Staff and Pensions Committee

Date: Monday 13 September 2021
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Committee Room 2 – Shire Hall

Membership
Councillor Andy Jenns (Chair)
Councillor Bill Gifford (Vice-Chair)
Councillor John Horner
Councillor Christopher Kettle
Councillor Sarah Millar
Councillor Jill Simpson-Vince

Items on the agenda: -

1. General

(1) Apologies

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

(3) Minutes of previous meeting 5 - 10

2. Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2020/21 11 - 28

3. Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2020-21 29 - 76

4. Sustainable and Resilient Workforce Annual Review 2020/21 77 - 100

5. Wellbeing and Volunteering Day 101 - 112

6. Health, Safety & Wellbeing Annual Review 113 - 138

7. Pensions Administration Activity and Performance 139 - 148

8. Firefighter Pension Schemes Internal Dispute Resolution Policy 149 - 158

9. Review of the Minutes of the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Local Pension Board meeting of 9th June 2021 159 - 164

10. Policy and Regulatory update 165 - 168

11. Employers joining and leaving the Warwickshire Pension Fund 169 - 172

12. Reports Containing Confidential or Exempt Information
To consider passing the following resolution:
'That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the items mentioned below on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972'.

13. Outsourcing of Firefighter Pensions administration and Pensioner Payroll for Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service 173 - 176

Monica Fogarty
Chief Executive
Warwickshire County Council
Shire Hall, Warwick

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A member attending a meeting where a matter arises in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest must (unless they have a dispensation):

- Declare the interest if they have not already registered it
- Not participate in any discussion or vote
- Leave the meeting room until the matter has been dealt with
- Give written notice of any unregistered interest to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting

Non-pecuniary interests relevant to the agenda should be declared at the commencement of the meeting.

The public reports referred to are available on the Warwickshire Web
https://democracy.warwickshire.gov.uk/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1

Public Speaking

Any member of the public who is resident or working in Warwickshire, or who is in receipt of services from the Council, may speak at the meeting for up to three minutes on any matter within the remit of the Committee. This can be in the form of a statement or a question. If you wish to speak please notify Democratic Services in writing at least two working days before the meeting. You should give your name and address and the subject upon which you wish to speak. Full details of the public speaking scheme are set out in the Council's Standing Orders.

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Staff and Pensions Committee

Monday 14 June 2021

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members
Councillor Andy Jenns (Chair)
Councillor Bill Gifford (Vice-Chair)
Councillor John Horner
Councillor Christopher Kettle
Councillor Sarah Millar
Councillor Jill Simpson-Vince

Officers
Neil Buxton, Technical Specialist - Pension Fund Policy and Governance
Sarah Duxbury, Assistant Director - Governance & Policy
Andrew Felton, Assistant Director - Finance
Victoria Jenks, Pensions Admin Delivery Lead
Trish Kinsella, Lead Commissioner - Strategic People Improvement
Isabelle Moorhouse, Trainee Democratic Services Officer
Chris Norton, Strategy and Commissioning Manager (Treasury, Pension, Audit & Risk)
Rich Thomas, Strategy and Commissioning Manager (HROD)

1. General
The Chair welcomed new members to the committee and informed it that some officer would leave after presenting their item to reduce room capacity.

(1) Apologies
None.

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
None.

(3) Minutes of previous meeting
(i) 8th March 2021
The minutes were approved as a true and correct record.
(ii) 25th May 2021
The minutes were approved as a true and correct record.

2. Teachers Pay - Review of Scale Points 6a and 6b

Trish Kinsella (Lead Commissioner - Strategic People Improvement) and Rich Thomas (Strategy and Commissioning Manager (HROD) presented the item. In October 2020, the Staff & Pensions Committee agreed a recommendation not to amalgamate to a single point six for the 2020/2021 pay year but to undertake a review into the financial impact of this and engage with schools and consider the approach being taken by neighbouring authorities. The review has since been completed and the outcome supported the amalgamation to a single scale point. The review confirmed that those teachers on point 6 would be paid at the higher value 6b scale point to mirror the Government's advisory pay points which were introduced in 2020. All those engaged with unanimously supported having a single point six pay grade. Trish Kinsella stated that the increased costs would fall onto schools to fulfil.

In response to Councillor John Horner, Trish Kinsella noted that teachers in 6a would see an increase in their pay whereas those at the 6b level would not.

Following a question from Councillor Jill Simpson-Vince, Trish Kinsella confirmed that some schools would be more impacted then others, but time had been spent with them engaging on this this and no objections had been received.
Councillor Christopher Kettle queried the financial challenges some schools may have with the pay increase. Trish Kinsella confirmed that the cost of the increase on the paybill was 0.2% and the school's finance team was working with schools to understand the impact on them. Rich Thomas added that schools were currently budgeting 2% for pay increases. Andrew Felton (Assistant Director – Finance) informed the committee that schools recently received an extra £7 million to help provide extra services, so the pay rise should not cause an insurmountable issue.

Councillor Bill Gifford commented that it would be difficult to oppose the recommendation in the circumstances as it had been accepted by the teaching unions, schools and that it is a matter for school governors as to whether to adopt the pay policy advice. Trish Kinsella added that schools have the right to set their own pay policy but that maintained schools currently follow the Warwickshire model pay policy.
In response to the Chair, Trish Kinsella confirmed that the West Midlands Employers School Network were comfortable with the six point pay outline because schools want to keep their pay grades in line with their geographical neighbours.

Resolved

That the Committee approves the amalgamation of points 6a and 6b of the Teachers Main Pay Scale into a single point 6, to be paid at the current scale 6b level, with effect from September 2021.

3. Scheme Advisory Board Final Good Governance Report

Chris Norton (Strategy and Commissioning Manager (Treasury, Pension, Audit & Risk) clarified that the pension fund needed to revise their governance report and the report itself received the officer's support. The report was to make sure that the pension fund had the resources in place for senior LGPS officers. One of the recommendations around representation stated that each administering authority must publish a policy on how scheme members and non-administering authority employers were represented on pension committees. Chris Norton added that there were time scales with governance KPIs (key performance indicators) to make sure everything was done

correctly. The recommendations themselves were starting points for things that needed to be worked on.

Resolved:
The Staff and Pensions Committee note and comment on the report.

4. Revised Terms of Reference for the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Local Pension Board
Chris Norton stated that the terms of reference needed to be considered and approved by Full Council but asked that the committee consider and comment in advance of consideration by Council. Chris Norton commented that the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) local pension board was already in place.
There were no specific comments made by committee members who confirmed that they were content to endorse the terms of reference for consideration by Council.

Resolved:
The Staff and Pensions Committee to reviewed and commented on the updated Terms of Reference for the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Local Pension Board before forwarding to the Council for approval.

5. Review of the Pension Fund's Breaches Policy
Neil Buxton (Technical Specialist Pensions Fund Policy and Governance) informed the committee that all pension schemes were required to have a breaches policy in place, for example, if an employer did not pay contributions deducted from members of the pension scheme. The policy itself gave clarity in relation to breaches and what action is required to be taken. It was noted that some consequential changes to the Administration Strategy were highlighted in the appendix.
Neil Buxton concluded that the administration Strategy had also been updated to reflect the new *I-connect* data portal that deals with the automatic transfer of data from scheme employers to the pension fund.

In response to Councillor Simpson-Vince, Vicky Jenks (Pensions Administration Lead) confirmed that all breaches were recorded by the pensions team and most breaches that were received were late information arrivals. Employers can report themselves or the pension board can report in the case of such breaches.It was added that breaches had decreased since the implementation of the new I-Connect system.

Councillor Gifford praised the work of the pension board in relation to historical breaches and queried if small-scale employers found compliance more challenging i.e. new academies. Vicky Jenks clarified that academies tend to join multiple academy trusts with other academies so they jointly send all their information to the pension team together; this was beneficial as it helped speed things up. Chris Norton added that the experience had not changed with breaches as the Chair of the local pension board gets involved with all of them.

In response to Councillor Sarah Millar's query regarding the interface between the whistleblowing policy and wider governance related policies , Andrew
Felton stated that there is inevitably some overlap at times, but that consideration would always be given as to the most appropriate policy to follow depending on the circumstances. .

Following a question from Councillor Kettle, Vicky Jenks clarified that the role of the Staff & Pensions Committee is to be assured that breaches are reported as necessary in line with our arrangements and acted on properly; all reported and unreported breaches are shared with the Committee and Local Pension Board and the expectation is that the Pensions Board would wish to share this information with the committee.

Resolved:
That the Staff and Pensions Committee note and comment on the report.

6. Regulatory Update

Neil Buxton stated that the report provided an insight to developments in the LGPS and the wider pension arena that impact on the LGPS. The introduction of a national pension dashboard by central government could conceivably ensure that all information about an individual's pension rights would be available to that person online. The new 2021 Pension Act will allow schemes to block transfers out of the LGPS where specified conditions are not met. This should help limit the number of members The Act will also introduce a climate change governance taskforce to force schemes to ensure that there will be effective governance in respect of climate change. Information from the LGA (Local Government Association) is expected at the end of 2021 regarding these changes. Neil Buxton added that the pension age where a member can receive their pension under their own volition will increase from 55 to 57 in April 2028. It was clarified that employees who were part of a pension fund before 12th February 2021 (the date of the consultation document) would be able to continue to retire at age 55 pension, even if they transfer to a new job where the employer is a LGPS member. The Pension Regulator is issuing a new code of practice which consolidates many of the existing codes and removes code 14 that applies to public service pension schemes. Further guidance on the impact on the LGPS is expected to be issued by the Regulator and MHCLG later in the year.

In response to Councillor Millar, Neil Buxton said that the County Council could respond to central government's changes independently, but more weight would be gained commenting through the LGA.

Resolved:
That the Staff and Pensions Committee note and comment on the report.

7. Pensions administration activity and performance update

Vicky Jenks clarified that the report provided updates of key developments within the pension team. The report focused on the success on the I-connect project which is due to complete by 30th June 2021. I-Connect is used to transfer data from scheme employers to the member pension scheme records via an electronic portal. The use of I-Connect has reduced the number of breaches being recorded by the Pensions team. There were other ongoing projects for example, the application of pensions increase of 0.5% in April to all pensions in payment. The report also documents key performance indicators; where a payment is to be made, these are treated as the highest priority.
A review of the breaches policy had recently been undertaken and the process for recording breaches updated. In April 2021 there were 21 green breaches compared to April 2020 when 81 breaches were recorded. The new reporting procedure and I-Connect will improve the breaches procedure.

Vicky Jenks stated there was a recent red breach with a total of 6 dependants being overpaid. Even though the number of members that were affected was small compared to the number in the scheme, the value of the overpayments was deemed to be significant, and it was rated as red breach and reported to the Pensions Regulator. The Pension Regulator stated that they were content with Warwickshire County Council's processes that have been implemented to address this issue and reduce the risk of this occurring again. This breach was resolved appropriately. The fund and employers work together to prevent further breaches.

Other ongoing projects included the pension dashboard and implementing arrangements to address the consequences of the age discrimination case of McCloud.

Councillors Millar and Gifford praised the I-Connect rollout and improved administration within the pension team. Chris Norton stated that a few years ago a governance review was undertaken to help improve the administration service and steps have been taken to implement best practice recommended and these now form part of business as usual.

Resolved:
Staff and Pensions Committee note this report.

8. Employers leaving and Joining the Pension Fund

Vicky Jenks informed the Committee that they needed to be notified whenever an employer leaves or joins the fund. Academies have automatic rights of entry to the scheme. The importance of keeping on top of leavers was acknowledged to make sure that any employers who leave the fund have their liabilities assessed to ensure any deficit or credit is identified. Neil Buxton added that employers exiting the scheme could negotiate with the fund regarding the payment of a deficit or credit. Andrew Felton noted that if an employer leaves the scheme without its liabilities resolved then it falls to Warwickshire County Council to pick up, so it is important that all issues are resolved beforehand.

In response to Councillor Simpson-Vince, Vicky Jenks clarified that employers leave the scheme when no active members are left. This may occur when an employer who has a 'closed' arrangement, which only allows those transferring employees to have access to the scheme and is not open to new joiners. This normally happens as a result of a TUPE transfer arrangement. When the employee leaves the employer then they cease to be in the pension scheme and the employer ceases to have any active member in the scheme. If employers have an 'open' scheme with the fund, then any employees for the employer can join and leave the fund.

Resolved:
That the committee note employers who have left the fund as they have no active members left in the scheme.

- Vinshires Plumbing and Heating (ceased 1st December 2020)
- Westfield Community Development Association (ceased 30th April 2020)
- Nuneaton Mencap Joint Hostel (People in Action) (31st October 2020)

The meeting rose at 14:51

…….
Chair

Staff and Pension Committee

13 September 2021

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2020-21

Recommendation
That the Staff and Pensions Committee notes and comments upon the report.

1.0 Introduction

1.1. This is the annual Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report for the year ending March 2021. The report covers performance against several key Health, Safety and Wellbeing indicators and measures and identifies any emerging themes.

1.2. Warwickshire County Council as the Fire Authority has a statutory duty to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of their employees so far as is reasonably practicable. A breach of these duties can result in fines for the Authority and with recent changes to legislation the Health and Safety Sentencing Guidelines include the ultimate sanction of custodial sentences for responsible individuals.

1.3. In December 2020 the dedicated WFRS Senior Health and Safety Advisor took flexible retirement and reduced their working hours to three days a week. The Watch Manager (operational) was successfully promoted to Station Manager and has taken over the Health and Safety Team management function. A health and safety apprentice was appointed in January. This is the first time the team has taken up the opportunity to employ an apprentice as a productive way to grow talent and develop a motivated, skilled and quality work force and promoting the health and safety culture throughout the Service.

1.4. The team provide competent guidance, advice and support to all teams and managers within WFRS; this reflects the unique and high-risk activity of the Service. The advice provided by the team ensures the service is legally compliant and that managers at all levels are aware of their corporate and individual responsibilities, along with any potential areas of vulnerability.

1.5. WFRS continue to very work closely with their five regional fire partners to share learning and best practice to improve health, safety and wellbeing standards across the region. Also, as part of the 'Three Shires Partnership' WFRS liaise with Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Services.

1.6. The main requirements which the Service must meet are set out in several complementary pieces of legislation and guidance which include:-

1.6.1. **The Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004**
The Act states that Fire Authorities must make provision for dealing with fires, road traffic accidents and other emergencies and identifies the need for adequately trained and equipped personnel.

1.6.2. **Fire and Rescue National Framework for England**
Reviewed in May 2018, this framework places a duty on Fire and Rescue Authorities to take into account the health, safety and wellbeing principles set out by the National Fire Chiefs Council. The framework identifies that Fire and Rescue Authorities have an important role in helping to ensure their firefighters remain fit and are supported in remaining in employment.

1.6.3. **The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974**
This applies to the Fire Authority as to any other employer, but it is more complex in its application to an emergency service.In addition, the Service is expected to comply with best practice operational guidance, or demonstrate good reason why it is acceptable to not comply. The guidance covers virtually every aspect of fire and rescue operations from firefighting and breathing apparatus operations through to water rescue, incident command and multi-agency response to terrorist incidents. This guidance includes:

1.6.4. **National Operational Guidance (NOG)**
NOG continues to be an essential guide to the safe systems of work needed at an incident and is aimed at policy writers in each fire and rescue service, to support them in producing local guidance, policy and procedures. The guidance provides details of specific hazards and effective control measures, which will support a fire and rescue service to deliver an effective, assertive and safe incident command structure.
WFRS has established a small team, working in close co-operation with training staff, to adopt and incorporate NOG guidance into the service. This involves reviewing all our existing policies and, wherever possible, bringing the service into line with national guidance. At the end of 2019 a member of this team was appointed to a secondment to join the national NOG team, to provide input and influence the national guidance content.
It is important to note that NOG applies equally to all fire and rescue services, ranging from the large metropolitans to smaller shires. Each Service is required to assess how best and to what extent the national guidance can be applied locally with the resources available. Whilst WFRS always strives to align itself with national guidance this is not always possible; in such cases the WFRS NOG policy team will record the reasons for divergence and they will be agreed at an appropriate level within the Service.

1.6.5. **The Health and Safety Framework for the Operational Environment**
This Framework which was produced by DCLG in June 2013 continues to assist Fire and Rescue Authorities in balancing risks, specifically in their wider role to protect the public and property, while meeting health and safety at work

duties to protect their staff and others. The Framework also focuses on the operational and training environments that are unique to firefighters and does not replace or replicate other health and safety guidance that applies to more routine activities.

1.6.6. **Striking the Balance between Operational and Health and Safety Duties in the Fire and Rescue Service**

This HSE publication is intended to clarify how the Fire and Rescue Service should comply with health and safety at work duties within their operational work. The statement and subsequent guidance is intended to assist Fire and Rescue Authorities in balancing risks, particularly in their wider role to protect the public and property, while meeting health and safety at work duties to protect and others. HSE recognises that firefighters and managers face difficult moral dilemmas and have to make decisions in what are sometimes extremely hazardous, emotionally charged and fast-moving situations. HSE initiated joint work with Fire and Rescue Service leaders to clarify how Fire and Rescue Authorities can strike the balance between their operational and health and safety duties.

1.7. **The Operational Environment and the need for Realistic Training**

For the purposes of the legislation, the incident ground is the “workplace” for Fire and Rescue, and we are responsible for the safety of our personnel and anybody else on the incident ground once we are on scene and in charge. It is also worth highlighting that any action taken in these circumstances normally involves accepting a level of risk that would not be seen as “reasonable” in a normal workplace.

The combination of limited information and the expectation to act quickly in a dynamic, hazardous environment explains why the Service puts such emphasis on realistic operational training and the broader “safe person concept” promoted within a good health and safety culture.

As part of the development of the WFRS distributed training model, the Service is pleased to report that building work has started on the Kingsbury site. This 36-week project is on target to be finished in October 2021. The completion of this site will provide WFRS with extensive, enhanced training facilities to carry out Working at Height, Confined Space, Large Animal Rescue and Road Traffic Collison training.

Negotiations are currently underway in relation an enhanced site for Breathing Apparatus Training. In the interim this training is carried out at Oldbury Station training facility, part of West Midlands Fire Service.

The work required on what was the West Midlands Ambulance Service site at Stratford Fire Station is now complete and able to facilitate Incident Command training, which ensures Officers at all levels are confident and competent in this area.

Water Rescue Training continues to be carried out at Llangollen in North Wales.

2. Purpose and Scope of this Report

2.1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Staff and Pensions Committee with an annual position statement of the management and performance of Health, Safety and Wellbeing within WFRS. It summarises the key Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) activities from 1st April 2020 to the 31st March 2021.

2.2. In WFRS, the Health and Safety and Occupational Health functions are two separate teams each with their own manager. The overall strategic management is provided by the Area Manager responsible for Continuous Improvement and Change.

3. Background

3.1. The information within the report relates to WFRS employees and activities for which we have statutory HSW responsibilities only. The report does not include any information or data related to the rest of Warwickshire County Council (WCC).

3.2. **Health, Safety and Wellbeing Communication and Consultation**

3.2.1. WFRS Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) information is presented and communicated routinely at the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee Meeting held every 8 weeks. This statutory meeting is chaired by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer. Members of the recognised representative bodies (FBU, FOA, FRSA and UNISON) are invited to attend. This allows timely sharing and discussion of HSW related information and encourages early positive action to be taken in response to identified concerns by all parties.

3.2.2. Since the start of COVID, regular meetings have been held with all the representative bodies, to ensure effective communications and discussions take place, while additional activities are being carried out by WFRS personnel.

3.3. **Fee for Intervention (FFI)**

3.3.1. Under the Health and Safety (Fees) Regulations 2012, those who break health and safety law are liable for the recovery of the HSE's related costs (separate to any other Legal liabilities that there may be). The current fee is charged at £129.00 per hour if the HSE deem an employer to be in 'material breach' of Health and Safety legislation. It is positive to be able to report that WFRS have not received any FFI charges.

3.4. **National Fire and Rescue Service Significant Adverse Events**

3.4.1. There are two incidents to reference. One involving a neighbouring Fire and Rescue Service, in 2019 where a firefighter was left with 'life-

changing' injuries is still under investigation.

3.4.2. A second occurring further afield in September resulted in the death of a firefighter during a water rescue training exercise and remains under criminal investigation. The Marine Accident Investigation Team have produced their comprehensive investigation report into this incident, which was shared with all Fire and Rescue Services. As with all reports of this kind, WFRS carried out a gap analysis on the findings and recommendations to identify any improvements required. An action plan has been produced and is monitored through the HSW Committee; the identified actions required are progressing well.

3.5. **Legislation Updates / Regulatory Intervention**

3.5.1. The RIDDOR Regulations which were temporarily amended at the start of the COVID Pandemic remain in place to include the reporting procedures for COVID-19. To date WFRS have not been required to report any incidents under these amendments.

3.6. **HSE**

3.6.1. The HSE have recently visited a number of fire stations to undertake a COVID compliance inspection. Inspectors stated they were impressed with the control measures implemented at Nuneaton, Atherstone and Henley stations. Whilst no formal feedback was provided, particular praise was given for the production and provision of an electronic COVID Portal which provides effective communication e.g. guidance, reporting processes/procedures, risk assessments and mental wellbeing support and signposting. Another area highly praised was the implementation of a COVID Manager, whose role it is to oversee with the assistance of BCCT the people manager and support aspect of COVID.

4. Key Areas of Health and Safety Improvement in WFRS

4.1. It is very encouraging to report that health and safety continues to be integrated into all WRFS activities. During 2020/21 the areas include:

4.1.1. **WFRS 'Hospital to Home' Service**
This service has played a critical part in supporting the NHS during these unprecedented times. The Health and Safety Team worked closely with the WFRS Prevention Team to assist with the planning and delivery of this service to ensure the additional controls required were implemented to protect staff and clients.

4.1.2. **Control of Post Fire Contaminants**

4.1.2.1. This subject continues to be high on the NFCC Agenda.

4.1.2.2. WFRS have and are continuing to implement good working practices, awareness and education in this area.

4.1.2.3. The ‘Clean Cab’ policy which was produced by the Health and Safety Manager is in the process of being implemented as well as the ‘Post Fire Hygiene; Lecture Package, both of which will support the Service in reducing the risk of potential fire contaminants.

4.1.2.4. An independent report from the University of Central Lancashire, commissioned by the FBU was published in November 2020. As a best practice report, it aims to help protect firefighters’ health by highlighting some of the risks and common sources of contaminants. It provides suggestions for preventative measures for minimising exposure to contaminants and best practice for the decontamination of FRS personnel and firefighting equipment after exposure to toxic fire effluent. It also provides background information, statistics, resources and actions vital for improving firefighters’ health and well-being, keeping them safe and preventing the contamination which otherwise could lead to potential serious health conditions resulting in either life-changing problems and/or premature death.

4.1.2.5. A gap analysis was carried out on the report and current activity. An action plan has been produced as a result and work has started on the recommendations which the WFRS HSW Committee have identified as reasonable and practicable.

4.1.2.6. The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) are in the process of finalising their report on the issue, which will be subject to the same process on receipt.

4.1.2.7. On a practical level, an autoclave (BA Washing Machine) was procured last year. This is the most effective control measure used as part of the decontamination process and has been of significant benefit.

4.1.3. **Health and Safety Training**

4.1.3.1. Apart from the IOSH Course for Senior Executives which was undertaken by the Fire Leadership Team, there have been no other IOSH or NEBOSH courses run this year due to COVID.

4.1.3.2. Despite this and to ensure operational personnel remain competent in role, risk critical areas of training have however continued this year. This has ensured WFRS could meet its statutory duties under the Fire Services Act. The training undertaken includes:

- Incident Command
- Emergency Response Driving
- Breathing Apparatus
- New Recruits
- First Responder Emergency Course

4.1.3.3. The Health and Safety Team supported the Training and Development Team in carrying out Covid Risk Assessments for the

training courses.

4.1.3.4. Refresher health and safety training has been carried out by personnel utilising the WFRS Lecture Package Delivery System.

4.1.4. **Health and Safety Inspections/Audits**

4.1.4.1. The risk-based programme of inspections has slowed this year due to the COVID pandemic, although the inspections have continued on workplaces with a 'sleeping risk'. All workplaces have been subject to a COVID compliant risk assessment. Thesehave been regularly reviewed and updated in line with the Government alert levels and additional control measures implemented e.g. lateral flow tests and more currently the vaccinations roll out.

4.1.5. **Regional Health and Safety Peer Review Audits**

4.1.5.1. As part of the West Midlands Regional Health and Safety Business Plan, peer review audits are carried out every three years. The last inspection at WFRS took place November 2019 and the areas which were audited were:

- Working at Height
- Slips, trips and falls
- Breathing Apparatus

4.1.5.2. The identified recommendations were monitored by the HSW Committee and have now all been implemented.

4.1.5.3. The next review was planned to take place at the end of April 2020 at Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, the audit was being led by the WFRS Senior Health and Safety Advisor. However, due to COVID-19 this audit has been postponed and rearranged for September 2021.

4.1.5.4. This peer review audit process is extremely useful and allows for the sharing of good health and safety practice within the West Midlands Region.

4.2. **HMICFRS Inspections**

4.2.1. **COVID-19 Inspection - August 2020**

4.2.1.1. The Health and Safety Team supported teams to ensure additional activities which were being undertaken to support the communities of Warwickshire, were risk assessed and suitable control measures implemented where required.

4.2.1.2. Extract from the report stated: -

'*In summary, we were impressed with how Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service maintained its statutory functions and made good use of its staff to carry out additional duties to support the*

community during the pandemic. It primarily used its wholetime firefighters to respond to emergencies. The Service used the increased availability of its on-call workforce beyond their normal operational commitment to help support those most vulnerable in the community'.

4.2.2. **Full Inspection**

4.2.2.1. This inspection started with a four-week desktop discovery phase in March 2021. Although outside the reporting period for this report, the inspection progressed during April to the formal stage, which included engagement with managers and staff from across the Service. As part of the inspection phase the Senior Health and Safety Advisor was interviewed. Initial feedback was given to the Fire Leadership Team in the final week of the inspection, which included a number of positives and some areas they felt we could improve in. The full report is expected in the Autumn.

4.3. **WFRS Health and Safety Practitioners Group**

4.3.1. This group continues to work effectively, the members include both uniformed and non-uniformed managers who are NEBOSH qualified and represent of the Service. The group is chaired and managed by the Health and Safety Manager. The Practitioners' roles and responsibilities support the Service and their individual teams as well as promoting good/best health and safety practices throughout the Service.

4.3.2. Although the work carried out this year has decreased, due to COVID, it is anticipated that work carried out by the group including new initiatives will move forward this year.

5. Performance against last year's Health and Safety Team Plan

5.1. The Health and Safety Team has continued to make every effort to carry out the work streams included in the team plan. However, the priorities have changed due to COVID pandemic.

The Health and Safety Team continues to prioritise their work to ensure we meet the ongoing demands arising from COVID by providing a robust service as we protect and support the health, safety and wellbeing of all WFRS personnel.

5.2. The Health and Safety Manager continues to be a key member to support the Business Continuity Co-ordination Team (BCCT) and the WFRS Recovery Team who are responsible for the work required to ensure WFRS can carry out their statutory duties set out in the Fire Services Act.

5.3. The Health and Safety Manager played a key role in the setting up of the Mass Testing Sites, by supporting WCC in producing the risk assessments required for the five allocated sites throughout Warwickshire. The robust

control measures required were discussed with and provided by WCC Facilities Management in addition to the assessments being regularly reviewed.

5.4. At the end of last year and as part of the work carried out by BCCT, a quality assurance programme has been set up. This effective process monitors, identifies and confirms that the risk assessments which have been produced and regularly reviewed in line with the changes in National Alert Levels, are adequate and being worked to.

5.5. As part of the Tripartite agreement with the Fire Bigrade Union (FBU), the team have carried out work in consultation with the FBU to complete the risk assessments for the additional activities which may have to be carried out by Union members e.g. body recovery, supporting the Ambulance Service, the NHS and Funeral Directors, all of which will support the communities of Warwickshire.

5.6. As work progressed, a decision was taken at national level to end the Tripartite agreement and move to a new set of National Risk Assessments, these assessments will be adopted and adapted to include the control measures which WFRS can implement.

5.7. The overarching COVID risk assessment aligning to the Government alert levels which was produced by the Health and Safety team has also been reviewed. This overarching document sets out clear strategic guidance for managers ensuring risk critical functions and activities can be switched back on safely when safe to do so ensuring no breaches in health and safety legislation are encountered.

5.8. Business Impact Assessments (BIAs) for all teams have been produced and are regularly reviewed in line with the Government roadmap and guidance. Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) are also in place along with new and existing risk assessments which are monitored and regularly reviewed.

5.9. The health and safety team have supported the 1-2-1 wellbeing process, which will give individuals the opportunity to spend quality time with their line manager to have a conversation and identify if they are having any issues/concerns. There are many variables, and we know that any return to the workplace will be challenging. The process identified will assist with the transition.

5.10. Whilst individuals may experience different levels of concern due to personal risk factors, this two-way process will identify and assist in the production of personal risk assessments, to ensure we implement effective agreed control measures. This process is paramount and will support employees ensuring that we respond to individuals with empathy and clarity. and fostering a supportive and caring employment relationship.

6. Recovery

6.1. The Service has set up, encouraged and promoted lateral flow testing for all staff attending a workplace or interacting with colleagues and members of the public.

6.2. As we move forward in line with the Government 'Road Map', WFRS will align with the County Council reinstatement plan where all premises will be reviewed with the emphasis on ventilation and occupancy levels. Whilst we have carried out similar work previously, this review is based on the latest understanding and will grade rooms on suitability for activities and managers have been advised that changes may be required as a result of these reviews. WFRS are liaising with the WCC team prioritising the Service requirements, as we already have key staff working in our premises and carrying out critical services. The WFRS Health and Safety Manager will be working closely with Facilities Support to carry out the accommodation reviews.
https://warwickshiregovuk.sharepoint.com/sites/Coronavirus/SitePages/WCC-Reinstatement-toolkit.aspx

7. Health and Safety Monitoring/Performance Data
Accidents/Incidents (Adverse Events) Statistics - Trend Analysis

Type of Adverse Event	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Dangerous Occurrence	0	1	2
Major Injuries	0	0	1
RIDDOR Injuries (over 7 days)	2	2	1
Near Misses	49	46	93
Personnel Injury	30	33	21
Vehicle Incident	23	32	23
Violence and Aggression	7	7	8

7.1. It is encouraging and positive to report the number of personal injuries has decreased this year. All incidents have been investigated and where required improvements made. There were no significant trends identified.

7.2. This positive decrease is the same for the number of vehicle incidents reported.

7.3. There has been a small increase in the number of violence and aggression incidents, these incidents of verbal abuse affect Fire Control Operators and Operational Crews. The incidents which occurred during operational incidents, are generally from members of the public under the influence of alcohol. Crews and Control Operators have undertaken diffuser training and are able to manage the situation. During the operational incidents police are also notified and will attend if deemed necessary. The Service has set up a working group to look at the procurement and use of body worn cameras (BWC) following a proof of concept BWC initiative in 2019/20.

7.4. As with all adverse events the aim is to have zero reporting, with the exception of near miss reporting. We have during this reporting period seen an increase in this area. However, an effective health and safety management system, which in turn leads to a positive health and safety culture, includes the identifying and frequency of reporting near misses. As a service it is positive that personnel proactively recognise what constitutes a near miss which needs to be reported and subsequently investigated

8. The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR)

8.1. Two Dangerous Occurrences were reported this year, these involved two separate incidents on the same training course where Breathing Apparatus (BA) sets were reported going into free flow (constant flow of air into the facemask). It was identified following a robust investigation that there was a small amount of debris in the lung demand valve (LDV) which caused one set to go into free flow. The second incident was caused by too much tolerance in a spring within the LDV of the set. As a result of the above findings, all personnel were reminded of the correct cleaning and stowage of BA set facemasks and all training sets were inspected for the fault found and are now subject to a test twice a year.

8.2. A ‘major injury’ occurred in July this year, this is the first incident of this type for three years.

8.3. The injury occurred during a Dedicated Retained Application Support Process (DRASP) where an applicant stumbled and fell during the initial warmup, as they fell they put their hands out to break their fall and in doing so fractured their left wrist.

8.4. A full investigation took place which identified the control measures in the risk assessment had been followed, including the wearing of PPE, which were sized before the event and an inspection of the drill yard prior to use. These events which are held regularly are facilitated by competent instructors and this particular activity was overseen by the WFRS Personal Training Instructor.

8.5. The investigation concluded that the injured person simply stumbled and fell, despite all reasonable and practicable controls being taken.

8.6. There was a decrease in the number of ‘Over 7 Day’ injuries. The one event reported resulted in an injury to a hydrant technician who works for the WFRS Water Team. While carrying out an inspection on an underground water tank, they injured their back whilst lifting the hydrant lid. The technician who had undertaken Manual Handling Training was taken to hospital where it was confirmed they had sustained a back-strain injury, which resulted in eight working days lost.

8.7. The inspection of underground water tanks has been suspended and

therefore the lifting of the covers will no longer take place. The requirement for the tanks to be inspected in the future is currently being looked into and mechanical options considered to replace the two person lift of the larger covers.

9. Common Identified Causes

Causes	2018/2019		2019/2020		2020/2021	
	Half Year	Year End	Half Year	Year End	Half Year	Year End
Personal Injury	13	30	20	33	11	21
Manual Handling	1	2	6	6	1	3
Slips, Trips & Falls	0	6	2	6	4	9
Hit by moving, flying or falling object	4	4	6	6	1	1
Hit something fixed or stationary	3	3	3	6	5	7
Burns - Operational	0	0	0	1	0	0
Burns - Training	1	3	1	1	0	0
RIDDOR Major Accidents	0	0	0	0	0	1
RIDDOR Over 7 Day Accidents	1	2	2	2	1	1
RIDDOR Dangerous Occurrences	0	0	0	1	0	2
Near Misses/Hits	41	49	19	46	44	93
Acts of aggression to Operational Staff	5	6	5	7	3	6
Acts of aggression to Non-Operational Staff	0	1	0	0	0	2
No. Employees	**458**	**426**	**458**	**435**	**429**	**441**

9.1. The decrease in the number of manual handling injuries is encouraging.

9.2. The team are currently in the process of producing a poster campaign to raise the awareness of injuries which are caused by slips, trips and falls. This should assist and help to reduce the numbers moving forward.

10. Occupational Health Team Update 2020/2021

10.1. Counselling and Psychotherapy Activity – 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021

10.1.1. During the above period there were 32 new referrals, 10 of which were returning clients with new presenting issues. In total, 574 formally contracted counselling/psychotherapy sessions have been provided, this is an increase of 161 session for the same period year-end 2019/20. This figure does not include one off appointments, or people who just needed a safe and neutral space to talk through a current issue without therapeutic intervention.

10.1.2. The Client Profile for the above-mentioned period

10.1.3. Total of 49 Clients – 36 Uniformed and 13 Non-Uniformed
Male – 32 and Female – 17

Presenting Issue	Total No. of cases	Work Related	Personal	Combination	Comments
Anxiety and OCD	**9**	2	3	4	
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	**8**	4	2	2	EMDR Therapy provided
Depression	**7**		2	5	Clinically assessed
Relationships/Divorce	**6**		5	1	
Health/Terminal Illness	**5**		5		
Addiction	**3**		3		
Covid-19 Impact	**3**		1	2	Impact on health and isolation
Bereavement	**2**		2		
Low Mood	**2**			2	
Suicide Risk/Ideation	**2**		2		One high risk with clear intent.
Phobia	**2**		2		EMDR Therapy provided
Totals	**49**	**6**	**27**	**16**	

10.1.4. **Client Profile and Presenting Issues as of 31 March 2021**
Total of 27 ongoing clients - 19 Uniformed and 8 Non-Uniformed

Male - 16 and Female - 11

Presenting Issue	Total No. of cases	Work Related	Personal	Combination	Comments

Anxiety	**7**	1	2	4	
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	**5**	2	2	1	EMDR Therapy provided
Relationships/Divorce	**4**		3	1	
Covid-19 Impact	**3**		1	2	Impact on health and isolation
Depression	**3**			3	Clinically assessed
Health/Terminal Illness	**2**		2		
Addiction	**1**		1		
Low Mood	**1**			1	
Suicidal Risk/Ideation	**1**		1		1 High risk with clear intent
Totals	**27**	**3**	**12**	**12**	

Notes:

In order to continue psychological support services during the COVID pandemic services have been delivered using a range of remote platforms, including Teams, Zoom, FaceTime and telephone. However, client preference and a number of high-risk clients have returned to having their sessions face to face with appropriate risk assessments and control measures in place. The transition to on-line working has been challenging for the OHWM, due to the increased level of fatigue and screen time.

10.1.5. **Statistics for period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021**

Service Medical Advisor Activity

Type of Appointment	Number Undertaken	Comments
Clinical Reviews	90	Face to Face and Telephone To monitor progress and phased return to work plans
Referrals	19	A range of issues concerning physical wellbeing with a majority being Muscular Skeletal
LGV Medicals	21	100% pass rate

Asbestos Screenings	5	H.S.E guidance does not allow us to undertake Spirometry testing – lung function as a routine, these were particular circumstances which needed to be addressed.
New Recruit Medicals (On-call and W/T)	27	No issues to note
Case Conferences	4	To review long-term absences and 2 Ill Health Retirements.

Occupational Health Advisor

Type of Appointment	Number Undertaken	Comments
3 Yearly Medicals	118	Paper based with specific issues followed up with the individual.
Referrals and sickness absence reviews	25	Monthly meeting with HR now established to monitor and update all absences,
LGV Medicals	21	100% pass rate
BAI Medicals	5	H.S.E guidance does not allow us to undertake Spirometry testing – lung function
New Recruit Medicals (RDS and WT)	27	No issues to note
Post Covid-19 Review	2	To ensure individual was fit to resume operational duties following Covid-19 a spirometry was undertake for exceptional circumstances

Failed to Attend Appointments

Person with whom appointment was missed	Number of missed appointments
Service Medical Advisor	2
Occupational Health Advisor	0

Private Treatment Referrals and Flu Vaccinations

Type of Appointment	Number Undertaken	Cost to WFRS	Comments
Physiotherapy	58	£2900	Combination of upper and lower limb disorders 2 Cases required surgery A majority remained at work or on light duties
Private Scans (MRI, CT etc.)	0	0	

External Counselling/Mentoring	6	£360	Conflict of interest for OHWM, therefore not ethical.
Eye Protection	14	£1610	Provision of safety glasses and BA inserts where appropriate
Other Consultants	0	0	
Podiatry Assessments	1	£48	When PPE is causing issues for wearer
Dyslexia Assessments	0	0	
Ill Health Retirement IQMP Assessments and Reports	2	£1100	

10.1.6. **Annual Fitness Testing**

In line with previous years, the fitness testing is completed with 14 people unable to take the annual test due to injury or long-term sickness. Overall, 325 have been completed and passed, which equates to a 100% pass rate for those able to undertake the test.

10.1.7. **General update and new activities during this period**

In order to respond to the COVID pandemic, we have been adjusting how we work and deliver our services. On the whole this has been successful, and we have endeavoured not to impact on our core services as much as possible. This has been achieved by moving to provision of services remotely and using technology to good effect. There has however been an impact on the team by way of isolation and increased fatigue levels associated with working online for long periods of time. The provision of psychotherapy is a good example of this, because in essence you are missing over 50% of the usual cues including body-language and the non-verbal communication.

During the last 12 months we have undertaken a number of initiatives to support our staff and the work of Occupational Health as follows:

- Provision of mental health and suicide prevention training for WCC Foster Carers on 20 and 21 October 2021.
- Wellbeing packs sent to all new green book employees, which provides information of all wellbeing services available to them.
- Wellbeing Noticeboards and information folder available on all stations and teams.
- Regular Occupational Health newsletters, covering relevant topics and COVID.
- Input of information to the COVID Portal.
- Contacting staff who are isolating or having to shield.

10.1.8. **Forthcoming initiatives**

- Development of information in respect of ‘Long-COVID’, for both the physical and psychological impacts.

- We will be writing to all personnel who have had COVID personally to provide information about long-COVID and inviting them for a health screening or psychological support appointment with the relevant member of the Occupational Health team.
- Expansion of the Wellbeing Ambassadors team, training of new team members will commence in June 2021.
- Development of the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Portal – we will have all of our information in one location, including health promotions, wellbeing advise, forms and policies.

Orders have been placed for flu vaccinations, we plan to run clinics in both the North and South of the county during September.

11. Conclusion

11.1. This year has been very challenging for both the Health and Safety and Occupational Health Teams, due to the additional workloads which were imposed on the teams, due to COVID. The H&S team was stretched for capacity, as the Health and Safety Manager played a critical role in the BCCT, to ensure COVID compliance in workplaces, by producing an overarching risk assessment, workplace and personal risk assessments, as the majority of WFRS personnel remained in the workplace, to provide statutory emergency response.

11.2. The Occupational Health Manager has continued to provide necessary counselling services. The sessions were revised to ensure effective support online and in some cases, face to face appointments were essential, these were also assessed to ensure COVID compliance.

11.3. Considerable work has been undertaken to reduce the risk of isolation mainly due to many ‘green book’ (non-operational) staff working from home. We have produced regular wellbeing newsletters, which have focussed on both psychological and physical wellbeing.

11.4. It is encouraging to be able to report the number of adverse events and personal injuries have reduced this year.

11.5. Overall, both teams have continued to work effectively and prioritise their work to ensure we meet the ongoing demands arising from COVID, by providing a robust service as we protect and support the health, safety and wellbeing of all WFRS personnel and provide a professional service to ensure the Fire Authority meets its statutory and moral duties.

11.6. The Occupational Health, and Wellbeing and Health and Safety Teams will continue to prioritise their work to ensure we meet the ongoing demands arising from COVID, aligning with the County Council reinstatement plan with the focus being people and mental wellbeing. The WFRS Health and Safety Manager will be working closely with Facilities Support to carry out the

accommodation reviews to support the plan and the health, safety and wellbeing of all WFRS personnel.

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Staff and Pensions Committee

13 September 2021

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Annual Review 2020/2021 (previously known as Annual Workforce, Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap Report)

Recommendations
That the Staff & Pensions Committee:

1. Approves the publication on the Council's website of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Annual Review 2020/2021 at Appendix A, to meet the statutory requirement to publish annually equality information relating to employees, including gender pay gap information.

2. Approves the publication on the Government's gender pay gap website of the Council's gender pay gap figures, based on 31 March 2021, as required by the gender pay gap regulations. Appendix B outlines what the Council is required to publish.

3. Notes the performance information in relation to EDI during 2020/2021 and endorses our targets outlined at 3.5, in recognition that continued improvement will take time.

4. Notes the work in our approach to EDI and supports the priority actions for 2021/2022 at 2.7.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 At Warwickshire County Council (WCC), we all share a common vision, to make Warwickshire the best it can be, and by making it the best it can be means making it the best for **everyone**. We recognise that our people are our greatest asset and when they feel valued, included, safe and supported, this positivity reaches the people we are here for, our customers and communities.

1.2 The Council has published workforce diversity data relating to its employees annually, following consideration at Staff and Pensions committee, as required since 2012 under the Equality Act 2010, to demonstrate its compliance with the general equality duty under section 149 (1) that WCC must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to: -

A) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other

conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.

B) Advance equality of opportunity, and;

C) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

1.3 The charts within Appendix 1 show the Council's workforce diversity information, based on the year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, and its gender pay gap data at 31 March 2021. The statutory deadline for publishing both sets of data is the 30 March 2022.

