

Finance and Resources Committee

Tuesday 25th April 2023

Workforce Dashboard

Item number	
Executive/routine	Routine
Wards	All
Council Commitments	

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 To review and note the information contained in the Workforce Dashboard for the period October to December 2022.

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Finance and Resources Committee

Workforce Dashboard

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides the Council's Workforce Data (October to December 2022).
- 2.2 Key trends in the workforce data for this period include increases in the flexible workforce spend with increases for overtime, casual and agency workers. There has also been an increase in overall sickness absence rates for both local government and teaching staff. In December 2022 total workforce costs (excluding agency) increased as colleagues on local government terms of and conditions received a pay award and associated back pay.
- 2.3 As reported to this Committee on 8 September 2022 and 10 November 2022, a number of service areas within the Council are continuing to experience service capacity issues generally and these are further compounded by employee absence, turnover and an inability to recruit to an increasing number of 'hard to fill' roles due to the challenging employment market. In turn this has increased the utilisation of agency workers.
- 2.4 According to a recent CIPD survey, 57% of organisations currently have hard to fill vacancies, and two thirds of employers still expect to have hard to fill vacancies in the next 6 months. Reduced labour pool due in part to Brexit and Covid-19, immigration changes and changing working preferences are all considered to be contributing factors. Recruitment and retention is included as a key risk in the Council's Risk Register and ongoing efforts to address these challenges are being given high priority.

3. Background

3.1 Workforce dashboard data

The Workforce Dashboard provides data and insight for the period October to December 2022 including:

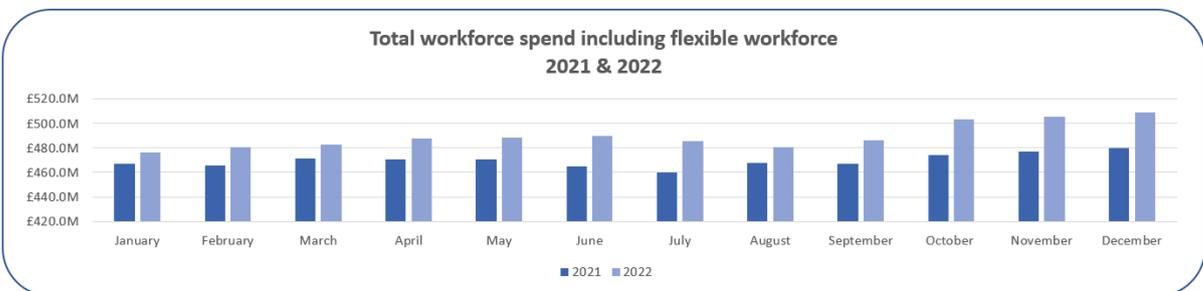
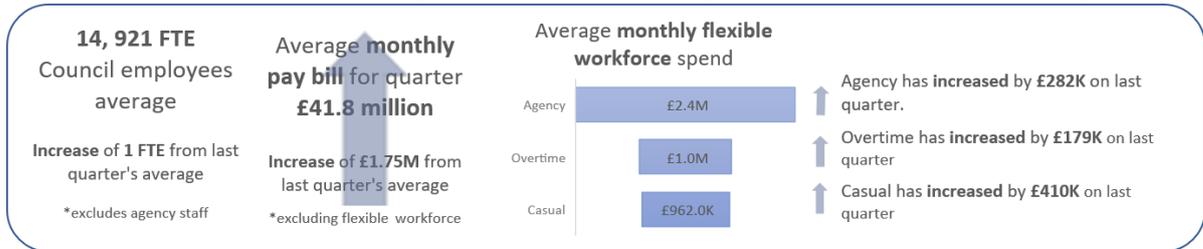
- the number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) colleagues employed and breakdown of role grading by directorate;
- the cost of the quarter's pay bill, including our flexible workforce (agency, overtime and casual);
- recruitment information;
- trends on sickness absence rates;

- organisational leaver information; and
- insight from Directorates on the last quarter and workforce context for the next quarter.

