

Quarterly Workforce Report

April – June 2021



Observations and Exceptions

During this quarter the council, and the country, were successfully accomplishing the key milestones, easing restrictions and concluding their respective roadmaps, with all government restrictions lifting shortly after the end of the quarter. The UK government also continue to successfully roll out a mass COVID-19 vaccination programme, with currently over 90m vaccinations administered: 88% of the UK population over 16 given a first dose and 78% given both doses of the vaccine, supporting the decision to lift government restrictions.

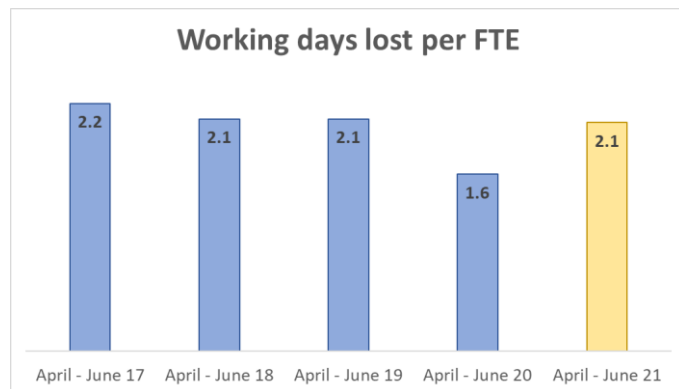
The council continues to operate with restrictions inside of council-owned buildings to safeguard staff and Wiltshire residents, with workplace access restrictions and social distancing measures remaining in place. The council has continued to roll out pilot schemes to evaluate a new ways of working, trialling new 'hybrid' meeting technology, dedicated collaboration spaces and the desk booking app. Utilisation and feedback of these pilot schemes has been largely positive. These are being reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose and HR & OD and the Workplaces and Workspaces workstream are liaising with services that are less engaged with the pilot schemes for feedback. The council have also recently concluded another Wellbeing and Engagement Survey, the results of which are due to be published imminently. Initial review of the survey findings suggest that most staff feel moving to a hybrid/blended way of working will have a positive impact on wellbeing, work-life balance, feeling part of the organisation and how effective they are in their role.

The pandemic has reinforced the need for a more agile and adaptable workforce, and work through our Organisational Recovery programme continues to address this. The Agile workstream have introduced the Agile Workforce Pool which provides staff with the opportunity to undertake temporary placements in critical service areas, providing opportunities for staff to build their career, develop skills and expand their knowledge of the council and allows the council to meet short term demand.

The COVID-19 virus has had significantly less impact on sickness absence during this quarter, contributing 18 absences totalling 198 working days, a 75% reduction compared to the previous quarter (January – March), which saw 79 COVID-related sickness absences totalling 789 working days. COVID-related sickness absence represents only 2.8% of the total days lost from April - June, making COVID-19 the 11th most common absence reason for absence (previously second most common in January – March). This reduction is aligned with a reduction in cases seen nationally during the same period. However, since the end of the April to June quarter the council has experienced a slight increase in COVID-related sickness absence, also aligned with a similar trend nationally, mostly likely due to the increased transmissibility of the Delta variant. The council also experienced a increasing trend in those self isolating since the end of June, also likely due to the delta variant and people being notified to self isolate through the NHS COVID-19 app which hit a peak in July. However, it should also be noted that even when numbers peaked in July, this was still only affecting around 1% of our workforce and the council are continuing to mitigate transmission with restrictions remaining in place

regarding workplace access and social distancing measures in council buildings. Since these numbers peaked in July, however, the number of staff self isolating has reduced significantly, a figure which is expected to further reduce with all government restrictions ceasing and no longer requiring to check in to venues. At the time of writing, the automatic requirement to self isolate when identified as a COVID-19 case contact has been removed for most of the population in England. COVID absence figures continue to be reported on a weekly basis and reviewed by the corporate leadership team.

Previously we have reported that sickness absence levels have been significantly lower than usual due to the pandemic; however this quarter the council have reported a sickness absence rate of 2.1 days lost per FTE (increasing from 1.8 days lost per FTE last quarter), returning to similar levels experienced in this quarter prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, as detailed by the adjacent graph. This is particularly significant as the council would normally experience a reduction in sickness absence in this quarter following the more usual seasonal spike in the January to March quarter (during the winter months).