1.4 At Staff and Pensions in September 2020, it was agreed that the Council would also voluntarily publish its ethnicity pay gap data from that reporting year onwards, because we believe it's an important step towards ensuring our workforce is diverse, inclusive and fair for everyone. The ethnicity pay gap is an equality measure that shows the difference in average (mean and median) earnings between Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) and White British / Not stated employees, however we recognise that BAME combines and includes a wide range of ethnicities, therefore we have disaggregated our ethnicity pay gap data within this report to explore it further.

1.5 This reporting year we have also decided to voluntarily publish our disability pay gap data and will continue to do so. The disability pay gap shows the difference in average (mean and median) earnings between employees with a declared disability and employees without.

1.6 This insight, alongside other data, including but not limited to, our regular check in surveys, qualitative data captured through a range of channels (e.g. Staff Networks, Employee Forums, focus groups etc.), supports us in setting our objectives and measuring our progress.

1.7 In addition, this report outlines our commitments, what's been achieved so far and the immediate actions that we will take to improve and accelerate progress and change. By publishing this document, we are making a public commitment to change for the better and holding ourselves accountable for our progress.

1.8 This report pulls out the main themes from the annual review for consideration by the Committee.

2.0 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) at a glance:

2.1 Both our mean and median gender pay gaps have reduced since 31 March 2020. These figures are lower than the national gender pay gap figures and the public sector as a whole.

Gender Pay Gaps	31 March 2021	31 March 2020	Difference
Mean	2.6%	2.7%	-0.1%
Median	5.4%	8.7%	-3.3%

2.2 Both our mean and median ethnicity pay gaps have slightly decreased since 31 March 2020, with both still being a negative measure. A negative measure indicates the extent to which Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) employees earn, on average, more than their White British / not stated colleagues. We have also disaggregated our ethnicity pay gap data in this year's report to explore and understand it further, because we recognise the limitations of combining everyone who's not White British as Black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME).

Ethnicity Pay Gaps	31 March 2021	31 March 2020	Difference
Mean	-0.8%	-2.6%	-1.8%
Median	-2.2%	-3.2%	-1%

2.3 Our mean disability pay gap has reduced whilst our median disability pay gap has increased since 31 March 2020. This is because there's a less even split of employees with and without a declared disability across all the Pay Band Quartiles, with more employees with a declared disability in the Lower Quartiles than the Upper Quartiles. Talent Development is outlined as one of our key priorities at 2.7, with a particular focus on disability.

Disability Pay Gaps	31 March 2021	31 March 2020	Difference
Mean	3.5%	3.9%	-0.4%
Median	8.6%	5.9%	+2.7%

2.4 Our employee's diversity data disclosure rates have increased across all groups; however, we still need to improve this which is why one of our priorities is to develop and deliver Our People Data campaign.

2.5 Our corporate oversight in this area has strengthened through the revamped Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Group, compromised of diverse employees from across the Council, enabling a one Council approach putting EDI at the heart of everything we do.

2.6 Our staff networks have grown whilst new ones have been established, providing members with the opportunity to support one another, connect, and discuss prevalent issues and enact change.

2.7 Our vision will be achieved through multiple enablers, and our actions to date are helping us to be an inclusive organisation, which is evidenced by our data. Our

priority is to continue to deliver our plan, whilst focusing on the following over the next year: -

- **Our People Data campaign.** We're only as good as our data, that's why we want to drive disclosure rates to help us understand our landscape better, become better at identifying key issues, and measuring our progress. To enable us to do this we need to focus on dialogue with our people to better understand, educate and build trust through a range of activities.

- **Inclusive Recruitment and Onboarding.** We will review and develop our current practices in relation to attraction, recruitment and onboarding, helping us to become a more inclusive employer.

- **Talent Development.** We will explore and analyse possible options for advancement at all stages of employee journeys so that our workforce represents the diversity of Warwickshire at all levels within the organisation and there are no barriers to progression for different groups, with a particular focus on ethnicity and disability, resulting in increased performance.

3.0 Measuring Success and Performance Data

3.1 We use our data to give us an increased awareness and an accurate understanding of the issues we're responding to. This evidence-based approach lets us make sure that equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) remains a core business priority.

3.2 When asking our people for their diversity data we give them the option of prefer not to say. Our areas where there's the highest proportion of employees selecting prefer not to say / not stated is religion and belief and sexual orientation.

3.3 In reviewing our approach in engagement, throughout the pandemic we have moved from an annual YourSay survey to more regular shorter check in surveys where respondent's diversity data was collated and analysed. Similarly, the highest proportion of employees selecting prefer not to say was also religion and belief and sexual orientation. In measuring our success, we benchmark ourselves against other local authorities. We are only able to do this for some of the check in questions due to the similarity of the question. The average response rate is 45%: -

Statement	2020-2021 % agreement score	2019/2020-2021 difference	Benchmark Score	Variation to Benchmark
Warwickshire County Council is a good employer	84%	+9%	56%	+28%
Warwickshire County Council	83%	+2%	Not available	

values equality and diversity in the workplace				
I am treated with fairness and respect at work	82%	+0%	Not available	
I feel valued and recognised at work	71%	+8%	50%	+21%
I have not experienced or witnessed any form of bullying or harassment at work in the last 12 months	78%	+5%	Not available	

3.4 Individuals who stated prefer not to say scored lower in measures of wellbeing, employee engagement and agreement to Warwickshire County Council valuing fairness and respect and that they haven't experienced or witnessed any form of bullying and harassment at work in the last 12 months. In addition, 14.3% of our leavers preferred not to say, whilst only 8.9% of our workforce have selected prefer not to say. Our People Data campaign is outlined as one of our key priorities at 2.7.

3.5 To measure our success we have identified the following targets: -

- **Pay Gap Data.** We will be an inclusive organisation when our gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps (mean and medium) are within 5% of 0% either way.

- **Disclosure Rates.** An upward trend in diversity data disclosure rates every year. This will enable us to truly understand whether our workforce represents the diversity of Warwickshire at all levels within the organisation.

- **Check-in Survey Data.** An upward trend for the agreement scores against the following statements, plus benchmarking against other local authorities: -

  - Warwickshire County Council is a good employer
  - I believe Warwickshire County Council values equality and diversity in the workplace
  - I am treated with fairness and respect at work
  - I feel valued and recognised at work
  - I have not experienced or witnessed any form of bullying or harassment at work in the last 12 months

4.0 Conclusions

4.1 2020/2021 has been an unprecedented year. One which has seen a seismic

movement in the equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) landscape. However, we have made exceptional progress in terms of delivering our EDI plan in line with Our People Strategy.

4.2 EDI continues to be a key priority area for the Council as we continue to deliver our plan, focusing on Our People Data campaign, inclusive recruitment and onboarding, and talent development over the next year.

4.3 The diversity of our workforce continues to be roughly reflective of the diversity of Warwickshire, however we will re-look at this when the Census 2021 results are available.

4.4 Our gender pay gaps continue to decrease, whilst our ethnicity pay gaps have increased, however both are still a negative measure, this indicates the extent to which Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) employees earn, on average, more than their White British / not stated colleagues. We have also disaggregated our ethnicity pay gap data in this year's report to explore and understand it further, because we recognise the limitations of combining everyone who's not White British as BAME.

4.5 Whilst our mean disability pay gap has decreased, our medium disability pay gap has increased, this is because there's a less even split of employees with and without a declared disability across all the Pay Band Quartiles, with more employees with a declared disability in the Lower Quartiles than the Upper Quartiles. Talent Development is outlined as one of our key priorities at 2.7, with a particular focus on disability.

4.5 We have identified targets set out in 3.5 to measure our success. When benchmarking our data against other local authorities, as well as the Census 2011 and national / public sector / west midlands pay gap data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS), it is clear we are performing exceptionally, however we know we've still got a lot to do and we plan to do more work to ensure our people and the people we're here for feel valued, included, safe, supported and welcome in Warwickshire.

5.0 Financial Implications

None.

6.0 Environmental Implications

None.

Background Papers

Appendix 1 - Our People focus on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Annual Review 2021/2022

Appendix 2 – What the Council is required to publish (Gender Pay Gap)

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Not applicable.

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OUR PEOPLE

Equality, Diversity, & Inclusion

Annual Review **2020/2021**

Warwickshire County Council, a great place to work where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Warwickshire's Story

Reflections and a view from Monica Fogarty, Chief Executive

At Warwickshire County Council, we share a common vision, to make Warwickshire the best it can be, and this means making it the best for everyone. We've long felt that the Council has a significant role to play in tackling inequalities. We believe that by putting equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of everything we do, we will be best equipped to achieve our vision. We recognise that our people are our greatest asset and when they feel valued, included, safe and supported, this positivity reaches the people we are here for, our communities and customers.

The murder of George Floyd just over a year ago, proved to be a seminal moment triggering global anti-racism protests, as people across the World demanded the overhaul of systems which perpetuate racism and social inequality. The past year in particular, has shown how issues of inequality affect individuals and communities. The coronavirus pandemic and its devastating effects highlighted disparate health and economic outcomes for diverse populations.

This report outlines our commitments, what's been achieved so far and the immediate actions that we will take to improve and accelerate progress and change. We must lead by example, which is why by publishing this document, we are making a public commitment to change for the better and holding ourselves accountable for our progress.

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00. At a glance

1. Both our mean and median gender pay gaps have reduced since 31 March 2020. At 31 March 2021, our mean gender pay gap is 2.6% and our median gender pay gap is 5.4%. These are lower than the national gender pay gap figures and the public sector as a whole.

2. Both our mean and median ethnicity pay gaps have slightly decreased since 31 March 2020, with both still being a negative measure. At 31 March 2021, our mean ethnicity pay gap is -0.79% and our median ethnicity pay gap is –2.2%. We have disaggregated our ethnicity pay gap data in this year's report to explore and understand it further, because we recognise the limitations of combining everyone who is not White British as Black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME).

3. Our mean disability pay gap has reduced whilst our median disability pay gap has increased since 31 March 2020. This is because there is a less even split of employees with and without a declared disability across all the pay band quartiles, with more employees with a declared disability in the lower quartiles than the upper quartiles. Talent Development is outlined as one of our key priorities, with a particular focus on disability.

4. Our employees' diversity data disclosure rates have increased across all groups; however, we still need to improve this which is why one of our priorities is to develop and deliver Our People Data campaign.

5. Our corporate oversight in this area has strengthened through the revamped Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Group, compromised of diverse employees from across the Council, enabling a one Council approach putting EDI at the heart of everything we do.

6. Our staff networks have grown whilst new ones have been established, providing members with the opportunity to support one another, connect, and discuss prevalent issues and enact change.

01. Our People Strategy

Through the later end of 2020, the council refreshed its Our People Strategy, to drive through the vision of Warwickshire County Council, a great place to work where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best.

Embodying our Values and Behaviours, the Our People Strategy is built on 6 building blocks:

Our behaviours

Our behaviours were first introduced in 2016 and these haven't changed. Our behaviours frame how we should behave at work. They help us to understand how we should go about our work and the way we should interact with each other and our customers.

To support the achievement of our vision, five key organisational values have been identified:

High performing | Collaborative | Customer focused | Accountable | Trustworthy

Our People Strategy building blocks

The building blocks provide the foundations for the delivery of Our People Strategy vision. We have identified six key building blocks:

For each building block we have a clear set of outcomes we need to achieve so that we can fulfill our vision and transform as an organisation in a way which is sustainable.

02. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion vision and objectives

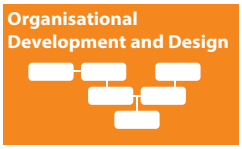
Our equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) vision - **Warwickshire County Council, a place where everyone feels valued, included, safe, supported and welcome -** places our approach to inclusivity at the heart of everything we do.

We want our Employees to feel…	We want our Communities to feel…	We want our Members to feel…
Valued, included, safe, supported, welcome and that they can reach their potential no matter what their background.	Safe, supported and that when they interact with Warwickshire County Council in whatever capacity, that they consistently receive a dedicated, inclusive and accessible service.	Included and supported by our action plan. Leveraging support from Members where possible will enhance our external reputation and internal profile.

Our EDI objectives are supported by Our People Strategy and our Council Plan 2020-25. To fulfil Our People Vision, Warwickshire County Council, a great place to work where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best, we recognise that diversity and inclusion across the Council plays a role in this and that we all have different talents, different attributes and bring different skills to the table. By doing this we will be able to develop, adapt, innovate and progress. EDI plays an important role in delivering the outcomes of the Our People Strategy such as: -

- Our people are diverse, feel that they belong and can bring their whole self to work
- We will listen, learn and act to create an inclusive organisation with a sustainable and resilient workforce
- We will break down barriers to enable a collaborative, innovative and accountable environment
- Our offer enables us to attract, retain, engage and motivate a diverse and talented workforce
- Our people are celebrated for their diversity and bring the capabilities and behaviour to drive a high-performance culture

Our EDI objectives ensure that there is an integrated and proactive approach to EDI that meets our Public Sector Equality Duty, is informed by sector best practice, and supports the achievement of our values, behaviours and vision.

Our People Strategy Building Blocks	No.	Objective	Expected Outcomes
Culture, Values and Behaviour	1.	Provide a diverse range of education and training opportunities related to EDI for our people to access.	Our people are aware and actively engage in WCC's approach to EDI, understand their responsibilities and feel they can act accordingly with confidence to promote the development of a more inclusive culture, improving our overall performance.
	2.	Continue to actively support a range of local and national diversity and inclusion events and activities.	Increase in the profile of WCC's commitment to EDI.
Leadership	3.	Harness the collective knowledge and experience of our customers, employees and partners through collaborative working to enable learning and tackle the issues that affect us all.	Increase in engagement, partnership working and understanding of equality issues, enabling the Council to act.
	4.	Ensure each employee has at least one objective in their Appraisal, in the period 2020-2025, which explicitly supports the Council's EDI ambitions.	Appraisals inform development.
	5.	Develop a Warwickshire Equality Charter with other organisations to help improve equality, diversity and inclusion across Warwickshire.	Organisations have the resources, information and support to help improve equality, diversity and inclusion across Warwickshire.
Organisational development and Design 	6.	Review and develop current practices in relation to policies, processes and services, including the commissioning of services.	WCC has robust mechanisms in place to make sure our policies, processes and services, including commissioned services, are accessible and inclusive.
Performance	7.	Ensure we have the infrastructure in place which to provide accurate data to inform our decision making and measure our progress.	WCC can identify key issues and measure progress in relation to EDI.

Reward and Recognition 	**8.**	Continue to recognise and highlight opportunities and the success of EDI initiatives and people.	Increase in employee engagement and motivation.
Talent Development and Career Opportunities 	**9.** **10.** **11.**	Ensure all our learning and development is increasingly accessible and inclusive. Review and develop current practices in relation to attraction, recruitment and development. Explore and analyse possible options for advancement at all stages of employee journeys.	WCC offers every employee fair training and development opportunities. WCC's workforce represents the diversity of Warwickshire at all levels within the organisation and there are no barriers to progression for different groups, resulting in increased performance.

Throughout the report, we have used Our People Strategy building block icons to help you connect the stories we tell with our EDI objectives. What follows is just a selection of our work on EDI over the last year.

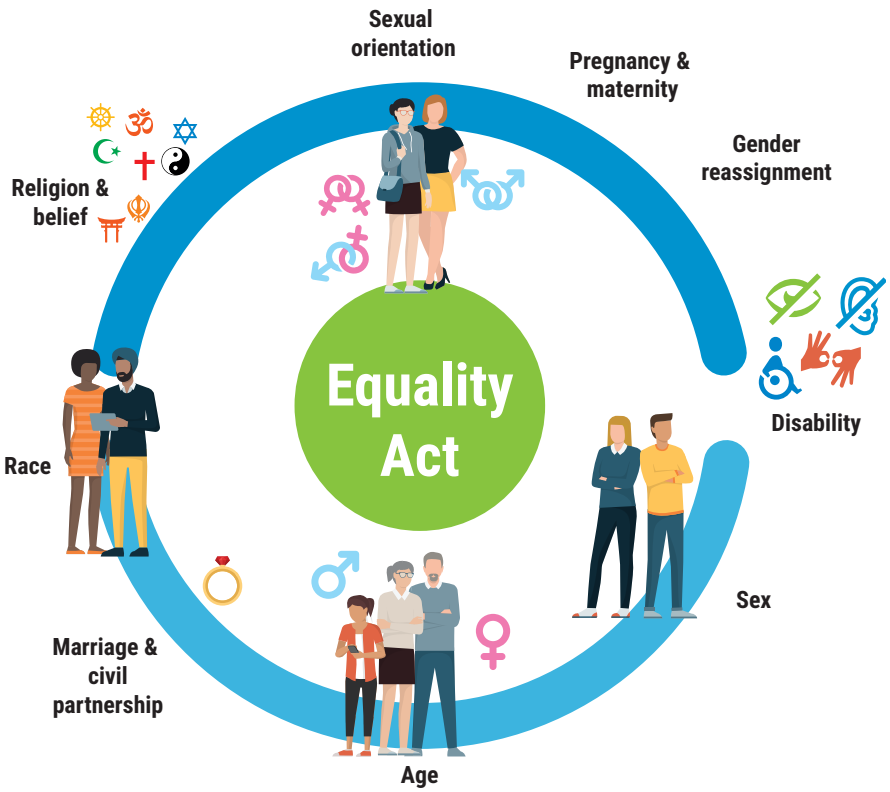
In addition to our EDI objectives, we commission a Pan Equalities Service. Our current contract is held by EQuIP until March 2022.

The service works towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination, whilst promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people of different groups under each the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010, within and across the Public and Third Sectors to meet the following outcomes: -

1. Improved community cohesion and equality within Warwickshire.

2. People living or working in Warwickshire feel that their voices are heard, and they have influence in local decision making.

3. People living or working in Warwickshire are safe and protected from harm and are able to remain independent for longer.



03. Measuring Success

To measure our success, we have identified the following targets: -

- **Pay Gap Data.** We will be an inclusive organisation when our gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps (mean and medium) are within 5% of 0% either way.

- **Disclosure Rates.** An upward trend in diversity data disclosure rates every year. This will enable us to truly understand whether our workforce represents the diversity of Warwickshire at all levels within the organisation.

- **Check-in survey data.** An upward trend for the agreement scores against the following statements, plus benchmarking against other local authorities: -

  - Warwickshire County Council is a good employer

  - I believe Warwickshire County Council values equality and diversity in the workplace

  - I am treated with fairness and respect at work

  - I feel valued and recognised at work

  - I have not experienced or witnessed any form of bullying or harassment at work in the last 12 months

04. Achievements 2020/2021

Introduction of our Diversity and Inclusion STAR Award!

Diversity and inclusion are crucial to ensuring a positive, productive workplace and an outstanding service to our customers. In 2020 we launched our new Diversity and Inclusion award as part of our annual employee awards to celebrate and recognise individuals and teams for making a difference to individuals, communities, business, and our people.

Empowering and Equipping Our People

Culture, values and behaviour

We empower and equip our people with accountable freedom, encourage considered curiosity to learn more about diversity, and support our employees to make the right decisions.

This year we have invested significantly in our education and training opportunities for employees. Our approach is to be diverse in our delivery, through a range of webinars, sharing case studies and stories, podcasts and resources.

We wanted to highlight an example of work being done to find solutions, build partnerships and bring about sustained change for people in Warwickshire. The Foster Carer Training and Qualifications team developed a session covering Black History to support Foster Carers so that they can form bonds with their children through cultural understanding, and help the children develop a positive sense of identity. This has now become a core component of the training programme.

As part of our commitment to Race Equality we held four open sessions for our ethnically diverse employees, with the aim to start the conversation about the impact and use of the acronym Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME), as well as capture common themes which enabled us to identify key next steps. This included the development of our Racial Language Guide and Guidance for Holding Discussions About Racial Inequalities, as well as the development and delivery of our Microaggressions workshop, enabling our people to understand how small subtle acts of racism can have a large impact and discover techniques to minimise the occurrence. We also commissioned Pearn Kandola to deliver their Free to Soar: Race & Wellbeing in Organisations sessions and launched our Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Anonymous Reporting Form, to gain data on behaviour and enable the Council to target training accordingly and understand more about why people may not feel confident in raising the

Strong communication campaigns throughout the year amplified and promoted other diversity celebrations and inclusion initiatives, and highlighted the importance of turning conversation into action to inform our people around the significance of being inclusive in our language and anti-discriminatory in our actions. Highlights included our Women's Staff Network encouraging colleagues to make gender equality pledges for International Women's Day, Heritage and Culture working with community leaders to add more culturally and ethnically diverse stories to their archives, and the Libraries putting together reading lists for Holocaust Memorial Day. We also celebrated Carers Week, which saw our Carers Staff Network launch our own Let's Talk Caring Conversation template.This enables employees to have open and honest conversations with their manager about their caring responsibilities and agree how each employee is uniquely supported to manage their work/home/caring balance and remain well, enabling each individual to be the best they can be. In addition to this, we also launched a new Carer's policy, as well as added Carer Aware training to the induction programme for all new starters, and started collating data on how many carers we have in our workforce, alongside other diversity data, which we'll be able to report on next year.

"The training really resonated with me. It gave a tremendous amount of understanding about Black history and its importance, along with how to educate the children we care for so that they also develop an awareness" – Foster Carer

Council Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Group

We have made progress in co-ordinating our work through strengthening our corporate oversight in this area through the revamped Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Group. The group has a diverse membership from across the council. The group have developed an action plan aligned to Our People Strategy, and are helping to equip and empower our senior leadership team to be able to support the Council in effectively delivering a change in culture and mindset through a range of inputs at Senior Leadership Forum.

Responding to COVID-19

As part of the Coventry and Warwickshire Creative Health Alliance, Warwickshire County Council Public Health has commissioned several artists to deliver important vaccination information in innovative and creative ways across the county. The purpose of the artwork is to provide reassurance and encourage positive behavioural change towards getting the COVID-19 vaccine. The artists have worked in a range of media to create this engaging work, from comic strips and videos to animations, songs and even the colourful wrapping of messaging across public transport. Where required each artist has also worked closely with focus groups in order to obtain real, valid experiences and represent the genuine thoughts and feelings of Warwickshire's diverse residents. Find out more about **COVID-19 Arts Projects.** We also worked in partnership with EQuIP to reach and support our diverse communities and provide COVID-19 information and support available in a range of languages and accessible formats.

Fire and Rescue Recruitment

Our communities will become safer if we recruit, retain and develop future leaders from a cross section of our communities. To be able to remove and understand cultural barriers in applying for a career within the Fire Service, and enable us to foster good relations with our diverse communities, we held ten taster day events at different locations as part of our recruitment campaign, encouraging different groups of people, including Women, as well as Neurodiverse, LGBTQ+, and Black and ethnically diverse individuals, to view the Fire Service as a career and apply. These enabled different groups of people to find out more about the service through a range of myth busting activities. Overall, 86 attended, 86 stated they found it interesting and helpful, 75 were going to apply, 5 undecided and 6 were not going to take their applications any further.

It's important that we provide an inclusive and supportive working environment for everyone who works here. Therefore, we reviewed and introduced new policies and practices. This included the introduction of a Menopause policy with the aim to ensure that individuals suffering with menopause symptoms feel confident to discuss it, and ask for support and any reasonable adjustments so they can continue to be successful in their roles, and foster an environment in which colleagues can openly and comfortably instigate conversations or engage in discussions about menopause.

Working with Pride

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service celebrated Pride by hosting a series of virtual webinars in partnership with colleagues at Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Royal Berkshire and Buckinghamshire fire and rescue services. The webinars were a chance for the fire services to listen and to understand the communities around them and to have an open conversation on how fire and rescue services can improve for the LGBTQ+ community.

In addition, we worked with the NHS South Warwickshire Foundation Trust (SWFT) to adopt and implement the NHS Rainbow Badge Scheme locally. The scheme focuses on raising awareness about how LGBTQ+ service users are more likely to face discrimination when accessing healthcare services than heterosexual users. In order to gain a greater understanding of those potential barriers, it was critical that we built trust within the local LGBTQ+ community groups across Warwickshire and listen to their concerns and learn from them. We commissioned a piece of work, led by EQuIP, to explore and understand the experiences of LGBTQ+ people when accessing health and social care provision in Warwickshire and their view on the Rainbow Badge scheme. A specialised training programme was developed and delivered to local Rainbow Badge scheme champions within maternity and children's services, which included a service user sharing her and her wife's experience of SWFT maternity services and how it could have been improved.

100% of respondents felt that the:

- objectives for the sessions were met
- role of the Champion was clearly defined
- training was applicable to the workplace

"I want to be the most inclusive and respectful practitioner that I can. I want service users to feel comfortable and safe when they access services."
– **NHS Rainbow Badge Champion**

We are proud to support and celebrate Pride and our LGBTQ+ employees and communities. Every year we raise the rainbow flag outside of Shire Hall during LGBT+ History and Pride month. To enable our people to understand and be able to create LGBTQ+ inclusive spaces, we developed and delivered a range of LGBTQ+ Inclusion workshops for our people and our district Councils. We also commissioned Warwickshire Pride, Warwickshire's local LGBTQ+ charity, to deliver a session on Trans Awareness which over 200 people attended. To mark LGBTQ+ History month, members of our LGBTQ+ network shared their hobbies and interests, what this year has meant to them, and what it is they do to support their wellbeing.

(Fire and Rescue's Pride celebrations)

Our Sexual Health team also developed and hosted a range of LGBTQ+ sexual health quizzes, as well as a podcast talking about the barriers in accessing support and what we can do as a service provider to overcome them.

(Rugby Library proudly wearing their pro-noun badges)

Warwickshire Hate Crime Partnership

Warwickshire County Council forms a key role in the Warwickshire Hate Crime Partnership, which brings agencies together to address hate crime in the county. The partnership recognises that hate crime is under-reported in the county and that improvements are needed to increase confidence in the reporting process and broaden the support on offer to victims. This year, the partnership has bought together data from Police, EQuIP, Victim Support, schools and the Crown Prosecution Service to show the true scale of hate in the county and enable the delivery of targeted work across local districts and boroughs, or with communities who are being affected. The impacts of this means the partnership is now more responsive to trends in hate crime reporting, providing reassurance to communities that Warwickshire County Council and partners take hate crime seriously and are committed to addressing this. In addition, throughout the pandemic partners have utilised technology to increase awareness within their own organisations. To mark Hate Crime Awareness Week in October 2020, a professional's webinar was held to educate attendees across partner agencies to understand what hate is and how we all play a role in tackling this and supporting those affected. Warwickshire Police have also implemented a new Hate Crime Support Team to provide greater support to victims of hate crime in the county.

Partners have supported this and along with ongoing communications, encouraged the reporting of hate crime. This has been of particular focus in response to lockdown measures easing, with the impact these have had on community cohesion, as well as in response to Black Lives Matter. The impact of these messages has been an increase in reports to partners with neighbour disputes during national lockdowns being reported as well as a peak in reports to the Police in June 2020, coinciding with the international Black Lives Matter movement.

Armed Forces Covenant

This year we achieved the Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award! To achieve this we amended our HR policies to take into consideration the Armed Forces Covenant, which resulted in the period of paid leave for reservists being extended and the introduction of a Guaranteed Interview Scheme which offers any service person or leaver who meets the essential criteria for any post being advertised externally a guaranteed interview. **To find out more about the Armed Forces Covenant**.

Leading with Data

We use our data to give us an increased awareness and an accurate understanding of the issues we're responding to. This evidence-based approach lets us make sure that equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) remains a core business priority. In reviewing our approach in engagement, throughout the pandemic we have moved from an annual YourSay survey to more regular shorter check-in surveys. The average response rate is 45%.

When asking our people for their diversity data we give them the option of prefer not to say. Our areas where there's the highest proportion of employees selecting prefer not to say / not stated is religion and belief and sexual orientation. As part of our check-in surveys over the last year, respondents diversity data was collated and analysed. Similarly, the highest proportion of employees selecting prefer not to say was also religion and belief and sexual orientation. Individuals who stated prefer not to say scored lower in measures of wellbeing, employee engagement and agreement to Warwickshire County Council valuing fairness and respect and that they haven't experienced or witnessed bullying and harassment at work in the last 12 months. In addition, 14.3% of our leavers preferred not to say, whilst only 8.9% of our workforce have selected prefer not to say. This is a priority area for us, and we have identified the following actions:

- Engagement with employees to understand their views on diversity data collection
- Develop and deliver Our People Data campaign with the aim to build trust with our people about how we use their data and why it's important
- Improve our exit interview data collection

84% of our people agree that Warwickshire County Council is a good employer. (**+9% from 2019**) LA benchmark score = **56%***

83% of our people believe Warwickshire County Council values equality and diversity in the workplace. (**+2% from 2019**)

82% of our people agree that they are treated with fairness and respect at work. (**+0% from 2019**)

71% of our people feel valued and recognised at work. (**+8% from 2019**) LA benchmark score = **50%***

78% of our people have not experienced or witnessed any form of bullying or harassment at work in the last 12 months (**+5% from 2019**)

**We compare against Local Authority (LA) benchmarks where available.*

05. Staff Networks

Warwickshire County Council recognises the power of our staff networks to improve the wellbeing for our people, and the culture of our organisation.

One of the ways we wish to support this is through the development of specific staff networks. Such groups provide members with the opportunity to support one another, connect, and discuss prevalent issues and enact change.

Our staff networks are run by employees for employees, with administrative support from the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team.

We currently have six staff networks:

- Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) Staff Network
- Carers Staff Network
- Christian Staff Network*
- LGBT+ Staff Network
- Women's Staff Network*
- Widows / Widowers Staff Network*

*Newly established in 2020-2021

"The Network has really developed into a lovely community that supports every member with kindness and positivity and has such a wealth of collective knowledge and experience from the lived experience of being carers that is always generously passed on to other members to help them in their caring roles" – Chair of the Carers Staff Network

"I'm passionate about achieving equality for all women and want to ensure that the voices of women from all backgrounds are heard so that WCC and the wider community can be a safe environment in which everyone can thrive and attain their goals" – Chair of the Women's Staff Network

The Chair or a representative from our equality staff networks attend the Council's EDI group meetings as a critical friend, providing the networks with a clear route within WCC to feedback, recognising the importance of two-way communication to enable a collaborative, innovative and accountable environment.

06. Priorities for 2021/2022

Our vision will be achieved through multiple enablers, and our actions to date are helping us to be an inclusive organisation, which is evidenced by our data. Our priority is to continue to deliver our plan, whilst focusing on the following over the next year: -

- **Our People Data Campaign.** We're only as good as our data, that's why we want to drive disclosure rates to help us understand our landscape better, become better at identifying key issues, and measuring our progress. To enable us to do this we need to focus on dialogue with our people to better understand, educate and build trust through a range of activities.

- **Inclusive Recruitment and Onboarding.** We will review and develop our current practices in relation to attraction, recruitment and onboarding, helping us to become a more inclusive employer.

- **Talent Development.** We will explore and analyse possible options for advancement at all stages of employee journeys so that our workforce represents the diversity of Warwickshire at all levels within the organisation, and there are no barriers to progression for different groups, with a particular focus on ethnicity and disability, resulting in increased performance.

07. Conclusion

We hope that throughout these stories you are able to see how equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are at the heart of everything we do, but most importantly support us in reaching our core vision: - "To make Warwickshire the best it can be"

We know we've still got a lot to do and we plan to do more work to ensure our people and the people we're here for feel **valued, included, safe, supported** and **welcome** in Warwickshire.

08. Our Diversity Data

The following charts show our workforce diversity information, based on the year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, and our gender and ethnicity pay gap data at 31 March 2021. For 2020/2021, we have expanded our reporting to include our disability pay gap figures. This section also looks at our turnover and promotion rates by protected characteristics. This insight, alongside other data, including but not limited to, our regular check-in surveys, qualitative data captured through a range of channels (e.g. Staff Networks, Employee Forums, focus groups etc.), supports us in setting our objectives and measuring our progress. The following charts show the trends from 2018/2019, with the main summary being: -

- Both our mean and median gender pay gaps have reduced since 31 March 2020. Our mean gender pay gap at 31 March 2021 is 2.6%. This is a reduction of 0.1% from 2.7% at 31 March 2020. Our median gender pay gap is 5.4%. This is a reduction of 3.3% from 8.7%. This is because the proportion of women in the Upper and Upper Middle Quartiles has increased slightly from 2020, whilst the proportion of women in the Lower Middle and Lower Quartiles has decreased.

- The gender pay gap in the UK has been declining slowly over time; over the last decade it has fallen by just over one-fifth among all employees. Our median gender pay gap is lower than the 2020 national median gender pay gap of 15.5% by 10.1%, and the public sector as a whole by 10.4% where the median gender pay gap is 15.8% (ONS).

- Our mean gender pay gap is lower than the 2020 national median gender pay gap of 14.6% by 12%, and the public sector as a whole by 11.9% where the mean gender pay gap is 14.5% (ONS).

- “Both our mean and median ethnicity pay gaps have slightly decreased since 31 March 2020, with both still being a negative measure. A negative measure indicates the extent to which Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) employees earn, on average, more than their White British / not stated colleagues. We have disaggregated “BAME” in this year’s report, because we recognise its limitations as a term that combines and therefore dilutes the experiences of Black, Asian and other minority ethnic groups.

- Our mean ethnicity pay gap at 31 March 2021 is -0.8%. This is a decrease of 1.8% from -2.6% at 31 March 2020. Our median ethnicity pay gap is –2.2%. This is a decrease of 1% from -3.2%. This figure is lower than the 2019 national median ethnicity pay gap of 1.9%, and significantly lower than the 2018 West Midlands median ethnicity pay gap of 9.5% (ONS).

- By disaggregating our ethnicity pay gap data we are able to explore and understand it better –

Ethnicity	Warwickshire Councty Council median ethnicity pay gap, 2021	2019 national median ethnicity pay gap disaggregated (ONS)
Asian or Asian British	1.7%	-0.9%
Black or Black British	-2.1%	5.7%
Mixed	-6.4%	1.3%

- Our mean disability pay gap at 31 March 2021 is 3.5%. This is a reduction of 0.4% from 3.9% at 31 March 2020.

- Our median disability pay gap is 8.6%. This is an increase of 2.7% from 5.9%, and lower than the 2018 national median disability pay gap of 12.2% (ONS). The reason our median has increased, whilst our mean has decreased, is because there's a less even split of employees with and without a declared disability across all the Pay Band Quartiles, with more employees with a declared disability in the Lower Quartiles than the Upper Quartiles. Talent Development is outlined as one of our key priorities, with a particular focus on disability.

- Our employees' diversity data disclosure rates have increased across all groups; however, we still need to improve this which is why one of our priorities is to develop and deliver Our People Data campaign.

- The ethnic diversity of our Senior Leadership Team (Tiers 0 – 3), has been reported as Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME), Non-BAME, and Not Stated. This is because of the low numbers for some categories which would make individuals identifiable. To enable us to disaggregate "BAME" we explored collating the data set to represent Tiers 0 – 4b Leaders. However, due to the Council going through its Functional Operating Models, the data set for Tiers 0 – 4b Leaders is incomplete. Therefore, we are unable to provide the diversity data as it is not representative due to it not including a significant number of employees at that level. As part of Our People Data campaign, we plan to fix this and drive disclosure rates upwards.

Key Measures and Definitions

Heads/Headcount: The headcount is defined as the physical number of people irrespective of the number of positions held or the number of hours worked by the individual. It is possible for an individual to be employed within different roles within the WCC structure, therefore the headcount for Warwickshire will not necessarily be equal to the total headcount for each group.

Full Time Equivalent (FTE): Full Time Equivalent relates to the number of hours an employee is contracted to work each week as a proportion of the number of hours per week defined as full-time as per contracts of employment. Thus a full-time employee would have an FTE of 1.0 and an employee working 18.5 hours per week in a role based upon a 37 hour contract would have an FTE of 0.5.

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME): Within this report we have disaggregated "BAME", because we recognise its limitations as a term that combines and therefore dilutes the experiences of Black, Asian and other ethnic groups.

New Starters: New starters are defined as employees starting employment within the organisation (and not those changing roles).

Leavers: Leavers are defined as employees leaving the organisation (and not those leaving an individual post but remaining employed).

Promotion: A promotion is the advancement of an employee's rank or position in the organisational hierarchy system.

Gender Pay Gap: The gender pay gap is an equality measure that shows the difference in average (mean and median) earnings between men and women.

Ethnicity Pay Gap: The ethnicity pay gap is an equality measure that shows the difference in average (mean and median) earnings between BAME and White British employees. We recognise that BAME combines and includes a wide range of ethnicities, therefore we have disaggregated our ethnicity pay gap data to explore it further.

Disability Pay Gap: The disability pay gap is an equality measure that shows the difference in average (mean and median) earnings between employees with and without a declared disability.

Please note that headcounts for Pay Gap figures are based on "Relevant" Employees as per Pay Gap Guidance - exclusions include employees without full pay within pay period March 2021 because of long term sickness, maternity etc or those who have started or left within pay period March 2021

Warwickshire County Council, a great place to work where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best.

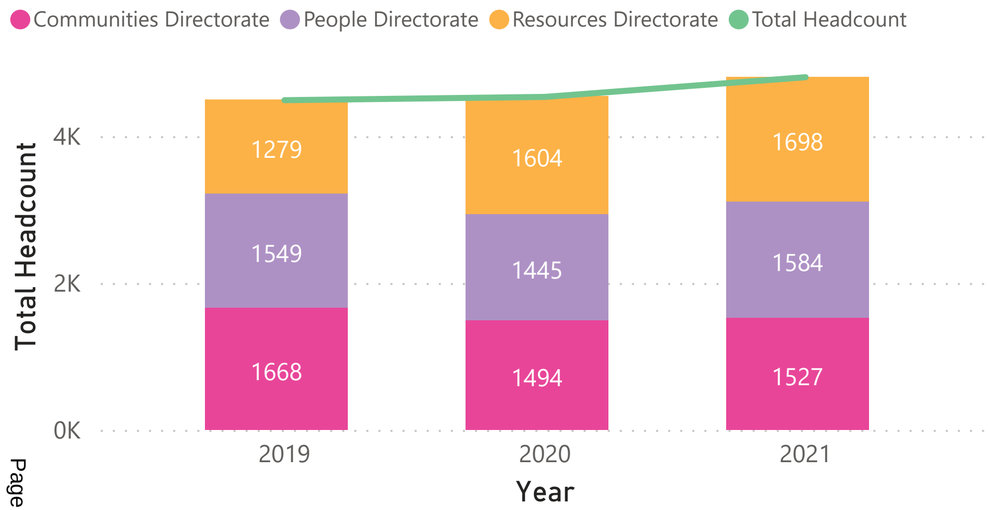
Warwickshire County Council (WCC)

Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps report
1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021.

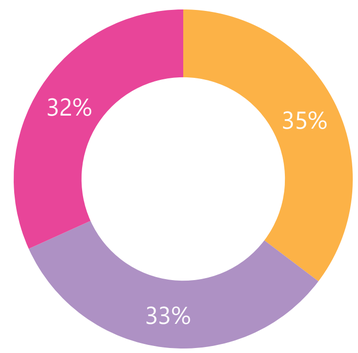
Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Workforce Profile - Headcount & Working Arrangements

Headcount by Year



% 2021 Headcount by Directorate



As of **March 31st 2021**, WCC headcount was **4808**, FTE **4022.5.**

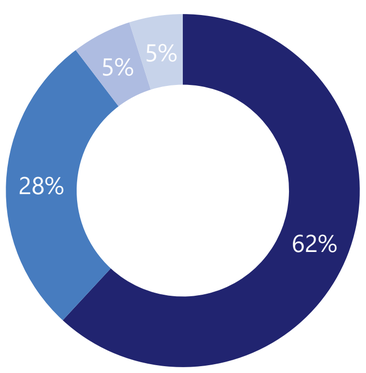
WCC ↑ **5.2%** increase in heads since *31st March 2020:*

Communities Directorate ↑ **2.2%** increase in heads

People Directorate ↑ **9.6%** increase in heads

Resources Directorate ↑ **5.9%** increase in heads

WCC Working Arrangements 2021



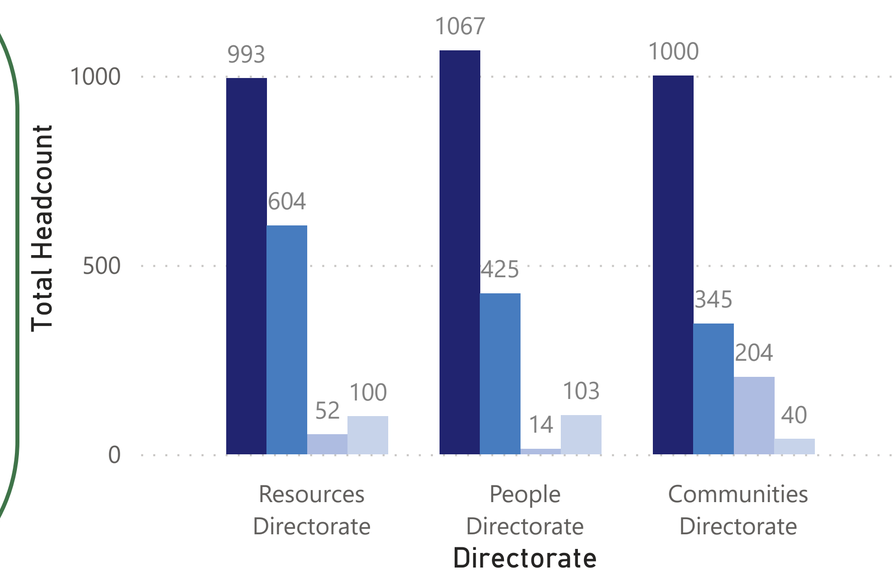
Full time | Part time | TTO | Zero Hours

*TTO refers to staff who are Term Time Only

The proportion of Full Time employees for **WCC** has increased by less than 1 percentage point since *31st March 2020*

2020		2021
64% Full Time Communities Directorate	↑	**65%** Full Time Communities Directorate
65% Full Time People Directorate	↑	**67%** Full Time People Directorate
55% Full Time Resources Directorate	↑	**58%** Full Time Resources Directorate

Working Arrangements 2021

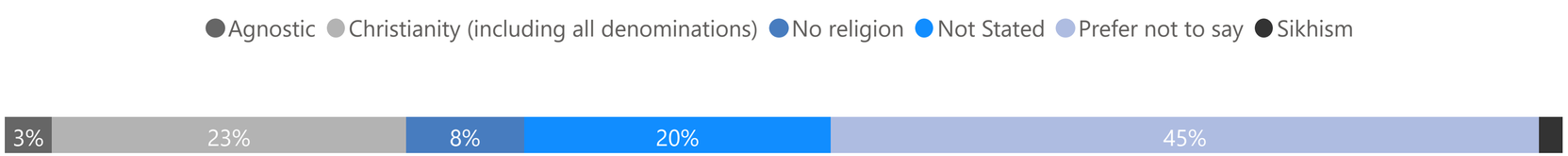


Full time | Part time | TTO | Zero Hours

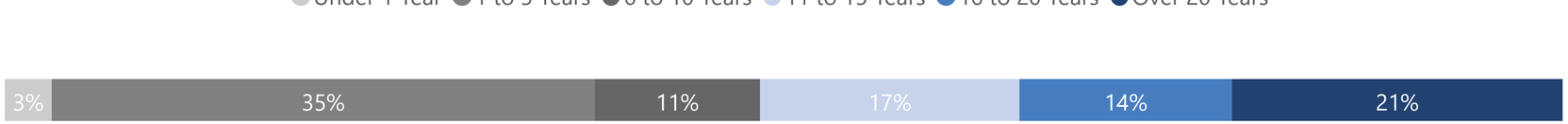
Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Workforce Profile - Senior Leadership Demographics

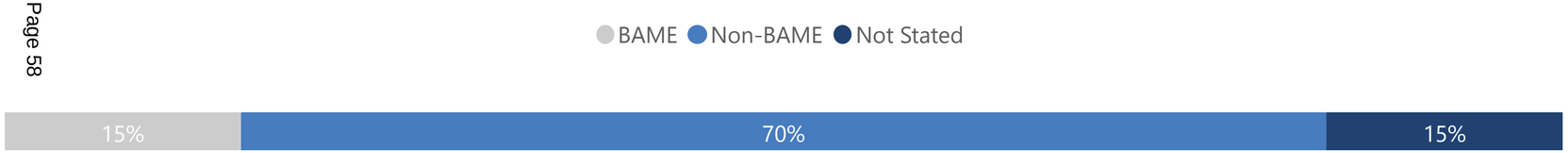
Senior Leadership Religion



Senior Leadership Length of Service

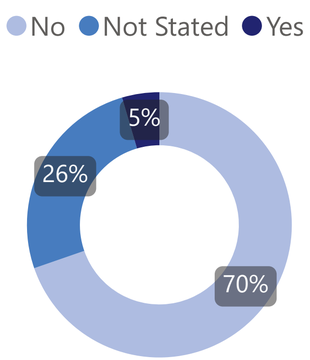


Senior Leadership Ethnicity

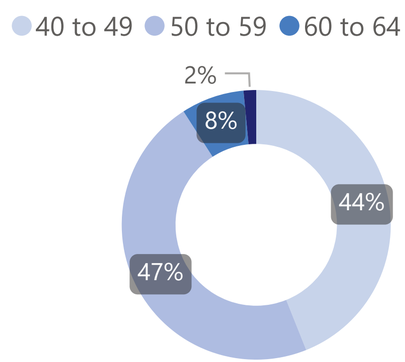


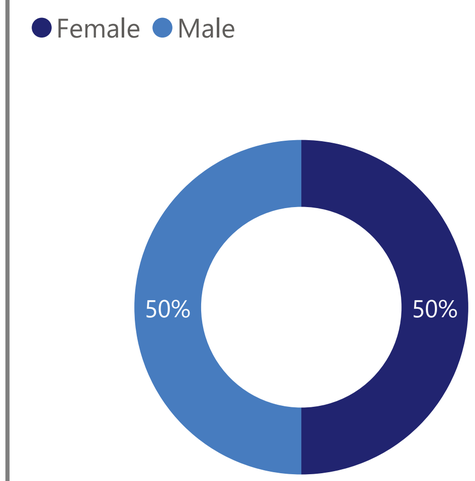
Individual ethnicities have not been included due to small numbers to avoid individual identification. To enable us to disaggregate "BAME" we explored collating the data set to represent Tiers 0 – 4b Leaders. However, due to the Functional Operating Models, the data set for Tiers 0 – 4b Leaders is incomplete, therefore we are unable to provide the data as it is not representative

Senior Leadership Disability Status



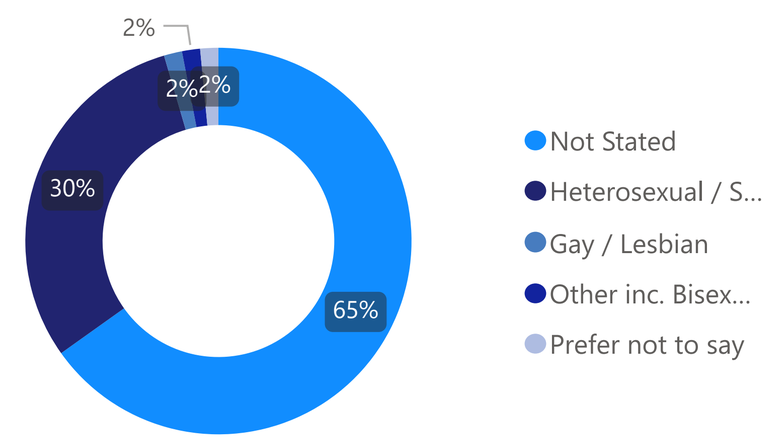
Senior Leadership Age Groupings





Senior leadership demographics includes employees from Tier 3 to Tier 0.