4. Main Report - Dashboard

4.1 Workforce Dashboard - Key workforce data

Quarterly workforce dashboard (October 2022 - December 2022)



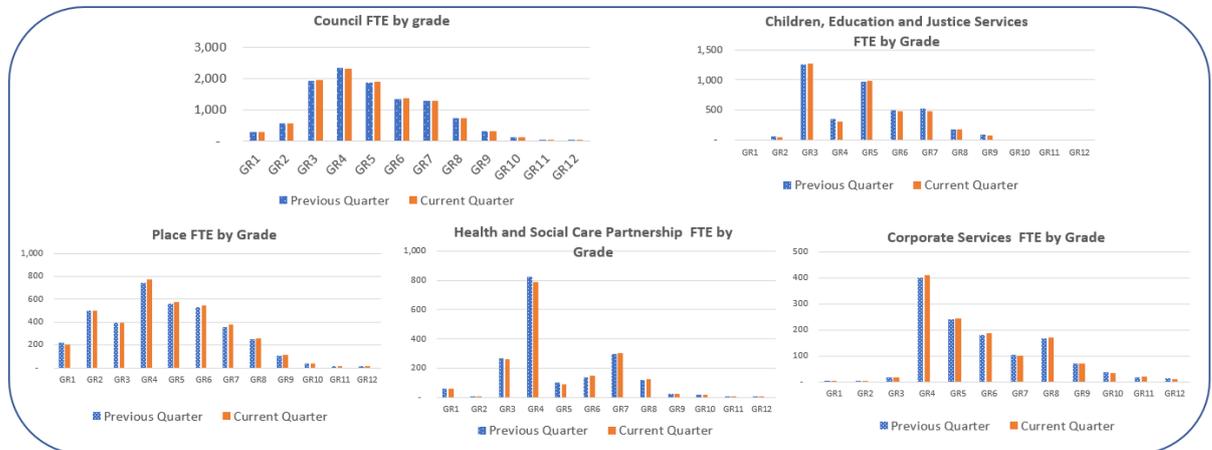
4.1.1 Average agency spend for October to December 2022 is £2.4 million per month.

4.1.2 Overtime has increased by £179k during this quarter.

4.1.3 The average pay bill has increased by £1.75M during this quarter, this may be attributed to the back dated pay award for Local Government Employees (LGE) which was paid to current colleagues in December. The next quarter's Workforce Dashboard (January to March 2023) will reflect an increase in workforce costs for Local Government organisational leavers and agency workers as payments were made during this period to those who qualified.

4.1.4 Additional spend on agency workers and overtime generally can be attributed to absence levels and challenging recruitment market conditions i.e. an inability to recruit to all vacancies.

