utilised to its full potential as a communication tool. Research shows that Gen Z (those born between 1997 and 2012) prefer quick messaging, like that provided in Slack, or MS Teams. Only 14.4% of Gen Z use email for work.

In contrast, the Baby Boomer generation (those born between 1946 and 1964) are more likely to want to pick up the phone and have a conversation about work, rather than respond to long, detailed emails. This of course, is subjective and every colleague is an individual. However, it does bring to the fore, an opportunity to start the conversation on how we can better communicate with each other at work.

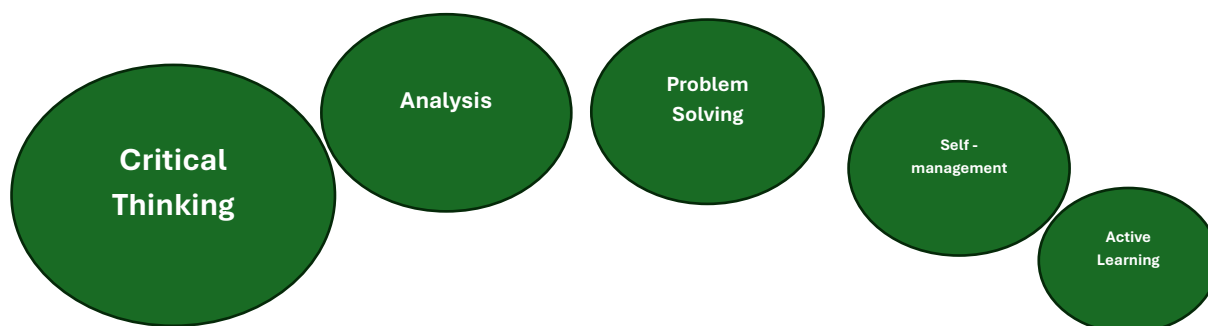
There is an opportunity to seek colleague feedback to improve intergenerational communications in the workplace. This would improve wellbeing, as well as productivity by considering governance and etiquette for using MS Teams and taking a radical approach to internal communications and engagement. However, this is an area where the Council should engage colleagues across the generations to identify the best ways of creating a working environment where people can work together and thrive.

It is also noted that 5000 colleagues across the Council do not have access to digital platforms. For instance, some of our frontline colleagues in waste, and facilities management who are based in depots and educational establishments.

6.7 Future skills

The fourth industrial revolution is now upon us – new technologies and their combined use, AI, robotics, biotechnology, and nanotechnology. We know that the emergence of these will continue to change the world of work in the coming years, with much of this detail yet unknown.

The World Economic Forum predict that the top skills that will rise into prominence by 2025 will be:



35% of the skills required for jobs today will change by 2030.

Industries predicted to grow:

- Care workers
- Artificial Intelligence
- Smart Product Design
- Entertainment.

At the City of Edinburgh Council, we are aware that we must review our workforce profile to address the skills, capability and experience we have, to address the current gaps and to predict where our future gaps will be.

It is likely that some roles in the future are likely to include:

- AI-related roles
- Business intelligence analysts
- Sustainability/climate change specialists
- Environmental management specialists
- Digital transformation specialists
- Information security analysts
- Encryption and cyber security specialists.

Research undertaken with the Global skills Taxonomy, World Economic Forum Future of Jobs 2023 identifies the importance of cognitive skills growth over the next four years, to reflect the increasing skills area of complex problem solving and:

- Recognising the importance of reflection and embracing a culture of curiosity and lifelong learning.
- Analytical skills (namely systems thinking, artificial intelligence and big data) but with an increasingly recognised importance of being coupled with creative thinking.

- Flexibility, agility, and resilience.
- Self-awareness and motivation.

We need to ensure that our workforces continue to evolve. By building in scenario planning, we can better assess what our workforce will look like against future requirements. By considering skill gaps analysis, this will better inform our future workforce model.

In addition to skills, we also know that we need to do more to keep pace with wider societal change and the expectations of multi-generational workforces. We aim to address skills gaps through Our Workforce Plan, Action Plan.

6.8 Critical skills

Critical skills are those in short supply both internally within the existing workforce and across the wider external labour market. In essence, where there is a known shortage of skills, this leaves a gap in the supply of talent.