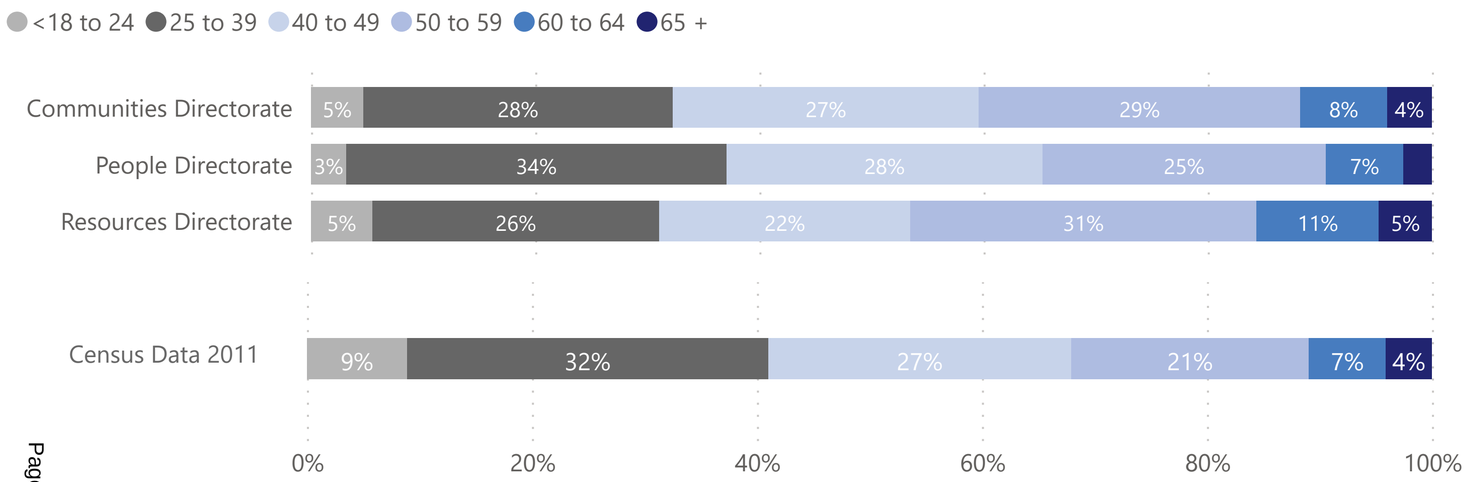
Senior Leadership Sexuality



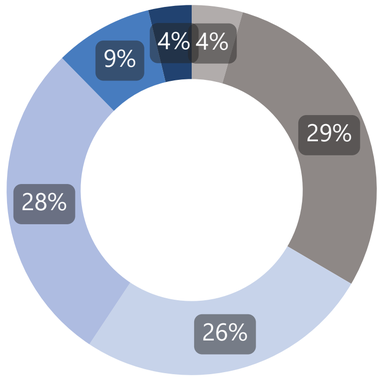
Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Workforce Demographics - Age

2021 Age Groupings by Directorate



WCC Age Groupings 2021



As of **March 31st 2021**, only **4.5%** of the **all** employees were aged **under 25**, the same as in 2020.

The proportion of the workforce aged **60+** was **12.4%** (up from 11.7% in 2020).

The majority, **83.2%** of the workforce are between the ages of **25 to 39.**

2021 Communities

83.6%

Aged 25 - 59

84.3% 2020

As of March 31st 2021, **4.6%** of Communities Directorate were aged **under 25** (4.5% 2020)

The proportion of Communities Directorate aged **60+** was **11.7%** (11.1% 2020)

2021 People

87.4%

Aged 25 - 59

87.5% 2020

As of March 31st 2021, **3.2%** of People Directorate were aged **under 25** (3.5% 2020)

The proportion of People Directorate aged **60+** was **9.5%** (8.9% 2020)

2021 Resources

78.8%

Aged 25 - 59

79.3% 2020

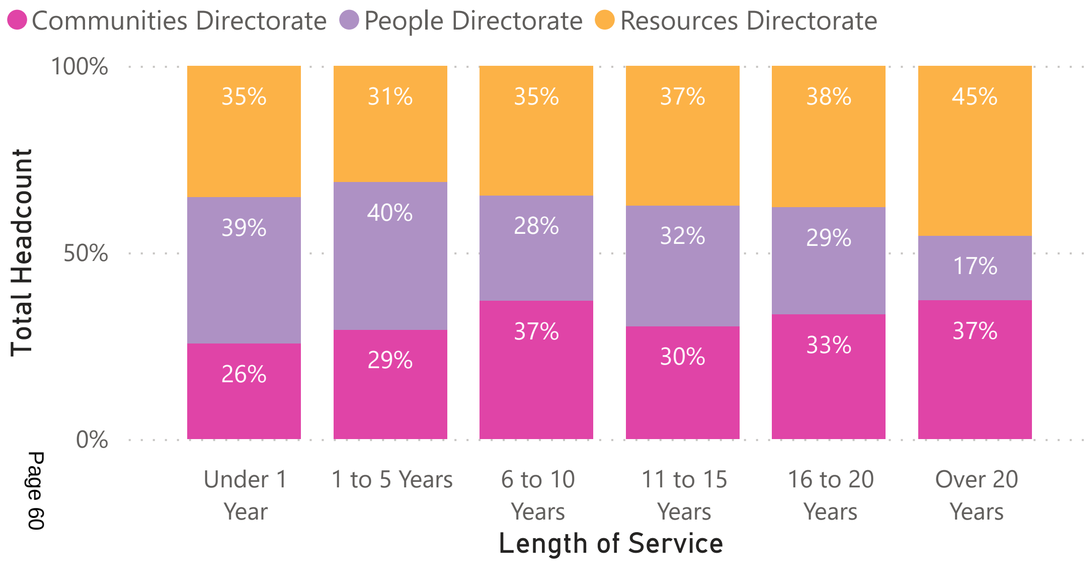
As of March 31st 2021, **5.5%** of Resources Directorate were aged **under 25** (5.6% 2020)

The proportion of People Directorate aged **60+** was **15.6%** (14.9% 2020)

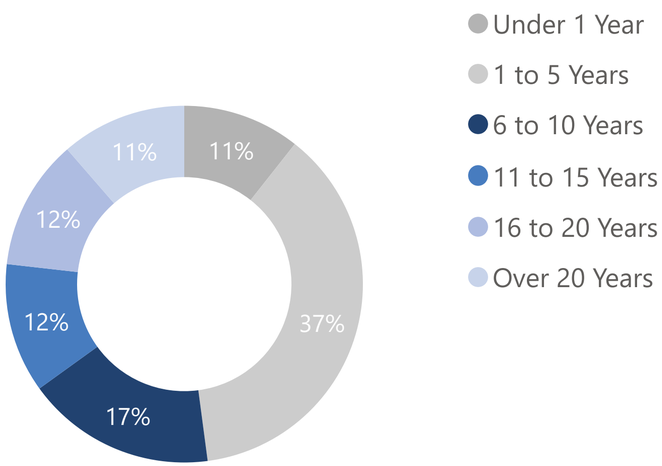
Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Workforce Demographics - Length of Service

Total Headcount by Length of Service and Directorate 2021



WCC Length of Service 2021

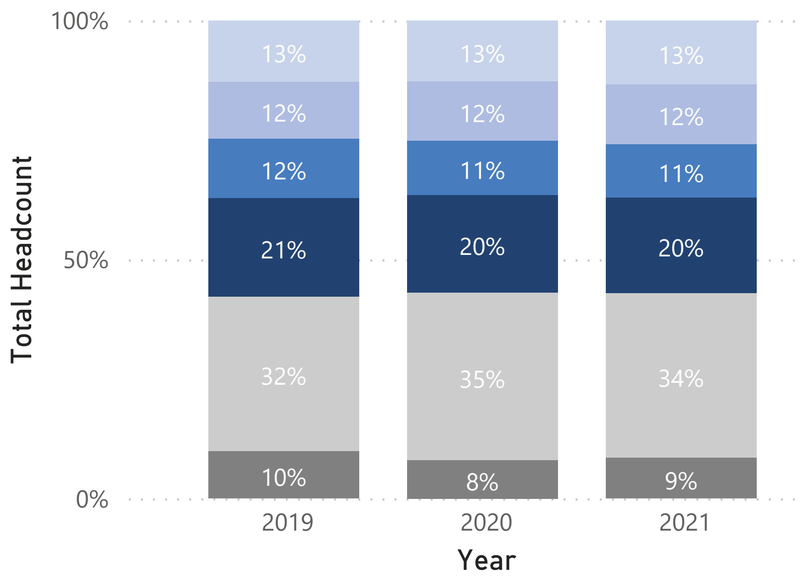


As of **March 31st 2021,** the proportion of employees who have been employed for **5 years or less** has **increased** to **47.9%** (45.8% 2020)

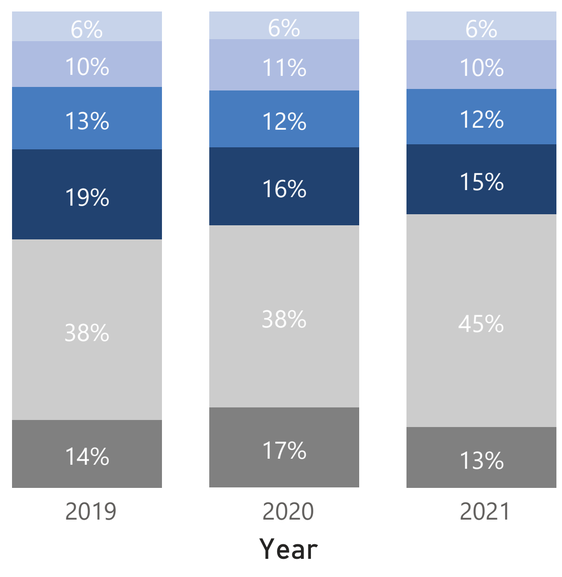
The proportion of employees who have been employed for **6 to 20 years** has **decreased** to **40.7%** (43.3% 2020)

The proportion of employees who have been employed for **over 20 years** has **increased** to **11.4%** (10.8% 2020)

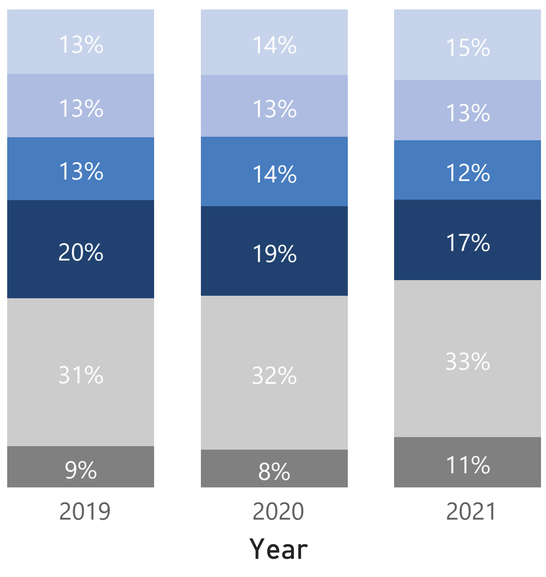
Communities Directorate - Length of Service



People Directorate - Length of Service



Resources Directorate- Length of Service



Length of service **5 years or less:**

Communities Directorate
43% (43% 2020)

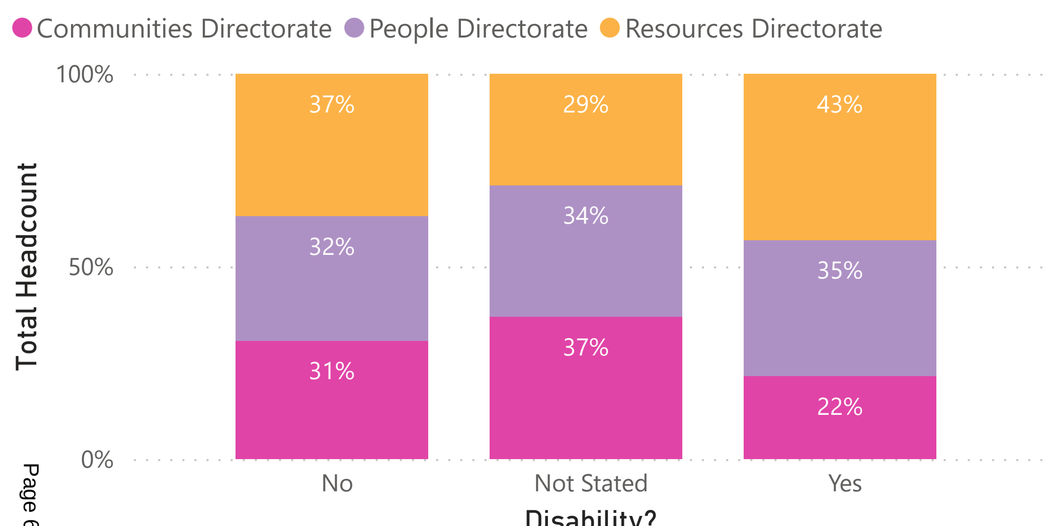
People Directorate
58% (55% 2020)

Resources Directorate
44% (40% 2020)

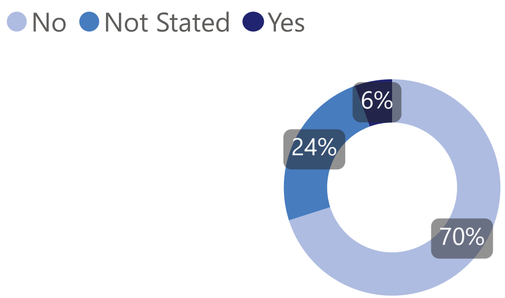
Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Workforce Demographics - Disability

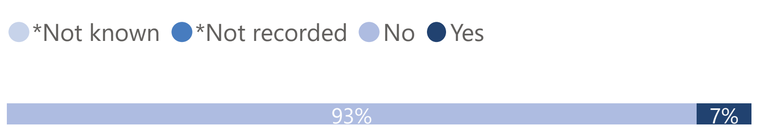
Disability Status by Directorate 2021



WCC Disability Status 2021



Census 2011 by Disability

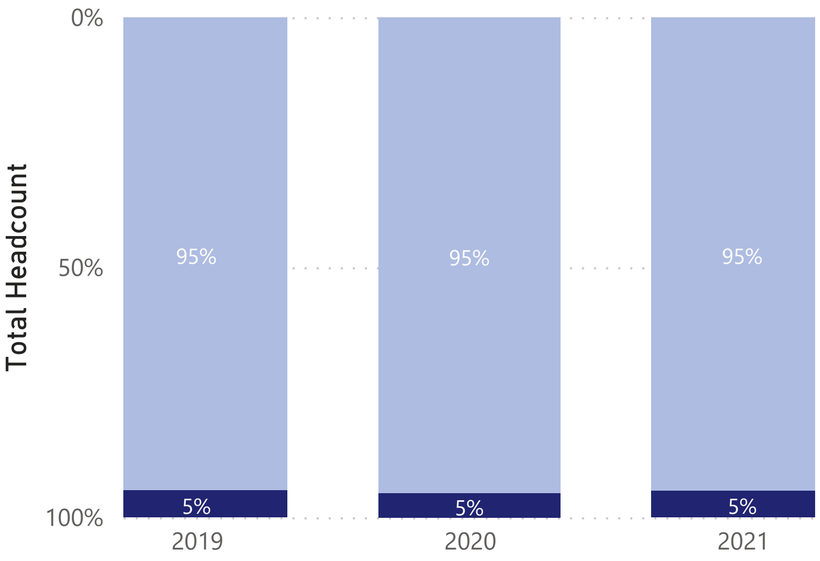


As of **March 31st 2021**, the proportion of employees in WCC who have **not recorded their disability** status is **21.8%** (23.8% 2020)

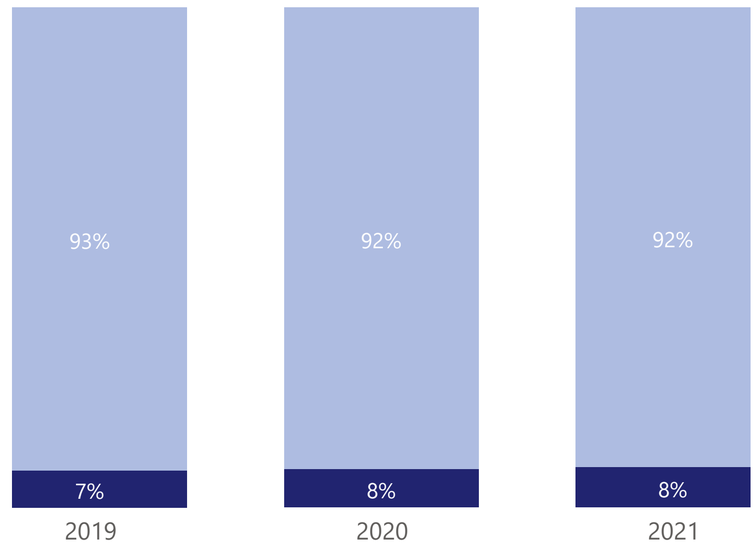
The proportion of employees in WCC who **have a declared disability** is **5.6%** (5.1% 2020)

The proportion of employees in WCC who **do not have a declared disability** is **70.1%** (68.2% 2020)

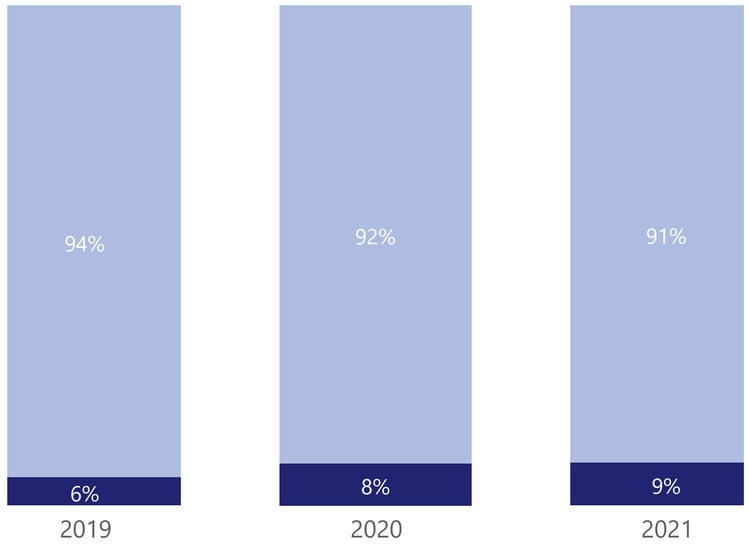
Communities Directorate - Disability Status



People Directorate - Disability Status



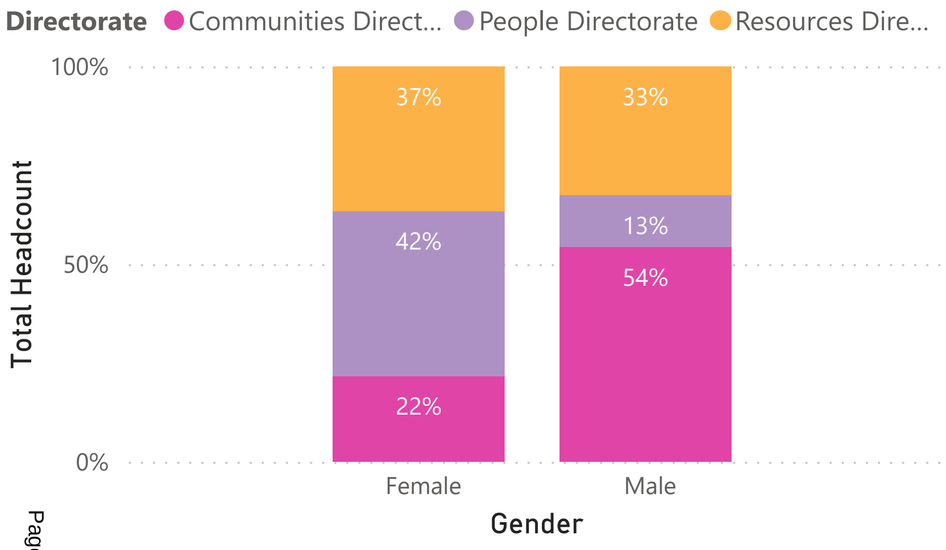
Resource Directorate - Disability Status

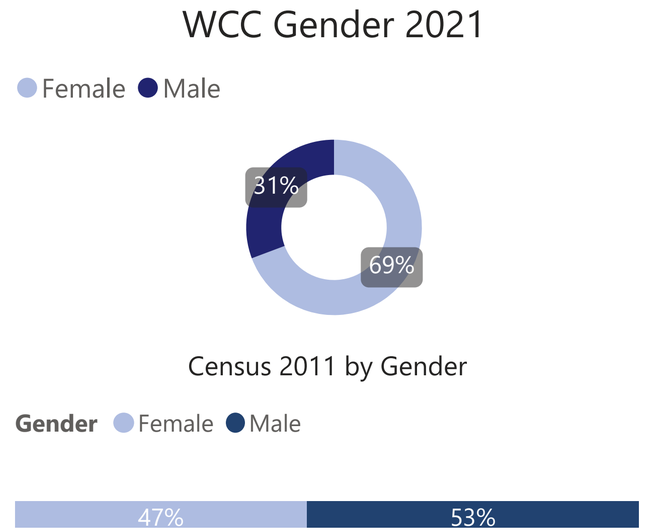


*Percentage above exclude 'Not known' and 'Not Stated' to allow direct comparison to the long-term health problem or disability Census 2011 profile for Warwickshire

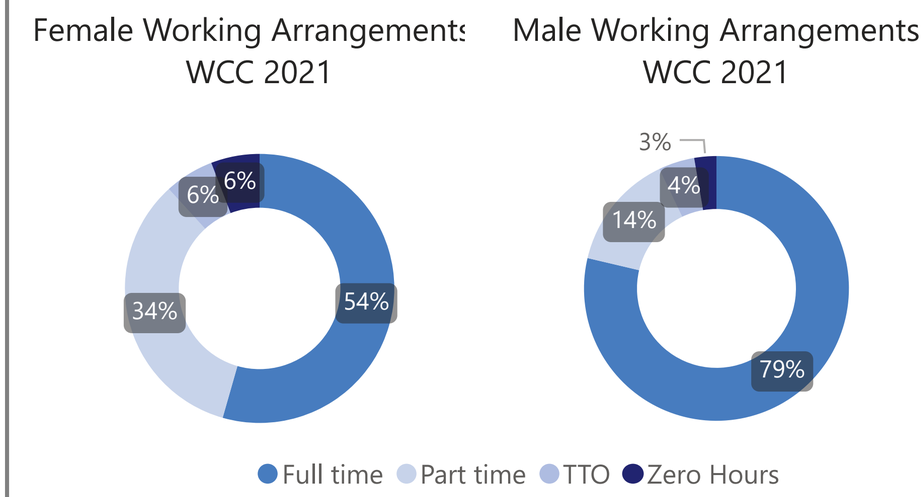
Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

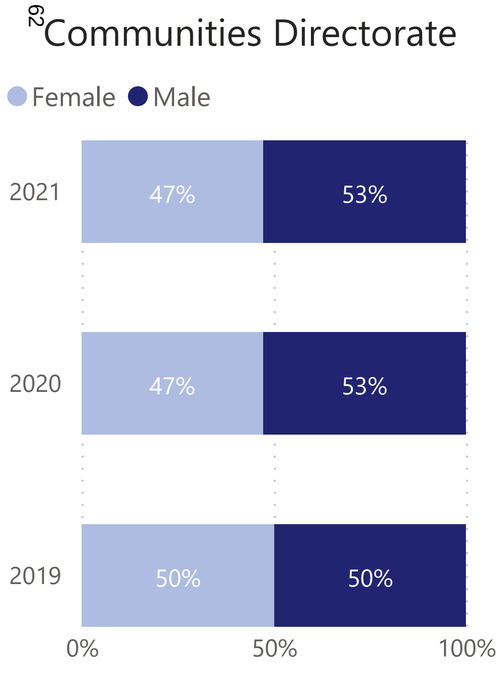
Workforce Demographics - Gender & Working Arrangements

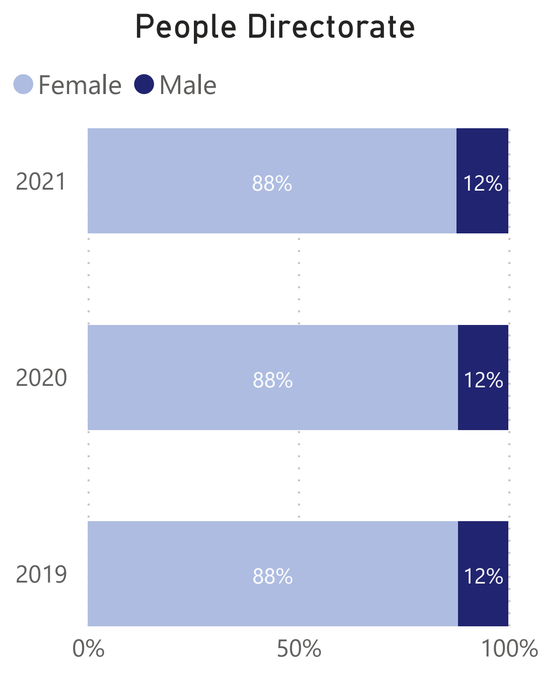


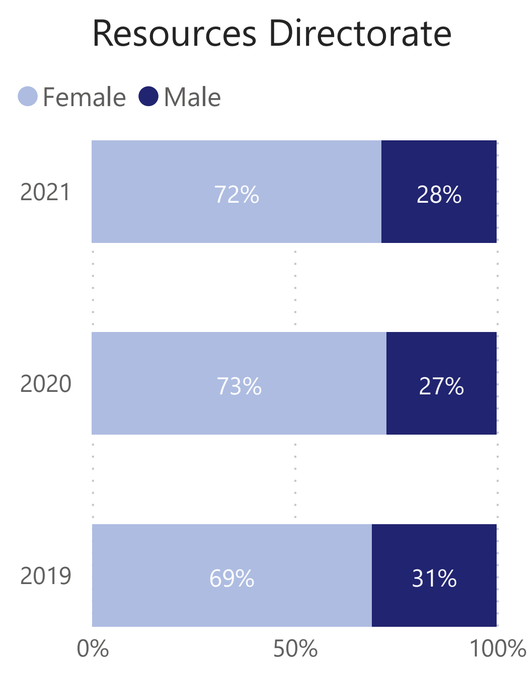


As of **31st March 2021**, **33.8%** of **females** were on **part time** contracts (35.7% 2020)
14.2% of **males** were on **part time** contracts (13.4% 2020)
54.4% of **females** were on **full time** contracts (52.9% 2020)
78.7% of **males** were on **full time** contracts (80.3% 2020)









Communities Directorate had 29.5% part time females (31.2% 2020), 14.7% part time males (12.7% 2020), 48.5% full time females (46.6% 2020) and 76% full time males (79.2% 2020).

People Directorate had 28.7% part time females (29.9% 2020), 10.6% part time males (14.8% 2020), 64.6% full time females (63.5% 2020) and 78.9% full time males (77.7% 2020).

Resources Directorate had 42.1% part time females (45.5% 2020), 15% part time males (16% 2020). 46.6% full time females (44.6% 2020), 83% full time males (52.5% 2020).

*Individuals of unspecified gender have been hidden due to low numbers to avoid individual identification

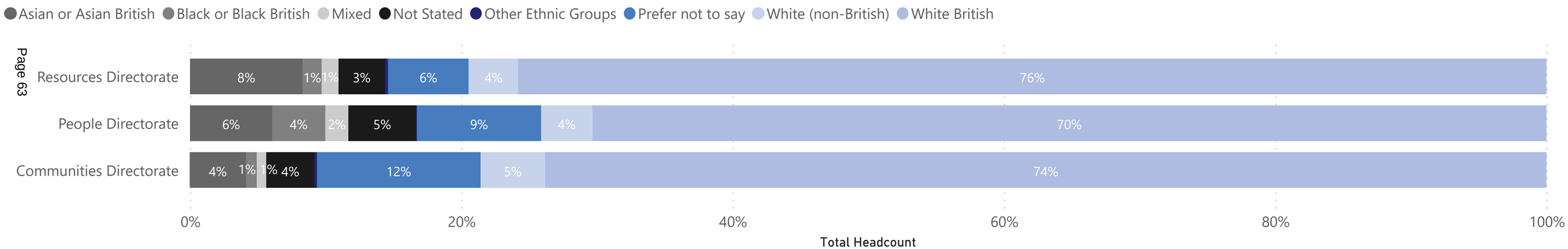
Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Workforce Demographics - Race (Ethnicity)

As of **31st March 2021**, the proportion of all employees who are Black or Black British is **2%** (2.5% 2020)

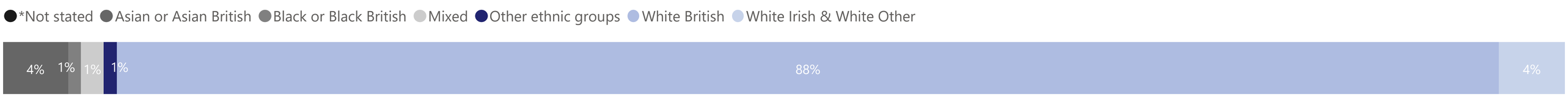
Communities Directorate	**73.8%** White British	73.5% 2020	**0.8%** Black or Black British	1.3% 2020
People Directorate	**70.3%** White British	70.9% 2020	**3.9%** Black or Black British	4.6% 2020
Resources Directorate	**75.8%** White British	76.5% 2020	**1.4%** Black or Black British	1.6% 2020

Ethnicity by Directorate 2021



WCC Ethnicity 2021

Census 2021



Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Workforce Demographics - Religion & Sexual Orientation

	Communities	People	Resources	Total	Census 2011
Sikhism	1%	2%	3%	**2%**	0%
Prefer not to say	50%	40%	45%	**45%**	0%
Not Stated	13%	17%	10%	**13%**	73%
No religion	15%	15%	15%	**15%**	1%
Islam	1%	1%	1%	**1%**	1%
Hinduism	1%	1%	1%	**1%**	19%
Christianity (including all denominations)	18%	22%	23%	**21%**	5%
Any other religion inc. Judaism and Buddhism	1%	1%	1%	**1%**	
Agnostic	1%	1%	1%	**1%**	1%

As of **31st March 2021**, **63%** of WCC employees have a religion/faith* (66.5% 2020)

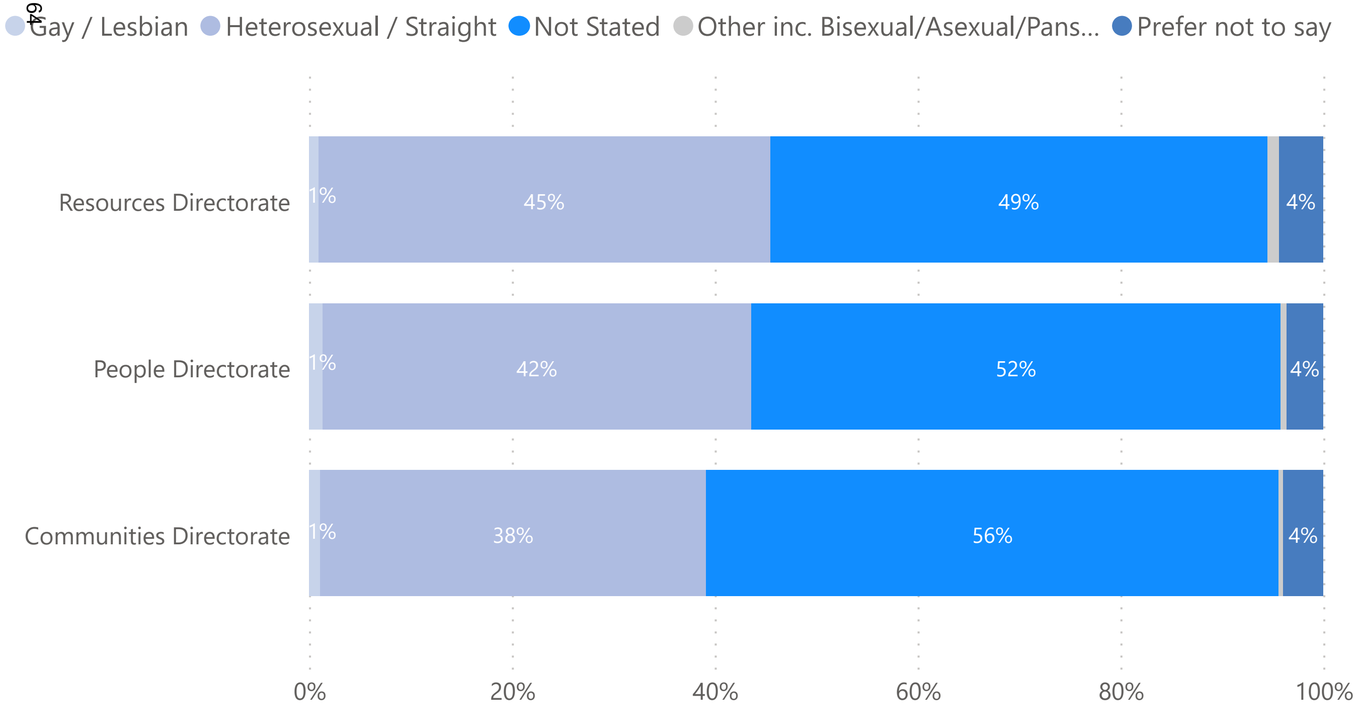
61% of Communities Directorate have a religion/faith (64.9% 2020)

64% of People Directorate have a religion/faith (65.8% 2020)

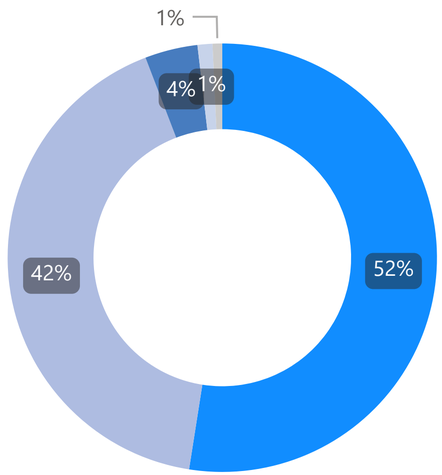
66% of Resources Directorate have a religion/faith (68.4% 2020)

*The percentage of employees who have a religion/faith is calculated with 'Not Specified' and 'Prefer not to say' excluded from the data to allow for direct comparison to the Census 2011 profile for Warwickshire.

2021 Sexual Orientation by Directorate



WCC 2021 Sexual Orientation



As of **31st March 2021**, **43.5%** of employees declared their sexuality (38.1% 2020)

39.6% of Communities Directorate declared their sexuality (36.1% 2020)

44.2% of People Directorate declared their sexuality (37.7% 2020)

46.5% of Resources Directorate declared their sexuality (40.9% 2020)

Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Workforce Salary & Gender

	Communities	People	Resources	Total
Under £12.5k	6%	0%	0%	**2%**
£12.5k to £20k	10%	3%	28%	**14%**
£20k to £30k	29%	39%	36%	**35%**
£30k to £40k	35%	36%	18%	**30%**
£40k to £50k	13%	16%	12%	**14%**
£50k to £60k	4%	4%	3%	**3%**
Over £60k	3%	2%	3%	**2%**

2021 Gender and Salary

	Communities	People	Resources	Total
Under £12.5k				
Female	0.5%	0.2%	0.1%	**0.2%**
Male	5.8%	0.1%	0.1%	**2.0%**
£12.5k to £20k				
Female	4.0%	2.5%	22.1%	**9.8%**
Male	5.6%	0.3%	6.0%	**4.0%**
£20k to £30k				
Female	16.1%	34.8%	25.4%	**25.5%**
Male	13.1%	4.5%	10.7%	**9.4%**
£30k to £40k				
Female	12.1%	31.9%	10.5%	**18.1%**
Male	23.0%	4.4%	7.6%	**11.5%**
£40k to £50k				
Female	7.4%	13.8%	7.0%	**9.4%**
Male	5.6%	2.2%	5.3%	**4.4%**
£50k to £60k				
Female	2.2%	2.7%	1.4%	**2.1%**
Male	1.9%	0.8%	1.1%	**1.3%**
Over £60k				
Female	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	**1.3%**
Male	1.3%	0.5%	1.5%	**1.1%**

As of **31st March 2021**, the proportion of the workforce earning **£30,000 or more** is **49.1%** (42.2% 2020)

Communities Directorate	**54.8%** Over £30,000	47.3% 2020
People Directorate	**57.6%** Over £30,000	50.2% 2020
Resources Directorate	**35.7%** Over £30,000	30.2% 2020

6.9% of all **male** employees earned **£50,000 or more** (5.8% 2020). This was **lower** for **females** **5.1%** (4.9% 2020)

Communities Directorate - **5.6%** of **males** earned **£50,000 or more** (4.6% 2020). This was **higher** for females **8%** (6.6% 2020)

People Directorate - **10%** of **males** earned **£50,000 or more** (7.6% 2020). This was **lower** for females **4.6%** (3.4% 2020)

Resources Directorate - **8.1%** of **males** earned **£50,000 or more** (6.7% 2020). This was **lower** for **females** **4%** (3.5% 2020)

*The figures are based on FTE and excludes 31 Females and 5 males with no salary information available - these employees have been excluded from this analysis

Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Workforce Turnover - Starters & Leavers

Starters and Leavers 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021

	Communities	People	Resources	Total
Starters	148	245	204	**597**
Leavers	101	99	107	**307**
Difference	+47	+146	+97	+290

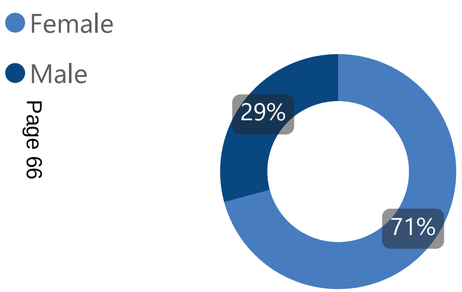
As of **31st March 2021**, WCC had a **8.0%** employee turnover rate (13.99% 2020).