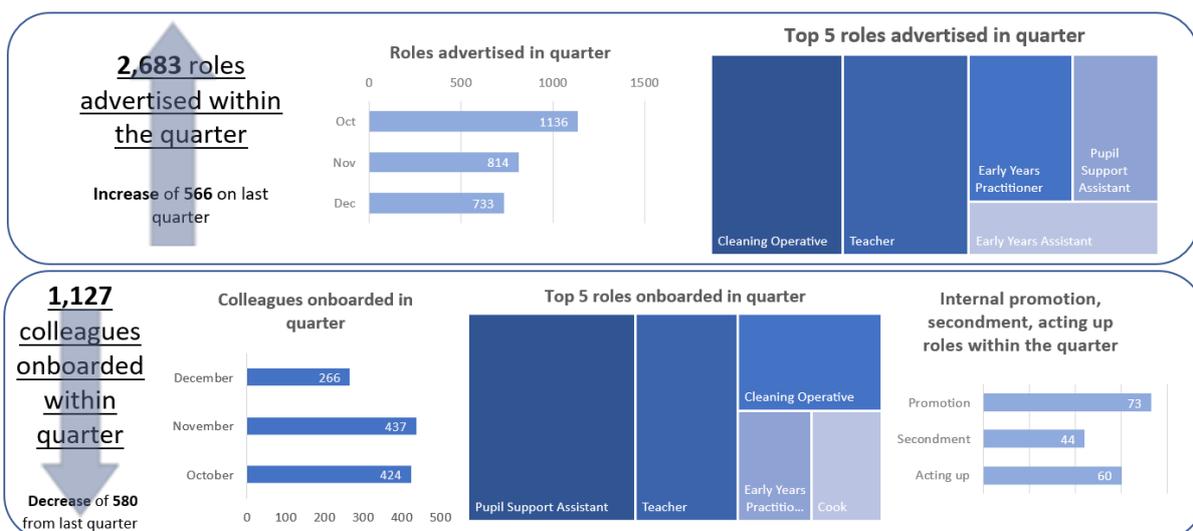
4.1.5 As at December 2022, the Council had a salary overpayments balance of £1.34m (1,078 employees affected). The majority of the balance is in Education and Children’s Services, £0.86 m with 655 colleagues impacted (both existing and leavers). The majority of overpayments were caused by ‘late information to HR’ and ‘HR error’.



4.1.6 The level of vacancies advertised over the period has increased from last quarter by 566.

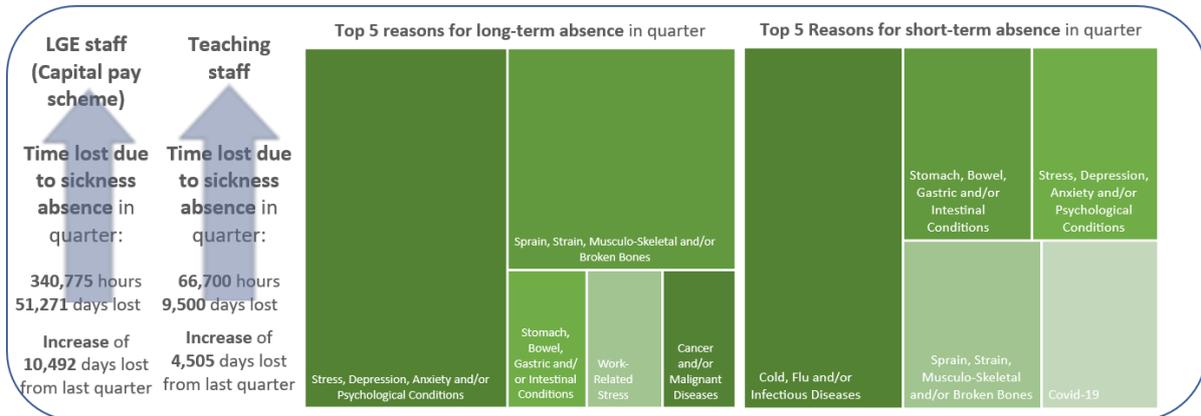
4.1.7 Four out of the top 5 roles advertised within the quarter are within the Children, Education and Justice Services Directorate. HR continue to work with colleagues to review and redesign our approach to recruitment within Education to create an improved candidate experience and maximise efficiencies in our approach.