Services considered technical and specialist skills gaps. Further detailed information will be available at service level, however, as a high-level overview, the following skills were initially identified:

Data and digital	Social workers and social work managers	Policy specialists	Economic, poverty and community planning
Artificial Intelligence	Skilled road workers	Clerk of works	Electricians, gas engineers and joiners
Engineers	Specialist construction	Analysts	Accountants
Environmental health	Trading standards	Care roles	Scientists
Licensing	Vehicle examiners	Professional corporate roles	Trades

6.9 Talent Pipelines

The Council promote the following talent pipelines:

- Apprenticeships (Edinburgh Guarantee).
- Modern apprenticeships.
- Graduate Apprenticeships.
- Foundation apprenticeships.
- Volunteers.
- Fixed term and supply Teachers.
- Supply list for Pupil support and early years.
- Flexible workforce (known internally as casual, tertiary, relief and seasonal).
- Contingent worker (self-employed or contractor).

- Temporary agency staff.

There are further opportunities to develop innovative approaches to ensure talent pipelines are increased, particularly for people city wide who may be on low incomes, unemployed or within minority communities. Opportunities should be further scoped.

6.10 Apprenticeships

As part of the Edinburgh Guarantee, the Council aims to lead by example by offering Apprenticeships which combine paid employment, on-the-job training, and an accredited qualification at industry-recognised standards.

The Council Apprenticeship Programme aims to create more job opportunities and upskill existing staff by creating career pipelines in our key sectors and strengthening and integrating services. There are more than 139 Apprenticeship frameworks in existence.

Apprentices can be any age and Skills Development Scotland provide funding towards the cost of training. A higher contribution towards training costs is paid in growth sectors, and to young people aged 16-24. All staffing costs and some training costs for an apprentice need to be met by departments.

As of June 2024, there were 63 Modern Apprentices employed by the Council. In addition to this there are a further 6 Graduate Apprentices who are completing degree level qualifications.

The Council planned to recruit 51 new modern apprentices in 2024-25 and a further 6 graduate apprentices. Consideration should be given to further sustainable employability models moving forwards.

6.11 Grow Your Own

Foundation Apprenticeships (FA) are a work-based learning opportunity for senior-phase secondary school pupils. Lasting one or two years, pupils begin their Foundation Apprenticeship in S5 or S6. Young people spend time out of school at college or with an employer and complete the Foundation Apprenticeship alongside their other subjects like National 5s and Highers.

Completion leads to a qualification at the same level of learning as a Higher and can lead to progression on to a job, such as a Modern or Graduate Apprenticeship. Foundation Apprenticeships are recognised as entry qualifications by all Scottish colleges and universities.

The Council have delivered Children and Young People FA for a number of years, and it is our ideal model we would aim to emulate for all frameworks. Once completed, apprentices are offered a guaranteed interview, access to support for making an application to the Modern Apprenticeship scheme, then potentially employment within the Council.

Consideration should be given to extending this approach across the organisation as a way to provide a clear career pathway for young people as well as a continual pipeline of talent into service areas.

Work placements provide 'generic' work experience opportunities for all school pupils, unrelated to a structured programme. The Council administer a flexible approach to length of placement, whether short or long term, the Council will promote the opportunity to schools and young people, to encourage uptake.

6.12 Career Ready

Young people who face barriers in education and employment due to their socio-economic-cultural background are given the chance to establish and develop their network, for their talents to be uncovered and potential fulfilled.

Working in partnership with employers and their employee volunteers, Local Authorities and schools, together Career Ready provide targeted young talent in S5/6 with a structured, impactful, 18-month programme which empowers, boosts social capital and develops work skills.

With a mentor from the World of Work, a four-week paid internship with their mentor's organisation, and a series of skills masterclasses combined with workplace visits, young people leave school more confident, knowledgeable and choiceful about their future career destiny and with a plan in place to achieve it. A lifelong network is established, which continues to be developed as a Career Ready alumnus.

For over 10 years the World of Work have developed partnerships with employers of all sizes and sectors, delivering lasting benefits in communities including the opportunity, resources and support to develop and build talent pipelines whilst investing in colleagues. They are endorsed by the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland and The Scottish Government as an example of best practice in employability transformation for young people.

In previous years, the City of Edinburgh Council has accommodated numerous Career Ready mentors and should consider this as a future model.

6.13 Succession planning

In a number of areas, there is a requirement to both increase workforce numbers in absolute terms and to develop and retain existing colleagues. As part of succession planning which is a priority within our People Strategy, key employees and roles will be developed, with measures in place to track status and volumes of employees ready to fill critical roles. Improved career and promotion pathways will be central to this and options for skills development will remain a key feature of annual review discussions in order to maximise colleague readiness for future opportunities.