Communities Directorate had a **7.3%** employee turnover rate (10.7% 2020)

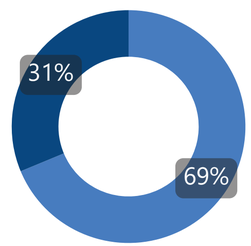
People Directorate had a **9%** employee turnover rate (12.5% 2020)

Resources Directorate had a **7.8%** staff turnover rate (12.5% 2020)

Starters Gender 2021

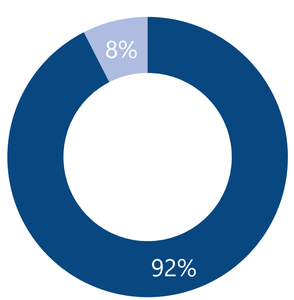


Leavers Gender 2021

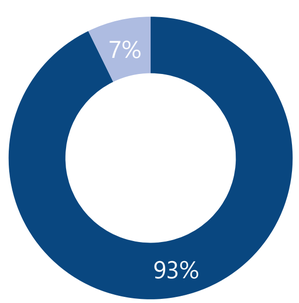


71% of all **starters** were **female** (74.8% 2020) and **69%** of all **leavers** were **female** (72.7% 2020). This compares to **69.3%** of the workforce who are **female**

Starters Disability 2021



Leavers Disability 2021



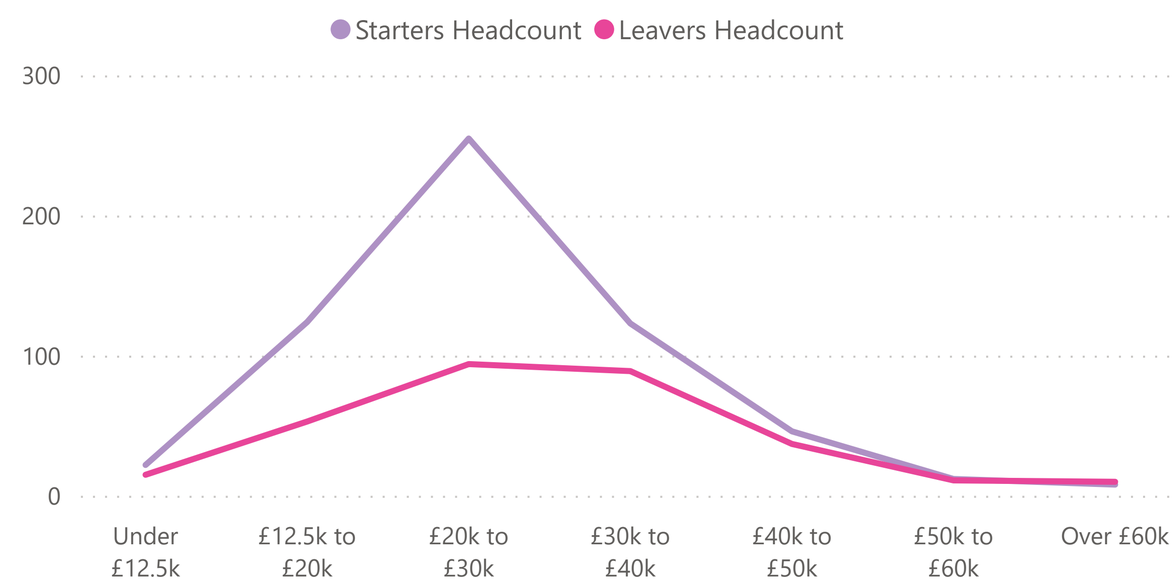
7.5% of **starters** and **7.2%** of **leavers** stated they **had a declared disability** (8.3% and 8.3% in 2020 respectively)

Has a declared disabillity? No Yes

22.8% of **starters** and **17.4%** of **leavers** were of **BAME origin** (33.5% and 24.1% in 2020 respectively). This compared to **13.8%** of the workforce who are of **BAME origin.** *individual ethnicities not included due to small numbers to avoid individual identification*

52.1% of **leavers** had given **5 or less years** of Service (70.3% 2020)

Starters and Leavers by Salary

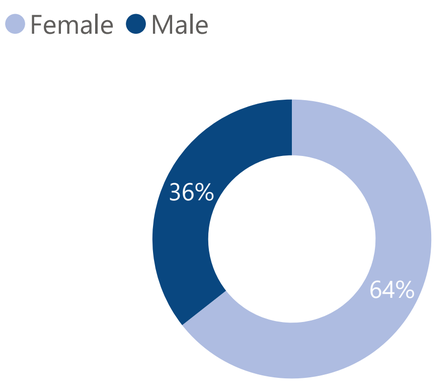


* Percentages above exclude 'Not Known' or 'Not Stated'

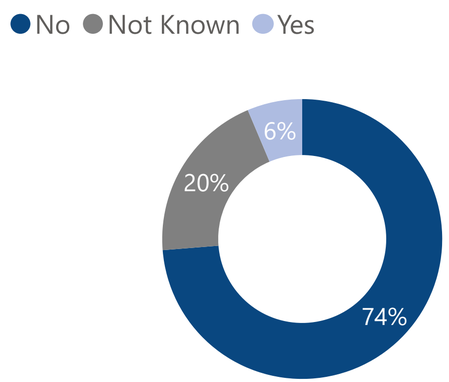
Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Workforce Turnover - Promotions

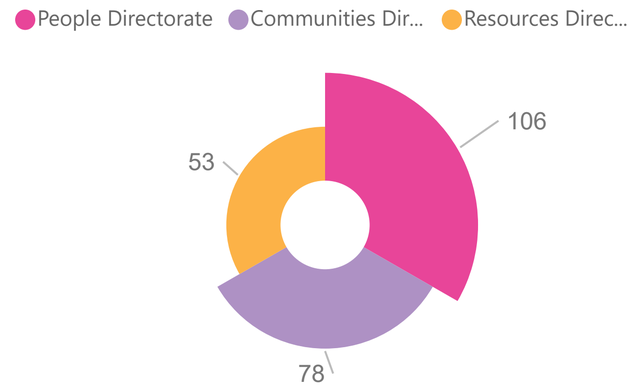
% Promotions by Gender



% Promotions by Disability Status



Promotions by Directorate



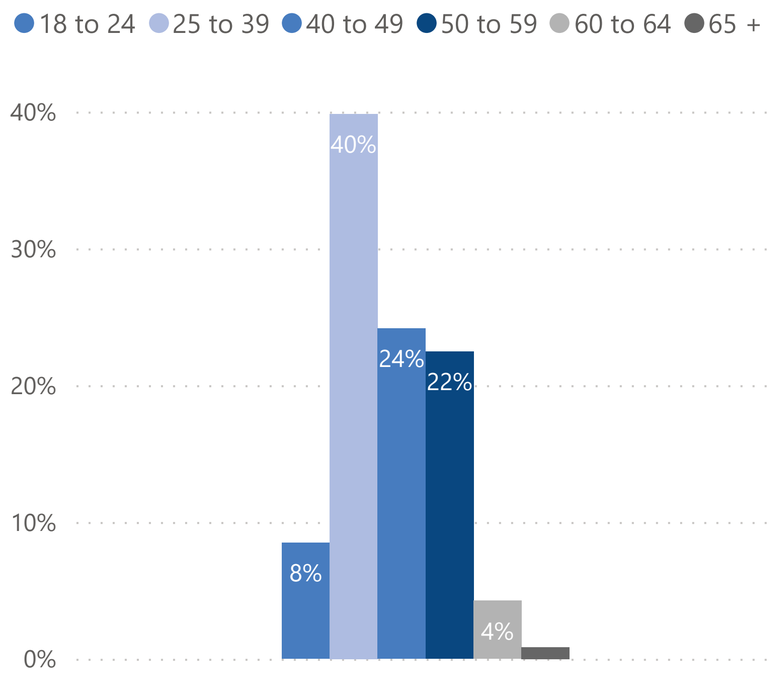
As of **31st March 2021**, **4.9%** (236) of employees in WCC were promoted (324 2020)

64.4% of promotions were achieved by **female** employees (77.2% 2020). 69.3% of the workforce are female.

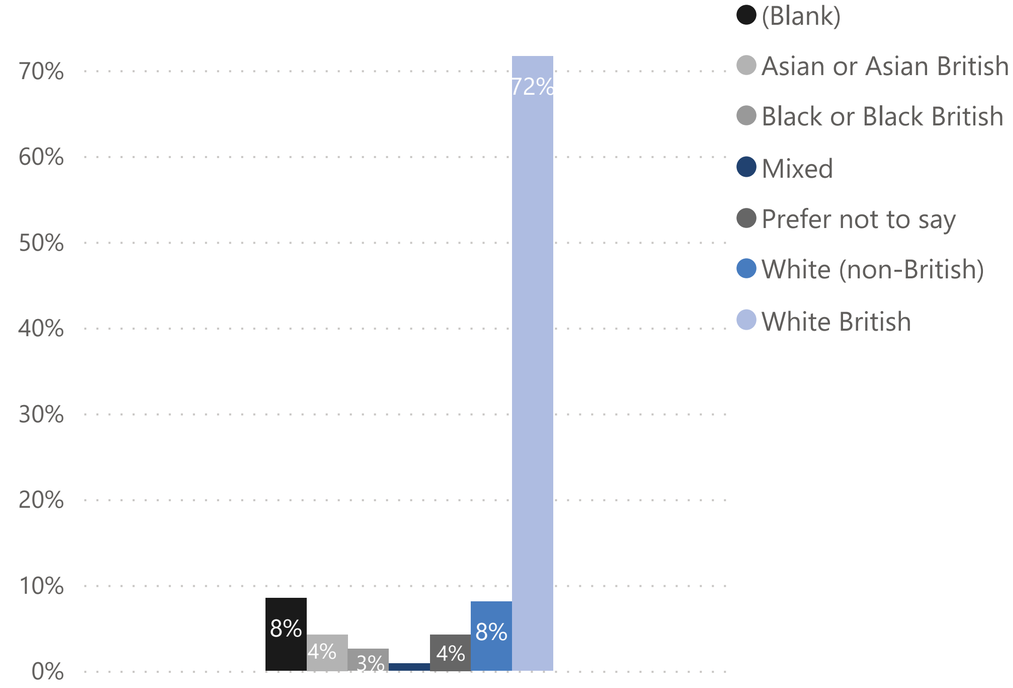
6.4% of promotions were achieved by employees with a **declared disability** (4.6% 2020). 5.6% of the workforce have a declared disability.

39.8% of promotions were achieved by employees aged **25 - 39 years old** (46.6% 2020). 29% of the workforce are between the ages of 25 - 39 years old.

% Promotions by Age Grouping



% Promotions by Ethnicity



18% of promotions were achieved by **BAME** employees (15.7% 2020). 26.7% of the workforce are BAME.

For 2021 data, ethnicity breakdown is available as follows:
2.5% of promotions were achieved by **Black or Black British**. 2% of the workforce are Black or Black British.
4.2% of promotions were achieved by **Asian or Asian British**. 6.3% of the workforce are Asian or Asian British.
0.9% of promotions were achieved by **Mixed**. 1.2% of the workforce are Mixed.

92.5% of promotions were achieved by employees earning **£20,000 to £50,000** (84.0% 2020). 79% of the workforce earn between £20,000 to £50,000.

Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Gender Pay Gap

Hourly Pay Rates (with salary sacrifice)

The gender pay gap is an equality measure that shows the difference in average (mean and median) earning between women and men.

£16.09
Mean Female Hourly Rate 2021

£16.52
Mean Male Hourly Rate 2021

2.6%
Mean Gender Pay Gap 2021

There is a **2.6%** Pay Gap (2.7% 2020) between the mean hourly rate of men and women at March 2021. This gap has **reduced**

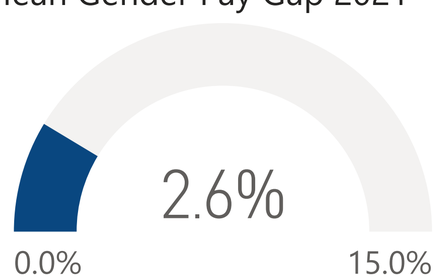
£14.62
Median Female Hourly Rate 2021

£15.41
Median Male Hourly Rate 2021

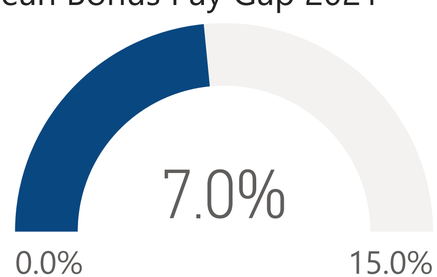
5.2%
Median Gender Pay Gap 2021

There is a **5.4%** Pay Gap (8.8% 2020) between the median hourly rate of men and women at March 2021. This gap has **reduced**

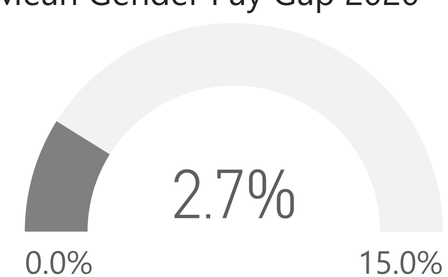
Mean Gender Pay Gap 2021



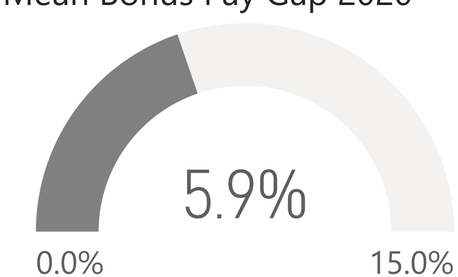
Mean Bonus Pay Gap 2021



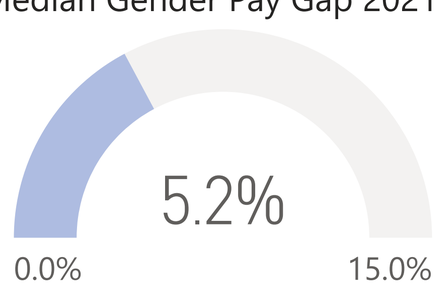
Mean Gender Pay Gap 2020



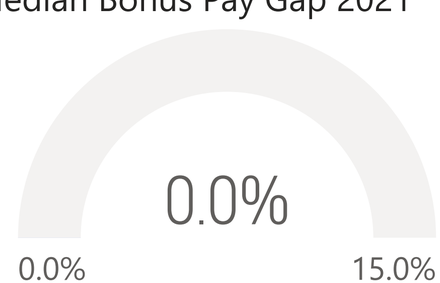
Mean Bonus Pay Gap 2020



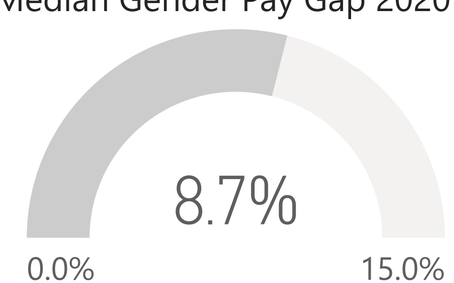
Median Gender Pay Gap 2021



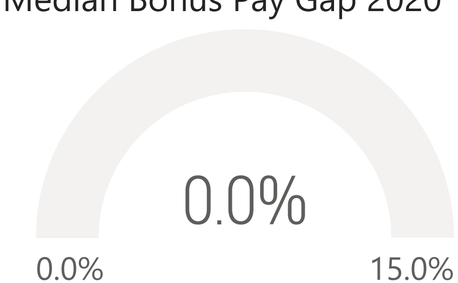
Median Bonus Pay Gap 2021



Median Gender Pay Gap 2020



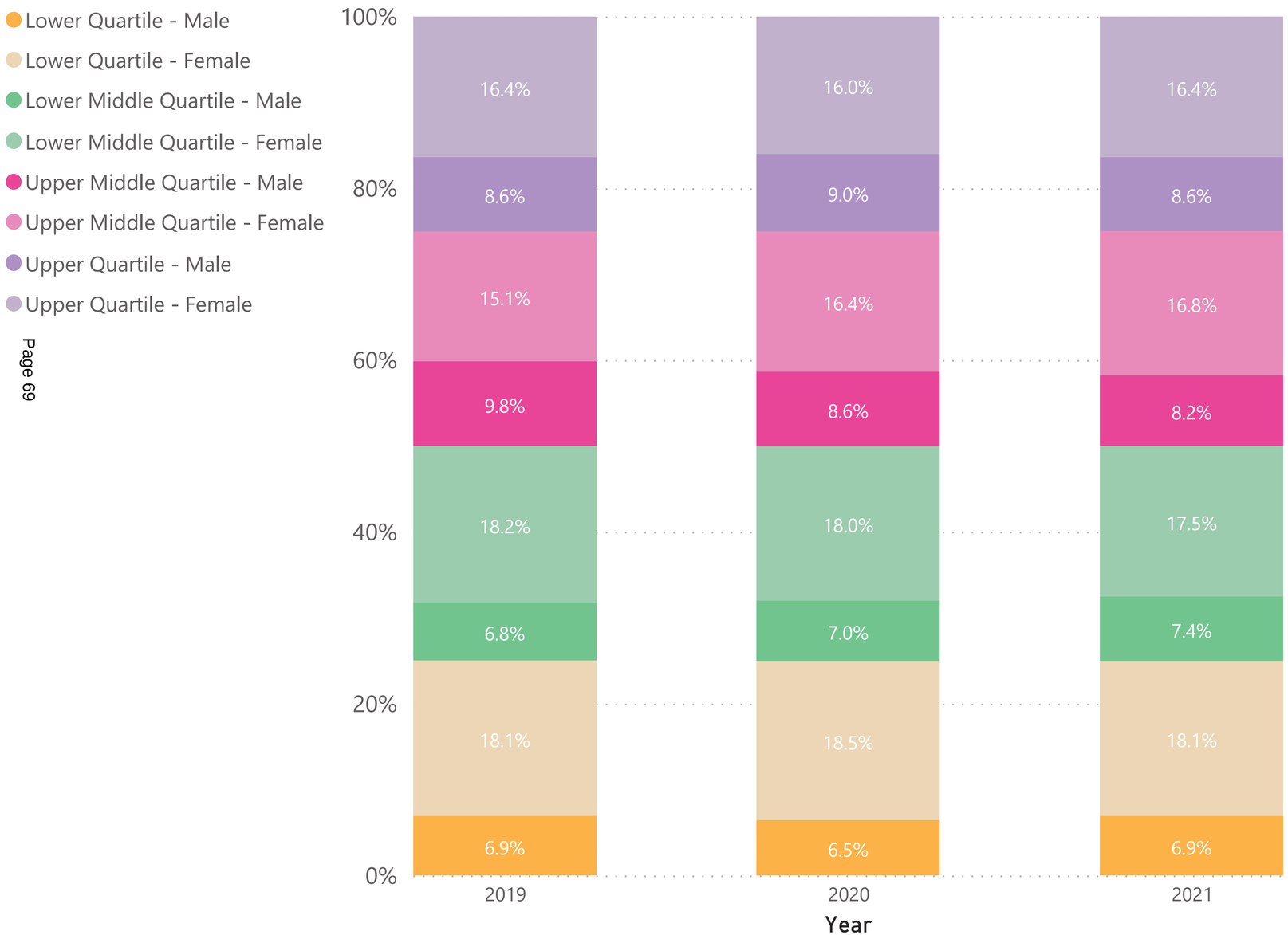
Median Bonus Pay Gap 2020



Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Gender Pay Gap - Pay Band Quartiles

Quartiles



Upper Quartile

The proportion of **women** in the upper quartile has **increased** slightly from 2020

65.5% of women are in the upper quartile (63.9% 2020) whereas **34.5%** of men are in the upper quartile (36.1% 2020)

Upper Middle

The proportion of **women** in the upper middle quartile has **increased** from 2020

67.1% of women are in the upper middle quartile (65.5% 2020)
32.9% of men are in the upper middle quartile (34.5% 2020)

Lower Middle

The proportion of **women** in the lower middle quartile has **decreased** slightly from 2020

70.1% of women are in the lower middle quartile (71.9% 2020)
29.9% of men are in the lower middle quartile (28.1% 2020)

Lower Quartile

The proportion of **women** in the lower quartile has **decreased** slightly from 2020

72.5% of women are in the lower quartile (74.1% 2020)
27.5% of men are in the lower quartile (25.9% 2020)

Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Ethnicity Pay Gap

Hourly Pay Rates (with salary sacrifice)

The ethnicity pay gap is an equality measure that shows the difference in average (mean and median) earning between BAME and Non-BAME / Not Stated employees

£16.34
Mean BAME Hourly Rate 2021

£16.21
Mean Non-Bame / Not Stated Hourly Rate 2021

-0.8%
Mean Ethnicity Pay Gap 2021

There is a **-0.8%** Pay Gap (-2.7% 2020) between the mean hourly rate of BAME employees and White British or Not Stated at March 2021. This gap has **reduced**

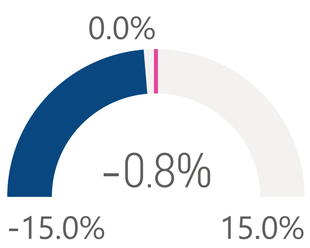
£15.32
Median BAME Hourly Rate 2021

£14.99
Median Non-BAME / Not Stated Hourly Rate 2021

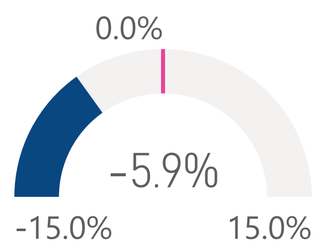
-2.2%
Median Ethnicity Pay Gap 2021

There is a **-2.2%** Pay Gap (-3.2% 2020) between the median hourly rate of BAME employees and White British or Not Stated at March 2021. This gap has **reduced**

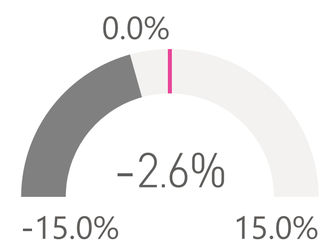
Mean Pay Gap 2021



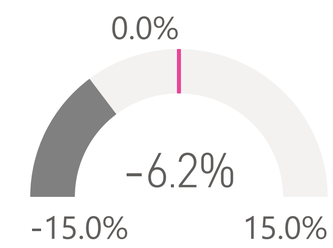
Mean Bonus Pay Gap 2021



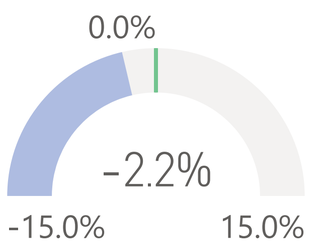
Mean Pay Gap 2020



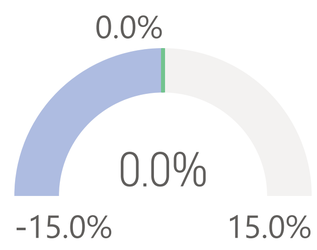
Mean Bonus Pay Gap 2020



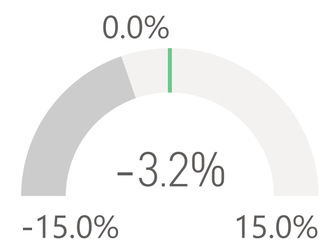
Median Pay Gap 2021



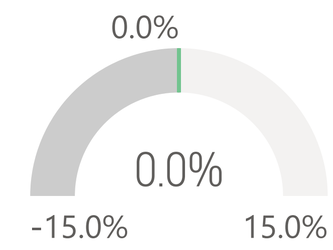
Median Bonus Pay Gap 2021



Median Pay Gap 2020



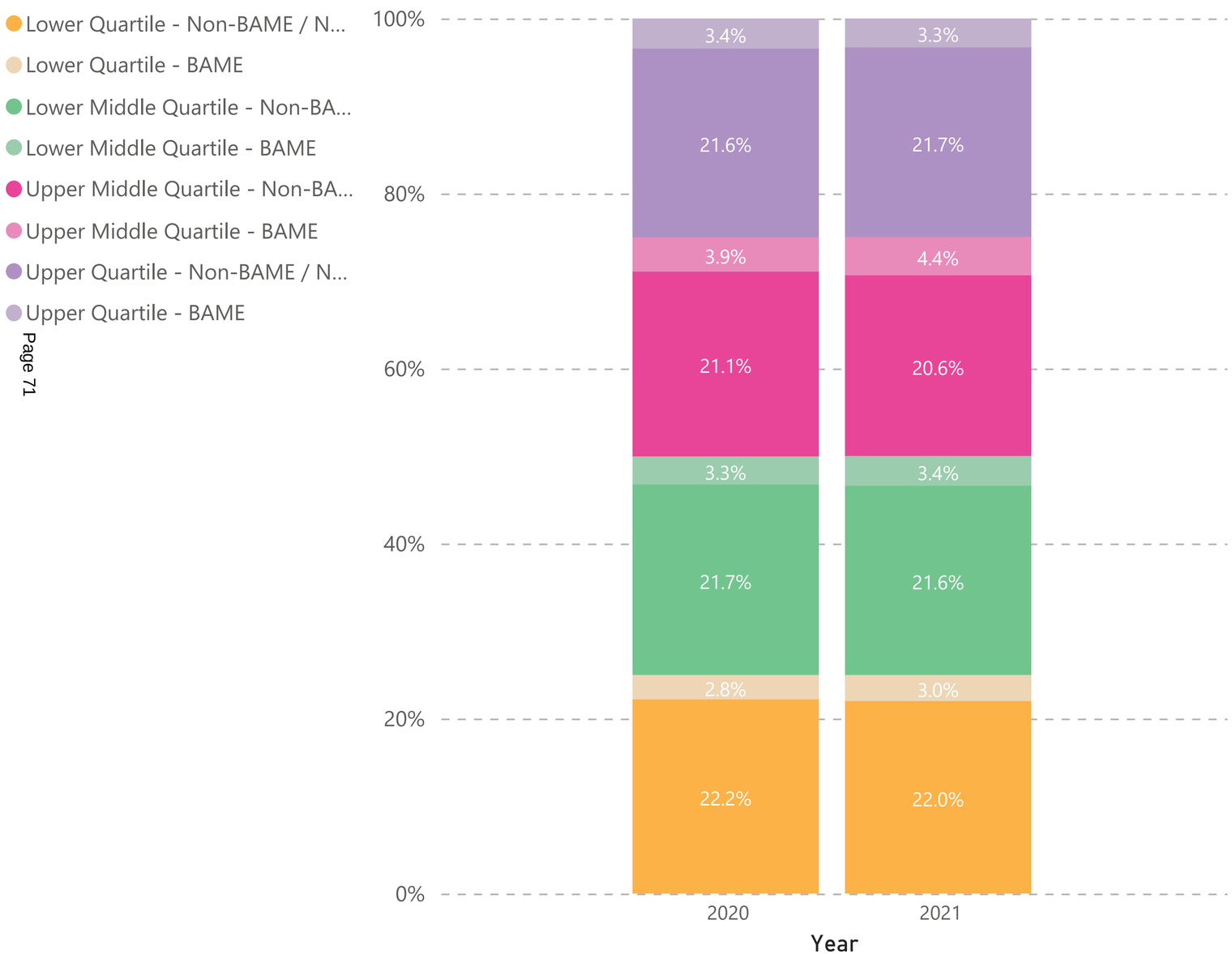
Median Bonus Pay Gap 2020



Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Ethnicity Pay Gap - Pay Band Quartiles

Quartiles



Upper Quartile

The proportion of **BAME** employees in the upper quartile has slightly **decreased** from 2020

3.3% of **BAME** employees are in the upper quartile (3.4% 2020)

Upper Middle

The proportion of **BAME** employees in the upper middle quartile has **increased**

4.4% of BAME employees are in the upper middle quartile (3.9% 2020)

Lower Middle

The proportion of **BAME** employees in the lower middle quartile has **increased**

3.4% of BAME employees are in the lower middle quartile (3.3% 2020)

Lower Quartile

The proportion of BAME employees in the lower quartile has increased

3% of BAME employees are in the lower quartile (2.8% 2020)

Hourly Pay Rates (with salary sacrifice)

We recognise that Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) combines and includes a wide range of ethnicities. Therefore, we have disaggregated our ethnicity pay gap data to explore it further.

Please note all % pay gap figures on this page have been calculated as a % of the Mean Hourly Rate of White British employees (**£16.36**), whereas on previous pages the calculation has been created as a % of Non-BAME and Not Stated

£16.19 Mean Asian or Asian British Hourly Rate	1.06% Mean Asian / Asian British Pay Gap 2021
Relevant Asian or Asian British Employees 263	

£16.71 Mean Black or Black British Hourly Rate	-2.13% Mean Black / Black British Pay Gap 2021
Relevant Black or Black British Employees 88	

£16.49 Mean White - Non-British Hourly Rate	-0.80% Mean White - Non-British Pay Gap 2021
Relevant White - Non-British Employees 179	

£17.41 Mean Mixed Hourly Rate	-6.41% Mean Mixed Pay Gap 2021
Relevant Mixed Employees 56	

Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Disability Pay Gap

Hourly Pay Rates (with salary sacrifice)

The disability pay gap is an equality measure that shows the difference in average (mean and median) between employees with and without a declared disability

£15.69
Mean Disabled Hourly Rate 2021

£16.26
Mean Non-Disabled / Not Known Hourly Rate 2021

3.5%
Mean Disability Pay Gap 2021

There is a **3.5%** Pay Gap (3.8% 2020) between the mean hourly rate of employees with and without a declared disability or Not Stated at March 2021. This gap has **reduced**

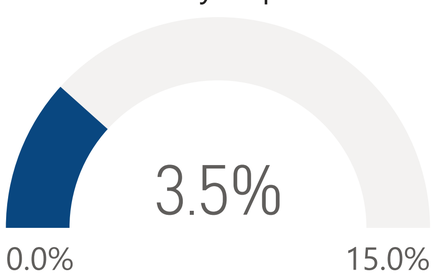
£14.01
Median Disabled Hourly Rate 2021

£15.32
Median Non-Disabled / Not Known Hourly Rate 2021

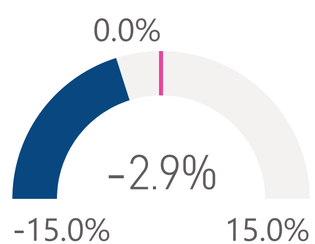
8.6%
Median Disability Pay Gap 2021

There is a **8.6%** Pay Gap (5.9% 2020) between the median hourly rate of employees with and without a declared disability or Not Stated at March 2021. This has **increased**

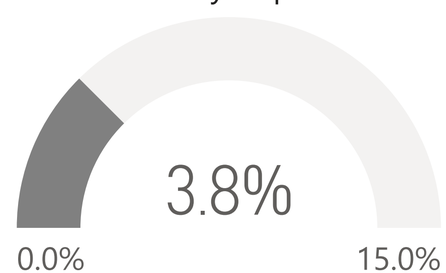
Mean Pay Gap 2021



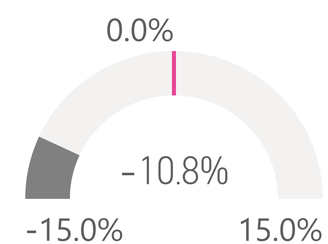
Mean Bonus Pay Gap 2021



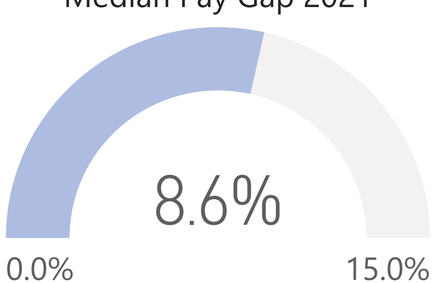
Mean Pay Gap 2020



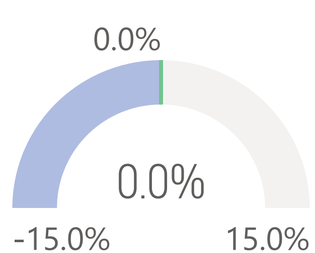
Mean Bonus Pay Gap 2020



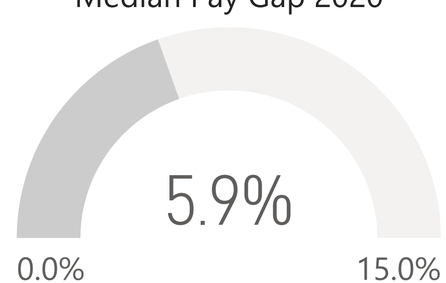
Median Pay Gap 2021



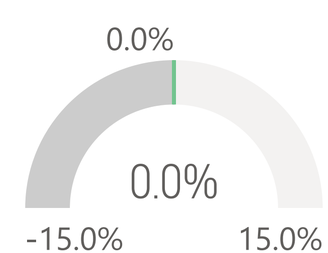
Median Bonus Pay Gap 2021



Median Pay Gap 2020



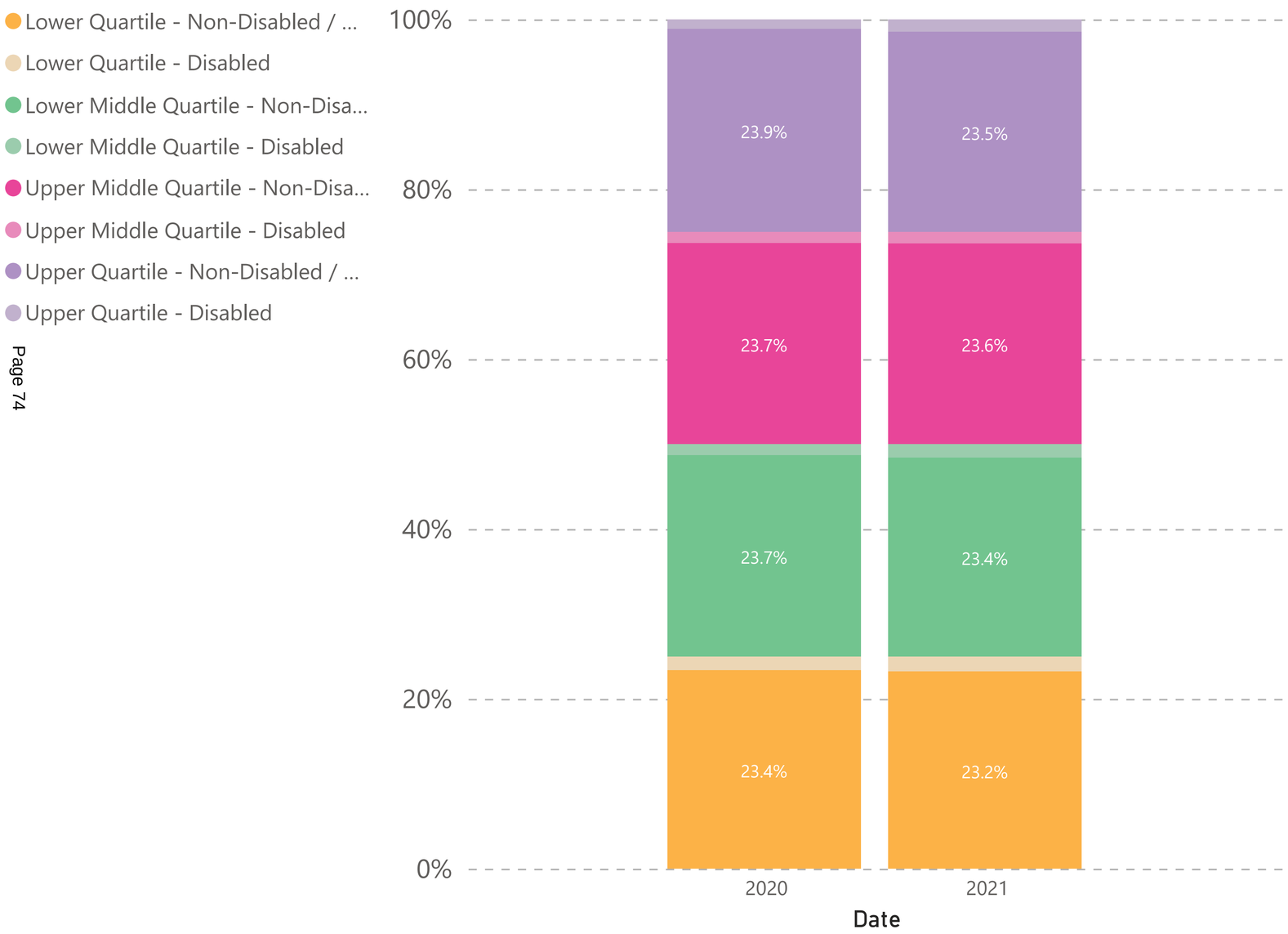
Median Bonus Pay Gap 2020



Our Diversity Data and Pay Gaps Report 2020-2021

Disability Pay Gap - Pay Band Quartiles

Quartiles



Upper Quartile

The proportion of employees with a **declared disability** in the upper quartile has slightly **decreased** from 2020

1.4% of employees with a **declared disability** are in the upper quartile (1.1% 2020)

Upper Middle

The proportion of employees with a **declared disability** in the upper middle quartile has slightly **increased** from 2020

1.4% of employees with a **declared disability** are in the upper middle quartile (1.3% 2020)

Lower Middle

The proportion of employees with a **declared disability** in the lower middle quartile has slightly **increased** from 2020

1.6% of employees with a **declared disability** are in the lower middle quartile (1.3% 2020)

Lower Quartile

The proportion of employees with a **declared disability** in the lower quartile has slightly **increased** from 2020

1.8% of employees with a **declared disability** are in the lower quartile (1.6% 2020)

APPENDIX B – What the Council is required to publish (Gender Pay Gap)

Since 2017, organisations with 250 or more employees must publish statutory calculations every year showing how large the pay gap is between their male and female employees using a specific reference date. For public sector organisations this is the 31st March.

The gender pay gap is an equality measure that shows the difference in pay between all men and women in a workforce expressed as a percentage of men's earnings. It can sometimes be confused with the law on 'equal pay'. An equal pay analysis looks at whether men and women doing equal work are paid the same i.e. it is a direct comparison between the contractual terms (including pay) of two people of the opposite sex doing equal work. A gender pay review, however, looks at the pay of men and women at all levels of the workforce as a whole.

Calculations

Mean	% difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male and female employees
Median	% difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male and female employees
Mean bonus	% difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male and female employees
Median bonus	% difference between the median bonus pay paid to male and female employees
Bonus proportions*	% of male and female employees who were paid bonus pay during the relevant period
Quartile pay band proportions	Proportions of male and female employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands

*Please note that the calculations relating to bonus proportions are not required for Warwickshire County Council.

Key points about the basis of the calculations

- The mean average involves adding up all the numbers and dividing the result by how many numbers are on the list.
- The median average involves listing all of the numbers in numerical order. If there is an odd number of results, the median average is the middle number. If there is an even number of results, the median will be the mean of the two central numbers.

- The data is based on ‘full time relevant employees’, I.e. those employed on the reference date and paid their usual full basic pay during the relevant pay period.
- The data is based on ‘ordinary pay’, defined as basic pay, allowences, pay for piecework, pay for leave and shift premium pay but not overtime pay; redundancy or other termination payments, pay in lieu of leave, or non-cash benefits.
- The calculations are based on head count and not on ‘full time equivalent’ (FTE) numbers of employees.

Staff and Pensions Committee

13 September 2021

Sustainable and Resilient Workforce Annual Review 2020/2021 (Previously known as Employee Sickness Absence Management Report)

Recommendations

1. That the Committee notes the performance information in relation to the management of employee sickness absence during 2020/21 and endorses an overall target of 8 days per FTE (with a +/- 1 day tolerance).

2. That the Committee notes the work in our approach to developing a sustainable and resilient workforce and supports the priority actions for 2021/2022.

3. That the Committee considers for future years whether the use of the charts in section 3 are a complementary addition to the Annual Review, or whether the annual review information would be sufficient.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Following the introduction of the Our People Strategy and the increase in absence figures in 2019/2020, the council identified a key priority area of developing a sustainable and resilient workforce. With the aim to support the wellbeing of our workforce and reduce the level of sickness absence across the council, by providing an infrastructure for managers to proactively support wellbeing and manage absence.

1.2 An annual review attached as Appendix 1 details the work that has taken place with regards to developing a sustainable and resilient workforce and outlines:

a) The achievements in 2020/21.
b) The priorities and action plan for 2021/2022 to take forward further development of a sustainable and resilient workforce.
c) Workforce performance data for 2020/21, with trend and benchmarking information.

1.3 This report pulls out the main themes from the annual review for consideration by the Committee.

2.0 Sustainable and Resilient Workforce; at a glance:

2.1 Absence has reduced significantly from 10.9 to 7.45 days per FTE over the last year, whilst we have been working through the pandemic with many of our people working from home. With a 3.45 days reduction, the rate is the lowest level for a decade and is below the public sector and the Shire's Counties LA comparators for the first time in 5 years. A 25% overachievement of the target of 7% reduction (from 10.9 to 10.1 days per FTE) and an actual reduction of 32%.

2.2 Regular 'Check- ins' with our staff has allowed us to track how people are feeling and tailor our supporting staff offer and we know that at least 80% of our staff have been doing ok or better and 86% of our people feel that wellbeing is promoted at work.

2.3 The sustainable and resilient workforce group, which is a collaboration of managers and professionals, has been created and are driving actions to maximise wellness at work. Priority has been focused on data and insight for managers and working towards achieving Bronze Thrive at Work accreditation.

2.4 Stress and mental health absence makes up over a third of time lost due to absences, and remains a focus for 2021/2022 along with long term absence, which makes up over 70% of our absence. Whilst this is an increase in terms of percentage, the days per FTE for stress have reduced from 3.17 to 2.47.

2.5 Two thirds of our people have taken no sickness absence at all, an increase from 50% last year. Absence relating to cancer, is now one of our top reasons, and we have seen a reduction in absences relating to chest and respiratory. Covid-19 related absences has not had a significant impact on the absence reasons, however, what is not yet fully known is the longer term effects, in relation to long-covid and the mental health impacts of the pandemic.

2.6 2020/2021 has been an extraordinary year in terms of reducing sickness absence, likely to have been impacted considerably by home working, social distancing and increased hand hygiene. Therefore, this attendance performance should not be regarded as a benchmark year, instead the aim should be to maintain this improvement, and as such a target range of 8 absence days per FTE (+/- 1 day) is proposed.

2.7 Priorities for 2021/2022 will focus on Stress and Mental Health related absence and workload management, managing long term absence, understanding the longer-term impact of the pandemic and the use of data to target our actions.

3.0 Performance Data and Benchmarking

3.1 Traditionally the committee has received performance data and benchmarking information, whilst these are included in the annual review in graphical format, these have also been included here for ease of comparison purposes:

3.2 Days per FTE

Absence has significantly reduced to the lowest level for a decade and is lower than both the public sector average and the Shire's Network Average. A target reduction of 7% was set, a 32% reduction was achieved.

Year Ending	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
Days Lost per Employee FTE	8.81	9.61	9.60	10.08	10.26	9.90	9.87	9.51	10.90	7.45
Public Sector Average	9.3	9.1	7.9	8.7	7.9	8.7	8.5	8.5	8.4	8.0
Shire County Average				9.92	9.78	9.36	9.62	9.48	9.19	7.60

Note the Public sector average has a lag in reporting and is a year in arrears

3.3 By Service Area

The majority of the service area's exceeded the 7% target reduction, with the one exception, this is likely to be due to the transfer of staff through the Service Redesign process to other areas, and as a result not all comparisons are like for like.

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	20/2021	% + /_	FTE
WCC (excluding schools)	**10.08**	**10.26**	**9.9**	**9.87**	**9.51**	**10.9**	**7.45**	-34%	**3890.4**
Communities Directorate	**9.99**	**9.28**	**9.21**	**9.05**	**8.44**	**9.65**	**5.64**	-40%	**1243.73**
Communities	9.26	10.19	11.12	8.31	7.12	7.93	9.27	14%	152.72
Education Services	11.72	8.54	9.62	9.09	7.07	7.83	5.18	-23%	341.13
Environmental Services*						7.02	4.45	-37%	336.46
Fire & Rescue **	6.5	8.42	7.91	10.22	10.09	14.34	4.73	-67%	**410.15**
People Directorate	**12.28**	**13.16**	**13.12**	**12.12**	**12.12**	**14.11**	**10.51**	-26%	**1282.71**
Adult Social Care	11.9	16	15.37	13.35	13.38	16.22	11.54	-29%	495.61
Children & Families	11.8	12.86	11.45	12.4	11.66	13.12	10.8	-18%	697.72
People Commissioning	15.89	13	11.24	4.03	7.98	7.98	2.28	-71%	67.01
Public Health	3.16	6.56	7.49	7.95	15.15	6.22	1.9	-69%	17.47
Resources Directorate	**8.2**	**8.87**	**8.36**	**7.05**	**8.25**	**9.94**	**6.52**	-34%	**1298.4**
Business and Customer	11.21	11.55	10.15	9.95	9.43	13.5	8.51	-37%	522.75
Commissioning Support Unit	9	4.98	4.82	3.7	2.66	5.73	2.8	-51%	132.66
Enabling (was HR and OD)	7.84	9.46	7.77	5.03	8.04	7.98	6.35	-20%	320.43
Enabling (was ICT)	4.64	6.89	5.27	5.55	7.71				
Enabling (was Property Services)	8.7	9.07	10.07	6.37	12.26				
Finance	6.83	7.35	7.18	8.81	7.3	7.18	5.83	-19%	163.71
Governance and Policy	7.29	7.95	5.92	6.77	5.49	6.08	4.03	-34%	153.84

* Environmental Services is a new area which did not exist prior to 2019/2020.
**Fire and Rescue service, from 2020/21 onwards a different method of calculating days per FTE, based on the shift patterns has been adopted.

