

Quarterly Workforce Report

October - December 2020



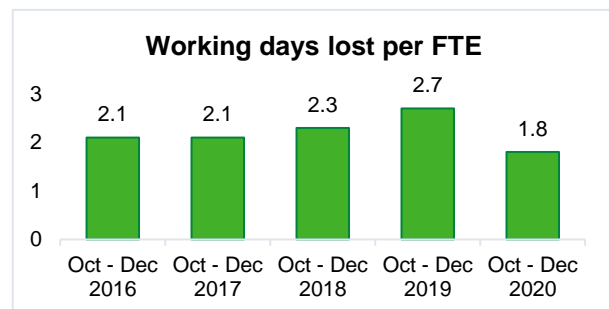
Observations and exceptions

As COVID-19 cases rose during the October – December quarter, nationally we saw a tier system introduced and a second lockdown imposed. As a result, the changing COVID-19 situation continued to impact the council's workforce and service delivery throughout the autumn months.

The COVID-19 virus had a greater impact on sickness absence during this quarter in comparison to quarter 2, contributing 36 absences totalling 217 working days. This is a notable increase from the last quarter (July – September), which saw only 1 COVID-related sickness absence; this increase was aligned with a rise in cases seen nationally in the same period. It should be noted that COVID-19 related sickness absence amounts to just 3.3% of the total absence days lost in the quarter, and, in addition, the 31 members of staff affected by the virus during this quarter represent less than 0.7% of our workforce, which is well below a figure of around 2.1% nationally based on data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS). This indicates that the restrictions implemented in relation to staff accessing workplaces, as well as the social distancing measures in place for staff who did require access, are likely to have contributed positively.

Over the course of the pandemic, the council has also monitored the impact of COVID-19 on team capacity, and during this quarter only 2.4% of the workforce were impacted to the point that they were unable to perform the duties of their role, i.e. they were either unwell with the virus, or were self-isolating and unable to work. This is up from 1% in quarter 2, however is associated with the increase in spread experienced nationally during this period.

During this quarter, sickness absence amounted to 1.8 working days lost per FTE. Despite the increase in COVID-19 related sickness absences, this figure is still significantly lower than that of the same quarter in previous years, with working days lost per FTE climbing to 2.7 during October – December 2019.



It is likely that this deviation from the trend is a result of the increased COVID-19 restrictions and the national 4-week lockdown imposed during November 2020. The increased restrictions during this quarter, as well as a high proportion of staff working from home, reduced opportunities for the transmission of stomach-related illness as well as colds and flu. Compared to the same quarter in 2019, cold/flu and other infections are down 72%, whilst stomach-related illnesses are down 34%. This is significant as, historically, Wiltshire Council have experienced a very clear seasonal increase in sickness absence during the autumn/winter months. In 2019 the sickness absence rate increased by almost 30% from 2.1 to 2.7 between quarter 2 and quarter 3. However, in 2020 Wiltshire Council only experienced

a 6% increase from 1.7 to 1.8 days lost per FTE between the same period. In addition, the stricter measures during this quarter have greatly limited the delivery of services requiring manual tasks (such as Leisure and Passenger Transport), thus reducing absences related to musculo-skeletal issues by 23%.

During the previous quarter (July – September), the council saw stress-related absence increase, returning to a level in line with the normal trend. This quarter, however, has seen a reduction of 7% in stress-related absence, predominantly from non-work stress-related absence. This reduction could be in part due to the increased focus the council has placed on Wellbeing throughout 2020, with regular activity on the wellbeing resources page of the EPIC Hub, weekly wellbeing-focused internal comms emails, regular council-wide Wellbeing surveys, and a dedicated Wellbeing and Engagement workstream within the Organisational Recovery programme. In addition, schools reopened nationally in September and remained open throughout this quarter, which may also have contributed to the reduction in non-work stress-related absence.

As part of our endeavours to improve the financial situation of the council following the impact of COVID-19, the council introduced recruitment controls in June 2020. These controls prohibited contract extensions for agency staff, resulting in a decrease in agency costs to less than £670k this quarter, a steady reduction of over £1m since the January – March 2020 quarter. The Agile Workforce workstream within the Organisational Recovery Programme will focus on creating and encouraging an internal flow of staff, making it easier for managers to source internal applicants for roles previously filled by agency staff or requiring external recruitment.