Service management teams will be supported with succession planning. Regular workforce dashboards will provide insight into employee demographics, showing the spread of age and their time within the organisation. This is designed to highlight the percentage of employees aged 55 and above, an element of whom will be considering retirement.

Reporting also allows senior managers to identify individual key roles or elevated risk roles where succession planning is required to ensure that there is someone within the organisation who can fulfil the crucial elements of the role when people move on. This will be reflected in our new Succession Framework.

Grow and Retain our Talent - Summary

- We will develop a **succession planning framework**.
- We will review and set out our **career pathways**.
- We will enhance our **learning and development offer** by agreeing core essential learning and compliance monitoring. We will promote our learning platform, myLearning Hub as the Council's 'one stop shop for learning'.
- We will consider **skills and knowledge gaps identified through workforce planning**, including professional, role specific, coaching and mentoring, and learning through continuous professional development (CPD) ensuring learning budgets are appropriately aligned to need.
- We will review our Grow Your Own Employability Models and maximise recruitment models and funding streams, targeting areas of unemployment across the City.
- We will support services to consider digital and service enhancements and undertake skills audits to understand learning requirements.

7. Nurture a workplace where our people can thrive

One of the Council's priorities is to create good places to live and work in Edinburgh. The People Strategy sets out what each of us can do to support and improve the wellbeing of everyone working for the City of Edinburgh Council and create and engender a culture of openness and transparency as well as an organisation that learns from successes and failures.

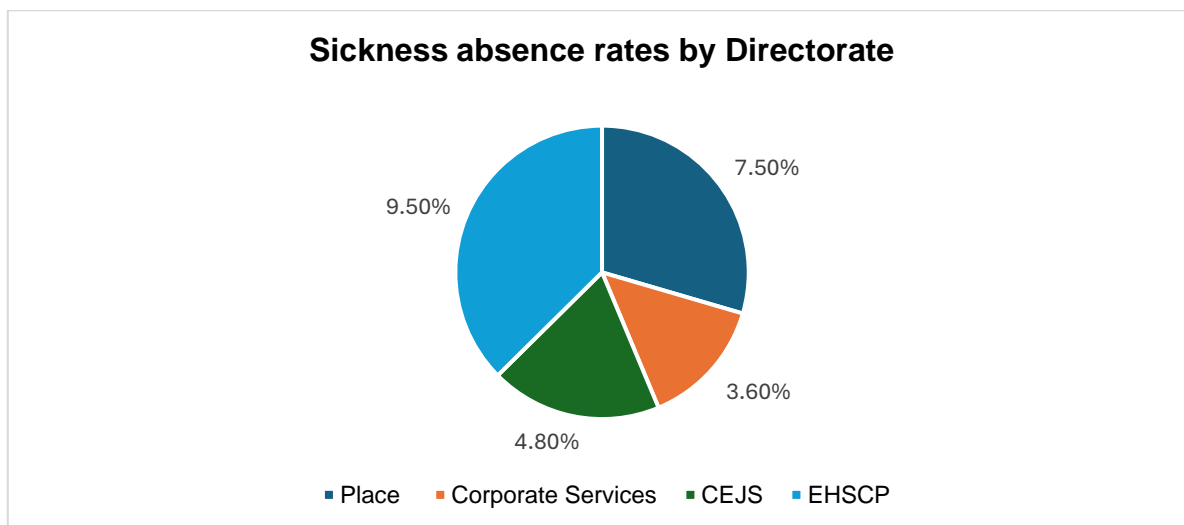
7.1 Colleague Availability

Colleague availability is the number of employees available for work after taking into consideration all annual leave, sickness absence, family leave, study, and special leave.

The importance of colleagues having the opportunity to fully utilise their annual leave allowance is recognised and encouraged. Current data is not available across the organisation to be able to measure this, however this will be available post October 2024, along with other leave indicators. Flexible work and special leaves policies have also recently been reviewed within the Council and monitoring of these will be available as part of the new HR/Payroll system.

7.2 Sickness Absence

At 31 March 2024, the following chart shows sickness absence across the Council.