3.4 Percentage No Absence

Over two thirds of our people have not had a day off absent in the last 12 months, an increase from 50% the previous year,

No Absence	2011/12	12/13	13/14	14/2015	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
WCC	40.50%	36.30%	39.30%	38.70%	40.70%	39.60%	48.10%	39.95%	50.45%	67.58%

3.5 Benchmarking information

Benchmark data on average days absence has been obtained from the Shire Counties network to provide comparative data. Datasets should be considered as illustrative as the precise method for calculation, together with absence strategies, may differ.

The public service sector average for 2020 was 8.0 days per employee per year, compared to 8.4 days reported in 2019

Warwickshire absence rates are tracking below the average for the first time in 5 years.

Local Authority	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Warwickshire	9.9	9.87	9.51	10.90	7.45
LA a	8.4	9.1	9.4	9.80	6.47
LA b				9.00	7.70
LA c	13.2	11.9	12.4	13.63	12.90
LA d				10.18	8.30
LA e				11.03	8.23
LA f	7.8	9.1	8.1	8.59	5.64
LA g	6.9	7.3	7.5	8.02	5.99
LA h				10.08	7.51
LA i					5.91
LA j				8.39	6.46
LA k				11.2	10.53
LA l				7.42	6.42
LA m	7.5	8.3	6.7	7.42	6.42
LA n	12.9	13.6	13	11.91	8.79
LA o		10.6	10.7	6.65	9.48
LA p				6.39	4.81
LA q				6.74	9.48
LA r				8.1	6.00
Mean Average	9.36	9.62	9.48	9.19	7.60
Public Sector	8.7	8.5	8.5	8.4	8.0

Public Sector Source: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2020

3.6 Percentage of time lost due to short-term / long-term sickness

During the last 12 months there has been a significant increase in the percentage of long-term v short term, although overall long term absence has reduced from

7.19 to 5.31 days per FTE.

	WCC		Communities		People		Resources	
	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term
2015/16	37.3%	62.7%	41.1%	58.9%	33.8%	66.2%	40.0%	60.0%
2016/17	39.7%	60.3%	38.9%	61.1%	37.3%	62.7%	45.6%	54.4%
2017/18	36.6%	63.4%	39.8%	60.2%	33.6%	64.4%	44.7%	55.3%
2018/19	37.4%	62.6%	39.0%	61.0%	32.4%	67.6%	44.2%	55.8%
2019/20	33.5%	66.5%	33.1%	66.9%	30.2%	69.8%	39.0%	61.0%
2020/21	28.6%	71.5%	27.0%	73.0%	27.4%	72.6%	31.8%	68.2%

Short-term absence = below 20 working days. Long term absence four weeks plus

3.7 Sickness Absence Management With the support of the HR Service, managers across all Directorates are working to proactively manage sickness absence in accordance with the Council's Sickness Management of Absence Procedure. Please note due to the sensitive nature of the details, some of these figures are not recorded in the annual report.

Year	Indicators (e-episodes, d-days)				Ill Health Retirements	Dismissals	Re-deployees
	3e / 6mths	5e / 12mths	10d/12mnth	LTS at 31/			
2015/16	No Record				9	7	No record
2016/17					16	7	No record
2017/18					9	5	No record
2018/19					6	7	1
2019/20	160	117	783	153	9	1	3
2020/21	78	55	568	59	1	2	3

3.8 Reasons for Sickness Absence

The top reasons for sickness absence by percentage has changed this year, stress and mental health is still the highest, now making up over a third of all absence (although it is worth noting that overall stress absence has also reduced in 2021/2022 from 3.17 days per FTE to 2.47). Musculo Skeletal remains the second highest, and chest and respiratory is no longer the third reason, being replaced by cancer. Covid-19 related absence has not had a significant impact on the absence reasons.

Reason	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
Mental Health	19.90%	25.40%	25.30%	24.60%	25.70%	29.10%	33.10%
Musculoskeletal	17.70%	18.60%	16.00%	18.10%	19.60%	17.00%	15.70%
Chest or Respiratory	5.90%	4.60%	5.10%	9.90%	9.60%	7.90%	3.80%
Cancer	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	na	n/a	6.50%

Digestive System	6.90%	6.70%	7.00%	4.50%	6.40%	6.80%	4.00%
Reason Withheld	6.60%	3.90%	5.50%	0.90%	5.90%	6.10%	5.90%
Neurological	4.00%	4.20%	3.40%	3.70%	4.10%	5.00%	4.30%
Viral (inc Covid-19)	13.90%	13.20%	12.30%	4.80%	3.50%	3.50%	5.30%

3.9 Financial Implications

The estimated opportunity cost of days lost due to sickness absence has reduced by £700,000 in the last 12 months. Please note that this figure does not include any cover costs where cover arrangements may have been put into place

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Estimated Cost	£3.13 million	£3.5 million	£2.8 million

3.10 Occupational Health Referrals and Reasons

Management referrals have reduced slightly this year and the percentage of referrals relating to stress has increased.

Referrals	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Communities Group	**77**	**73**	**99**	**103**	**78**	**111**	**73**
People Group	**256**	**211**	**168**	**181**	**181**	**222**	**210**
Resources Group	**127**	**128**	**110**	**97**	**79**	**78**	**94**
Total	**460**	**412**	**377**	**381**	**338**	**411**	**377**

Referral Reasons	18/19	19/20	20/21
Mental Health	40%	47%	50%
Musculo-Skeletal	21%	20%	15%
Other Reasons	39%	33%	35%

3.11 Employee Assist Programme

The Employee Assistance Programme provision is available to all WCC employees (excluding WFRS who have their own in-house provision) and has continued to be extensively communicated and promoted to employees. It is worth noting that during throughout 2020, this has also made available to WCC's foster carers, WCC commissioned social care providers as well as a number of our schools.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Emotional Support	25	37	35	31	128
Legal and Information	10	10	5	10	35
Management Support			1	1	2
Total	35	47	41	42	165

WCC only contacts.

4.0 Conclusions

4.1 2020/2021 has been an exceptionally successful year in terms of developing a sustainable and resilient workforce, especially considering the global pandemic.

4.2 Absence rate have reduced significantly over the last 12 month and is at the lowest level for a decade, which can be attributed to the majority of our workforce working from home, our focus on wellbeing along with more accurate recording of absence in our Fire and Rescue Service. Our Absence is now tracking below our benchmark comparators.

4.3 The wellbeing of our workforce continues to be our number one priority, with a commitment to keeping our people well and at work and with our agile working offer encouraging our people to work in the way that enables them to be their best.

4.4 Stress and Mental health continues to be a priority area along with reducing our long-term absences, understanding the effects of long covid and the mental health impact of the pandemic.

4.5 A full programme of activity is planned for 2021/2022 to ensure that absence levels are sustained.

4.6 A target of 8 days per FTE (with a +/- 1 days tolerance) is proposed for 2021/2022.

Background Papers

Our People focus on Sustainable and Resilient Workforce Annual Review 2021/2022

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Not applicable.

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OUR PEOPLE

Focus on Sustainable and Resilient Workforce

Annual Review **2020/2021**

Warwickshire County Council, a great place to work where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best.

Warwickshire County Council

Sustainable and Resilient Workforce

Warwickshire's Story

Message from Monica Fogarty,
Chief Executive

The wellbeing of our people is a key priority. Our people are what makes Warwickshire great, and we know that supporting people to be their best at work, will enable the Council to achieve and even exceed its objectives.

2020/2021 has been a time when the resilience of the Organisation and that of our workforce has been tested. During that same time, we have seen a significant reduction in sickness absence. This must be because people have been able to strike a better life-work balance. Going forward as an organisation we must continue our efforts to promote wellbeing and to support our people to be well at work. We need to establish our new blended way of working and sustain this improvement over the next year.

At a glance

1. Absence has reduced significantly from 10.9 to 7.45 days per FTE over the last year. This reflects a period where we have been working through the pandemic with many of our people working from home. With a 3.45 days reduction, the rate is the lowest level for a decade and is below the public sector and the Shire's Counties LA comparators for the first time in 5 years. A 25% overachievement of the target of 7% and an actual reduction of 32%.

2. Regular 'Check- ins' with our staff has allowed us to track how people are feeling and tailor our supporting staff offer. We know that at least 80% of our staff have been doing OK or better, and 86% of our people feel that wellbeing is promoted at work.

3. The sustainable and resilient workforce group, which is a collaboration of managers and professionals, has been created and are driving actions to maximise wellness at work. Priority has been focused on data and insight for managers and working towards achieving Bronze Thrive at Work accreditation.

4. Stress and mental health absence makes up over a third of time lost due to absences, and remains a focus for 2021/2022 along with long term absence, which makes up over 70% of our absence. Whilst this is an increase in terms of percentage, the days per FTE for stress have reduced from 3.17 to 2.47.

5. Two thirds of our people have taken no sickness absence at all, an increase from 50% last year. Absence relating to cancer, is now one of our top reasons, and we have seen a reduction in absences relating to chest and respiratory. Covid-19 related absences has not had a significant impact on the absence reasons, however, what is not yet fully known is the longer term effects, in relation to long COVID and the mental health impacts of the pandemic.

6. 2020/2021 has been an extraordinary year in terms of reducing sickness absence, likely to have been impacted considerably by home working, social distancing and increased hand hygiene. Therefore, this attendance performance should not be regarded as a benchmark year, instead the aim should be to maintain this improvement, and as such a target range of 8 absence days per FTE (+/- 1 day) is proposed.

7. Priorities for 2021/22 will focus on stress and mental health related absence and workload management; managing long term absence; understanding the longer-term impact of the pandemic; and the use of data to target our actions.

Focus on Sustainable and Resilient Workforce

Through the later end of 2020, the council refreshed its Our People Strategy, to drive through the vision of Warwickshire County Council, a great place to work where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best.

Embodying our Values and Behaviours, the Our People Strategy is built on 6 building blocks:

Our behaviours

Our behaviours were first introduced in 2016 and these haven't changed. Our behaviours frame how we should behave at work. They help us to understand how we should go about our work and the way we should interact with each other and our customers.

To support the achievement of our vision, five key organisational values have been identified:

High performing | Collaborative | Customer focused | Accountable | Trustworthy

Our People Strategy building blocks

The building blocks provide the foundations for the delivery of Our People Strategy vision. We have identified six key building blocks:

For each building block we have a clear set of outcomes we need to achieve so that we can fulfill our vision and transform as an organisation in a way which is sustainable.

Building a sustainable and resilient workforce

One of the main enablers of the Our People Strategy is that **"We will listen, learn and act to create an inclusive organisation with a sustainable and resilient workforce."**

With the introduction of the Our People Strategy at the end of 2020 and the increasing absence figures in 2019/2020, the council identified a key priority area of developing a sustainable and resilient workforce.

The aim is to support the wellbeing of our workforce and reduce the level of sickness absence across the council, by providing an infrastructure for managers to proactively support wellbeing and manage absence. Throughout the pandemic the priority has been to keep people safe and well whilst adopting different societal challenges and working arrangements.

This document reviews absence statistics and actions taken to create a sustainable and resilient workforce through 2020/2021 along with the plans for 2021/2022.

Absence has reduced significantly over the last 12 months, which can mainly be attributed to our approach to agile working with approximately 80% of our workforce working from home, alongside a more accurate recording of absence data in our Fire and Rescue Service.

Measuring Success

In order to measure our performance for 2021/2022 we continue to monitor and report the following:

- Days lost per employee
- Days lost per employee - stress/ anxiety/mental health
- Percentage pf employees taking no sickness absense in the last 12 months
- Number of people on long term sickness
- Long term / short term % split

Achievements 2020/21

Sustainable and Resilient Workforce

The purpose of the project is to support the management of wellbeing, absence and attendance, by ensuring that the council has the data and insight, culture, behaviours and skills to maximise wellbeing and attendance at work

Achievements to date include:

- A council wide group was been established in Autumn 2020, consisting of a cross section of manager/leaders and professionals from HR, Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Business Intelligence and Communications
- Regularly reviewed absence data
- Launched a new approach for data, so that managers and leaders can be responsible for managing absence cases.
- Launched a new leadership module of HR for non HR managers on sustainable and resilient management
- Launched a new managers' HR induction which has a focus on attendance management and wellbeing
- Defined the priorities for 2021/2022 including launching a wellbeing charter, reviewing the sickness absence policy, responded to the Thrive health needs assessment findings, scoping a programme of activities, scoping the ongoing approach to attendance management targets.

Supporting Staff

Alongside the sustainable and resilient workforce project and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the council set up a supporting staff hub which has co-ordinated a range of support to our people, particularly those working from home. This has included a dedicated intranet area; developing how we work protocols; designing the check-in approach to engagement and regular wellbeing focused content in our weekly issues of the Working for Warwickshire staff magazine and on Yammer.

Engagement

In reviewing our approach to engagement, we have moved from an annual YourSay survey to a more regular, shorter check-in survey. The average response rate is 45%. The wellbeing of our people has been a consistent theme, where we have tracked how people have been feeling. Throughout, at least 80% have been feeling OK for better, although the number of people not coping well has also increased. Ensuring that we support our people has therefore remained a priority.

Throughout the check-ins, we have been able to measure other elements of our approach and wellbeing offer including:

- 86% of our people believe wellbeing is promoted at work, a 14% increase on the previous year.
- 89% are satisfied with internal communications, an 11% increase.
- 76% employee engagement score, an increase of 6%
- 83% of our people believe WCC values equality and diversity in the workplace, a 2% increase

Wellbeing

Through the pandemic response our approach to wellbeing and supporting our people has been critical. The main achievements include:

- Network of support including access to Occupational Health, Employee Assistance Programme, Wellbeing champions and Listening Mates
- Commissioned and delivered a series of personal resilience workshops focusing on Cope – Happy, Thrive – Happy, Succeed Happy, both live and recorded to maximise participation
- Developed tools for managers and staff to identify and support colleagues who may be suffering, including spotting the signs and conversation starters guidance
- Empowering our people to prioritise their own wellbeing and developing protocols so that our people can own their day
- Updated and promoted individual wellness plans to reflect working from home to support our people, leaders and managers in having conversations about wellbeing.
- Defined our agile working offer, with the overriding principle that work is what you do, not necessarily, when and where you do it. This is based on service delivery, trust and choice, empowering our people to work in the way that enables them to work at their best.

Thrive at Work Accreditation

Warwickshire has committed to achieving Bronze accreditation through the West Midlands Combined Authority's Thrive at Work programme.

- Undertaken a Health Needs Assessment, this looked at how people are feeling, their health and their wellbeing
- Demonstrated our commitment to wellbeing
- Provided evidence on a number of key wellbeing initiatives
- Provided evidence that appropriate policies are in place to support wellbeing
- Demonstrated that our leaders and managers are well equipped to support wellbeing

Managers Insight and Data

In order for wellbeing and absence to be managed appropriately, it is imperative that managers have access to the information they need. Whilst we develop a real time absence dashboard for managers, as an interim measure, we have improved our pre-existing approach.

Target

A target of 8 days per FTE (with a +/- 1 day tolerance) has been set for 2021/2022.

Priorities for 2021/2022

Key focus for 2021/2022

- Continued focus on wellbeing to reduce stress and mental health related absence and workload management
- Managing long term absence
- Understanding the longer term impact of the pandemic and continue to monitor how people are feeling as we enter the reinstatement phase and move to an agile working approach, where we will measure, listen learn and adapt
- Using data to target our actions
- Target areas with high levels of absense, correlate with other HR metrics and provide support to address and specific issues.

Action plan

- Seek to maintain the improvement in attendance, with an employee absence target range of 8 days per FTE (with a tolerance of +/- 1 day)
- Launch wellbeing charter including managers must do's.
- Achieve Bronze thrive accreditation and develop an action plan for silver
- Link public health and employee wellbeing initiatives
- Review the sickness absence policy and procedure in line with our tone and voice work

- Implement the Thrive action plan, including analysis of health data to prioritise health initiatives
- Develop a dedicated landing page on the intranet for all wellbeing activities
- Develop a Managers data dashboard for absence data
- Monitor absence rate, return to work interview compliance, immediate referral to Occupational Health for all mental health absences and action plans for those off over 3 months
- Wellbeing and workload management - priority for our engagement survey
- Supporting Mental Health offer

Conclusion

2020/2021 has been an exceptionally successful year in terms of developing a sustainable and resilient workforce, especially considering the global pandemic:

- Absence rates have reduced significantly over the last 12 month and is at the lowest level for a decade, which can be attributed to the majority of our workforce working from home along with more accurate recording of absence in our Fire and Rescue Service
- Our absence is now tracking below our benchmark comparators
- The wellbeing of our workforce continues to be our number one priority, with a commitment to keeping our people well and at work and with our agile working offer encouraging our people to work in the way that enables them to be their best
- Stress and Mental health continues to be a priority area along with reducing our long term absences, understanding the effects of long COVID-19 and the mental health impact of the pandemic.
- A full programme of activity is planned for 2021/2022 to ensure that absence levels are sustained
- A target of 8 days per FTE (with a +/- 1 days tolerance) is proposed for 2021/2022

Sustainable and Resilient Workforce Annual Report 20-21

Introduction

Key Measures and Definitions

Full Time Equivalent (FTE): Full Time Equivalent relates to the number of hours an employee is contracted to work each week as a proportion of the number of hours per week defined as full-time as per contracts of employment. Thus, a full-time employee would have an FTE of 1/0 and an employee working 18.5 hours per week in a role based upon a 37 hours contract would have an FTE of 0.5

Days per Full Time Equivalent (FTE): Days per FTE relates to the number of days of sickness absence per FTE

Key Highlights

Absence has **reduced significantly** over the last 12 months from **10.9** days to **7.45** days per FTE and is at the lowest for a decade.

The split between long term and short term absence, has seen an **increase** in **long term** absence.

Mental health is the **top reason** for absence, and now makes up over a third of all absences. However, the days per FTE mental health absences has reduced over the year. As a result of Covid-19, we saw a slight increase in Viral, and a significant reduction in check and respiratory.

Long term absences have **reduced** over the last 12 months as have the number of people hitting sickness indicators

Two thirds of our people have had **no absence** in the last 12 months, a significant increase on the previous year.

Warwickshire County Council, a great place to work where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best.

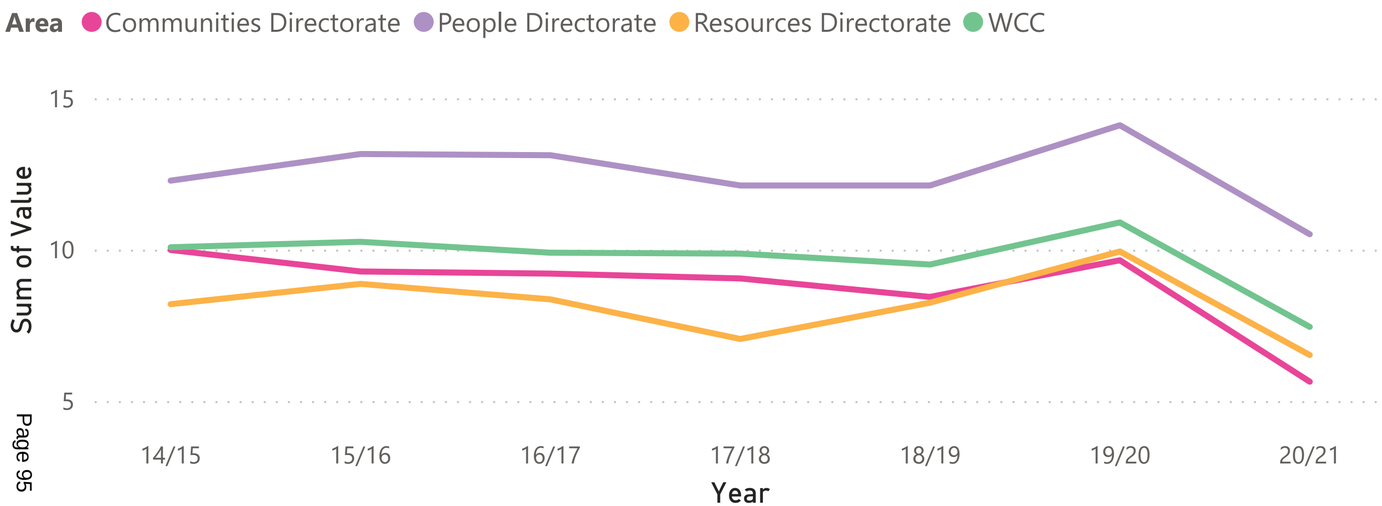
We will listen, learn and act to create an inclusive organisation with a sustainable and resilient workforce.

Warwickshire County Council

Sustainable and Resilient Workforce Annual Report 20-21

Absence

Days per FTE



Days per FTE has **decreased**

WCC Days per FTE 19/20	WCC Days per FTE 20/21
10.90	7.45

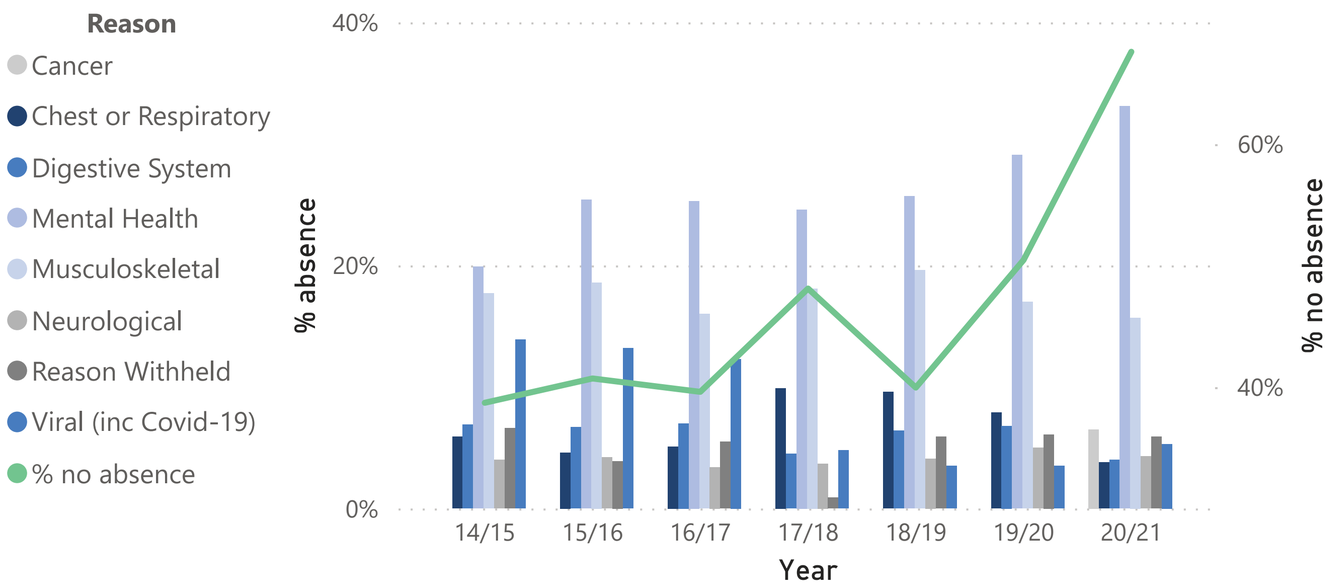
% of staff with no absence has **increased**

% staff with no absence19/20	% staff with no absence 20/21
50.5%	67.6%

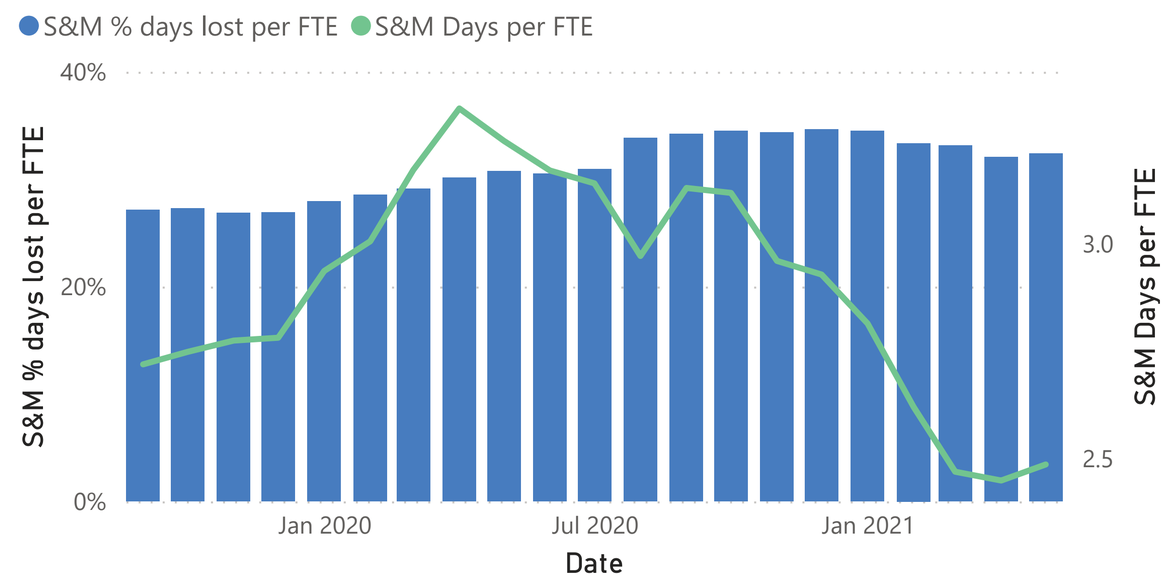
Top Sickness absence reasons 20/21

Stress and Mental Health	Musculo-skeletal	Cancer
33.1%	15.7%	6.5%

Top Reasons for Absence and % of all staff with no absence trend



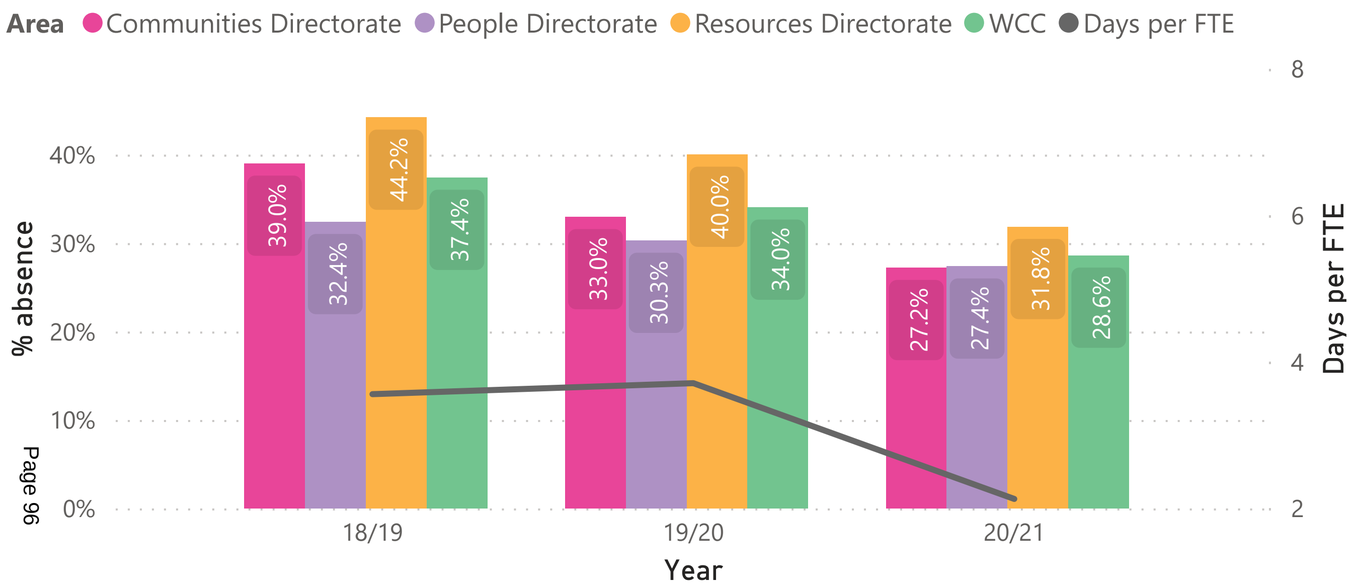
Stress and Mental Health % of days lost



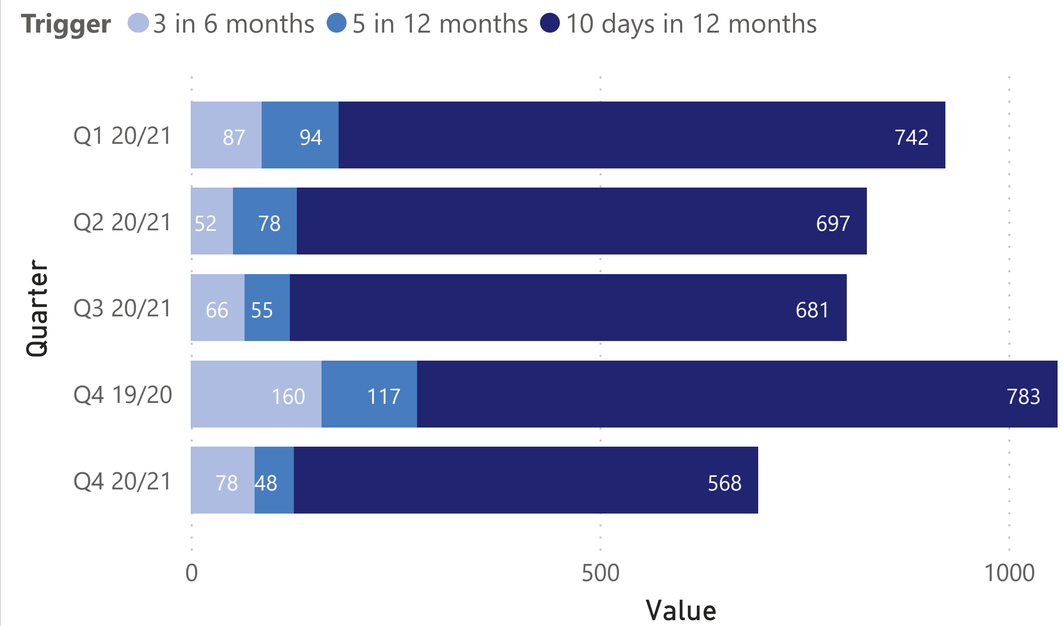
Sustainable and Resilient Workforce Annual Report 20-21

Absence

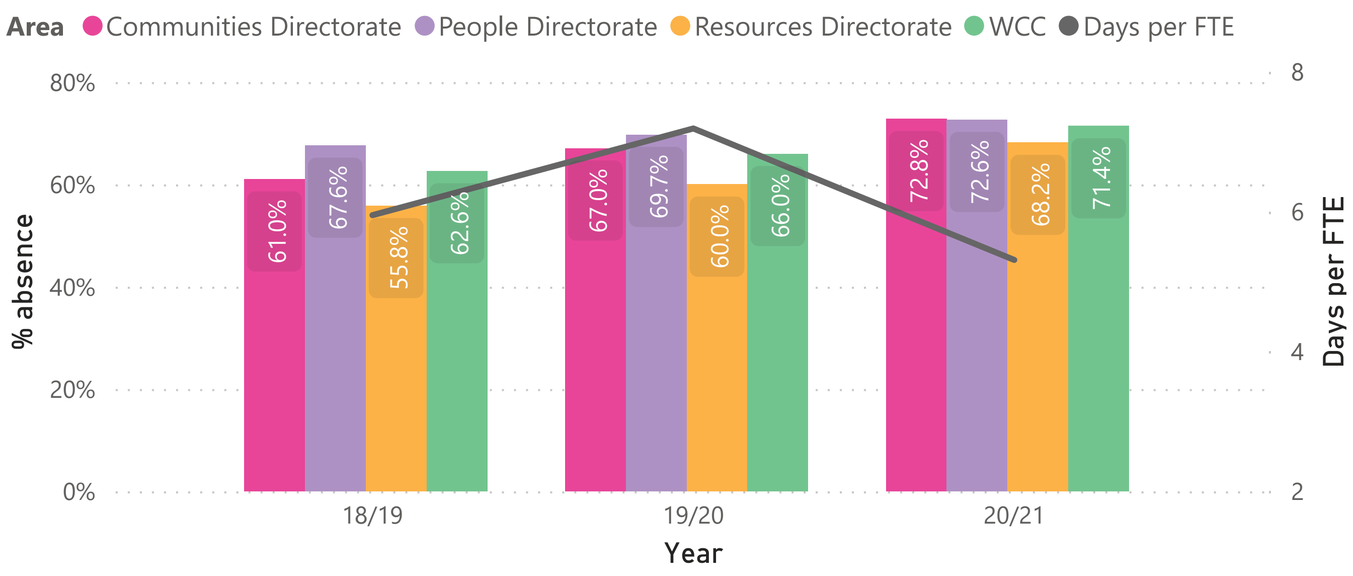
% days lost to short term absence



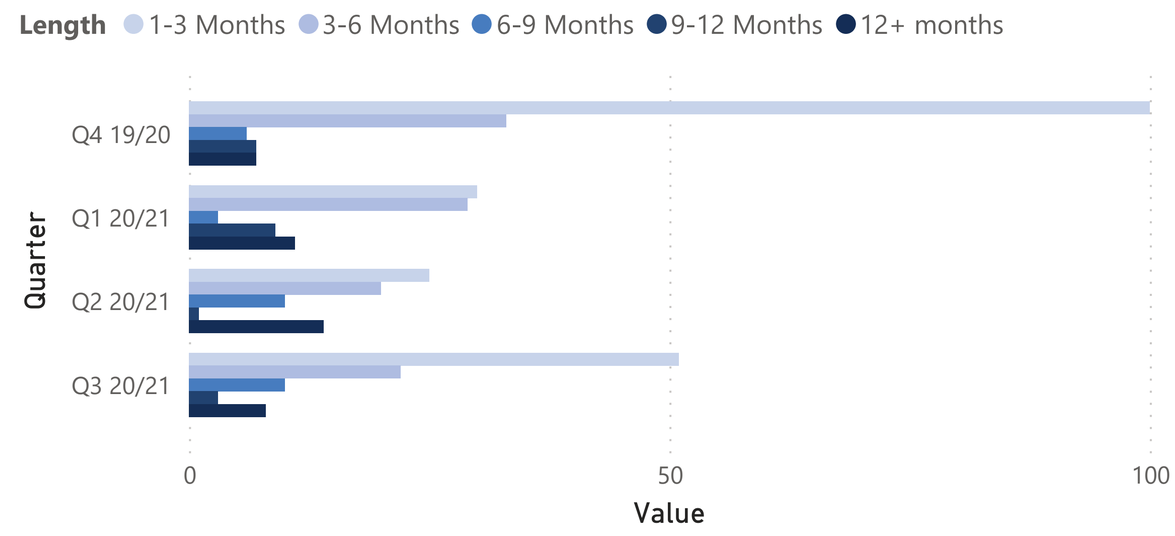
Number of staff hitting trigger indicators



% days lost to long term absence



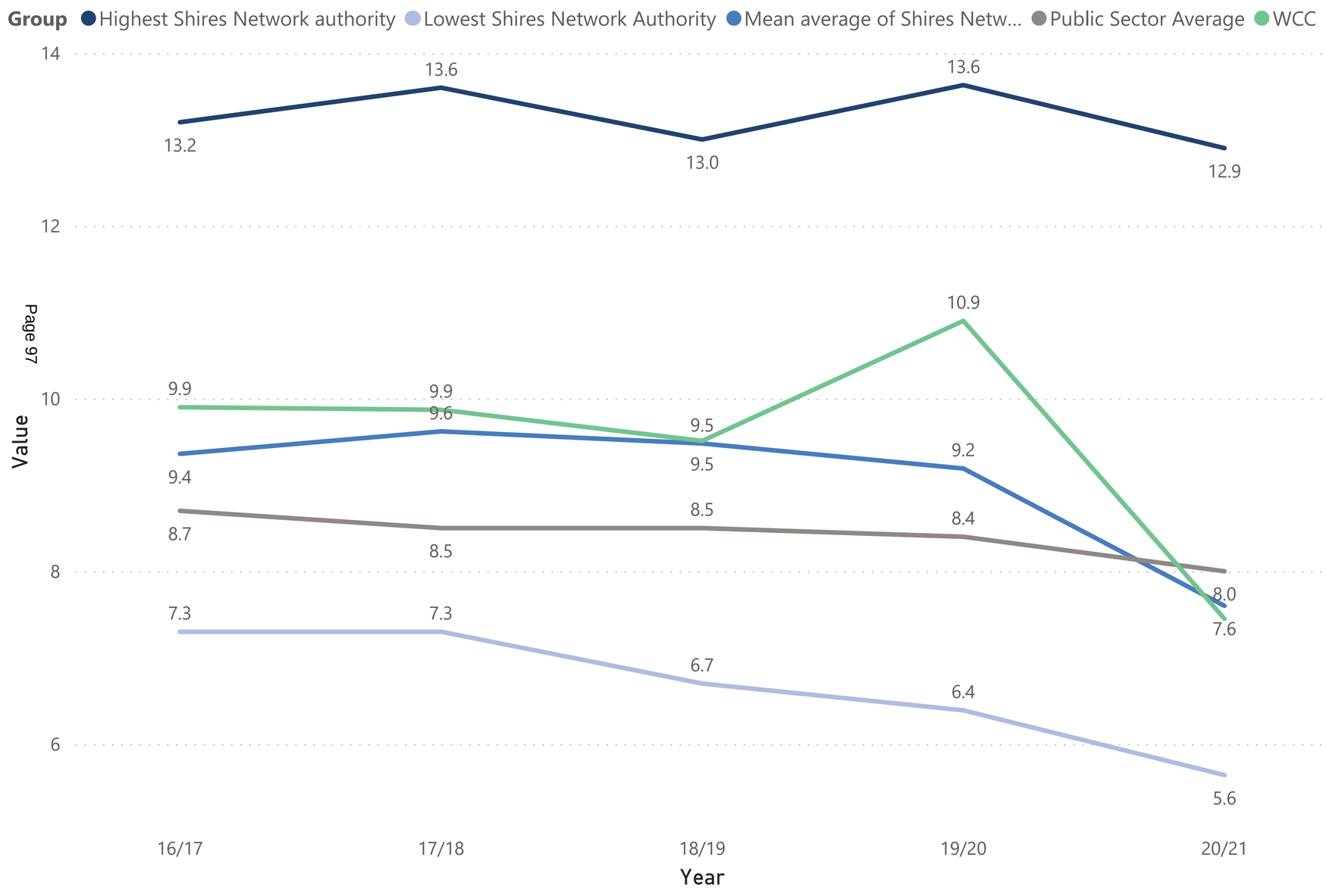
Long term absence by length



Sustainable and Resilient Workforce Annual Report 20-21

Benchmarking

Benchmark by year



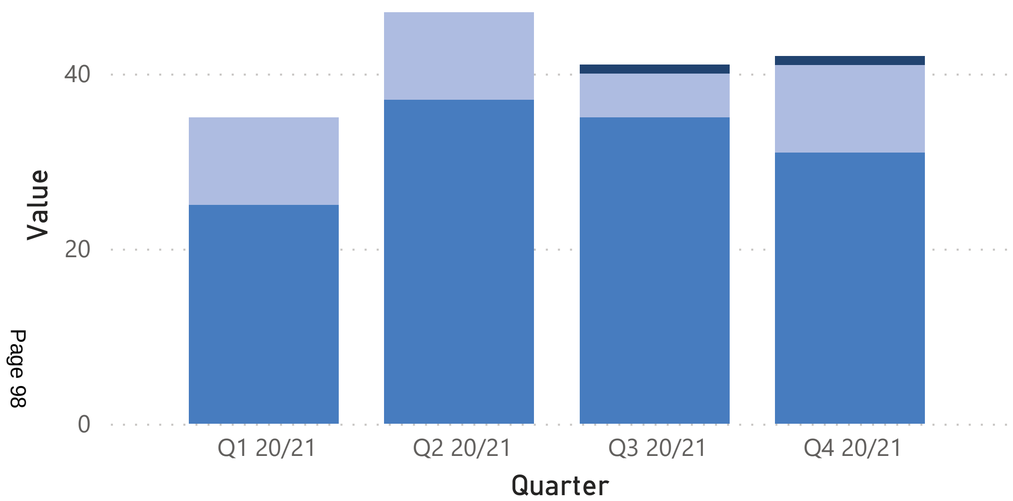
Benchmark data on average days absence has been obtained from 19 local authorities across the Shire Counties network to provide comparative data. The data compares the highest, lowest and mean average against Warwickshire's annual days per FTE figure.