With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing into 2021, the direct impact of the COVID-19 virus on our workforce remains minimal. A significant impact on our workforce that is emerging is the need to remobilise our workforce to resource areas with an increase in demand or latent demand, requiring a more agile workforce. However, work on our Organisational Recovery programme continues to address this, and our council is dedicated to emerging from the pandemic leaner and stronger. Monitoring the impact on staff mental health and wellbeing remains critical, however the vaccination rollout, commencing in December 2020, has been a success so far, with the government aiming to offer all adults in the UK the first dose of the vaccination by July 2021, offering an end in sight.

Workforce Demographics



Current quarter	4482
Jul-Sep	4610
Apr-Jun	4680
Jan-Mar	4723



FTE

Current quarter	3453.8
Jul-Sep	3496.3
Apr-Jun	3545.7
Jan-Mar	3560.8



Disability

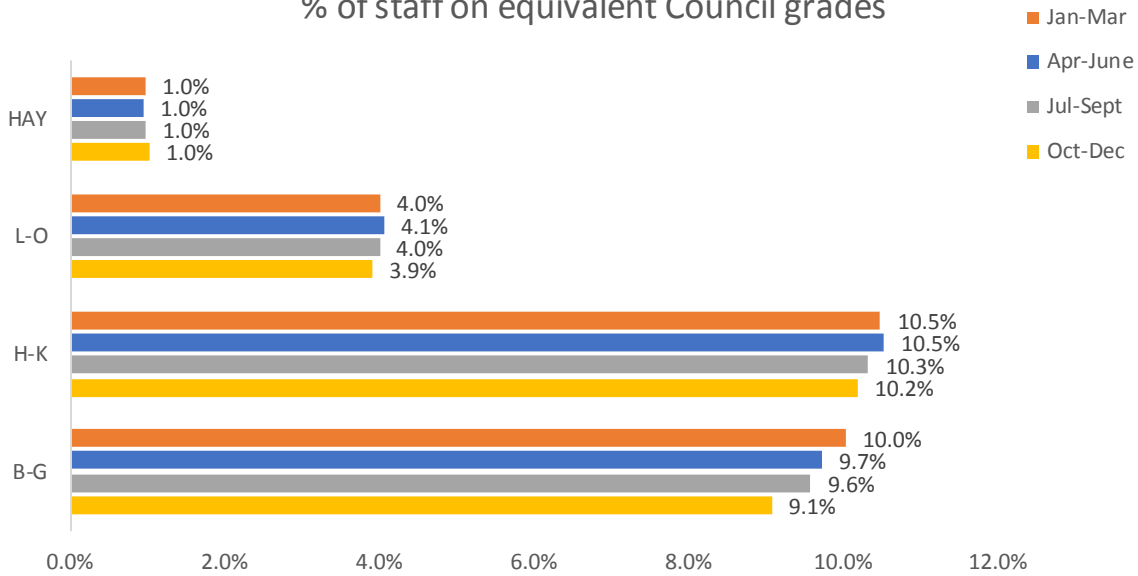
Current quarter	8.0%
Jul-Sep	8.0%
Apr-Jun	8.1%
Jan-Mar	8.2%