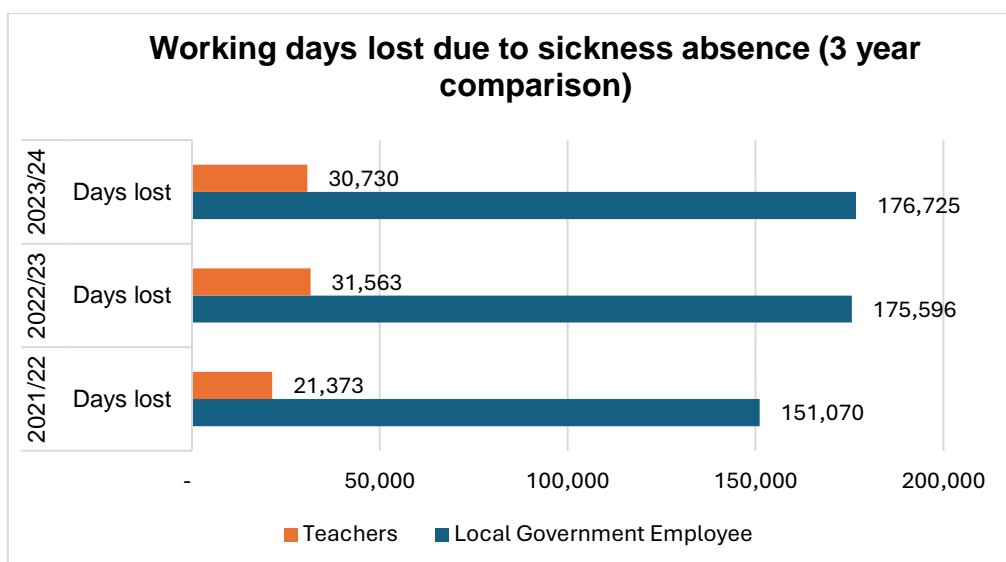


Total working days lost due to sickness absence (last 3 years)

The total working days lost is a way of measuring the loss of productivity when colleagues are absent from work. For the financial year ending 31 March 2024, **working days lost was 208,246.**

The Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD) has reported that the average rate of employee absence (2023 data) now stands at 7.8 days per employee, per year. This is at the highest level reported for 15 years, rising from 5.8 days pre-pandemic.

This equates to 10.2 days per employee, per year, for the City of Edinburgh Council.



Top five reasons for short term absence

The table below (chart 1) shows the top short-term reason for absence as ‘Infection’. However, patterns start to emerge for ‘Stress’ highlighted in red, and ‘Musculo Skeletal’ highlighted in amber. These patterns translate into the first and second top reasons for long term sickness in chart 2.

Chart 1					
	1	2	3	4	5
31 March 2020	Infection	Stress	Musculo Skeletal	Gastrointestinal	Ear Nose Throat Dental & Allergies
31 March 2021	Stress	Musculo Skeletal	Gastrointestinal	Infection	Ear Nose Throat Dental & Allergies
31 March 2022	Infection	Stress	Musculo Skeletal	Gastrointestinal	Ear Nose Throat Dental & Allergies
31 March 2023	Infection	Gastrointestinal	Covid-19	Musculo Skeletal	Stress
31 March 2024	Infection	Stress	Gastrointestinal	Musculo Skeletal	Covid-19

Top five reasons for long term absence

Chart 2 shows a breakdown of the top five reasons for long term sickness absence across the Council over the last 5 years. There is a clear pattern reflecting the top reason recorded as, ‘stress’, with the second ‘musculoskeletal’, and the third ‘cancer’.

Chart 2					
	1	2	3	4	5
31 March 2020	Stress	Musculo Skeletal	Cancer	Gastrointestinal	Neurological
31 March 2021	Stress	Musculo Skeletal	Cancer	Gastrointestinal	Heart
31 March 2022	Stress	Musculo Skeletal	Cancer	Neurological	Heart
31 March 2023	Stress	Musculo Skeletal	Gastrointestinal	Cancer	Covid 19
31 March 2024	Stress	Musculo Skeletal	Cancer	Gastrointestinal	Neurological

Stress is also the top absence factor across the UK and the breakdown for the Council includes both work and non-work related stress (we are not currently able to separate these out for reporting purposes). We are working with our Occupational Health specialists to understand contributory factors in this to help consider other interventions.

As an organisation, we are committed to reducing any stigma towards colleagues who tell us they are suffering from mental ill health. We provide support pages on our intranet (the Orb), to help our colleagues to keep themselves mentally healthy including individual and team stress risk assessments. We provide sources of information and support such as our Occupational Health provider and our Employee Assistance Programme. In addition, we signpost colleagues to external support services which they may find useful.

We have embedded a video produced by the charity, Scottish Action for Mental Health (SAMH). The 'See Me' campaign raises awareness that it's okay to ask someone "Are you okay?" and how powerful this can be, in making a difference to reduce the stigma of mental ill health in the workplace. We continue to deliver Wellbeing Roadshows, mental health awareness workshops and mental health first response sessions across the Council, to reach colleagues from different localities.