Sustainable and Resilient Workforce Annual Report 20-21

Employee Assistance Programme & Occupational Health

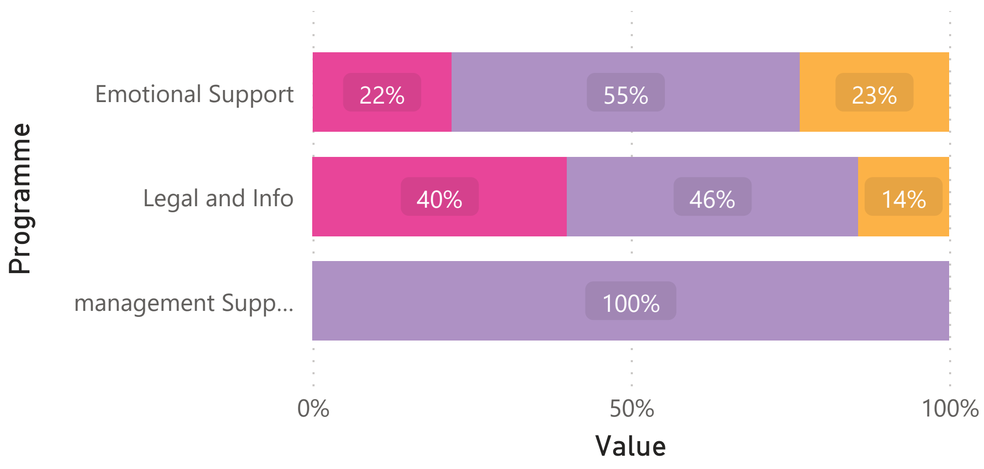
Employee Assistance Programme

Programme Emotional Support Legal and Info management Support



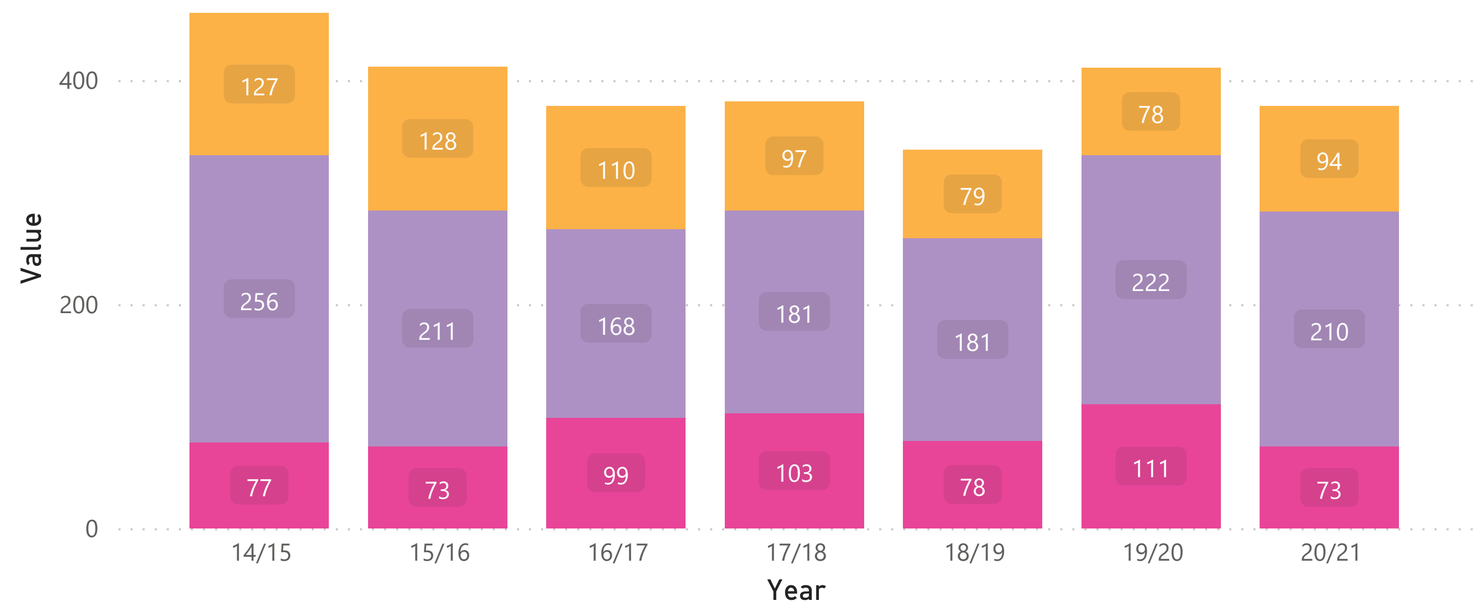
Programme by Directorate

Service Communities People Resources



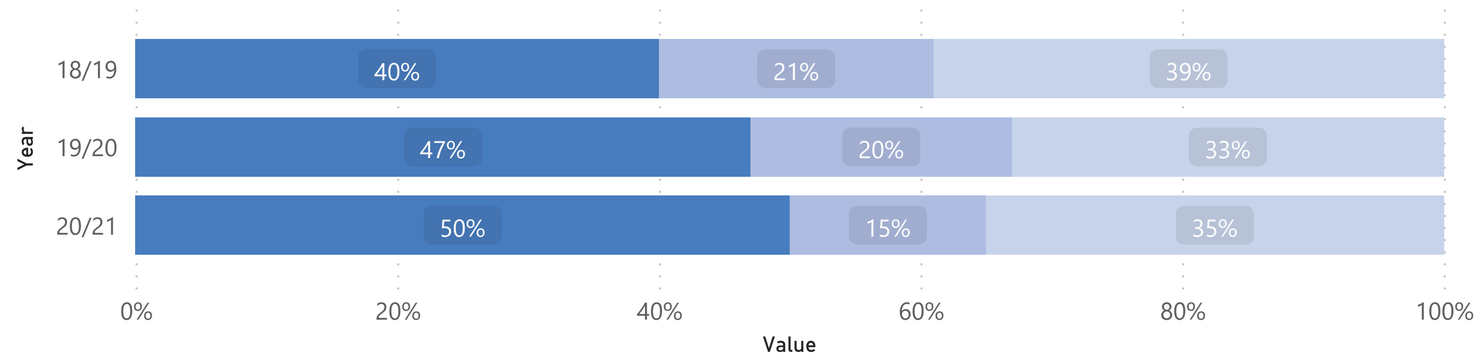
Number of Occupational Health Referrals by Year and Directorate

OH referrals Communities People Resources



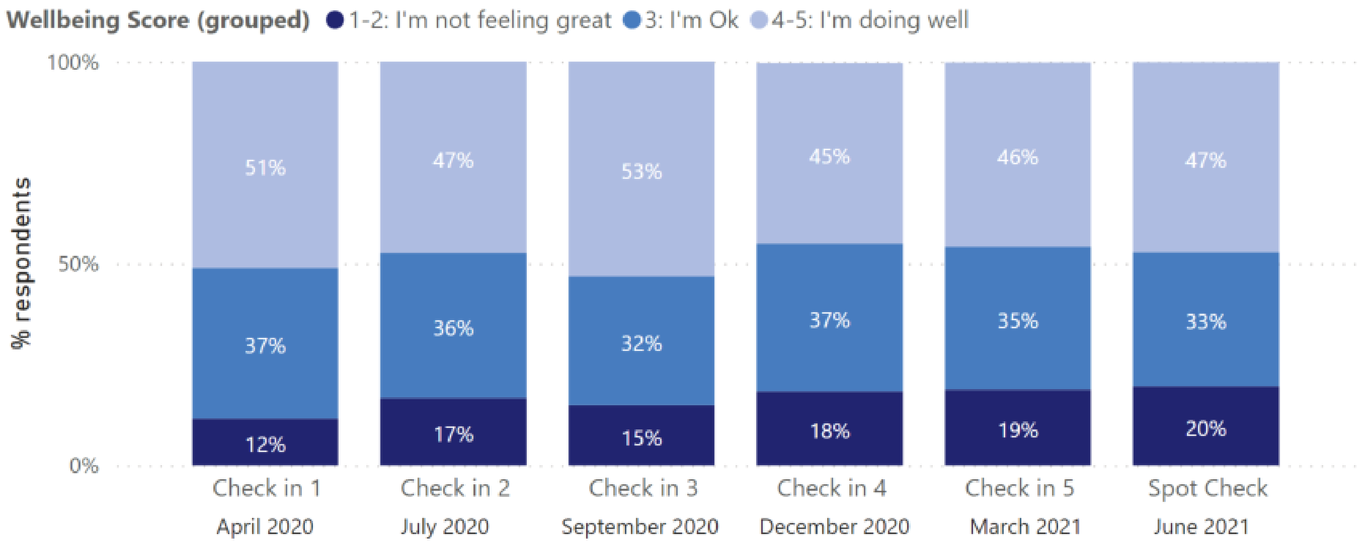
Occupational Health Referral reason by year

OH referral reason Mental Health Musculo-Skeletal Other Reasons

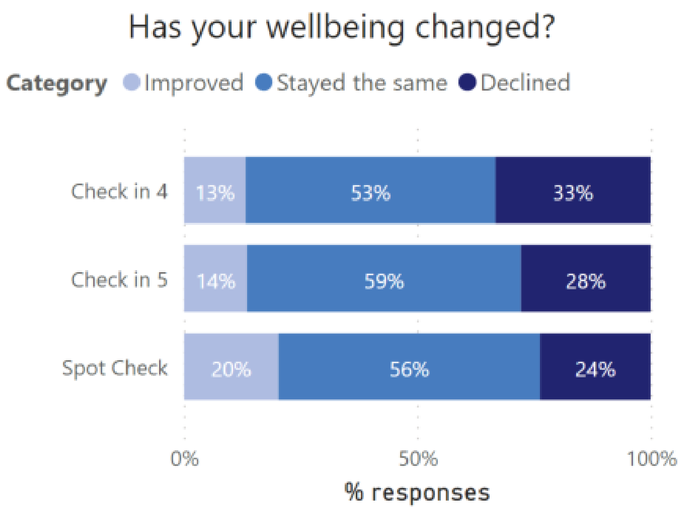


Sustainable and Resilient Workforce Annual Report 20-21

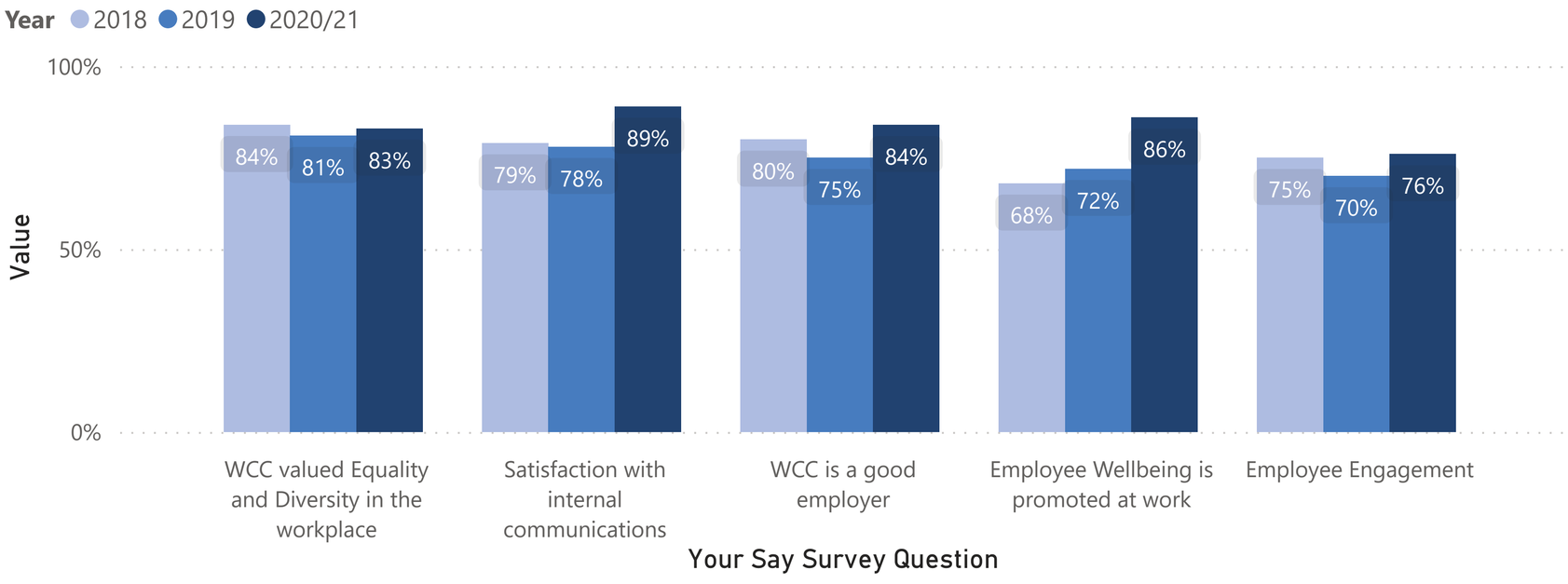
Engagement and Wellbeing

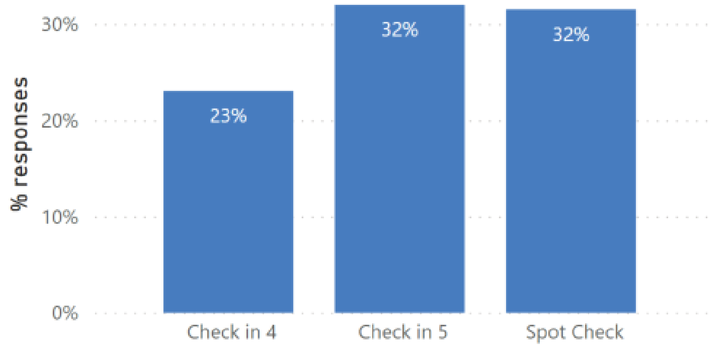


Employee wellbeing and engagement has been monitored through a series of check-in surveys from April 2020 to present.



Your Say Survey Questions





Thrive at Work Summary results 854 responses

About Thrive at Work

In March 2021 we ran the Thrive at Work Health Needs Assessment. This survey provided further insight into the wellbeing of our people, building on the information gathered through our check in surveys.

Thrive at Work is a workplace commitment to create an organisation that promotes employee health and wellbeing. There are four levels to the programme, WCC is working towards the bronze accreditation (level 2).

Wellbeing

Does WCC take positive action on health and wellbeing?

Yes 92%

No 8%

How much action does WCC take?

A lot 33%

Quite a bit 46%

Some 18%

Very little 3%

In the last 12 months, have you gone to work despite feeling that you should have taken the day off sick?

No, never 53%

Yes, once 16%

Yes, 2-5 times 25%

Yes, 6%

Working through COVID

How are you coping with remote working?

Coping well 38%

Coping quite well 49%

Coping not so well 12%

Not coping at all 1%

Are any outside of work challenged impacting on how you are working?

Yes 43%

No 57%

How would you describe your weight?

Underweight 1%

About right 52%

Overweight 47%

Have you established a good work routine?

Yes 92%

No 8%

Are you taking regular breaks?

Yes 70%

No 30%

Smoking

currently smokers 31%

non smokers 69%

of smokers intend to give up 68%

What did our people say?

Manager

My manager is accessible and frequently in contact **86%**

My manager keeps me up to date and well informed **85%**

My manager cares about my welfare and wellbeing **85%**

Leadership

The organisation is taking the situation seriously **97%**

Senior Management have been sufficiently visible and accessible **91%**

I have confidence in the senior management team decision responses **87%**

I would be listened to if I voiced concerns regarding WCC's response **70%**

Communication

The communication I have received has been helpful and reassuring **90%**

I am kept up to date and feel well informed regarding WCC's response **93%**

I know who to talk to if I need support **91%**

My team are communicating well and staying connected **84%**

Doing my job

Where I am currently working I have what I need to perform my job effectively **78%**

I am satisfied with the flexible working arrangements made by WCC to accommodate my needs during the pandemic **81%**

What did managers say?

I feel comfortable having 1:1 meetings with staff I line manage **99%**

I feel happy discussing staff health and wellbeing issues with them **97%**

I feel able to deal with any health and wellbeing concerns staff speak to me about **92%**

I feel able to manage staff sickness and return to work effectively **90%**

Do you feel supported by the organisation to manage your team?

Yes definitely 69%

Yes a little 28%

Not at all 3%

Warwickshire County Council

Staff and Pensions Committee

13 September 2021

Wellbeing and Volunteering Day

Recommendations

That the Committee supports the proposal to offer a Wellbeing and Volunteering Day to all Warwickshire County Council employees (excluding schools) to be taken by 31st March 2022.

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 This report is being brought to the Staff and Pensions Committee at the request of and with the support of the Chief Executive. The report considers a proposal to offer a Wellbeing and Volunteering Day to employees (excluding schools) to be taken by 31st March 2022. The proposal is being taken forward as a pilot for the financial year 2021/22 the outcome of which can be considered and taken into account in making recommendations for future years. The proposal builds on a wellbeing day offer which was implemented in 2019 for Children's Social Workers as part of their retention pledge, aimed at optimising retention rates for social workers in line with our commitment to increase and retain the number of permanently employed social workers.

1.2 Our people make our organisation the best it can be, and the physical and mental health of our workforce is key. In developing a sustainable and resilient workforce our approach to wellbeing and volunteering can help fulfil our commitment to the wellbeing of our people.

1.3 The pandemic has changed the way in which we live and work, and has brought to the fore:

- The need to look after our own wellbeing
- The importance of volunteering.

1.4 Through our regular engagement check-in's and the thrive accreditation process, we understand how good wellbeing can contribute to our overall performance as a Council.

1.5 There is also increasing evidence from on-line research that since the start of the pandemic the value of non-financial benefits and a community focused ethos have come to the fore and providing our people time to give back to the community could complement our existing benefits as an additional attraction and retention tool. It is hoped an opportunity to have a 'taster' day volunteering could lead to our people giving their own time on an ongoing basis and fit with the

community engagement agenda.

1.6 The proposal to offer a Wellbeing and Volunteering Day to our people will allow an opportunity for individuals to participate in a meaningful activity which will enhance their life, either by learning something new or by giving something back to the community/others.

1.7 Some of the benefits to offering this day will include:

- Improved self-esteem – learning new things or overcoming a challenge can improve wellbeing and confidence.
- Resilience – better ability to cope with stress
- Volunteering can provide social interaction, where connecting, helping and learning from others can improve an individual's sense of self-worth and wellbeing, as well as having a number of wider community benefits.

1.8 The activity should be a constructive development opportunity and meet both of the following requirements:

- Personal development opportunity to support emotional wellbeing.
- Broadly promotes the Council's corporate objectives - promoting health, wellbeing, community engagement and sustainability.

1.9 Whilst there is no definitive list of activities an intranet page has been created by the Council's wellbeing and community engagement specialists with suggestions and tips. As a guideline, individuals should look to:

- Explore a different lifestyle
- Help others or the community
- Learn new stills
- Increase self confidence
- Experience of a lifetime, such as a challenge for charity
- Improve physical and mental wellbeing
- Inspire others
- Increase energy and resilience.

1.10 In applying for a Wellbeing and Volunteering Day individual are expected to discuss and seek approval for the activity from their line manager and a discussion should take place during the next 1-2-1 reviewing the outcomes and impact the day has had on the individual's wellbeing. The proposed policy is clear that this is not another day's annual leave.

1.11 The pilot will take place until 31st March 2022, following which an evaluation of the take up and feedback on the benefits will take place and consideration given to recommending continuing to offer in the future.

2.0 Financial Implications

2.1 The notional costs of a Wellbeing and Volunteering Day, if all employees were to take up the offer, would be in the region of £500,000. However, taking a Wellbeing or Volunteering Day is not compulsory, and it is unlikely all those who are offered the benefit will take it. Indicative evidence from the existing offer to social workers

suggests this to be the case. In addition, and more difficult to quantify, is the impact of a Wellbeing and Volunteering Day (and our other wellbeing initiatives) in preventing or reducing sickness absence, which has a cost benefit. Days taken will be recorded on YourHR so take up can be monitored throughout the trial period.

3.0 Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications of this proposal.

4.0 Supporting Information

4.1 The proposal is to offer a Wellbeing and Volunteering Day to all WCC employees. The offer will be made for a period up to March 2022 and will be approached on a pilot basis. The data around take up and usage will be collated to enable a review to be undertaken thereafter to determine recommendations for future years and whether this should be offered on a permanent basis to complement our existing benefits and recruitment and retention offer.

4.2 The offer of such a day will be valued by our people and our communities, whilst at the same time is relatively low in terms of direct costs.

4.3 Any working time lost is likely to be compensated by increased good will, and the feeling that we take wellbeing and community engagement seriously.

4.4 The proposal does not apply to agency or casual workers and does not apply to staff employed by schools and other agencies

5.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

5.1 If approved, the offer will be made to staff, with the policy and FAQ being communicated and our people will be encouraged to take up the offer in order to provide valuable feedback. Upon completion of the pilot phase to March 2022 a full evaluation will be done with recommendations formulated for the future.

Background Papers

Appendix 1 - Wellbeing and Volunteering at Warwickshire County Council

	Name	Contact details
Report Authors	Jane Dall – Senior People Practitioner Kate Sullivan - Lead Commissioner Culture, Leadership and Performance	katesullivan@warwickshire.gov.uk janedall@warwickshire.gov.uk
Assistant Director	Sarah Duxbury Assistant Director of Governance & Policy	sarahduxbury@warwickshire.gov.uk
Chief Executive	Monica Fogarty	monicafogarty@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jenns	andyjenns@warwickshire.gov.uk

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Not applicable.

This is community spirit

Wellbeing and Volunteering at Warwickshire County Council

Version: 1 -
Date Issued: September 2021
Review: 31st March 2022

Contents

1. Our Approach – Policy Statement 3
2. What is a Wellbeing or Volunteering day 4
3. Planning a Wellbeing or Volunteering day 4
4. Your HR process for booking a Wellbeing for Volunteering day 5
5. Documents and further reference 6

Our Approach - Policy Statement

Our people make our organisation the best it can be, so creating a sustainable and resilient workforce is a key priority for us. The physical and mental health of our employees is key objective, through creating a healthy work environment and helping individuals create resilience.

In developing a sustainable and resilient workforce this policy helps to fulfil our commitment to the wellbeing of our people and enable our organisation to be the best it can be.
The pandemic has changed all of our lives, two things it has brought to the fore are:

- The need to look after our own wellbeing
- The importance of volunteering

Wellbeing

We encourage all our people to take pro-active steps to manage their own health and wellbeing. We are constantly reviewing the measures we have in place as an employer to support our people and our Wellbeing Charter reflects our commitment to providing a healthy and positive working environment. We believe that by giving people the time and space to learn something new or connect with our communities can enhance wellbeing. Learning is about gaining new knowledge, skills and experiences which are all good for our wellbeing.

Volunteering

Volunteering has multiple benefits. We have all seen the impact it can make to the communities in Warwickshire and customers we serve. During the pandemic, our people have stepped up and gone beyond their roles to make a real difference. As well as helping others it has also shown us the positive impact it can have on those volunteering. Giving back to the community is great way to link with others perhaps beyond our existing networks, learn something new and help improve our environment, or the lives of others.

This policy is **6 month trial, ending on 31st March 2021**, we will evaluate the take up and feedback of this benefit before determining if it can make a real difference to the longer term wellbeing of our people.

This policy covers all colleagues of Warwickshire County Council (WCC); it excludes agency and casual staff and students on placements.

1. What is a "Wellbeing or Volunteering day"

There is no one definition of what a Wellbeing or Volunteering day is, what makes an activity meaningful will vary for individuals but it should involve learning or giving back.

Some of the benefits of continuous learning or giving back to the community are:

- Improved self-esteem – learning new things or overcoming a challenge can help us feel better about ourselves or improve confidence in dealing with new situations
- Better ability to cope with stress – by focusing on what you are trying to achieve and takes your mind away from your own concerns
- Encourages social interaction – connecting, helping and learning from others can improve our own sense of self-worth and wellbeing

Our people are entitled to one paid Wellbeing or Volunteering day off (pro-rata for part time workers) planned in advance.

Line Managers should ensure any requests agreed meet the requirements of the team and continuity of service to our customers.

As a guideline the benefits of the activity an individual chooses for a Wellbeing or Volunteering day should look to:

- Explore a different lifestyle
- Help others or the community
- Learn a new skill
- Increase self-confidence
- Experience of a lifetime such as challenge for charity
- Improve physical and mental wellbeing
- Inspire others
- Increase energy and resilience.

Some ideas of activities that you could do to make use of the Wellbeing and Volunteering Day are:

Volunteering

- WCC works closely with CAVA, they have one-off opportunities as well as longer term volunteering opportunities if you want to commit more of your time too
- WCC has internal volunteering opportunities in certain services
- If you have a connection with a charity for personal reasons explore opportunities to support it
- Take part in community work e.g. litter picking in a community garden

Wellbeing

- A taster day for an exercise or fitness activity
- Taking part in a sponsored event
- Having a "well person" health check appointment
- Complete a short course to learn a new skill such as a cookery course, home maintenance or managing anxiety/change
- Undertake learning or reading to aid personal development and wellbeing
- Coordinate and hold a team or workplace event to improve their wellbeing
- Creative wellbeing events such as undertaking a challenge whilst being sponsored to raise money for a local charity.

2. Planning a "Wellbeing or Volunteering Day"

Individuals will be expected to discuss the activity they want to undertake with their Line Manager when seeking approval and to feedback what they gained once it has taken place.

As part of this trial, we will be asking Line Managers about their experiences of using this policy and gathering feedback on the process.

Planning a Wellbeing or Volunteering Day – The Principles:

Whilst the Wellbeing or Volunteering Day is around choosing something meaningful for the individual there are some key principles for taking the time.

- The Wellbeing or Volunteering Day must be taken in one go as a whole day, not part days or hours.
- Time off is being given by WCC; any costs associated with the activity will be the responsibility of the individual
- As part of a trial all activities must be agreed and taken by **31st March 2022**
- Approval must be agreed by the Line Managers before the activity takes place
- Reasonable notice should be given, if a request is made at short notice time off may not be given as many teams work rota's or must provide front line customer services so pre-planning will be required.
- The day must be recorded on Your HR (YHR) as a learning experience.
- This is not an additional day of annual leave day and should not be added on to an existing period of annual leave.
- The Wellbeing or volunteering day is not for sick leave or medical appointments; WCC has a comprehensive Sickness and Wellbeing policies to support (link).

- If you need time off for childcare or caring responsibilities, we have a family friendly policies for you (link).
- The activity should be a constructive development opportunity and meets both of the following requirements:
    - Personal development opportunity to support emotional wellbeing.
    - Broadly promotes the Council's corporate objectives e.g. promoting health, wellbeing, community engagement and sustainability (e.g. volunteer with a charity which promotes these objectives).

The spirit of this policy is clear and we trust our people to respect this.

3. Your HR Process for booking a Wellbeing or Volunteering Day

Booking a Wellbeing or Volunteering Day"

Follow the process below to agree and discuss the details of the Wellbeing or Volunteering day and book on Your HR.

For Individuals log in to Your HR to book as a personal learning event, for Managers to approve see 'How-to guides' for managers

Remember to:

- Discuss and book the date in advance
- Discuss the benefits and agree that the request meets the criteria. If agreement can not be made refer to your Service Manager.
- Individuals should document the details of the activity on YHR, not just book as Wellbeing/volunteering day.
- Managers should follow up in one to ones and supervision the benefits from the day.
- Managers and individuals should have ongoing dialogue about wellbeing in one to ones and team meetings

The Process

4. Documents and further reference

Documents

- Warwickshire's wellbeing pages https://warwickshiregovuk.sharepoint.com/SitePages/HR/Keeping-you-well-and-working.aspx
- Wellness Plans
- Employee Assistance Provider (EAP)

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Staff and Pensions Committee

13 September 2021

Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing Annual Review 2020/2021

Recommendations

1. That the Committee notes the achievements in relation to the services response to the COVID Pandemic. Highlights of these achievements are summarised in the annual review report.

2. That the Committee notes the ongoing work to develop a new health, safety and wellbeing delivery framework outlined in the annual review report

3. The committee notes and supports the development of our technology platforms to improve essential data collection as outlined in the annual review report.
4. The committee supports the key focus areas for 2021/2022 as set out in the annual review report.

5. That the Committee considers for future committee reports whether the need for the summary health & safety performance data is required to be included as part of this cover sheet, or whether the annual review report would be sufficient for the committee.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Staff and Pensions Committee with an annual review for the management and performance of corporate health, safety and wellbeing. It outlines the health, safety and wellbeing activities from 1st April 2020 to the 31st March 2021 and the objectives proposed for 2021-2022.

1.2 Our workplaces and the way we work are continually changing, and this won't alter in the future. The emergence of the COVID pandemic in 2020 showed us that the way we work, and our people's expectations can change quickly and dramatically and what is truly achievable if we all work together.

1.3 With the emerging changes in the way we now work presenting new health & safety challenges it is more important than ever to continue to strengthen our safety culture. We have learnt through our successful staff check in surveys that continuous engagement and allowing people to be part of decision making for health, safety and wellbeing has had a positive outcome.

1.4 As we emerge out of the pandemic, we will continue to focus on working together to communicate, engage and empower all our people. Listening and understanding what our people want to support their involvement in improving

health & safety and wellbeing will be a core focus for 2021- 2022

1.5 The annual health, safety and wellbeing review attached as Appendix 1 details the work that has taken place with regards to our people's occupational health, safety and wellbeing and outlines:

1. Our People Strategy Alignment
2. Health, Safety & Wellbeing Performance & Achievements 2020-2021
3. Our Performance Highlights Summary 2020-2021
4. Meeting our Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing Challenges for 2021/2022
   - Working to our People Strategy Priorities
   - Development of a delivery framework that supports our safe & healthy culture
   - Importance of Measuring our Performance
   - Key Focus Areas for 2021-2022
5. Health and Safety Annual Data 2020-2021

2.0 Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing summary:

This summary pulls out the main health & safety performance data contained in the annual report for consideration by the Committee.

2.1 The total number of recorded accidents and incidents during 2020/2021 decreased across all service levels. We believe this is a direct result of lockdown measures and people working from home.

2.2 The number of injuries or incidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR requirements also decreased slightly but not by the amount expected with the pandemic lockdown measures and more people working from home.

2.3 Absence due to Musculoskeletal injuries have reduced for the 3rd consecutive year in a row from 19.6% (18/19) 17% (19/20) 15.7% (2020/2021). This may potential be due to the increased working from home during the pandemic.

2.4 Musculoskeletal Injuries still account for a mean average of 17.4% of reasons for sickness absence. Second highest reason for sickness absence after mental health. Currently we do not know why this figure is so high with the data available. With improved analytics on the way the Council records these absences, we expect to be better positioned to identify why and where these incidents are occurring and make recommendations on how the Council can reduce the number of work-related musculoskeletal absence numbers in 2021/2022

2.5 Corporately slips, trips and falls recorded have decreased by 82% to 31.82%. At this stage we believe this is due to the increased numbers of staff working from home rather than because of any H&S intervention programs or safety culture improvements delayed due to the Pandemic. With the proposed improvements in how we capture and record incident analytics we will be able to identify why and how these incidents are occurring to be able to make a positive impact on reducing this type of work-related incidents in 2021/2022

2.6 Schools recorded an increase in slips, trips, and falls from 2019/2020 by 78% and now accounts for 36.82% of recorded school incidents. We believe this increase is due to the increased work necessary to keep schools open during the

pandemic, resulting in a decrease in general safety awareness.

2.7 Personal Injuries sustained by the fire and rescue service decreased by 36% to account for 15.44% of all injuries recorded. This noticeable decrease could potential be the result of changes to working practices during the pandemic. However, it could also be because of the increased communications on the importance of reporting near misses, resulting in better awareness of hazards in the workplace. We will continue to monitor these figures post pandemic to review the effectiveness of the positive H&S communications ongoing to improve safety.

3.0 Conclusions

3.1 2020/2021 has been a successful year in terms of responding to the pandemic, maintaining critical services, and supporting all our people and the community through the global crisis.

3.2 Our focus for 2021/2022 is to continue to develop a delivery framework with consistent principles and measurable outcomes that engage and interact with our people to continuously improve our health & safety performance and reduce incidents and accidents.

3.3 The introduction of the new annual review approach that aligns together, for the first time, several HR&OD areas working to deliver the Our People Strategy. This will allow for Warwickshire to continue to tell its story in relation to Our People and our vision to make Warwickshire a great place to work where talented and diverse people are enabled to do their best.

Background Papers

Appendix 1 - Our People focus on Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Review 2020/2021

	Name	Contact details
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The report was not applicable to circulate to members prior to publication.

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OUR PEOPLE

Focus on Corporate Health, Safety & Wellbeing

Annual Review **2020/2021**

Warwickshire County Council, a place that promotes a safe and healthy work environment keeping our people healthy and safe, every day at work.

Warwickshire County Council

Health, Safety & Wellbeing Warwickshire's story

Message from Monica Fogarty,
Cheif Executive

Here at Warwickshire County Council, we believe that the best way we can show a person that we care is to be concerned for their personal health, safety and wellbeing. This has never been more important to us than throughout the Pandemic.

Throughout 2020-2021 we faced an unprecedented challenge to keep all our people safe and healthy. It is a credit to our workforce that each challenge was responded to rapidly, enabling us to remain effective as a council during this difficult time. We are committed to promoting health and safety and to supporting our people to be the best they can be.

I know that we all look forward to sustaining our ability to adapt and learn innovative ways to enrich the health, safety and wellbeing of our people over the coming year.

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• Working for People Strategy Priorities • Develop a framework that supports our safe & healthy culture • Key Focus Areas for 2021/2022	
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At a glance

Throughout this challenging year we have worked in collaboration with our colleagues to ensure all our essential council services have remained fully operational during the COVID pandemic. We have supported all our people to meet the individual difficulties faced by each of us during the global pandemic, and we are pleased to present what we have achieved in 2020-2021 and our challenges for 2021/2022.

- **Regular Check ins with our staff have allowed us to see how people are feeling and tailor our supporting staff offer. Showing at least 80% of our staff have been doing ok or better**

- **The pandemic enforced lockdowns and working at home arrangements have been truly extraordinary in both protecting the communities from the virus and reducing the rate of recorded accidents and injuries sustained at work. The continued lifting of COVID restrictions and a return to hybrid working will be monitored to see if this incident trend is reversing and to what extent**

- **Our Health, Safety and Wellbeing Culture**

- **Using our People Strategy building blocks to build our Health, Safety and Wellbeing framework that continues to support an inclusive environment for safe and healthy people**

- **Increase the use of technology to gather health, safety, and wellbeing data to enable the council to make clearer evidence-based decisions and focus on priorities.**

Through the later end of 2020, the council refreshed its Our People Strategy, to drive through the vision of Warwickshire County Council, a great place to work where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best.

Embodying our Values and Behaviours, the Our People Strategy is built on 6 building blocks:

Our behaviours

Our behaviours were first introduced in 2016 and these haven't changed. Our behaviours frame how we should behave at work. They help us to understand how we should go about our work and the way we should interact with each other and our customers.

To support the achievement of our vision, five key organisational values have been identified:

High performing | Collaborative | Customer focused | Accountable | Trustworthy

Our People Strategy building blocks

The building blocks provide the foundations for the delivery of Our People Strategy vision. We have identified six key building blocks:

For each building block we have a clear set of outcomes we need to achieve so that we can fulfill our vision and transform as an organisation in a way which is sustainable.

Health, Safety & Wellbeing Performance & Achievements 2020/2021

The response to the COVID Pandemic has dominated the health, safety and wellbeing service since March 2020 and throughout these incredibly difficult times our focus has always been to safeguard the wellbeing of all our people.

Our response to the COVID-19 pandemic has three areas of clear achievements:

Maintain critical services at the peak of the pandemic

Maintain critical services at the peak of the pandemic – We quickly responded to and implemented guidelines and protocols to ensure critical services were maintained, all our people always felt safe at work and supported networks wherever needed. We supported our communities and vulnerable people and assisted wherever possible both professionally and personally

Strengthened our resilience to the Pandemic

Strengthened our resilience to the Pandemic – We kept our people supported with up to date COVID information about rapidly changing situations on the ground. Maintained and communicated clear guidelines to all our people, supported networks and increased our employee assistance programmes to ensure all our people had access to support

Supported our people during the pandemic and through the easing of restrictions

Supported our people during the pandemic and through the easing of restrictions- Recognising that the new environment in which our people were working was changing rapidly and bringing new health & safety challenges with hybrid working, we successfully implemented and increased health, safety and wellbeing arrangements in response to keep our people safe and healthy. This work continues into 2022

Highlights Summary

Highlights of just some of the great work completed in response to the COVID Pandemic.

300+
Covid Risk Assessments

10,000+
Covid Tests supported

160
Warwickshire Schools Supported

Our Employee Assistance Programme Extended to Warwickshire Schools

1000+
Covid related enquiries

1-2-1 Wellbeing meetings

weekly wellbeing articles as part of working for Warwickshire

Keeping you well at work with information, guidance, tips and support

280 Social Care providers supported with EAP

Staff Wellbeing Check in surveys

vita health group
Making People Better

Information, guidance and tools for managers - working from home safely

Employee support networks

Wellbeing, physical and mental health support

Support and advice to services on safe recovery and re-instatement post COVID

10,000 + Community support activities completed

200+ Covid response meetings supported

Warwickshire Lateral Testing Sites supported

150+ adverse event investigations during the COVID-19 pandemic

Meeting our Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing Challenges for 2021/22

At Warwickshire County Council our workplaces and the way we work will need to respond to continual change. The emergence of the COVID pandemic in 2020 showed us that the way we work, and the expectations of our people can change quickly and dramatically, and what is truly achievable if we all work together.

As we move towards a more hybrid way of working post pandemic, we encounter new health, safety & wellbeing challenges that require changes to the way we help all our people be safe and healthy. At times of rapid change, it's more important than ever to continue to strengthen our safety culture and maintain strong communication links, ensuring that our top priority remains the health, safety and wellbeing of our people.

Working to Our People Strategy priorities

How we manage health, safety and wellbeing is an essential component to developing our core culture, values and behaviour.

Our challenge is to grow an environment that supports a strong health, safety and wellbeing culture. A culture that is embedded in the heart of everything our people do daily

Develop our health, safety and wellbeing culture

Many factors affect a person's behaviour towards their own health, safety and wellbeing. External environmental factors also play a big part in a person's thoughts and actions while at work. Things like age, demographics, mental health, physicality, and lifestyles all play a significant part in how each of us behave at work. An individual's behaviour can also significantly impact on the health, safety and wellbeing thoughts and actions of others around them. These complexed factors should all be considered in our approach to how we support and meet new people expectations, never more important than now, as we ease out of the unprecedented global pandemic into a new world that has changed and continues to change rapidly.

One of the best ways we can continuously manage and adapt to these complexed behaviours is by strengthening and maintaining a strong and effective health, safety and wellbeing culture. A culture where all our people continue to feel supported and have the opportunity to be part of building our work environments that both support health, safety and wellbeing as a daily core value and support living healthily and lifestyle choices for all our people.

Creating an effective workplace health, safety and wellbeing culture has the single greatest impact on accident reduction.

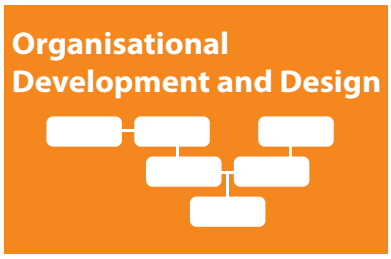
Effective communication with our people is key to promote a positive health and safety culture.

Effective communication with our people is key to promoting positive relationships with others. By listening and understanding our people and conveying their thoughts and insights clearly in ways that others can understand we will promote our positive health & safety culture at all levels.

- Key Focus Areas for 2021-2022 will be Communication & Empowerment - We will continue to improve communication and engagement channels that encourage all our people to speak openly and honestly on health & safety matters.

Develop management systems that continue to support and strenghten our health, safety and wellbeing culture

The pandemic accelerated work that was already underway to review how we work, how we engage with our people and how we use their valuable insights to constantly innovate and re-image our approach to health, safety and wellbeing management.



Learning through our people

We have learnt through our successful staff check-in surveys that continuous engagement and allowing our people to be part of decision making for health, safety and wellbeing has a positive outcome. We want to continue to listen to the views of all our people and gain valuable insights to improve how we support our people to be safe and healthy, every day at work. We've listened and understood that lengthy health and safety policy documents are sometimes not helpful, so we are developing a simpler health, safety and wellbeing statement that defines the Council's principles to manage health, safety and wellbeing to replace our existing policy. We have developed these simplified commitments and principles in consultation with the Council's employee forum and union representatives, and wWocess for the health, safety and wellbeing management system going forward.

Principles that shape work environments to support health, safety and wellbeing as a daily core value and offer support on living healthily and lifestyle choices for all our people

DELIVERY FRAMEWORK

An improved type of Health, Safety and Wellbeing management system that's designed to be easier to use for everyone in the Council.

We want all our people to support our commitments and principles, so we are focused on developing our new health, safety and wellbeing delivery framework. We believe a delivery framework is the best way to engage with all our people and with a clearer format more suited for easy guidance on health, safety & wellbeing management arrangements for all levels.

Our focus for 2021/2022 is to continue to develop this delivery framework with consistent principles and measurable outcomes that engage and interact with our people.

Importance of measuring our success

A significant part of any health, safety and wellbeing management system is to measure its success based on performance targets.

The traditional primary purpose of measuring health and safety performance is to provide regular information to our leadership teams. We now believe that all our people should have the opportunity to reflect on how we are performing. Sharing our performance data is an opportunity to communicate and engage with all our people on our health and safety performance and activities.

By giving all our people the right information on health, safety and wellbeing performance we hope to have a significant impact on their feelings of empowerment and inclusiveness, both key principles to build a balanced safety culture that listens and supports our people across all levels of our organisation.

Working with our communication partners across the organisation we will use technology to enhance our communication with a new dedicated health, safety and wellbeing portal page on the councils iWarwickshire intranet.

As part of our delivery framework model we will regularly share important health, safety and wellbeing information with all our people.

Measures on Health, Safety & Wellbeing Performance

By measuring performance we can ensure there is opportunity for continuous improvement.

As metrics become available through enhanced technology use we will report on the following performance areas

- Numbers of engagement campaigns and newsletters launched
- Results from health, safety & wellbeing surveys
- Number of inspections and audits conducted against delivery targets

- Benchmarking our Health & Safety Performance with comparative organisations
- Number of employee engagements and interactions completed
- Number of corrective and improvement opportunities raised during audits and inspections
- Number of outstanding or overdue corrective actions required to improve compliance
- Number of reported incidents to the Health & Safety Executive (RIDDOR)
- Number of corrective recommendations from incident investigation
- Number of employee days lost due to injury or illness related to work activity
- Number of reported medical treated injuries
- Days lost per employee – stress / anxiety / mental health / musculoskeletal Injury associated to work activities
- Calculated incident ratings based on incidents / injuries per FTE
- Targets for reduction on incident rates
- Identified trends and risk profiles
- Number of liability claims against the Council from work related incidents

Key Focus Areas for 2021-2022

Communication & Empowerment

- Increase face to face engagements
- Encourage individuals who want to make real change
- Maintain a strong connection with the grassroots of the council.
- Translate our people's valuable health, safety, and wellbeing insights into workable action plans
- Working together we are open to listen and seek to involve a range of opinions

Customer focused

As we emerge from the global pandemic, we will continue to focus on working together, communicating and empowering our people.

Communication and engagement is an essential element of both our safety culture and our health, safety and wellbeing management system.

Listening and understanding what our people want to support their health, safety and wellbeing will be a key focus for 2021/22. We will always work towards maintaining an enviroment that supports our people at every level to be safe and healthy, every day at work by:

- Increasing internal communications on health, safety and wellbeing at all levels up, down and across the Council
- Increasing engagements on matters of health, safety and wellbeing
- Increasing our positive reporting process and the publication of safety performance data at all levels
- Increase programmes that empower our people to be an integral part of the Council's health and safety culture.

Information driven priorities

Using technology to gather inclusive health, safety and wellbeing data is of crucial importance to the Council to keep our people safe and healthy at work. Data not only helps us identify and act on emerging health and safety issues, but also improves our understanding of our current safety culture and supports clearer evidence-based decisions. Focusing on priorities, outcomes and agreed objectives that our people feel part of.

Using technology to gather inclusive health, safety and wellbeing data enables the Council to focus on areas that have the most impact. We will reflect in shared communications on the collected data to make sure we have really heard what our people had to say.