4.1.8 Over the period October 2022 to December 2022, we supported a total of 167 apprentices.

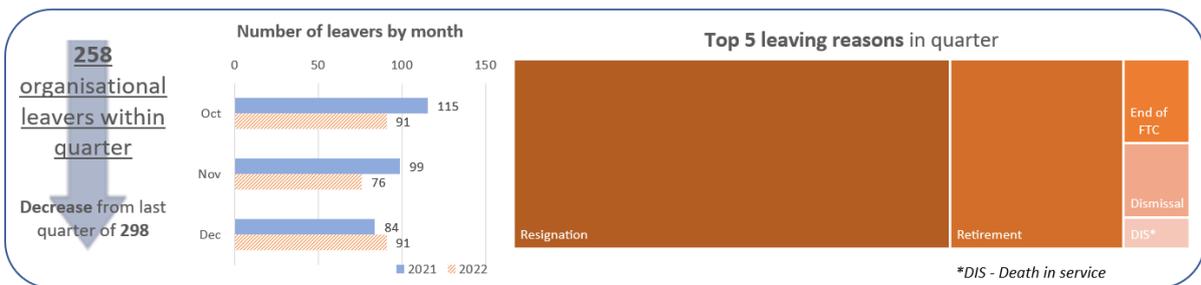


4.1.9 For the period October to December 2022, the Council lost 60,771 days to sickness absence which represents an increase of 14,997 days lost compared with the last quarter (July to September 2022). Stress, depression, anxiety

and/or psychological conditions remains the top reason attributed to long term absence.



4.1.10 This quarter there has been a decrease of 298 in organisational leavers compared to last quarter (July to September 2022).



4.2 Narrative from Directorates for the last quarter (October - December 2022)

4.2.1 Corporate Services

- Ongoing issues relating to recruitment and retention, including long recruitment lead in times, have continued to put pressure on service performance and this has also impacted on both overtime and sickness absence.
- Directorate sickness absence, both long and short term, was noted to increase this quarter in comparison to the previous quarter but given the timing of this quarter this is anticipated however we do note that this was higher in comparison to the same quarter the previous year but would wish to note that we have seen a decrease over the course of the year.
- Directorate Overtime spend was higher this quarter, particularly in the last month of the quarter. It should be noted however that not all overtime claimed within the quarter was worked within the quarter and that the majority of those colleagues claiming overtime are from our more operational grades. Reviewing historic data shows that this quarter is historically one in which overtime has been more prevalent.

4.2.2 Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership

- The Partnership have reviewed shift patterns within Homecare and made them more flexible to attract a wider range of people. 30 WTE colleagues were recruited into internal Homecare vacancies in this period. A recruitment

drive aimed at generating interest within local communities started in November 2022. Since November, there have been a further 6 recruitment events.

- Good progress has been made throughout the final quarter of 2022 in relation to homecare, with 3 out of the 12 registered home care services continuing to report below sickness absence target in September, October, November, and December 2022 with three more services on target.
- Sickness absence rose slightly in December due to colds, flu and infections which is normal for the period.
- A financial analysis of the cost of sickness absence in the first six months of 2022 compared with the second six months demonstrates a marked reduction in costs.
 - **Pre**-sickness absence additional resource, our January to June 2022 cost of sickness absence was an average of £142k per month.
 - **Post**-sickness absence additional resource (which really took hold around September 2022), the July 2022 to January 2023 cost of sickness absence has dropped to an average of £118k per month.
 - The difference being around £24k per month representing a reduction of 16.9% (on £142k per month).
- In relation to care homes, the Partnership have targeted adverts at individual care homes as this has resulted in more successful recruitment. In the past year, care homes have had 69 adverts for posts and successfully appointed 76 people. Care homes currently have several vacancies and further interviews are arranged. Due to vacancies within care homes, there is continued use of agency staff to supplement permanent staffing establishments to ensure safe staffing levels.

4.2.3 Children, Education and Justice services

- **Justice Services** - the service continues to carry a number of key vacancies in terms of both Social Worker and non-Social Worker posts, despite active recruitment efforts. Those who left have gone to promoted posts; work for other agencies or join other LAs, where they live. The Justice Services organisational review (excluding DTTO, which will be reviewed separately) commenced on 13 December 2022 and closed on 15 February 2023. The Drug Treatment and Testing Order (DTTO) Service remained suspended to new assessments and orders as a result of clinical staffing shortages but re-opened on a capped basis (30 new Orders) on 27 February 2023. Sickness absence continues to be monitored through the quarterly Divisional Absence Challenge Panel.
- **Children's Services** - there continued to be significant pressures due to the number of unfilled vacancies and recruitment challenges. Following several recruitment drives, ESS only managed to fill four vacancies, and there remains six unfilled. Two external candidates, who interviewed well and were offered posts, later declined citing pay scale as the reason, within the rest of the residential estate there are another 12.5 unfilled vacancies. The move to manager recruitment for each establishment continues to be beneficial, there have been some issues around timeframes for adverts going live and post recruitment to start date, particularly around PVGs. Overtime continues to be monitored and has seen reductions on the same period last year. Following