We are committed to development of a Wellbeing Plan that focuses on what matters most to colleagues and targets interventions in the right way, as well as implementing our new Reasonable Adjustments guidance and toolkits for colleagues and managers. Specific actions will be captured in our Equalities Strategy.

'*Musculoskeletal*' is the second top reason and we have over 5,000 colleagues who are frontline and may be lifting and manual handling on a day-to-day basis. In addition, we employ colleagues who are desk-based and may be sedentary for a large proportion of their working day. The Council has a number of training and toolkit interventions in place including Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessments.

Absence management is a key indicator within the People Strategy with dashboards and support for people managers being developed and enhanced to allow local actions and interventions to be implemented, as well as reported and monitored more easily.

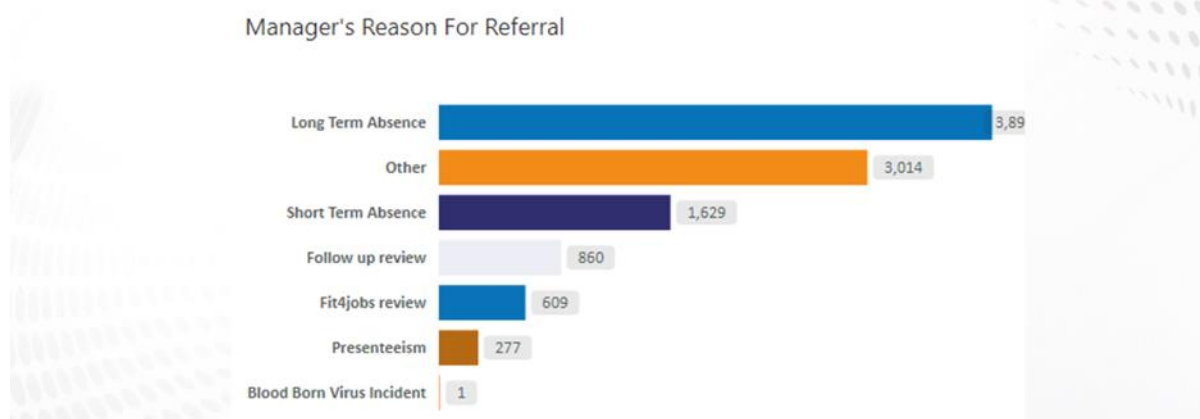
Occupational Health

The City of Edinburgh Council use an external provider for occupational health and wellbeing services. There are a number of services delivered under this contract, including: occupational health services, aimed at preventing industrial injury, monitoring colleague health and wellbeing and the provision of detailed management reports; psychological services including access to an employee assistance programme and an extensive range of counselling services to help treat mental health issues; and physiotherapy services aimed at preventing musculoskeletal pain and further advice on reasonable adjustments in the workplace.

The following chart shows the number of referrals made by line managers for colleagues to access occupational health services between April 2022 and March 2024. Long term absence is the highest reason, in line with stress being the top reason for long term sickness absence at the Council.

The second highest reason is 'other' which can include when line managers are looking for advice and information about how to support colleagues prior to an absence, or when a colleague has returned from a period of absence.