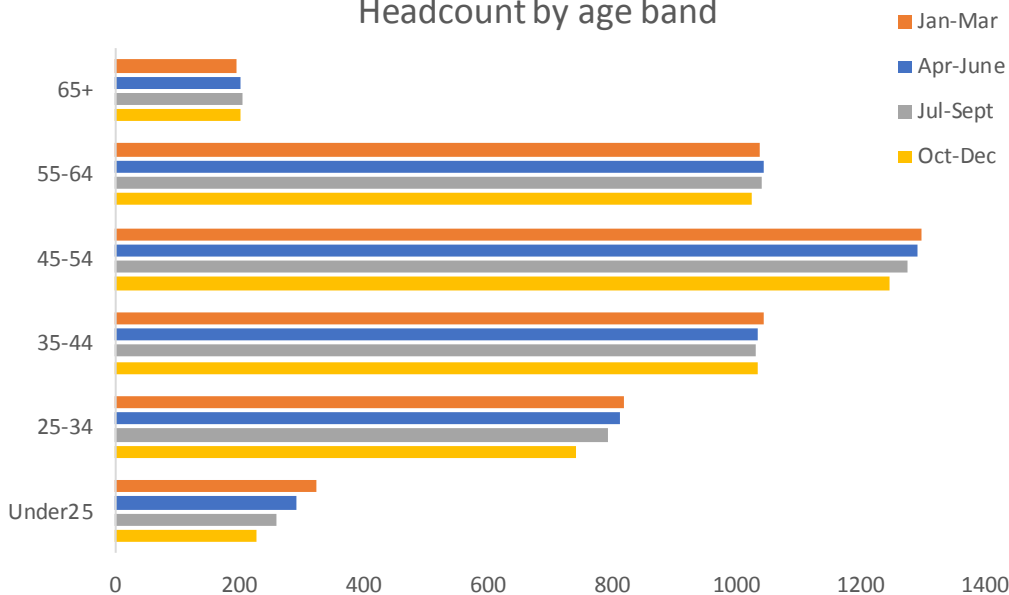
Ethnicity (BME)