Technology based innovations

- Using technology as a health, safety & wellbeing enabler is key to understanding the needs of our people
- Share information across the council
- Listen to our people at every level

Increased data will improve our risk assurance by:

- Aligning all data and improve leadership insights
- Easing the administrative burden of audits and inspection processes and centralise data
- Giving the ability to continuously monitor safety performance across the whole Council
- Identifying risks through audits and inspections
- Turning collected data into actions and remediations, track actions, compliance accountability and report on progress to leadership
- Increasing operational risk visibility
- Unifying corporate and operational risk to improved visibility and spot trends to proactively implement corrective and preventative actions

Health and Safety Annual Report 20-21

Introduction

Key Measures and Definitions

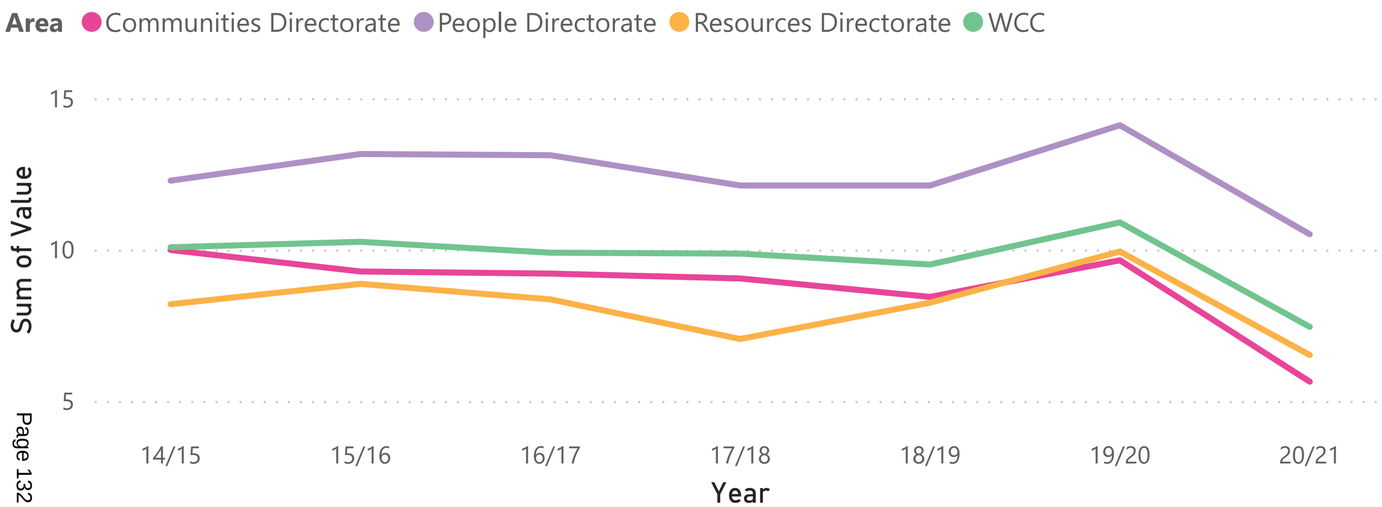
RIDDOR:

Warwickshire County Council, a place that promotes a safe and healthy work environment keeping our people healthy and safe, every day at work

Health and Safety Annual Report 20-21

Absence

Days per FTE



Days per FTE has **decreased**

WCC Days per FTE 19/20	WCC Days per FTE 20/21
10.90	7.45

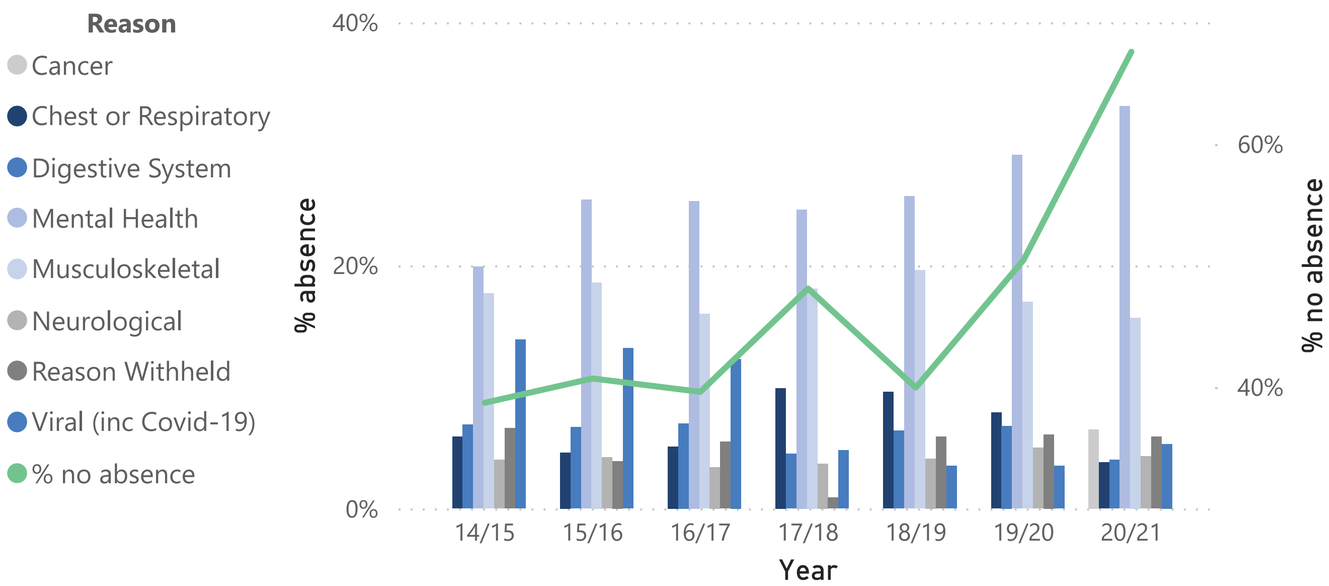
% of staff with no absence has **increased**

% staff with no absence19/20	% staff with no absence 20/21
50.5%	67.6%

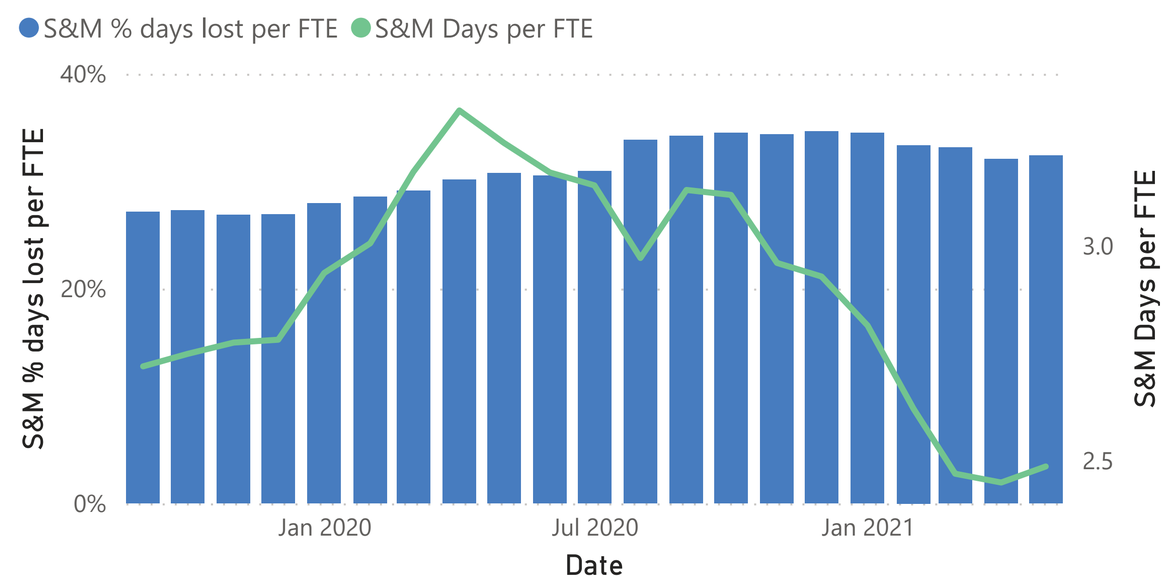
Top Sickness absence reasons 20/21

Stress and Mental Health	Musculo-skeletal	Cancer
33.1%	15.7%	6.5%

Top Reasons for Absence and % of all staff with no absence trend



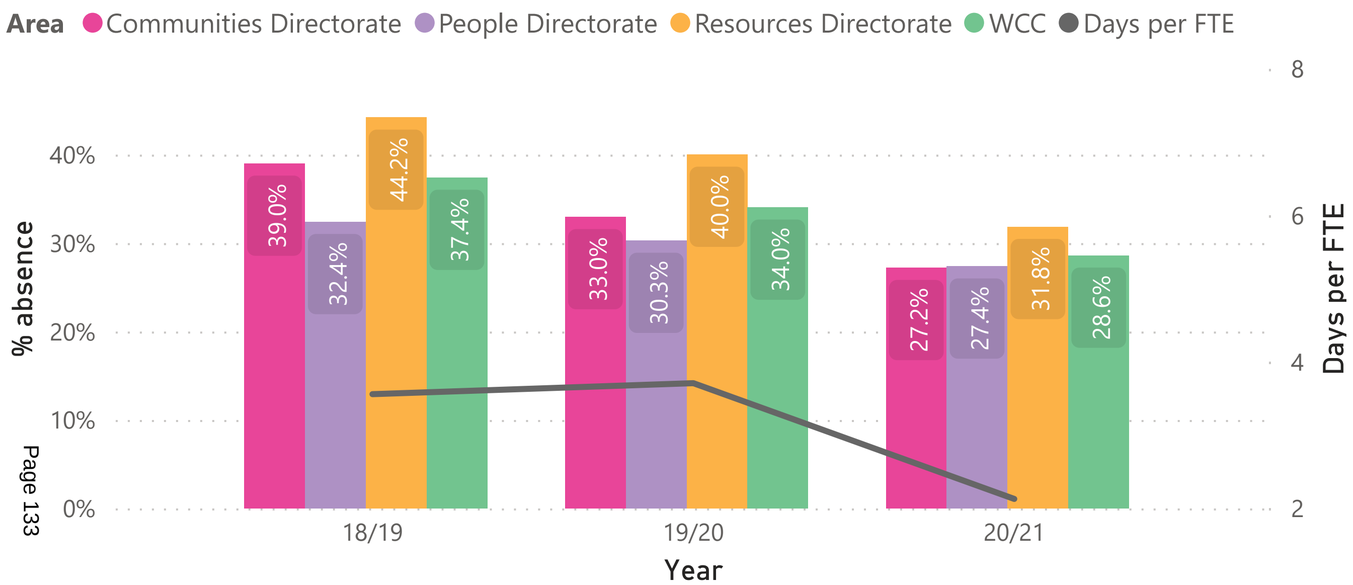
Stress and Mental Health % of days lost



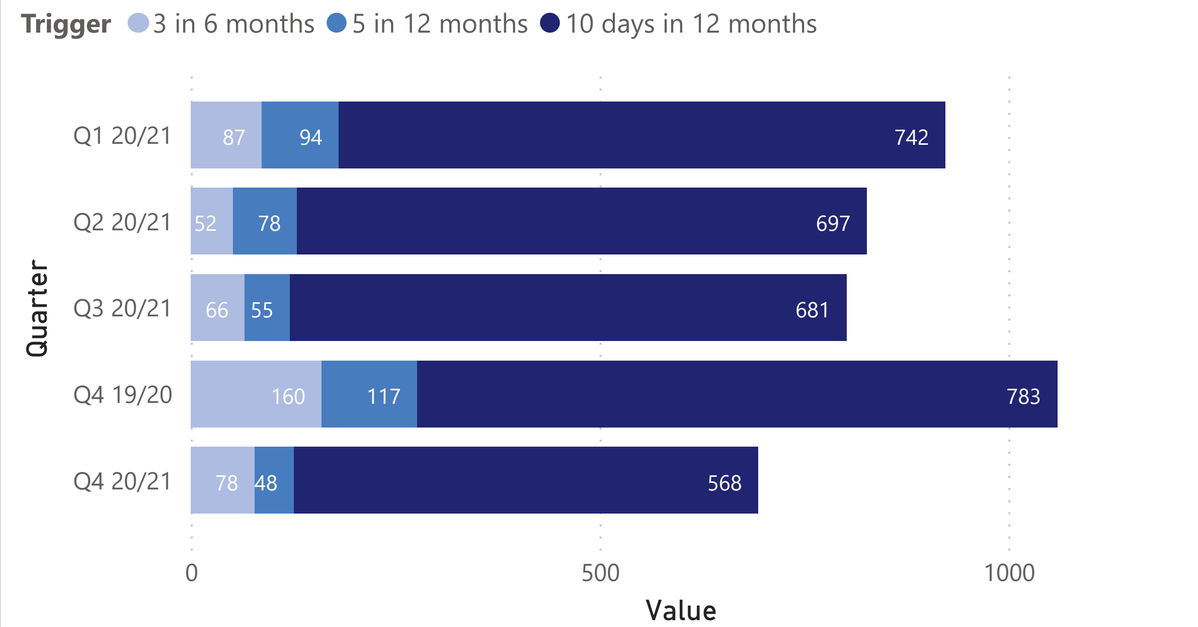
Health and Safety Annual Report 20-21

Absence

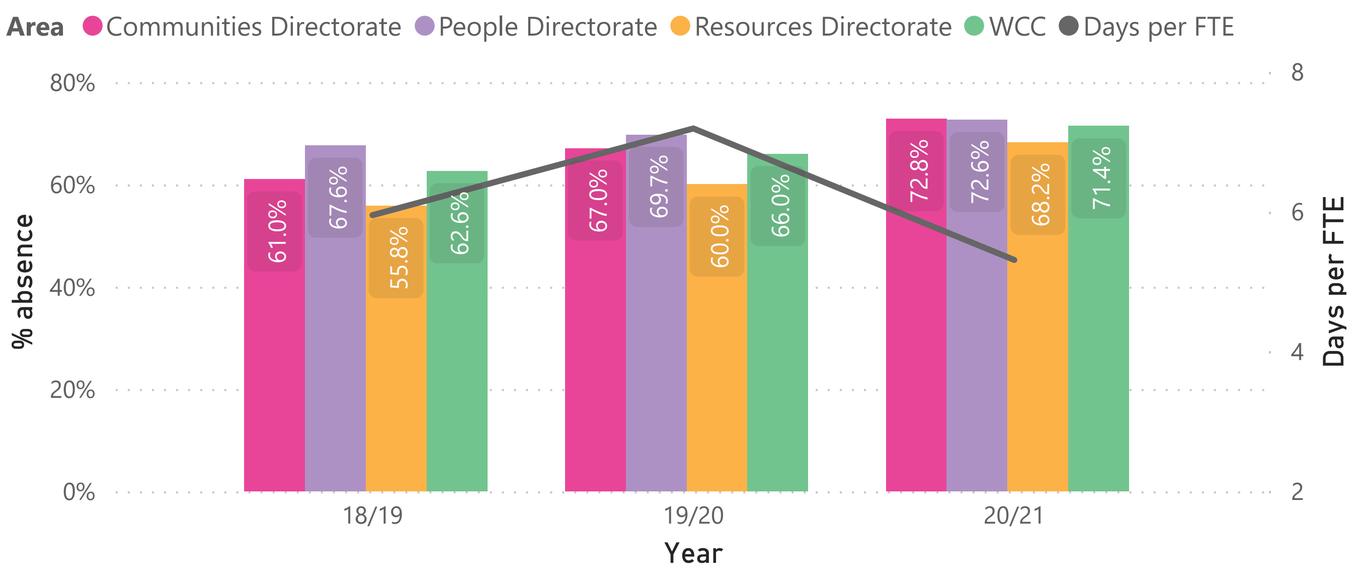
% days lost to short term absence



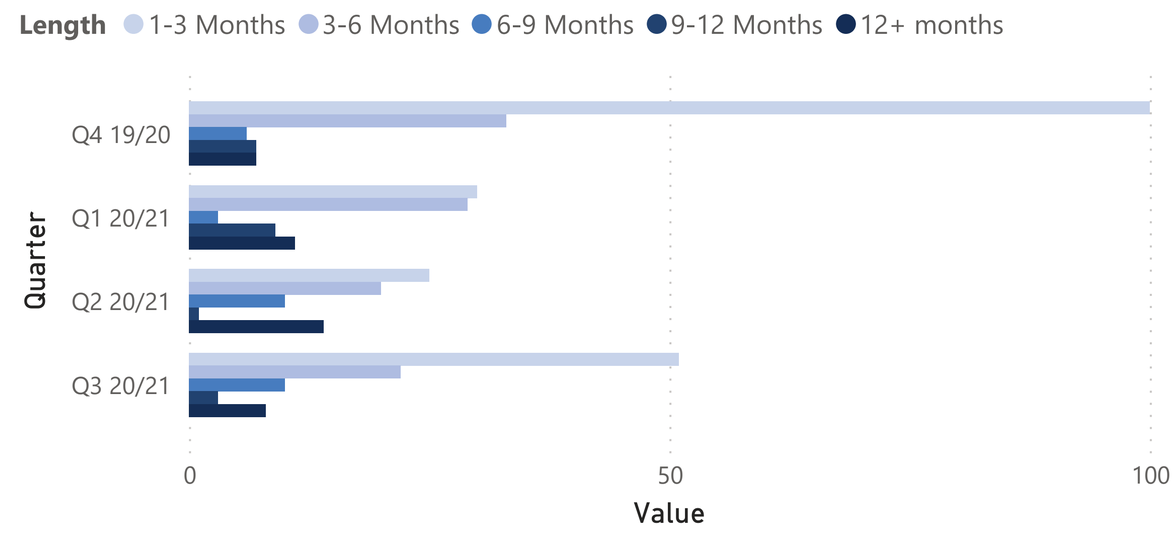
Number of staff hitting trigger indicators



% days lost to long term absence



Long term absence by length



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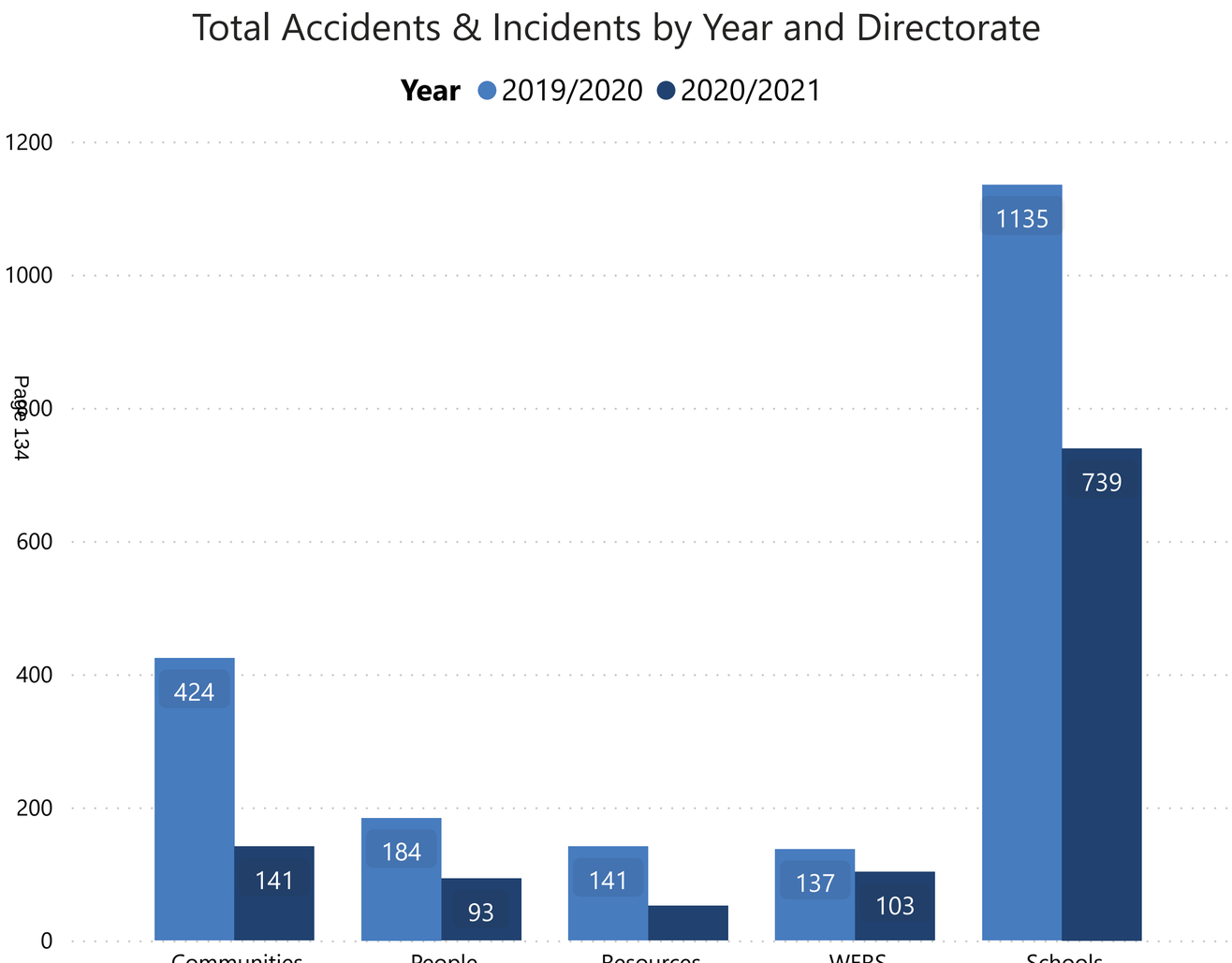
Accidents & Incidents



Total accidents and incidents has **decreased**

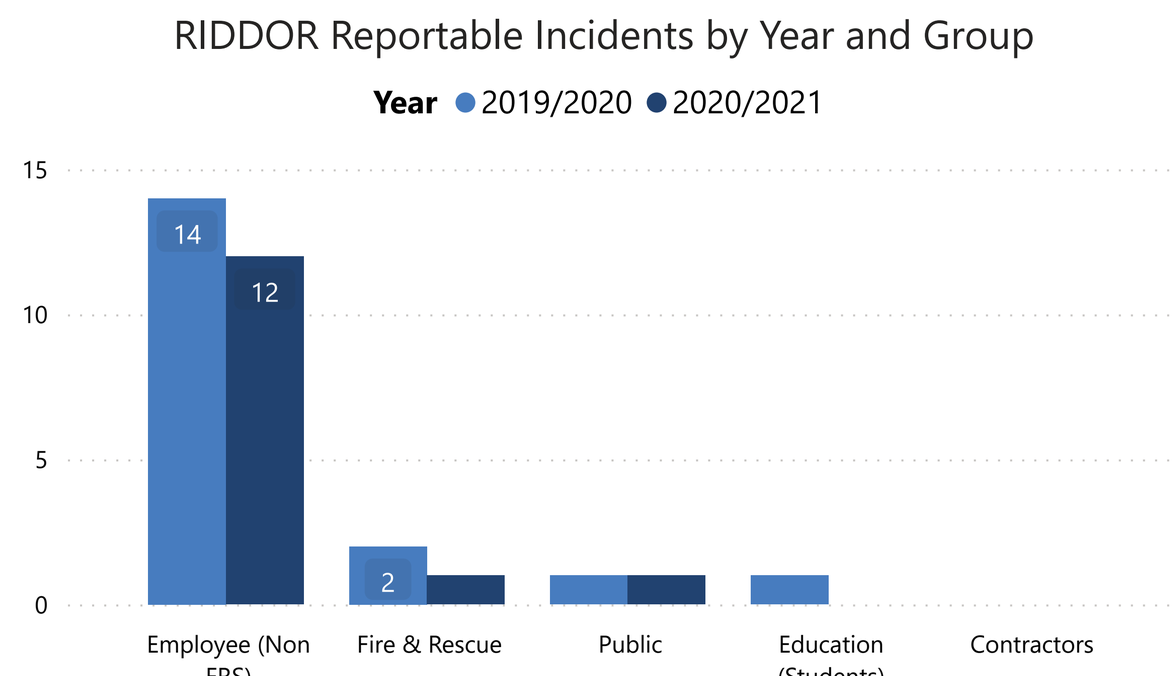
Total Accidents & Incidents in 2019/2020: 2021

Total Accidents & Incidents in 2020/2021: 1128

RIDDOR reportable incidents has **decreased**

RIDDOR Reportable Incidents in 2019/2020: 18

RIDDOR Reportable Incidents in 2020/2021: 14



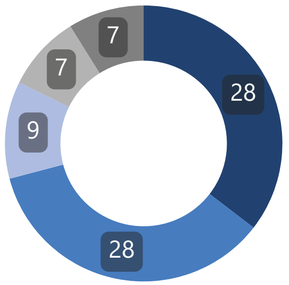
Health and Safety Annual Report 20-21

Common Causes

Corporate - Top 5 Common Identified Causes in 2020/21

Type Classification

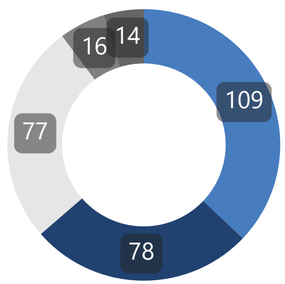
- Acts of agression to Operational staff
- Slip, trip & Fall
- Manual Handling
- Dangerous Occurance
- Hit by moving, flying or falling object



Schools - Top 5 common Identified Causes in 2020/21

Type Classification

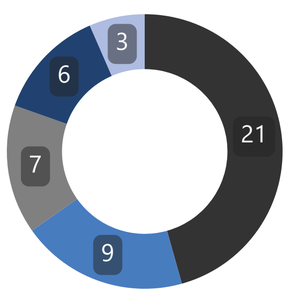
- Slip, trip & Fall
- Acts of aggression involving pupils
- Incident during Play
- Hit something fixed or stationary
- Hit by moving, flying or falling object



Fire and Rescue - Top 5 Common Identified Causes in 2020/21

Type Classification

- Personal Injury
- Slip, trip & Fall
- Hit something fixed or stationary
- Acts of agression to Operational staff
- Manual Handling



Total identified causes have decreased for all areas aside Fire & Rescue from 2019/20 to 2020/21.

	Top Common Identified Causes **2020/21**	Total identified causes **2020/21**
Corporate	Acts of agression to Operational staff	130
Schools	Slip, trip & Fall	371
Fire & Rescue	Personal Injury	53

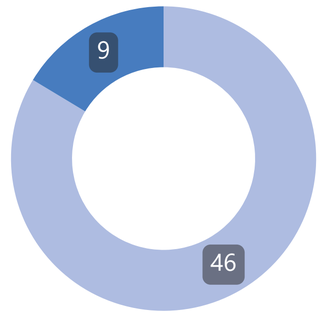
* Accidents/Incidents involving Near misses/Hits has been excluded from the top common causes

Health and Safety Annual Report 20-21

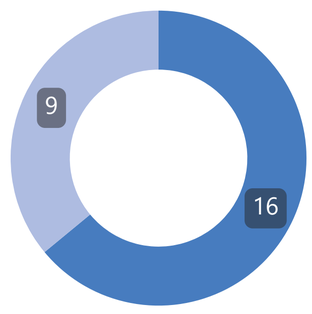
Pro-active risk management - near miss/near hits reported

Corporate - Near Misses/Hits 2019/20 and 2020/21

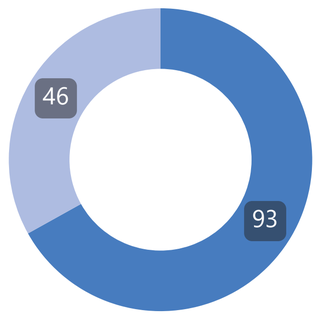
Year
- 2019/2020
- 2020/2021



Schools - Near Misses/Hits 2019/20 and 2020/21



Fire and Rescue - Near Misses/Hits 2019/20 and 2020/21



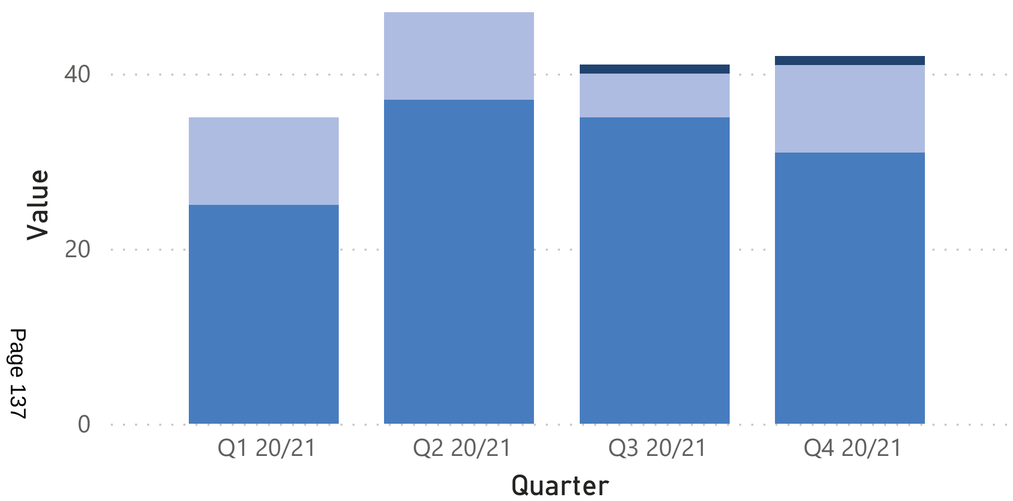
Accidents/Incidents involving near misses/hits has decreased for Corporate, but increased for both **Schools** and **Fire and Rescue** between 2019/20 and 2020/21 data.

Health and Safety Annual Report 20-21

Employee Assistance Programme & Occupational Health

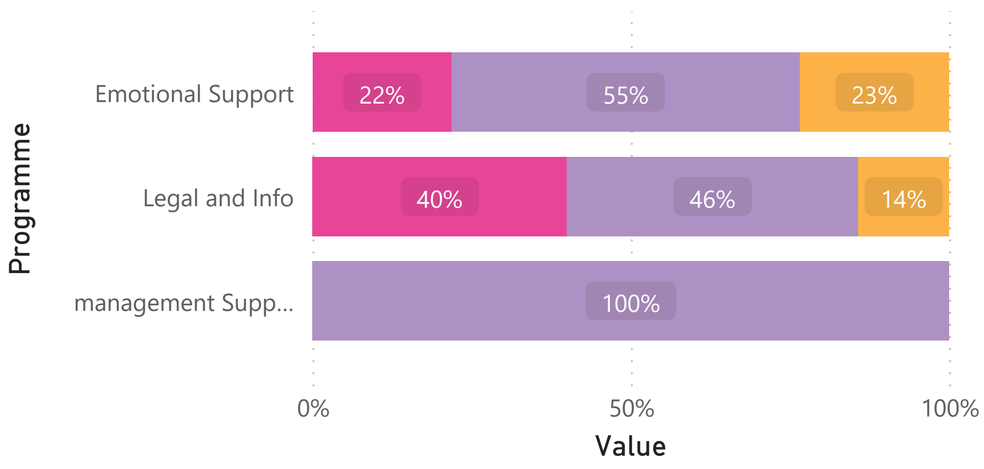
Employee Assistance Programme

Programme Emotional Support Legal and Info management Support



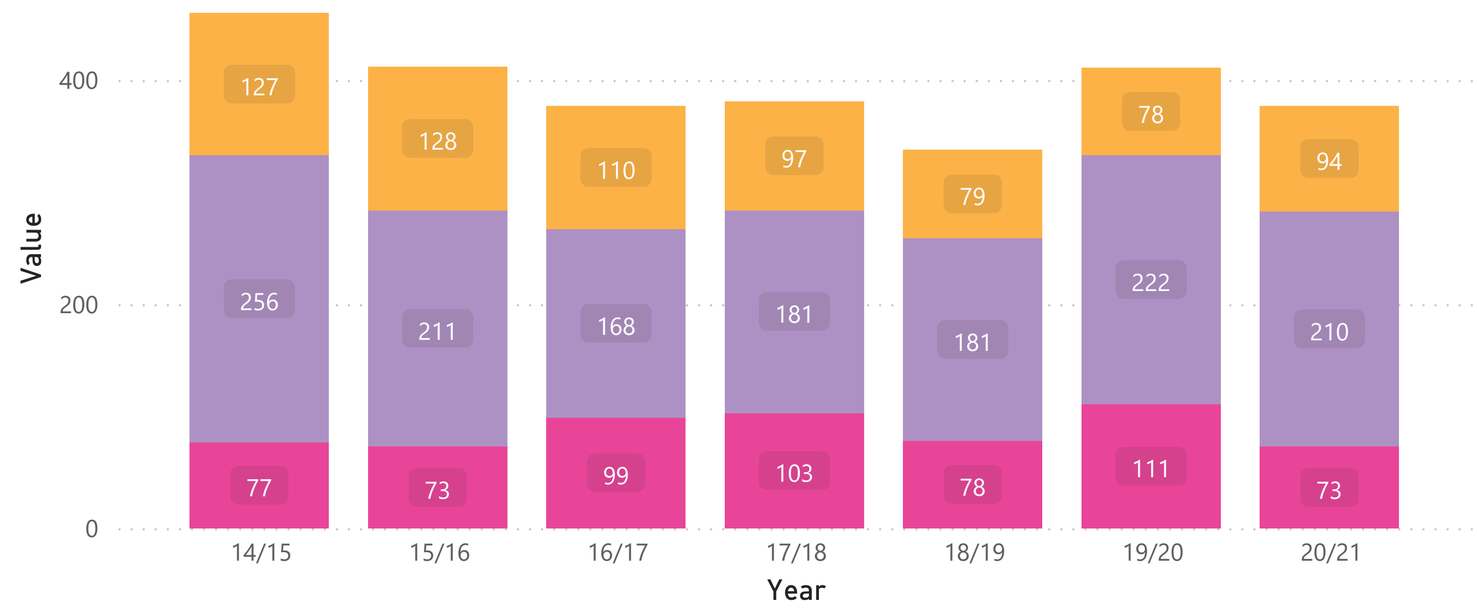
Programme by Directorate

Service Communities People Resources



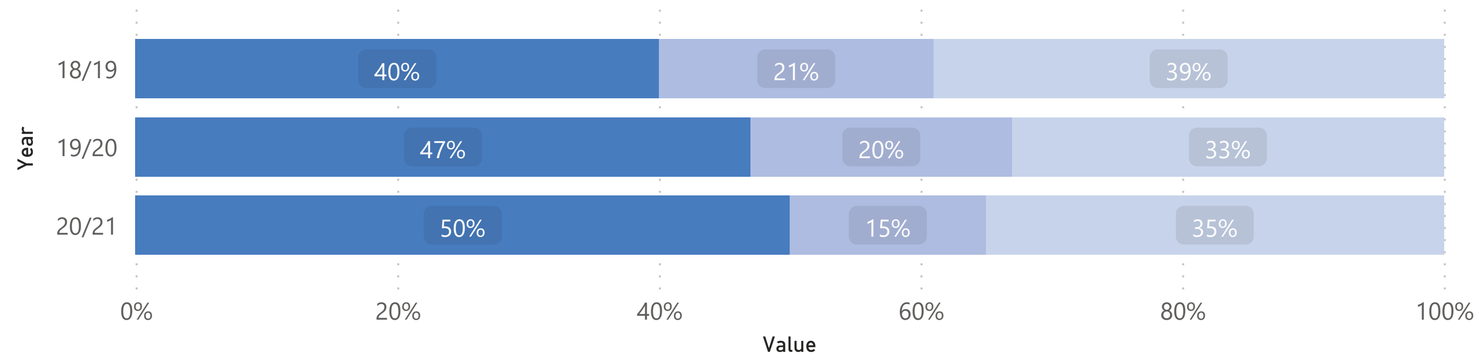
Number of Occupational Health Referrals by Year and Directorate

OH referrals Communities People Resources



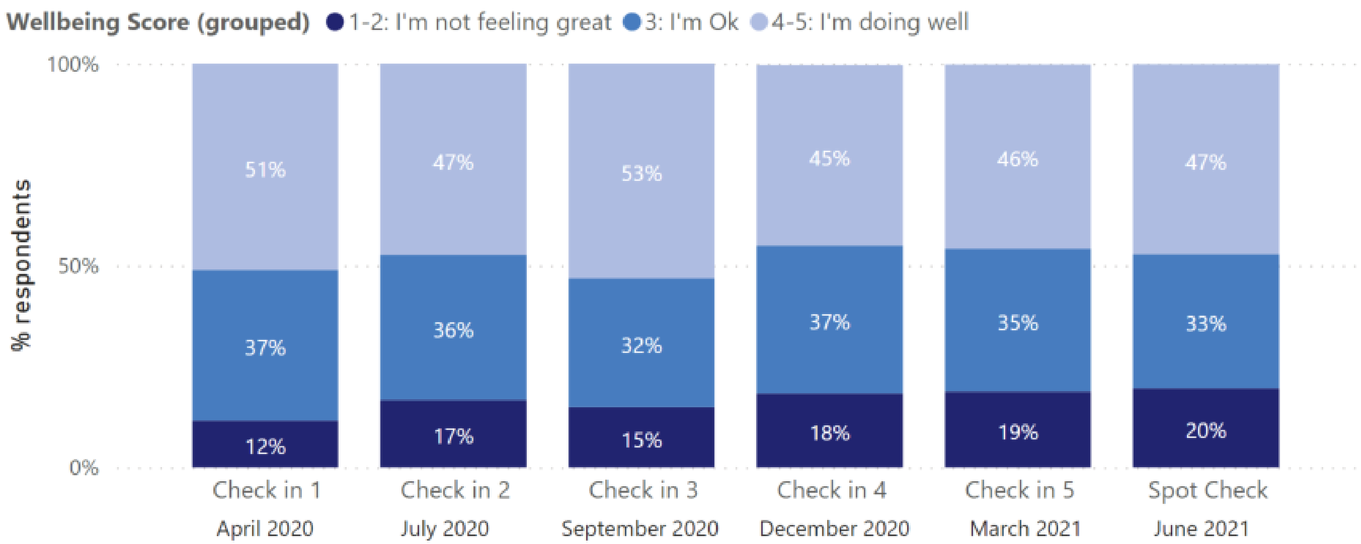
Occupational Health Referral reason by year

OH referral reason Mental Health Musculo-Skeletal Other Reasons

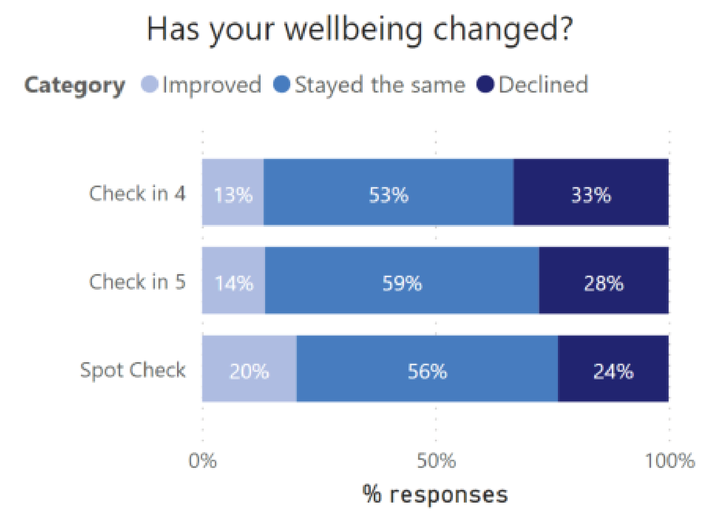


Health and Safety Annual Report 20-21

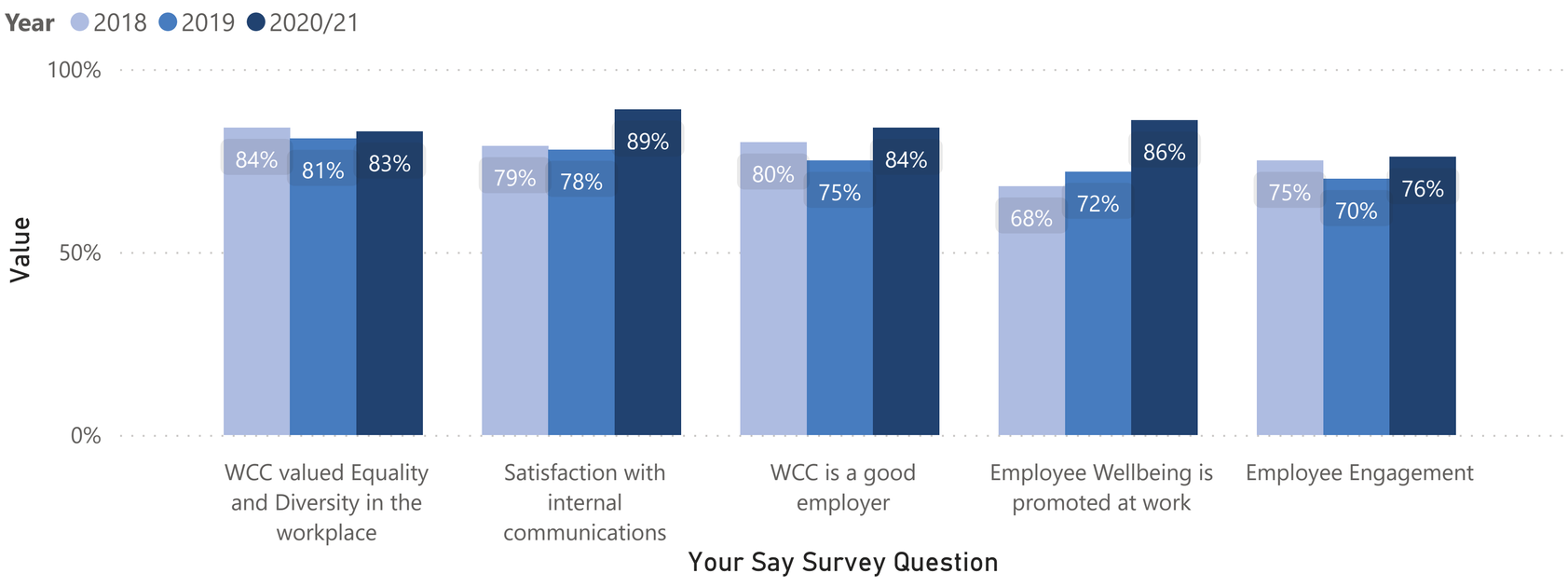
Engagement and Wellbeing

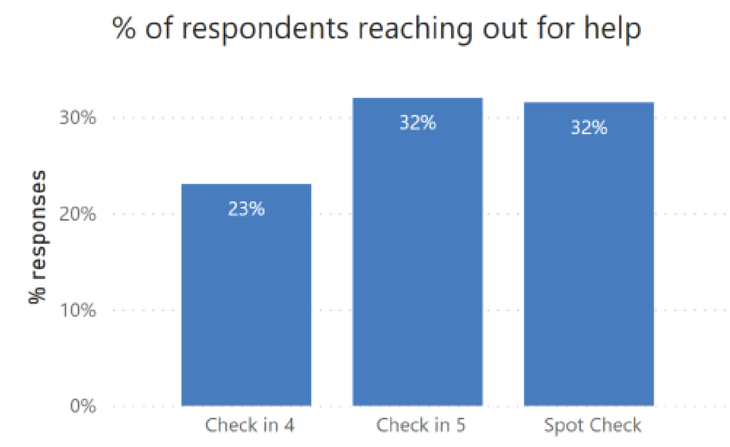


Employee wellbeing and engagement has been monitored through a series of check-in surveys from April 2020 to present.



Your Say Survey Questions





Staff and Pensions Committee

Pensions Administration Activity and Performance

13 September 2021

Recommendation(s)

1. Staff and Pensions Committee note and comment on this report.

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This report updates the Committee on the key developments affecting pensions administration and the performance of the Pensions Administration Service (PAS).

2. Financial Implications

2.1 All financial implications are dealt with in the body of this report.

3. Environmental Implications

3.1 None

4. i-Connect

4.1 The I-Connect project has now been completed

4.2 A total of 179 employers and 16,909 members have been onboarded.

4.3 There are 5 employers we have been unable to onboard due to delays created by them transferring to a new payroll provider during the implementation period. They will now be onboarded as part of Business As Usual. From July 2021 all new employers entering the fund will have to submit data via i-Connect. Any employer continuing to submit data via monthly excel spreadsheet will incur an administration charge.

4.4 The project has been delivered within agreed timescales and budget and the pensions administration team have worked extremely well with employers, matching data, and answering submission queries to deliver the project despite the challenges of the past 15 months. Warwickshire County Council payroll team and ICT have also worked closely with the pensions team to

create i-Connect extracts for 29 employers for whom they provide payroll services. As payroll provider for our largest number of members, collaboration of the two teams has been key to the success of the project. We have also received excellent support from our software provider Aquila Heywood.