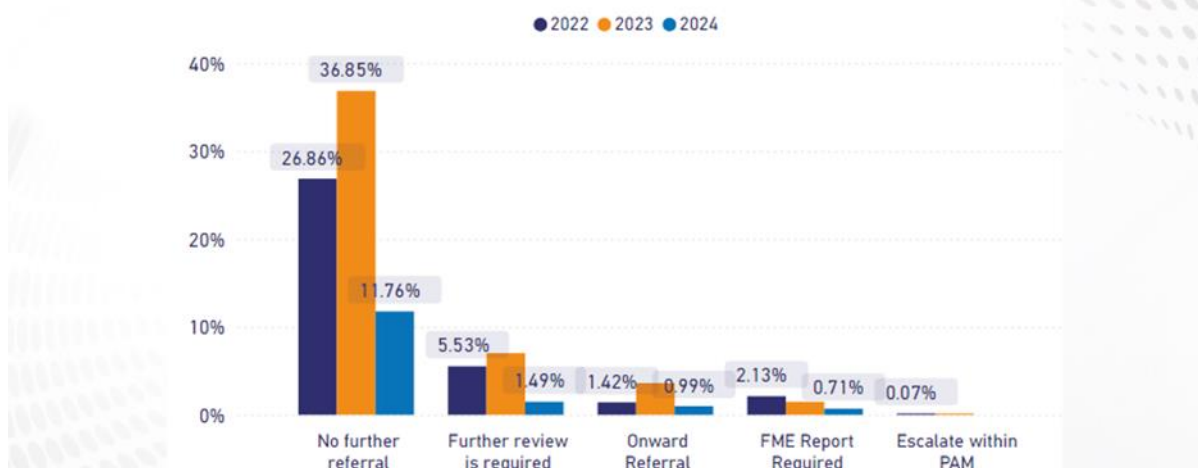
Management Referrals- 2-year period



Comparing 2022 against 2023 data, the chart below shows a decrease in the number of colleagues requiring further referrals. On face value, from looking at the data, this appears positive.

However, there are slight increases for 'further review required' and 'onward referral' demonstrating that colleagues are being offered the support they need.

Management Referrals- Next Action



7.3 Flexible working

Flexibility and control over decision-making at work improves wellbeing, inclusion and productivity. We'll continue to be a flexible employer and promote flexible ways of working aligned to service needs.

Currently, insufficient workforce data is available to report on the uptake of flexible working across the Council. The following data simply reflects the number of colleagues who are shown as part-time on our HR system. The table below reflects our female workforce as a majority who are part-time workers.

Contract type	Headcount	%Male	% Female
Part-time (permanent)	7,128	14%	86%

7.4 Fair Work

Established in 2015, the Fair Work Convention acts as an independent advisory body to Scottish Ministers. The Convention's vision is that, by 2025, people in Scotland will have a world-leading working life where fair work drives success, wellbeing and prosperity for individuals, businesses, organisations and society.

The dimensions of the Fair Work Framework are embedded within our People Strategy. Our aim is to deliver good quality and fair work through continuous improvement, and we have a collective statement that has been agreed in partnership with Trade Union representatives:

The City of Edinburgh Council is committed to advancing the Fair Work First criteria, specifically:

- We recognise the trade unions as the appropriate channel for effective employee voice.
- We will invest in workforce development.

- We will ensure payment of at least the real Living Wage for all City of Edinburgh Council employees and seek compliance through wider Procurement contracts including those employed in ALEO's.
- We will not use zero hours contracts inappropriately.
- We will continue to take action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace.
- We will offer and provide flexible and family friendly working practices for all workers from day one of employment; and
- We will oppose the use of fire and rehire practice.

Employment remains the best route out of poverty. However, most people in poverty live in households where someone is in paid employment and the proportion of people in poverty who are living in working households has increased over time.

There is an increased likelihood that households in working poverty will have young children in comparison to the general population. Parents' ability to increase working hours is often dependent on the availability of flexible working and childcare, the affordability of which can often be constrained by the conditions of Universal Credit. Around two thirds of working adults living in poverty are paid below the real living wage. This has been addressed within the Council as we are a Living Wage employer.

The impact of rising living costs from has negatively impacted on the prevalence of in-work poverty. The Council recognises the impact of increased fuel prices in particular roles, for example community and care teams using their own vehicles for transport. We are reviewing the availability of pool cars and ensuring that colleagues are aware of the processes for claiming expenses and overtime.

7.5 Employer Covenants

The City of Edinburgh Council has committed to sign up to a number of Employer Covenants. Led by the Department for Work and Pensions in partnership with other organisations, guidance, advice, support and in some cases, funding is accessible to Scottish organisations, with the aim of increasing equality of opportunity for protected groups.

The City of Edinburgh Council has adopted the following:

- **Ambitious About Autism Covenant for Employers:** a programme, supported by organisations, to create positive, long term and sustainable solutions by removing the barriers to work for autistic people.
- **Age-friendly Employer Pledge:** a national programme for employers who recognise the importance and value of older workers and are committed to improving work for people over 50.
- **Covenant for Empowering Women and Girls:** a programme to recognise the barriers and discrimination women face and pledging to take specific actions to overcome these obstacles and create a more equitable society.

- Scottish Care Leaver Covenant: a national inclusion programme for organisations to support care leavers aged 16-25 to live independently.
- Armed Forces Covenant: a programme to help members of the Armed Forces community have the same access to government and commercial services, and products as any other citizen.
- Crisis UK Homelessness Covenant: a pledge by employers to prevent and end homelessness through inclusive and supportive employment practices. By signing up to the Covenant, employers will build their understanding of homelessness as much more than 'rooflessness' or lack of physical shelter – but rather a lack of a home – a place that is safe, secure and decent. Employers will be supported by Crisis and the DWP to spot signs of and prevent homelessness amongst their employees.