recent recruitment exercises, the number of applicants has been significantly lower than previous years.

Education

- **Early Years** - the expansion to 1140 hours led to a significant increase in staffing allocations across early years settings. Four Head of Centre vacancies were successfully filled through a group recruitment approach. Recruitment of fixed term vacancies has been our greatest challenge.
- **Pupil Support Assistants and Early Years' Assistants** - the SEO Team have been working with our early years' settings and schools on a more centralised approach to recruiting PSAs and EYAs to our establishments. As this has been new for session 2022/23, there have been learning opportunities for us at each round, and we have taken feedback from settings, schools, and candidates. The recruitment of Pupil Support Assistants within all primary, secondary, and special schools has continued to be a challenge and the number of unfilled vacancies is having an impact on schools. Some of the special schools' provisions have had to close classes due to a severe shortage of PSAs. There have been PSAs borrowed from mainstream, ASL services, supply staff and all opportunities have been exhausted before closing school provisions. The low salary of these posts is a barrier to attracting people into the post.
- **Primary** - we have been working with Headteachers and Business Managers to maximise the number of permanent posts available to teachers, in order to maintain our workforce.
- **Secondary** - teacher shortages remain in many subjects in particular Maths, Computing Studies, Business Studies, Craft, Design and Technology, and Health and Food Technology. The rising cost of living in Edinburgh is contributing to nationwide difficulties in available staff to recruit and with staff retention. The service has implemented centralised recruitment in the shortage subject areas to make the interview experience easier for our prospective candidates and the ability to match candidates to their preferred school to assist with retention of staff.

4.2.4 Place

- There has been no significant change in the workforce data for Place since the previous quarter.
- As demonstrated in the dashboard information, the recruitment of cleansing operatives on a permanent basis has been progressing (reducing the services reliance on agency).
- A new Service Director for Housing and Homelessness has been appointed. Derek McGowan has now taken up his new role.
- Recruitment remains a challenge, with services struggling to attract suitable candidates in an increasingly competitive external market.

4.3 Looking forward over the next 12 months – Directorate’s narrative

4.3.1 Corporate Services

- The Directorate has recently welcomed our new Executive Director of Corporate Services Dr Deborah Smart. Our new Service Director for Human Resources is due to join in early May 2023.
- There continues to be difficulties with the recruitment and retention of colleagues; particular concerns have been raised within Finance and Procurement where they are currently operating at reduced capacity due to retirements coupled with a higher-than-normal number of colleagues leaving the Council. There are considerable recruitment challenges at present as the Division are unable to compete with market salary levels, resulting in a lack of interest or a lack of suitable candidates applying for specialist roles. This is a cause for concern and a critical risk for the Division putting pressure on remaining colleagues.
- Customer and Digital Services are continuing to manage resource on a ratio of 92% permanent and 8% temporary/fixed term; this allows the service to achieve budget savings as well as protecting permanent roles. A 3% turnover factor is on target to be achieved, primarily down to the long lead in recruitment times to fill vacancies.