Current quarter	3.1%
Jul-Sep	3.0%
Apr-Jun	3.0%
Jan-Mar	3.0%

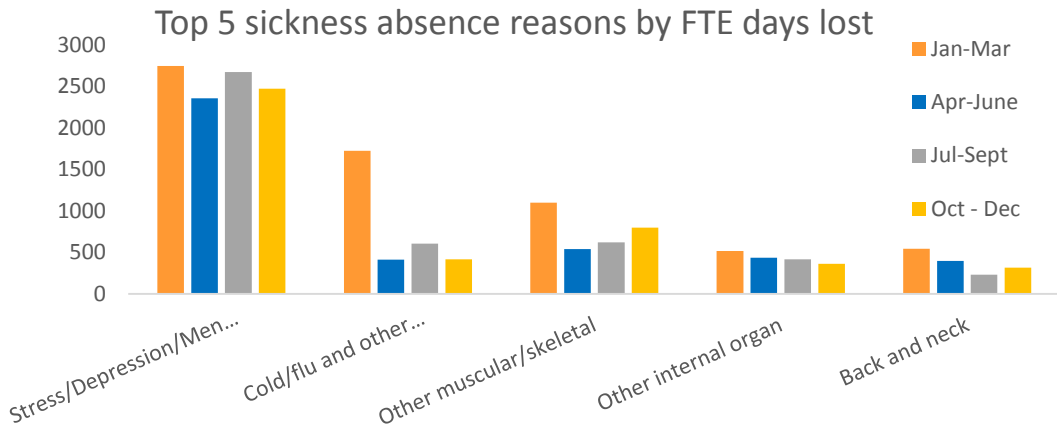
% of staff on equivalent Council grades



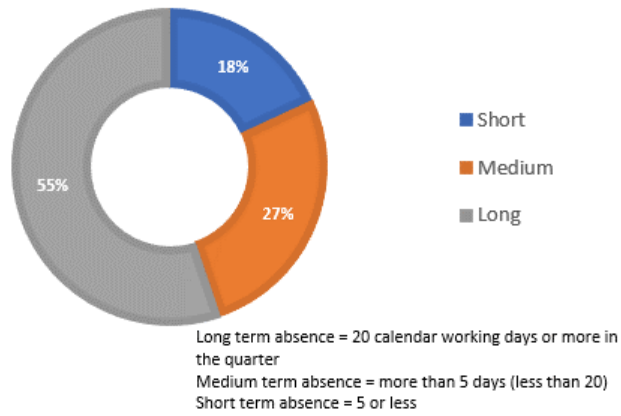
Headcount by age band



Sickness Absence



Sickness absence breakdown Oct - Dec 2020



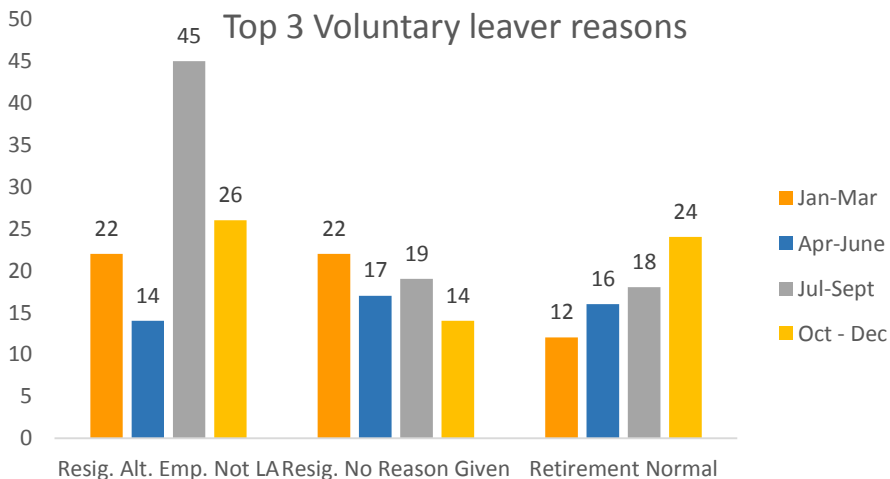
Turnover

Leavers 'under 25 years old'

Current quarter	8
Jul-Sept	18
Apr-June	13
Jan-Mar	15

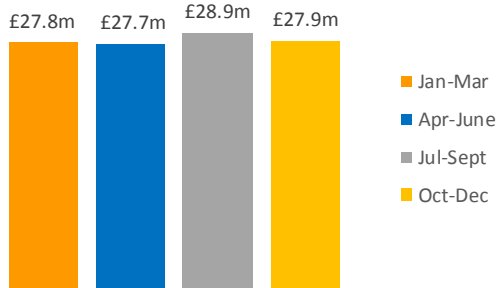
Leavers with less than 1 years service

Current quarter	13
Jul-Sept	14
Apr-June	14
Jan-Mar	22

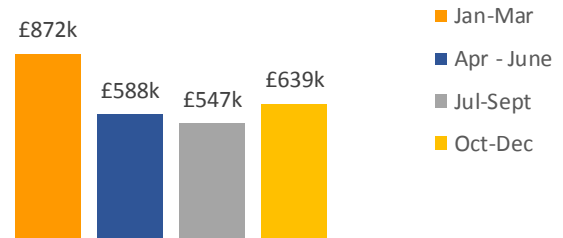


Employee costs

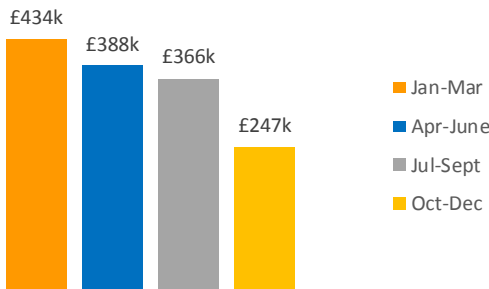
Permanent employee salary costs



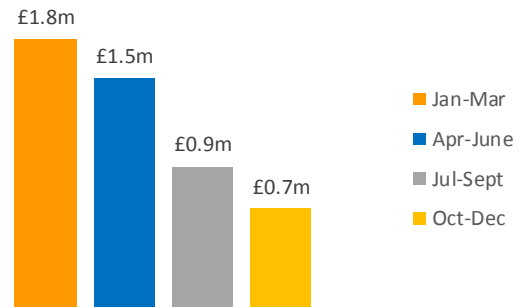
Sickness Absence Costs



Casual employee salary costs



Agency Costs



Advisory Cases

Disciplinaries

	new cases this quarter	Variance from previous quarter
Current Quarter	11	1
Jul - Sept	10	-2
Apr - Jun	12	2
Jan-Mar	10	-5

Absence & Health

	new cases this quarter	Variance from previous quarter
Current Quarter	153	21
Jul - Sept	132	38
Apr - Jun	94	-75
Jan-Mar	169	-7

Grievances

	new cases this quarter	Variance from previous quarter
Current Quarter	4	-4
Jul - Sept	8	6
Apr - Jun	2	-4
Jan-Mar	6	0

Improving work Performance

	new cases this quarter	Variance from previous quarter
Current Quarter	1	-3
Jul - Sept	4	2
Apr - Jun	2	-6
Jan-Mar	8	4