5. Key Performance indicators (KPIs)

5.1 Appendix 1 shows the KPIs for the period 1st May 2020 to 31st July 2021.

5.2 KPIs where a payment is to be made are treated as highest priority.

5.3 From the chart it shows there are 10 out of 14 targets being consistently achieved.

5.4 For the KPI where we send a letter to a member giving details of what a transfer in from another pension arrangement would provide, we are noticing an increase in volume in the number of these requests. This is making it difficult to achieve the target of sending information within 10 days of receiving the transfer. The KPI of 10 days was set last year to move it in line with CIPFA benchmarking. Previous to this the benchmark was 20 days. This workload is currently managed by 2 Pensions Officers. It is the intention from April 2022, when the Fire administration service is transferred to another provider, this work will be covered by 3 Pensions Officers. The percentage has increased from last month.

5.5 The KPI for retirement estimates includes those for the Fire scheme as well as the Local Government Pension Scheme. Due to guidance received by the Home Office in June, this led to a delay in being able to process some requests, out of 22 estimates processed 3 were done outside of the KPI.

5.6 For death grants 7 payments were made with 1 not being made within the KPI timescale. The 1 late payment was made within 16 days opposed to 10 days.

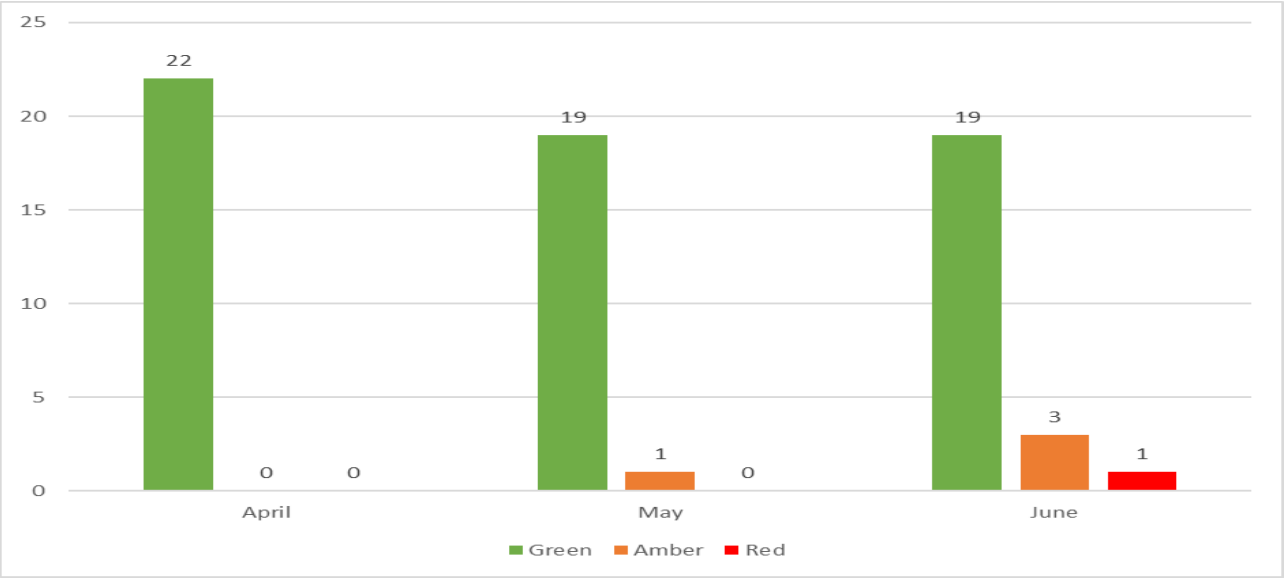
6. Workloads

6.1 The PAS has been monitoring the tasks outstanding and completed by the service since the 1 April 2020. The chart at appendix 2 shows the volume of outstanding work across the service and indicates that the service had 3442 tasks as at the 31st July 2021.

6.2 Up to the end of July 2021 we have completed 20,802 tasks and created 21,300.

7. Breaches

7.1 In accordance with the Breaches Policy, any Amber breach results in direct contact with the employer to resolve the issue, and further escalation if required.



7.2 A red breach relating to the discovery of a small number of overpayments made to dependant members has been recorded in June. These were identified through an audit exercise and a follow up review of pensions in payment for dependant members submitted since the introduction of a new payroll system in 2018. The payments have now been rectified and the overpayments are being recovered with 2 of the 6 already being paid back in full. This was reported to the Pensions Regulator on 8 June 2021. The Regulator has confirmed that due to the changes to procedures we have already implemented, to reduce the risk of this happening again, there will be no further action required by them.

7.3 In May we have seen an increase in the number of breaches relating to the I-Connect submission for 11 schools. The submission is managed by one payroll provider, and this issue has been raised directly with both the payroll provider and the academies affected. The Team Leader from the employer relations team has spoken with the payroll provider and additional resources are being put in place to ensure the submission are done in time.

7.4 Through regular reviews of the breaches being logged we have identified an issue with admissions for contracts being let by Academies for catering and cleaning. Issues include delays in signing of the admission agreement, late payment of contributions and monthly data submissions.

7.5 Through discussion with both our Border to Coast Pension administration Group and our regional pension managers group, the issue has been raised via Local Pension Board Chairs to the Scheme Advisory Board. The PAS have

arranged an employer engagement event with Academies in the fund to provide information and guidance regarding the letting of contracts and their responsibilities for payment of pension liabilities and employees affected by the transfer.

8. McCloud project

8.1 The McCloud project is progressing as planned.

8.2 A statement issued by Luke Hall, Minster for Housing and Communities and Local Government confirmed that a response to the consultation regarding the final arrangements for changes should now be expected towards the end of the calendar year.

Key elements of the changes that are expected to be made to the LGPS Regulations are as follows:

- Underpin protection will apply to LGPS members who meet the revised qualifying criteria, principally that they were active in the scheme on 31st March 2012 and subsequently had membership of the career average scheme without a continuous break in service of more than five years.

- The period of protection will apply from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2022 but will cease earlier where a member leaves active membership or reaches their final salary scheme normal retirement age (normally 65) before 31st March 2022.

- Where a member stays in active membership beyond 31st March 2022, the comparison of their benefits will be based on their final salary when they leave the LGPS, or when they reach their final salary scheme normal retirement age, if earlier.

- Underpin protection will apply to qualifying members who leave active membership of the LGPS with an immediate or deferred entitlement to a pension.

- A ‘two stage process’ will apply for assessing the underpin so that, where there is a gap between a member’s last day of active membership and the date they take their pension, members can be assured they are getting the higher benefit.

- Scheme regulations giving effect to the above changes will be retrospective to 1st April 2014.

8.3 The only consideration for the project is that the date for implementation has been suggested as April 2023, which would extend our timescales for delivering this project (April 2021 to March 2023)

9. Exit Payment update

9.1 The Restriction of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations 2020 ("the regulations") which imposed a cap of £95,000 on the payments which specified public sector exits, were revoked on 12th February 2021.

9.2 On 9th April 2021, the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) sent a notification for feedback on a new requirement for exit payments data, with an extension to the deadline of revenue outturn and capital outturn returns.

9.3 On the 2nd of July MHCLG issued a consultation in respect of the payment of special severance payments, and this consultation closes on 13 August 2021. The Local Government Association have provided a response to the Consultation, this can be seen at the link in background papers.

9.5 West Midland Employers will also be responding to the consultation document. The focus of the WME response will be regarding pension strain costs, where there is some discretion by employer's to either waive reduction to benefits or award additional pension benefits on retirement.

The expectation is that any changes will be implemented quickly and therefore, there is a need to remain aware of any exits that may get caught up in any changing requirements.

10. Annual Benefit Statements

10.1 The Annual Benefit statement project has been completed. All statements have been issued by 31st August 2021.

10.2 This year, with the introduction of i-Connect we have been able to produce 97% of statements without error. This is in comparison to 81% last year. 3% are cases where there is data missing from records and these have been queried with employers. Once data is received statements will be re-run for those records requiring one.

10.3 16,930 Deferred Annual Benefits statements were sent on the 3rd June 2021 and 16,492 Active statements were sent on 16th August 2021.

10.4 The third-party Tracing Project is currently underway which has significantly improved the number of statements we have issued to our members. 2167 scheme members have been traced to a new address.

11. Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP)

11.1 The Fund has received one IDRP at stage one, which was not upheld.

12. Update to the Administration strategy

12.1 Some minor changes have been made to the Administration Strategy. The changes made now ensure that employers must submit monthly data via I-connect following the completion of the implementation of I-Connect. There has also been some further information added regarding breaches.

13. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

None

Appendices
None

Background Papers
https://lgpslibrary.org/assets/minutes/20210702_DSG_draft%20response.pdf

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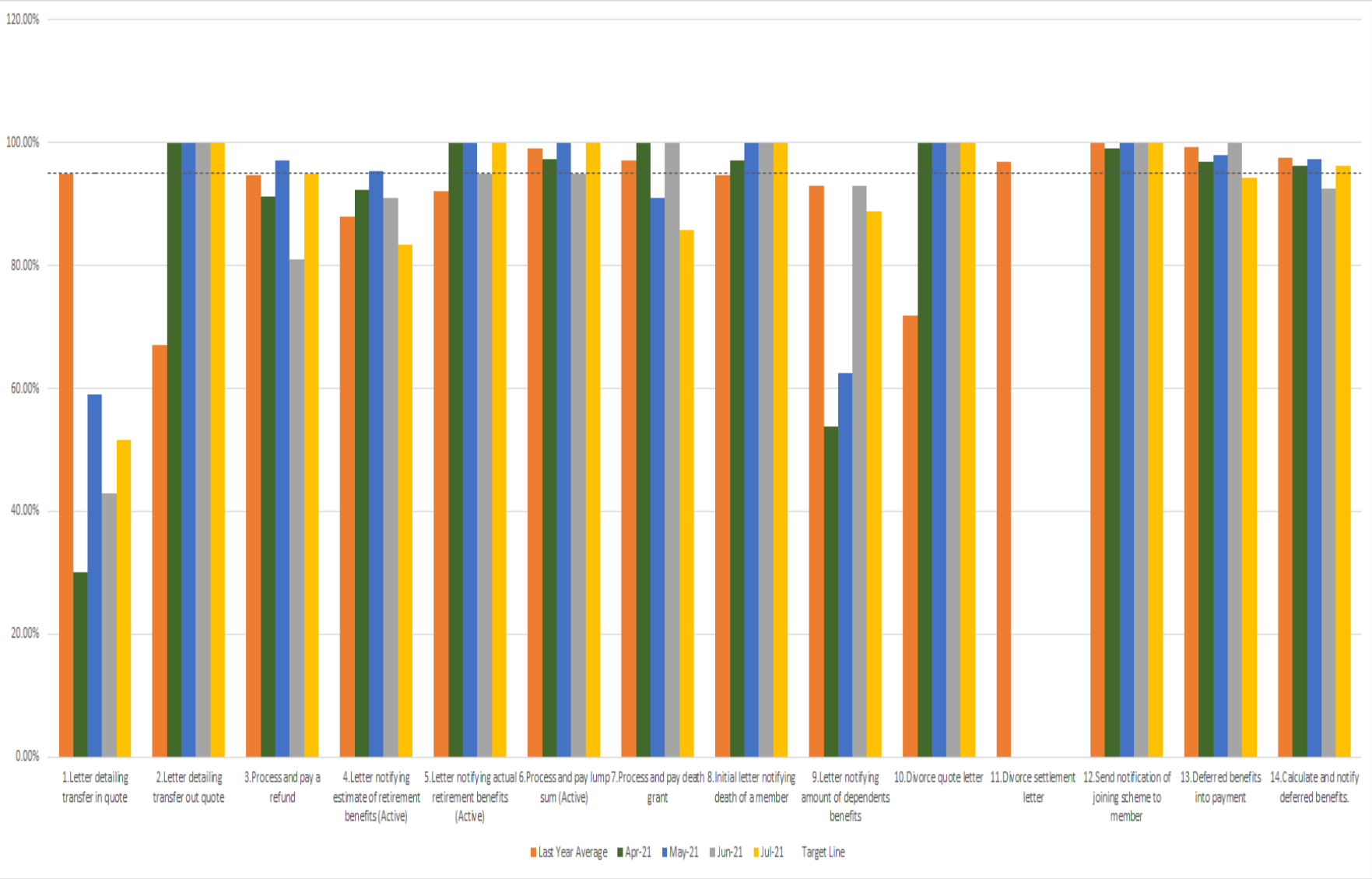
Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property	peterbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk

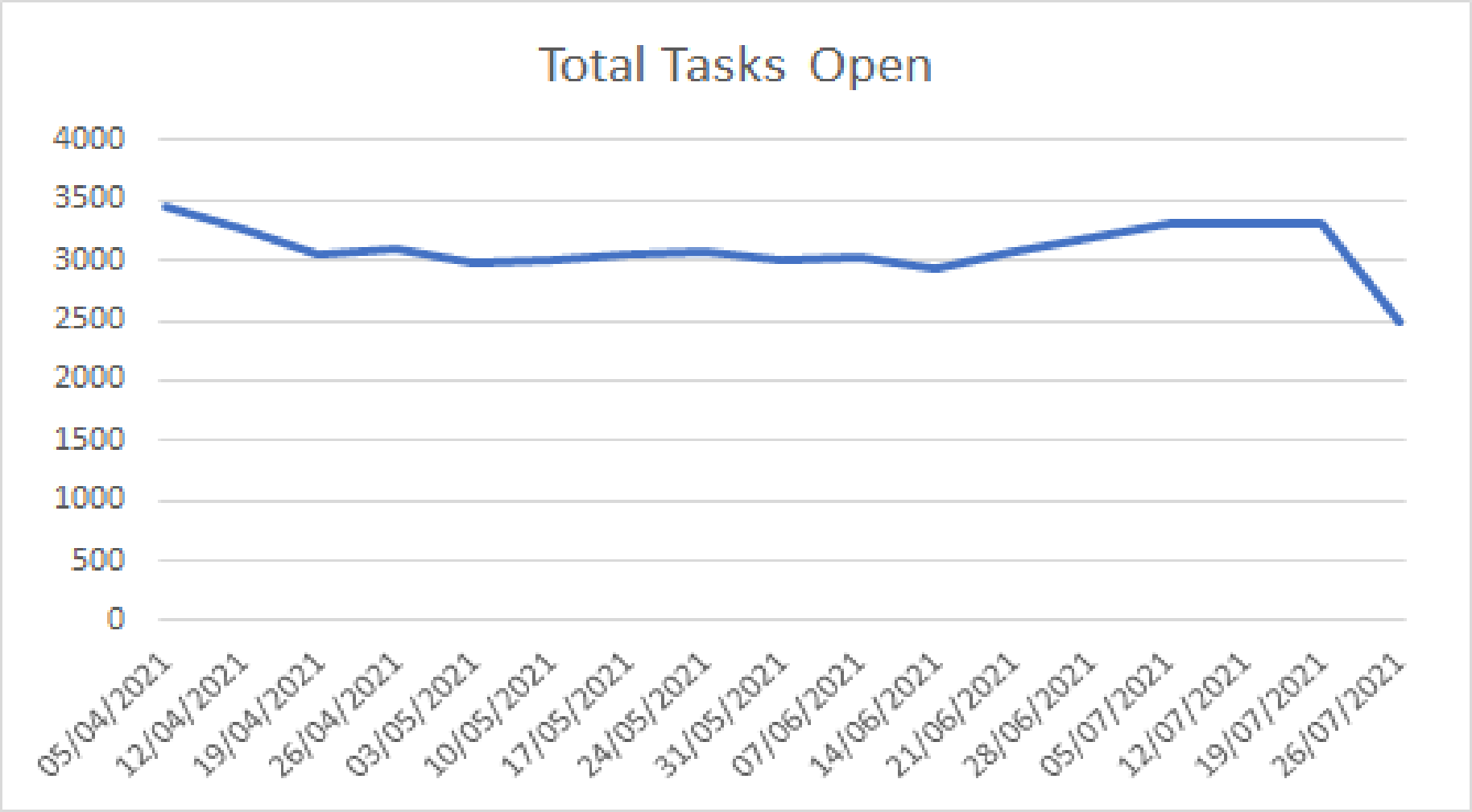
The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): Cllr Andy Jenns
Other members: n/a

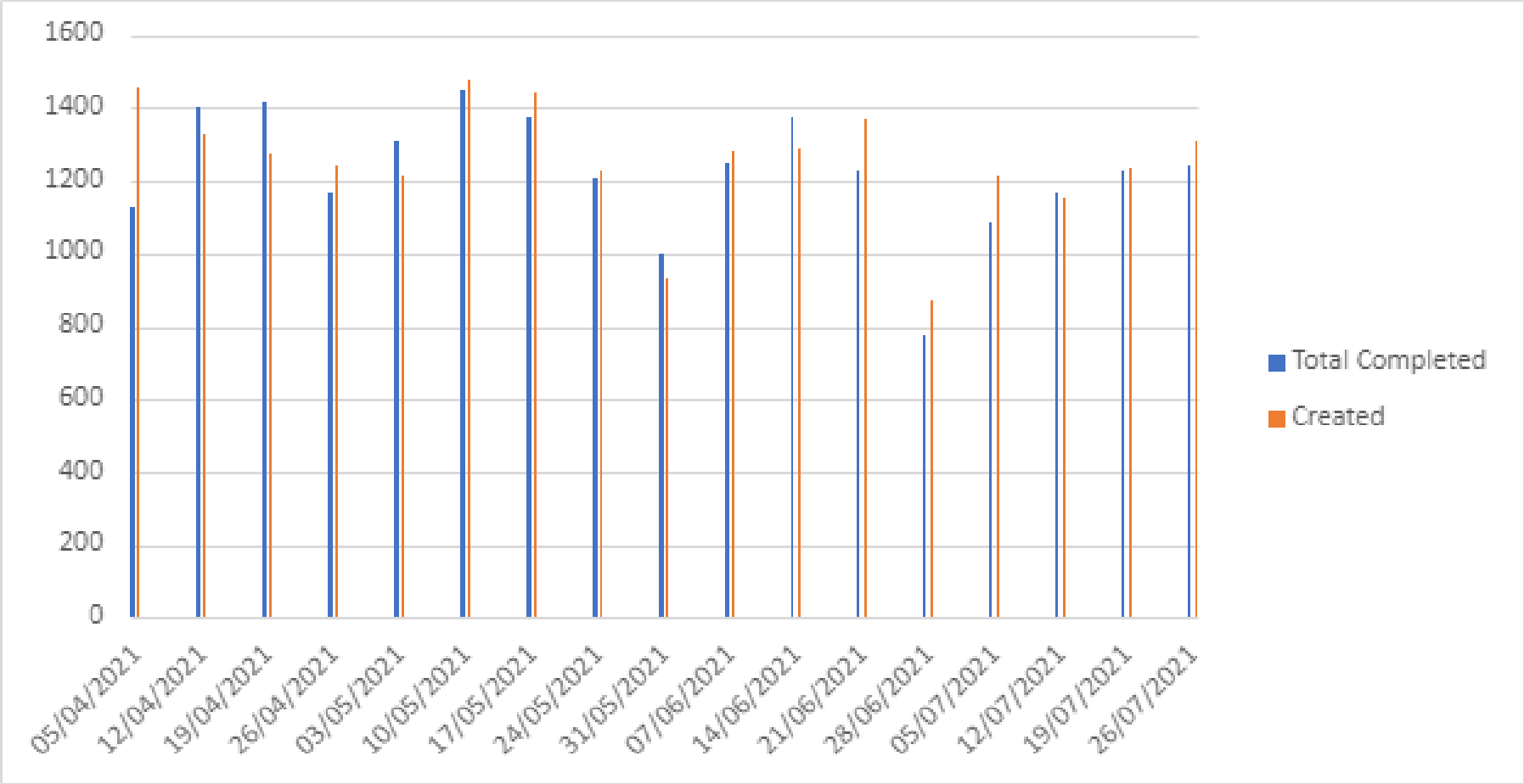
Appendix 1 Key Performance Indicators



Appendix 2 total outstanding work



Appendix 3 Comparison of work created to work completed



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Staff and Pensions Committee

Firefighter Pension Schemes Internal Dispute Resolution Policy

13 September 2021

Recommendation(s)

1. That the Committee approves the updated version of the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) policy document, which reflects that Stage 1 decisions are to be made by an officer nominated by the Chief Fire Officer and that Stage 2 disputes will be dealt with by the Chief Fire Officer, in relation to:

- Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992 (FPS 1992) Rule H3 (as amended by SI 2013/1392)
- Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2006 (FPS 2006) Part 8 Rule 5
- Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015 (FPS 2015) Regulation 163
- Firefighters' Compensation Scheme 2006 (FCS 2006) Part 6 Rule 3

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Warwickshire County Council ("the Council") as the scheme manager for Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service has updated its IDRP for its members, former members and others that are entitled to use it.

1.2 This document reflects the agreement by Staff and Pension Committee in September 2016 that the Chief Fire Officer is authorised to determine disputes (on terms and conditions satisfactory to the Strategic Director of Resources) under the internal pension dispute resolution procedure, and to nominate appropriate persons to whom such disputes should be referred for a decision in the first instance.

2. Financial Implications

2.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

2.2 Members may be interested to note that the Pensions Ombudsman has discretion to award compensation for distress and inconvenience for maladministration even where no legal rights have been infringed (for instance in cases of excessive delay or misapplication of the IDRP). Such awards range between a nominal sum and £2,000 with exceptional cases exceeding that sum.

3. Environmental Implications

None

4. Supporting Information

4. When complex issues occasionally arise, which require careful interpretation of scheme rules and relevant case law and in order to ensure consistency and transparency in decision making on pension matters, it is important that it is clear:

(a) who shall be responsible for making the initial decisions about pension matters at Stage 1

(b) who shall be responsible for making decisions at Stage 2.

4.3 It is important that the level of seniority of decision makers is consistent and appropriate to the importance of pension matters. The existing arrangement, as approved by Staff and Pensions Committee is aligned with the dispute resolution arrangements in place for the LGPS, where the Chief Executive determines disputes on behalf of the administering authority (on terms and conditions satisfactory to the Strategic Director of Resources) and nominates others to make Stage 1 decisions.

4.4 It is also recognised that HR officers and the Pensions Administration Delivery Lead, should continue to support decision makers, in order to minimise any potential for conflicting decisions in pension matters and also to ensure that legal advice is sought at an early stage, where cases are complex.

4.5 The policy document has been updated and refreshed with a view to being user friendly and accessible to those who have an interest in the relevant schemes.

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

5.1 The policy document can be implemented with immediate effect.

Appendices

1. Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (Firefighters Pension Schemes)

Background Papers

None

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Neil Buxton, Sarah Cowen, Victoria Jenks	neilbuxton@warwickshire.gov.uk, sarahcowen@warwickshire.gov.uk,

		vickyjenks@warwickshire.gov.uk
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Strategic Director	Strategic Director for Resources	robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property	Cllr Peter Butlin

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): Cllr Andy Jenns
Other members: n/a

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WARWICKSHIRE pension fund

WARWICKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Firefighters' Pension Schemes

Guide to the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure

Introduction

Warwickshire Pension Fund manages the Firefighters' Pension Schemes 1992, 2006, 2015 and the Firefighters' Compensation Scheme 2006 (the Schemes).

This guide explains how people with an interest in the Schemes can formally raise and hopefully resolve pension disputes through an Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP).

If you think you have a pension dispute, it may be helpful if you raise it with our pensions team in the first instance. The problem may be a simple error which can be corrected immediately or may be the result of a misunderstanding which can be clarified by explanation.

The Schemes offer various appeal routes according to the nature of the dispute. It is important that you select the most appropriate route. For example, if you disagree with a determination made in respect of entitlement to an ill-health award and you believe the problem lies in the medical opinion upon which the decision was made, it may be more appropriate to apply to a Medical Appeal Board.

Who may make an application under the IDRP?

The following persons may make use of the IDRP –

1. members (active, deferred or pensioner) of the Schemes.
2. widows, widowers, surviving civil partners or surviving dependants of a deceased member of the Schemes.
3. surviving non-dependant beneficiaries of a deceased member of the Schemes
4. prospective members of the scheme i.e. persons who under their contract of employment can or will become a member.
5. those who have ceased to be within any of the categories of persons referred to in paragraphs 1 to 4; or
6. those who claim to be such a person as is mentioned in paragraphs 1 to 5 and the dispute relates to whether they are such a person.

The application can be made by –

- The applicant in person or by a nominated representative,
- Personal representatives where the person has died,

- A member of the person's family or some other suitable representative in the case of a minor or where a person is incapable of acting for themselves.

Exemptions under the IDRP

The IDRP does not apply to disputes relating to opinions based on medical advice, such as where a notice of appeal has been issued under:

1. Rule H2 of the Firemen's Pension Scheme Order 1992 (appeal against opinion on a medical issue).
2. Rule 2 of Part 6 of schedule 1 to the Firefighters' Compensation Scheme (England) Order 2006 (appeal to medical referee); or
3. Rule 4 of Part 8 of Schedule 1 to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (England) Order 2006 (appeals against decisions based on medical advice).

The IDRP is also not available where the Pensions Ombudsman has commenced an investigation into a complaint made or dispute referred to them, or where proceedings have begun in any court or tribunal.

The Procedure

There are two stages to the IDRP.

- At Stage One, the complaint will be considered by a person nominated by the Chief Fire Officer. If the person with the complaint remains dissatisfied, they may then proceed to Stage Two.
- At Stage Two the complaint will be considered by the Chief Fire Officer.

The IDRP is usually conducted in writing. A hearing shall be convened only in exceptional circumstances.

Stage One

The application for consideration of the complaint should be made within six months of the decision that is disputed.

The application should be in writing and contain all the details of the complaint. Warwickshire Pension Fund has produced a form for this purpose which can be obtained by contacting Warwickshire Pension Fund on the contact details supplied below.

The form should be signed and submitted to Warwickshire Pension Fund together with any relevant documents which may support the complaint.

The Stage One decision maker will, in writing:

- acknowledge receipt of the Stage One application

- state that they intend to make a decision on the matters raised by the application within two months from the date the application was received
- explain that in the event that they cannot give a decision within two months, the applicant will be sent an interim reply (copied to any representative) setting out the reasons for the delay and the expected date for the issue of a decision,
- provide contact details for the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) which is available to assist members and beneficiaries of a pension scheme in connection with any difficulty with the scheme

The Stage One decision maker shall gather such facts and evidence as they feel appropriate to give a fair decision in respect of the complaint.

Having considered the case and arrived at their decision, the Stage One decision maker will notify their decision in writing. The decision will refer to any legislation, including any Scheme Orders relied upon for the decision. If a discretion allowed by the relevant Scheme has been exercised, there will be a reference to this and to the provisions of the Scheme which allow the discretion. The decision letter will also provide details of Stage Two of the IDRP, in the event that the dispute remains unresolved. This correspondence will be copied to any representative.

Stage Two

If the applicant is dissatisfied with the decision at Stage One, they can apply for the decision to be reconsidered by the Chief Fire Officer at Stage Two.

This application should be made within six months of the date that the Stage One decision was notified.

This application, like the Stage One application, must be given in writing. Again, a form has been produced for this purpose which can be obtained by contacting Warwickshire Pension Fund.

The application must contain all the information required by the form.

The form should be signed and submitted to Warwickshire Pension Fund together with a copy of the Stage One decision, and any relevant documents which may support the complaint.

Warwickshire Pension Fund will acknowledge receipt of the Stage Two application for a reconsideration of the Stage One decision in writing. That letter shall:

- state that a notice of a decision on the matters raised by the application will be made within two months from the date the application was received and that, in the event that a decision cannot be made within two months, an interim reply shall be sent (copied to any representative) setting out the reasons for the delay and the expected date for the issue of a decision.
- make reference to the availability of MAPS to assist members and beneficiaries in connection with any difficulty with the Scheme which remains unresolved.

The Chief Fire Officer will consider the application and arrive at their decision which shall be given in writing (copied to any representative) with an explanation as to whether, and if so to what extent, that decision either confirms or replaces the decision made at Stage One.

As in the case of the Stage One decision, the Stage Two decision will include a reference to any legislation, including Scheme Orders, relied upon for the decision. If a discretion allowed by the relevant Scheme has been exercised, there will be a reference to this and to the provisions of the Scheme which allow the discretion.

The letter will also advise that, if the applicant remains dissatisfied, the Pensions Ombudsman may investigate and determine any complaint or dispute of fact or law in relation to a pension scheme. A contact address for the Pensions Ombudsman will be given.

Contact Details

Warwickshire Pension Fund's contact details are as follows:

Email: firefighterpensions@warwickshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 01926 412984

Post: Shire Hall, Market Square, Warwick CV34 4RL

Further Advice

Money and Pensions Service

MaPS provides free, confidential advice to individual members of the public. Although MaPS will offer help before, during and after and IDRP, they will normally expect a person to have taken up the dispute at least informally with Warwickshire Pension Fund in the first instance.

MaPS can be contacted as follows:

Email: contact@maps.org.uk

Telephone: 01159 659570

Post: 120 Holborn, London, EC1N 2TD

The Pensions Ombudsman

The Pensions Ombudsman can investigate and determine complaints of maladministration or a dispute of fact or law in relation to an occupational pension scheme.

Please note that you must refer your complaint to the Ombudsman within 3 years of the even about which you are complaining, or within 3 years of when you first became aware of the problem.

The Ombudsman cannot help if court proceedings have begun and will normally expect the case to have first been considered under the IDRP and advice to have been sought from MaPS.

The Pensions Ombudsman can be contacted as follows:

Email: enquiries@pensions-ombudsman.org.uk

Telephone: 0800 917 4487

Post: 10 South Colannade, Canary Wharf, E14 4PU

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Staff and Pensions Committee

Review of the Minutes of the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Local Pension Board meeting of 4th March 2021

13 September 2021

Recommendation(s)

1. That the Staff and Pensions Committee notes the minutes of the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Local Pension Board meeting.

1. Executive Summary.

1.1 Following a recent review of the governance arrangements for the Firefighter Pension Schemes within Warwickshire, it was identified that the minutes of the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Local Pension Board were not being reviewed by an Executive Committee. The minutes of the Local Government LPB are reviewed by the Pension Fund Investment Sub-Committee (which has delegated responsibility and oversight for Local Government Pension Scheme matters) and it is recommended therefore, that the minutes of the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service LPB are reviewed by the Staff and Pensions Committee.

1.2 Set out at Appendix 1 are the minutes of the WFRS Local Pension Board meeting of 4th March 2021.

2. Financial Implications

2.1 None.

3. Environmental Implications

3.1 None.

4. Supporting Information

4.1 None.

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

5.1 None.

Appendices

1. Appendix 1 Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Local Pension Board minutes 4th March 2021

Background Papers

None.

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Neil Buxton	neilbuxton@warwickshire.gov.uk
Assistant Director	Andrew Felton	andrewfelton@warwickshire.gov.uk
Strategic Director	Strategic Director for Resources	robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property	peterbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): n/a
Other members: Councillors Jenns and Gifford

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Local Pension Board of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme

Thursday 4 March 2021

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members
Martin Reohorn (Chair)
Barnaby Briggs
Caroline Jones
Councillor David Reilly
Paul Morley
Tony Morgan

Officers
Helen Barnsley, Democratic Services Officer
Neil Buxton, Technical Specialist - Pension Fund Policy and Governance
Liz Firmstone, Service Manager (Transformation)
Jane Pollard, Legal Service Manager (Corporate)

1. General

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Vicky Jenks, Sian Marsh and Deborah Moseley.

3. Board Members' Disclosures of Interest

(As stipulated by the Public Sector Pensions Act 2013 and set out in Annex A of the Agreed Board Terms of Reference).

There were no declarations of interest noted.

(1) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

There were no matters arising.

4. Terms of Reference

Neil Buxton, Technical Specialist - Pension Fund Policy and Governance introduced the report to the Board and confirmed that the terms of reference had been updated.

It was noted that section 7.4 had been missed from the updated version sent to the Board. It was confirmed that this will be corrected and the correct document will be recirculated to the Board members.

The Board accepted the updated Terms of Reference.

5. Pensions Administration Update

Liz Firmstone, Service Manager (Transformation) presented the report to the Board. It was noted that the report brings a broad picture of the activity completed by the pension administrators.

The Board noted that there had been one recorded breach since the last meeting. The breach was a minor breach and had been resolved. There was no requirement for it to be reported.

In relation to internal disputes, it was noted that there have been three cases since October 2020. They have all been investigated with two not upheld and one being dealt with internally by HR.

In relation to McCloud/Sergeant, the Board noted that following consultation, the Government had announced that members will not have to choose options until they leave. These means that members will have the information to make the right decision. This is a good outcome.

It was noted that with reference to Immediate detriment, the Home Office has recently provided guidance, some of which was challenged in the courts but this has not been successful. It was confirmed that officers are waiting to hear if there will be appeals, although this is unlikely. Officers will revisit calculations to ensure that everything is correct.

The Chair raised a question in relation to the guidance and if it will include specific information about immediate ill health retirement and if it will this be across legacy schemes? It was confirmed that Liz Firmstone will investigate and report back at a future meeting.

Section 8 of the report related to data performance scores and it was noted that the scores compare well with others. There have been some issues with data in relation to legacy schemes but work is in progress to improve the performance score in this area. It was noted that advice is expected from the LGA in relation to legacy cases and how to proceed where data is missing or incorrect. The Board noted that access to older pay systems is still available and that this should help.

Following a question from the Chair, it was confirmed that Liz Firmstone will investigate if the missing data is all from one area and feedback to the Board at a future meeting.

Following a question from Councillor Dave Reilly it was confirmed that administrators can hold data from a range of sources and that this has been validated and verified by legal officers.

In relation to the outsourcing of administration, it was confirmed that work is in progress to ensure that the quality of the date is high before anything is outsources.

The Board noted that Shropshire have expressed an interest in sharing the tendering process for the outsourcing. Reassurance was given that the sharing process will not delay Warwickshire's plan. The Board noted that 1 April 2022 is the planned go-live date for the outsourcing project.

Barnaby Briggs stated that the national fire procurement framework would allow Shropshire to benefit from the process undertaken by Warwickshire. The Board noted that it was unclear at the moment if Shropshire were interesting in sharing the procurement process or in having a shared contract. The Chair advised caution in starting a new contract at the start of a financial year.

It was confirmed that in relation to O'Brien/Matthews case, an update would be prepared for the next meeting. O'Brien/Matthews related to a 2006 modified scheme for part time working settlements.

6. Risk Monitoring

Neil Buxton, Technical Specialist - Pension Fund Policy and Governance, presented the report to the Board and confirmed that it would be presented each quarter and any amendments would be highlighted to the Board.

The board noted that risks associated with Covid-19 have been added to the register. It was also noted that the implementation of i-connect will improve the quality of the data that is input.

The Board noted the content of the report.

7. Forward Plan

Neil Buxton, Technical Specialist - Pension Fund Policy and Governance presented the report to the Board confirming that it was a plan for items due to be presented to the Board at future meetings.

It was noted that there is flexibility if there are items that the Board would like to bring forward or push back. Standard items for each meeting are included on the plan as well as bespoke items such as policy reviews.

In relation to training, it was confirmed that a more detailed training plan for the Board will be provided at a future meeting. The Board noted that an LGA training session to be held at Hereford and Worcester has been opened to members in Warwickshire.

Paul Morley requested that the tender process be added to the forward plan as well as to the training plan to allow board members to fully understand the process

The Board noted the content of the report.

8. Any Other Business

Councillor Dave Reilly advised the Board that he would not be standing for re-election in May 2021, so this would be his last meeting of the pension board. The Board thanks Councillor Reilly for his work on the Board and wished him well for the future.

It was confirmed that a replacement member would be decided by full council at the meeting in May after the election.

Barnaby Briggs informed the Board of the latest FPS Bulletin (42) which raised a series of questions that Fire Authorities needs to address. It was agreed that the questions would be shared with the Board and that Liz Firmstone would circulate answers before the next meeting to that they could be discussed. The item will be added to the agenda.

9. Future Meeting Dates

The schedule of future meeting dates was agreed as follows:

Tuesday, 14 September 2021
Tuesday, 9 November 2021
Monday, 14 February 2022
Tuesday, 10 May 2022

All meetings will be held at 2.00pm in Shire Hall or virtually (subject to government guidance)

The meeting rose at 14:49

…….
Chair

Staff and Pensions Committee

Policy and Regulatory update

13 September 2021

Recommendation(s)

1. That the Staff and Pensions Committee notes and comments on the report.

1. Executive Summary

1.1 This paper sets out the policies reviewed as part of an annual review or where there have been minor amendments.

1.2 The report also seeks to update the Committee on regulatory developments in the pensions arena.

2. Financial Implications

2.1 None.

3. Environmental Implications

3.1 None.

4. Supporting Information

Admissions and Termination Policy

4.1 The Funding Strategy Statement (FSS) was recently amended to reflect changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations which allowed local authority pension funds greater flexibility and discretion on the contribution rate paid by an employer and the settlement of a cessation amount for an employer that has left the pension fund. The Pension Fund Investment Sub-Committee approved these changes at their June meeting.

4.2 The amendment to the FSS meant the Fund's Admissions and Termination Policy required changing and this report is to advise the Committee that these changes have been completed.

Administration Strategy

4.3 This Strategy is subject to a minor amendment which is referred to in the Administration Update report.

Governance Compliance

4.4 The Pension Fund's Governance Compliance Statement features as part of the Annual Report confirmation by the Fund as to whether it complies with a requirement or not, and where relevant explains if and why a different approach has been taken.

4.5 The publication of the Scheme Advisory Board's review of Good Governance together with the Pension Regulator's review of the Code of Practice has identified areas where the Fund may need to amend its approach.

4.6 In addition, further legislation and guidance is expected to be issued either by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and/or the Pension Regulator. As and when this occurs, a further report will be brought to the Committee.

5. Regulatory Update

Consultation on Special Severance Payments

5.1 The Ministry for Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG) issued a consultation on draft statutory guidance on the making and disclosure of Special Severance Payments (SSP) by local authorities.

5.2 The purpose of the guidance is to limit the use of SSP, noting the government's view that these payments do not represent value for money and should only be considered in truly exceptional circumstances.

5.3 Special Severance Payments are stated as being payments to employees, officeholders, workers, contractors and others outside of normal statutory or contractual requirements when leaving employment in public service. Examples include: payments reached under settlement agreement, paid special leave such as gardening leave and payments for retraining.

5.4 Statutory and contractual redundancy payments do not constitute SSP, nor payments made to compensate for ill-health, injury, or death. However, pay or compensation in lieu of notice and pension strain payments arising from employer discretions to enhance pension benefits may be a SSP.

5.5 This means there could be implications where employers exercise their discretion to waive early retirement reductions on voluntary retirement (e.g., compassionate grounds), flexible retirement etc.

5.6 If an SSP is made employers should consider lower cost alternatives, public perception of the payment and the setting of possible precedents. They should also consider the impact of SSP including legal advice on the prospect of defending a claim at tribunal, payments aren't made to avoid management action or unwelcome publicity.

5.7 If a SSP is made it requires that the personal approval and sign off of the Chief Executive Officer is documented with a clear record of the Leader's approval, and the guidance makes it clear that the Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer must be able to justify such payments.

5.8 Warwickshire County Council contributed to the response on that consultation by West Midlands Employers.

Cost Management Mechanism

5.9 The Cost Management Mechanism (the mechanism) was introduced following the Hutton review with the aim of providing protection to taxpayers and employees against unexpected changes (expected to be increases) in pension costs.

5.10 This would ensure that the anticipated risks of the rising cost of pensions would be fairly shared between employers and employees. The mechanism not only introduced a ceiling but also a floor so that if costs reduced then changes would be required to increase costs back to a fixed cost.

5.11 So, in 2016 when the mechanism was first utilised contrary to what was expected it was the floor that was breached and not the ceiling, resulting in improved benefits.

5.12 The recommendations were:

- Removal of tier 3 ill-health benefits, with tier 2 being the minimum
- Introduction of death in service entitlement of £75,000
- Enhanced early retirement factors
- Recommendations around changes to employee contribution bands.

5.13 These recommendations were placed on-hold pending an assessment of the cost of the McCloud settlement.

5.14 HM Treasury (HMT) has asked the Governments Actuary Department (GAD) to review the mechanism to see if it is working as intended.

5.15 GAD concluded the mechanism failed to meet a number of key objectives and that it can lead to "intergenerational unfairness and result in perverse outcomes such as an increase in benefits to members whilst at the same time having to increase employer contribution rates," and made several recommendations to HMT.

5.16 HMT has in turn released a consultation on changes to the mechanism which they propose to take effect from the 2020 cost management valuations:

- To remove any allowance for the legacy (i.e., final salary) schemes in the mechanism (although it is proposed to include past service of the 2014 / 2015 schemes in the mechanism)
- To widen the corridor beyond which a breach occurs from 2% of pay to 3% of pay.
- Add an economic check so that changes will only be implemented to the benefits if the breach of the corridor would still have occurred had the changes in economic assumptions been considered.

5.17 Officers will keep the Committee appraised of any developments.

6. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

None

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None.

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): n/a
Other members: Councillors Jenns and Gifford

Staff and Pensions Committee

Employers joining and leaving the Warwickshire Pension Fund

13 September 2021

Recommendation(s)

1. That the Staff and Pensions Committee delegates authority to the Strategic Director for Resources to approve applications from the listed employers subject to the applications meeting the criteria set out in the Local Government Pensions Scheme Regulations 2013.

1.1 New Academies

- Brailes C of E Primary School (1st August 2021)

1.2 New Employers

- Sodexo (1st August 2021)
- Prime Facilities Services (8th June 2021)

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Pension Fund must accept applications from scheduled bodies where the requirements of the regulations are met.

1.2 An academy is automatically a Scheme Employer on the basis that it meets the criteria of paragraph 20 of Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 i.e., it is a 'scheduled body'.

1.3 When submitting an application for membership each academy will be required to confirm:
- That it has internal authority to be admitted to the Pension Fund.
- The number of members to join the Pension Fund.
- That the academy will comply with the relevant LGPS Regulations.

1.4 The Pension Fund must accept an application from an applicant body made under paragraph 1(d) of Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 where that body has undertaken to comply with the Regulations.

1.5 Birmingham Diocese Multi Academy Trust are the letting authority for the contract with Sodexo and Warwickshire County Council are the letting authority for Prime Facilities Services.

1.6 Both have made an application on the basis that they meet the criteria of paragraph 1(d) of Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Local

Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 i.e., it is a ‘transferee body’.

1.7 The Applicant Bodies have a contract with another Scheme Employer within the Pension Fund and have LGPS admission in respect of this contract.

1.8 The Applicant Bodies will be carrying out a function or service on behalf of the Scheme Employer under a contract.

1.9 The Applicant Bodies have confirmed that the Scheme Employer will be party to the admission agreement.

1.10 The Applicant Bodies have undertaken to comply with the relevant LGPS Regulations.

2. Financial Implications

2.1 New entrants to the scheme will be required to cover their own costs and the actuarial process will ensure that employer contributions are appropriate to ensure this is the case.

3. Environmental Implications

3.1 None

4. Supporting Information

4.1 Warwickshire Pension Fund, Admissions and Terminations Policy 2021

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

5.1 At the moment the dates for the academy listed is provisional, next steps will be decided once the admission date is confirmed.

5.2 In the event that the application is accepted, arrangements will be made for the Applicant Body to enter into an admission agreement with the Pension Fund. Should admission commence prior to any admission agreement being completed, the Applicant Body has agreed to be bound by the terms of the standard form admission agreement appended to the Pension Fund’s Admissions and Termination Policy

Background Papers

1. Warwickshire Pension Fund, Admissions and Terminations Policy 2020

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): Cllr Jenns
Other members: n/a

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Agenda Item 13

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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