4.3.2 Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership (EHSCP)

- The Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership continues to look at ways to recruit more people to the care sector. The work with Capital City Partnership (CCP) is beginning to bear fruit with a high number of notes of interest and an increasing number of applicants going through the recruitment process.
- Looking forward, the Partnership are looking to schedule similar Community focused recruitment drive events on a bi-monthly basis.
- The Partnership have also engaged Council HR to try and establish ways to speed up the on-boarding process and are trialling a shortened Job Description for entry level positions. The CCP team are now well established with MyJobScotland as work continues to look at ways to strengthen the approach to recruitment. On 18 to 19 April, the Partnership, are joining NHS Lothian and Edinburgh College at a recruitment event in the St James Quarter. Work continues to develop communications and advertising material featuring some of our front-line colleagues.
- Our city-wide monthly support & challenge panels continue to achieve progress in driving down sickness absence and more coaching for managers will be delivered in each locality office in the coming months to ensure the position is sustained and builds on the improvement in performance.

4.3.3 Children, Education and Justice services

- **Justice Services** - we will be working towards implementing the new Justice Services structure, starting with the recruitment of three Grade 10 posts. We need to have the leadership structure in place before moving

forward with the new structure. Based on previous recruitment, this is likely to be challenging. However, we are looking to increase our opportunities to engage with students through engagement with universities etc. We will also be working with HR colleagues to raise our recruitment profile on-line.

- **Children's Services** - recruitment challenges continue to impact service delivery, this also has a direct effect on overtime, agency, and locum usage in some sectors. There are currently 31.15 unfilled Social Work vacancies within the Practice Teams and another five vacancies for other roles. There are a number of colleagues leaving services, either through retirement or to new positions. Work is underway to look at innovative approaches to attract people to work in Edinburgh which will include looking at ways to actively target those leaving university. Average case loads remain reasonable in the practice teams at 14.5 and we have put significant additional resource into Social Care Direct.

Education

- **Early Years** - since implementation of the expansion timely monitoring of our delivery models and the uptake of places in comparison to overall capacity across the city has helped us to keep track of supply and demand for places. This has now enabled us to identify surplus staff in settings that can be relocated to fill vacancies elsewhere.
- **Pupil Support Assistants and Early Years' Assistants** - a recruitment drive for PSAs will continue and these posts are centrally recruited. New adverts are going live in March 2023. The number of positions heavily outweighs the interest in the posts. We have created an opportunity for mainstream PSAs to be seconded into the special sector to increase numbers within these schools.
- **Primary** - 340 primary teachers have been interviewed for posts in August 2023. We are collaborating with schools to identify as many permanent and fixed term posts as possible. There are 16 surplus Primary Teachers also to be placed for August due to a dropping Primary roll across the city.
- **Secondary** - we will continue to work with the QIEO for Initial Teacher Education to develop a "grow your own" model to improve retention of newly qualified staff and with Learning and Teaching colleagues on teacher empowerment to improve the quality of work experience. We will establish a Head Teacher working group to examine recruitment processes and further work with the Roman Catholic Teacher Leadership group to address shortages of RC candidates for our RC schools.
- We are currently drafting voluntary transfer guidance which will allow staff to move more easily between schools to develop their skills.

4.3.4 Place

- Priority continues to be on reducing agency and overtime expenditure and recruiting to frontline roles. The approach to recruitment continues to be reviewed to identify new, innovative ways of attracting candidates to roles which are particularly hard to fill.
- Organisational reviews continue to be progressed, with matching and assignment beginning for the Lifelong Learning Review early in the new year.
- Building on the success of the manager events across the Council, preparations are underway for an event in June 2023 for managers from across the directorate.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 To continue to monitor workforce costs, associated business plans and organisational priorities and identify and drive areas for improvement.

6. Financial impact

- To note the budgetary implications of workforce costs (both direct and indirect).
- To note the direct and indirect costs related to absence (salary, overtime and agency).

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 Stakeholder consultation and engagement, including colleagues, Corporate Leadership Team, Senior Management Teams, Trade Unions and Elected Members is ongoing.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Workforce Dashboard with Wellbeing and Absence Deep dive 10 November 2022](#)

9. Appendices

Not applicable