7.6 Trauma informed

Being trauma informed recognises that trauma can affect individuals, groups, and communities.

It is recognised that many people accessing our services have been impacted by trauma. Its impact can be far reaching. The Trauma Informed Services Advisory Panel (TISAP) supports the development of a trauma informed workforce.

The Council have invested in a Lead Trauma Officer role. The role assists services and colleagues in developing their understanding. As part of any future service re-design, it will be an important consideration to ensure jobs and services are designed to consider best practice approaches to reduce the risk of citizens being exposed to trauma when accessing Council services.

Leaders within the Council and the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership have access to the “Preparing your service to implement trauma informed practice” guide.

There is also an advisory service available to leaders to enable them to access advice and support from the advisory panel (TISAP).

7.7 Celebrating Success

We want to encourage a culture of excellence and ensure that we celebrate our successes to support this.

As part of our People Strategy, we will consider workforce recognition schemes, at both Directorate and Corporate level, share success stories and develop a culture of valuing our colleagues in a variety of ways. This will be incorporated in our internal communications and engagement plan.

7.8 Employee Voice

Embedding Our Behaviours into everything we do on a daily basis is key to creating a safe environment where people feel confident to speak up and their views will be

listened to. “Humanising” our workplace is to reinforce that there’s a human being at the heart of every working process with their own unique experiences and views.

We are reviewing our internal communications to ensure that they are far reaching, provide simple and effective opportunities for colleagues to make suggestions, air their views, and participate in peer support and decision-making. As part of this we will further consider our employer identity, develop an internal communication and engagement plan, and set out how we will gather and use colleague feedback.

We will continue to undertake engagement conversations at a local level and promote our early resolution approach to performance management and dispute, providing toolkits and training on early engagement and courageous conversations.

We’ll continue to engage effectively with our trade unions and staffside to ensure collective collaboration in listening to our colleagues and informing policy and workplace initiatives.

We will continue to promote and support our Speak Up Supporters and independent channels for raising concerns.

Nurture a Healthy Workplace Where our People Can Thrive – Summary

- We will work with our Occupational Health providers to assess wellbeing take-up and create a **Wellbeing Action Plan**.
- We will consider the right service for our people as part of our Occupational Health Service **contract review exercise** during 2024.
- We will consider activities and methods to recognise organisational and individual success, including **employee awards programme**.
- We will develop and implement an **internal Communications and Engagement Strategy** to set out our colleague voice.
- We will introduce **workforce data dashboards and granular workforce information reports** for Service Directors and Heads of Service, to inform and improve the management of absence, performance and workforce planning. This will have a positive impact on our culture.
- We will support colleagues and people leaders to **reduce absence and improve performance** to ensure the Council is a great place to work.
- We will review and **develop approaches** to support our multi-generational workforce to communicate, perform, and work well together. Our colleagues across all generations need a voice and a digital platform to collaborate across the whole Council.

**Our Workforce Plan
Action Plan 2024-2027**

No.	Theme	Action	Outcomes	Timescales
1.	Attract the Best People	Develop Recruitment and Attraction Plan	This will set out recruitment and hiring approaches and associated marketing strategies. It will detail inclusive recruitment practices and employability models. It will include approaches to international recruitment.	Year 1
2.		Review reward and recognition framework.	This review will consider benchmarking across the industry and consider any proposals in relation to pay and grading structures, overall terms and benefits and job evaluation arrangements. This will require extensive engagement with colleagues and Trade Unions.	Year 1 and 2
3.		Create of operational service workforce plans (incorporating workforce models and contracts).	<p>This will result in local service workforce plans being developed, with key data setting out workforce required for now and future service delivery, along with skills required and action plan to deliver. For specific areas this will include review of fixed term and part time contracts, agency and overtime usage and agree actions to improve.</p> <p>Toolkits, guidance and support will be developed to ensure a consistent format as well as creation of Council wide key performance indicators and targets that will be reviewed at local Directorate Management Team Meetings and Finance and Resources Committee to measure achievement of these and wider People Strategy and staff governance.</p>	Years 1 and 2
4.		Implement new recruitment platform – Oracle Fusion and associated standard operating procedures and processes.	Phase 1 will see implementation of Core HR and Payroll system, including improved and enhanced reporting metrics. Phase 2 is the rollout of the new recruitment platform. This will allow review of transactional service to proactive recruiting team and improved experience for candidates and hiring managers.	Year 1 and 2
5.		Review induction and settling in process.	This will result in an improved induction process for new starts. It will include mentoring and longer-term guidance and support.	Year 2
6.		Review redeployment principles.	Consideration to be given to overarching arrangements for redeployment and proposals to be considered through consultation and engagement with Trade Unions to ensure a fair and reasonable approach for all involved.	Year 1

No.	Theme	Action	Outcomes	Timescales
7.	Develop Exceptional Leaders	Develop and implement actions plans from 2024 Culture Check in Survey.	Consider results from 2024 survey and agree action plans with local service teams. Align results against staff governance metrics to ensure consolidated approach to performance monitoring and action planning. Introduce colleague awards recognition programme and also promote internal communications and engagement programme for the year.	Year 1
8.		Undertake 2025 Internal Colleague Satisfaction survey.	Undertake full colleague satisfaction survey and seek to achieve high response rates across all Directorates.	Year 2
9.		Review of people manager competencies and development programmes.	Consideration of skills required for these roles, and skills audit to determine any gaps or focus for development programmes. Reviewing all programmes against current leadership framework to ensure fit for purpose and meets needs and skills for these roles and roll out refreshed offering. Also build on new Inspiring Manager Hub to share guidance, toolkits, good practice and bring together as core group. Also consider more immediate skills required, such as digital and AI etc to support current transformation and service improvements.	Years 1 and 2
10.	Foster a Culture of Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion.	Develop refreshed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2025-2028 and associated Action Plan. Implement Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan for 2024.	Outcome will be refreshed strategy and associated action plan.	Year 1
11.		Attain or maintain standards in Equally Safe at Work, Stonewall UK Workplace Equality Index, Disability Confident Leader and implement associated actions.	Linked to above, will support initiatives and ambitions in Strategy and action plan and allow consideration of best practices and standards across these areas.	Year 1 and 2
12.		Join Race Equality Matters and undertake benchmarking. Consider Carer Positive and Autistica.		Year 1 and 2
13.		Develop Sexual Harassment Policy.	New standalone Policy for the Council with input from colleagues and those with lived experience.	Year 1
14.		Roll out pilot projects to introduce more part-time and flexible working opportunities at management and leadership levels.	This will allow targeted recruitment campaigns in agreed Directorates and services areas to promote flexible opportunities and seek to increase attraction rates.	All

No.	Theme	Action	Outcomes	Timescales
15.	Grow and Retain Our Talent	Develop succession planning framework.	The new framework will allow clear route and toolkit for service area succession linked to leadership framework and identify leaders of the future, with agreed support and mentor to develop skillset and experience. Will also consider wider career pathways and arrangements to enhance development conversations across whole organisation.	Years 1 and 2
16.		Undertake skills gaps in key areas such as people management and digital.	This initial skills survey will focus on people managers and skills required, with review of current need and allow Inspiring Manager to be focused on skills needs and gaps. Clear role outline for people managers and how to achieve skills required.	Years 1 and 2
17.		Review Grow Your Own model and employability plan.	Refresh employability model and maximise external funding opportunities and widen scope for different groups. Will also consider recruitment approach for all Directorates and service areas to ensure annual commitments.	Year 2
18.	Nurture a Healthy Workplace where our People Can Thrive	Develop and implement wellbeing plan, including review of OH provision	Consolidated plan detailing all wellbeing offerings and review of existing programmes to ensure meeting need, being utilised and linked to staff governance outcomes.	Years 1 and 2
19.		Introduce colleague recognition programme.	Outcomes will consider how to celebrate success across whole organisation and within individual teams. This will be from introduction of annual Directorate Awards Programme and ongoing recognition at local levels. It will consider ways to use informal approaches on current software etc to allow peer to peer recognition.	All
20.		Develop internal communications and engagement plan.	This plan will review and set out all engagement methods used with colleagues and evaluate effectiveness and ensure that these are accessible for all types of services. Will set out annual programme of engagement as well as leadership visibility and links to colleague networks. Will also reinforce organisational identity and focus on “house style brand” and promotion of this as a consistent approach.	Year 1
21.		Introduce staff governance key performance indicators and targets at service level and monitoring and review framework.	Creation of Council wide key performance indicators and targets that will be reviewed at local Directorate Management Team Meetings, CLT and Finance and Resources Committee to measure achievement of these and wider People Strategy and staff governance.	Years 1 and 2