Stress-related absence has largely contributed to the increase in sickness absence this quarter. Stress-related absence has increased by almost a third (31%), compared to the previous quarter, and has contributed almost half of the total absence days lost in the quarter (43%). Contributing to this were significant increases in social care (both children's and adults), Joint Commissioning and IT. Results of the July 2021 Wellbeing and Engagement Survey and intelligence from the relevant HR Business Partners suggests that social care are experiencing increased demand (adults) and latent demand (children's) and are having to work very differently as a result of the pandemic. Many of the staff in these areas report that they do not feel empowered to take a break from work to support their own mental wellbeing, which could be contributing to this increase in stress-related absence. The survey shows a similar trend experienced by Joint Commissioning. In addition there is a restructure underway within IT and results from the recent Wellbeing and Engagement Survey suggests that staff in this area are feeling pessimistic about the future and are currently citing future uncertainty as their biggest concern, which may be contributing to the increase in stress-related absence. These responses will be discussed in senior management team meetings and the Wellbeing and Engagement Survey action planning process, to understand how the council can support these services.





The council are facing financial constraints as a result of the pandemic, and therefore costs are under constant scrutiny. Costs of both casual and agency staff this quarter have continued to follow a reducing trend, realising a combined reduction of around £1m compared to the same quarter last year (April to June 2020). The permanent costs have increased, however, by around £457k (1.6%), largely due to eligible staff receiving a pay increment in April 2021.

We can also see from the graphs below, within the turnover section, that significantly more staff have left this quarter without providing a reason. Understanding why staff are leaving and identifying any trends is critical to retaining staff and maintaining a sufficient workforce. HR & OD are currently reviewing the leavers process, and with it the exit questionnaire, to streamline the questions, and promote completion, to ensure it gives us sufficient and valuable insight on trends.

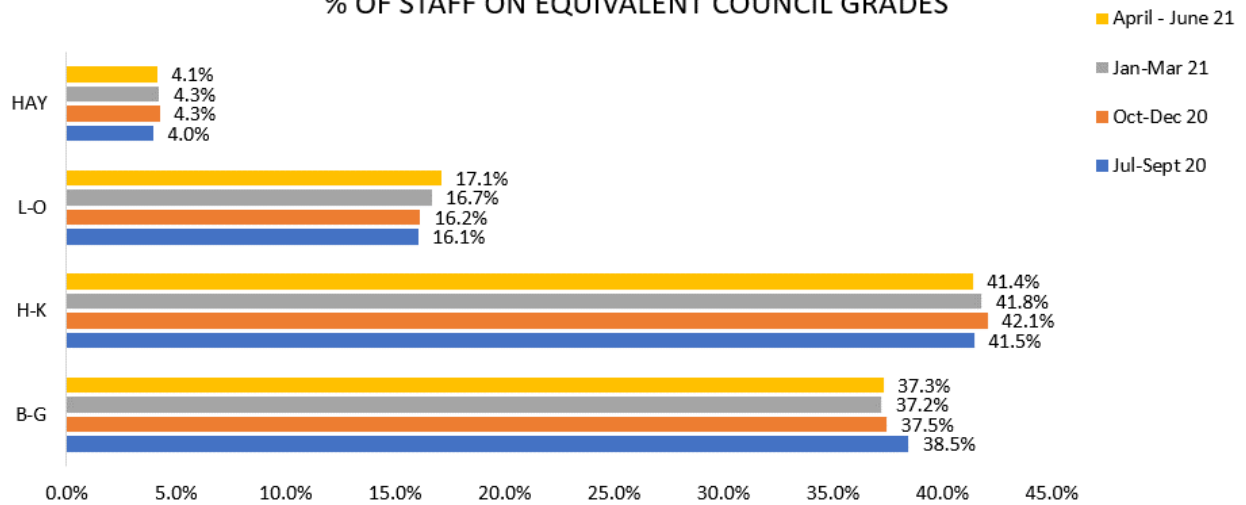
Maintaining a sufficient and sustainable workforce is critical to service delivery and providing a consistent service for Wiltshire residents. Of particular note are the data relating to the headcount by

age band graph in the section below, which show a trend of reducing numbers of staff under 25 years of age (and under 34) over the previous three quarters and the turnover table, which shows an increase in staff leaving who are under 25. Looking in more detail at the data, over the last 4 quarters, 59% of leavers under 25 were in Leisure. Leisure generally has a high turnover of staff due to the seasonal nature of the work, however due to the closures and reduced service being delivered in Leisure during the pandemic, turnover of staff under 25 has increased compared to the financial year prior to the pandemic (42%). 'Places Leisure' is to be brought back in to the council in October 2021, at which point we will see an increase in the proportion of staff under 25.

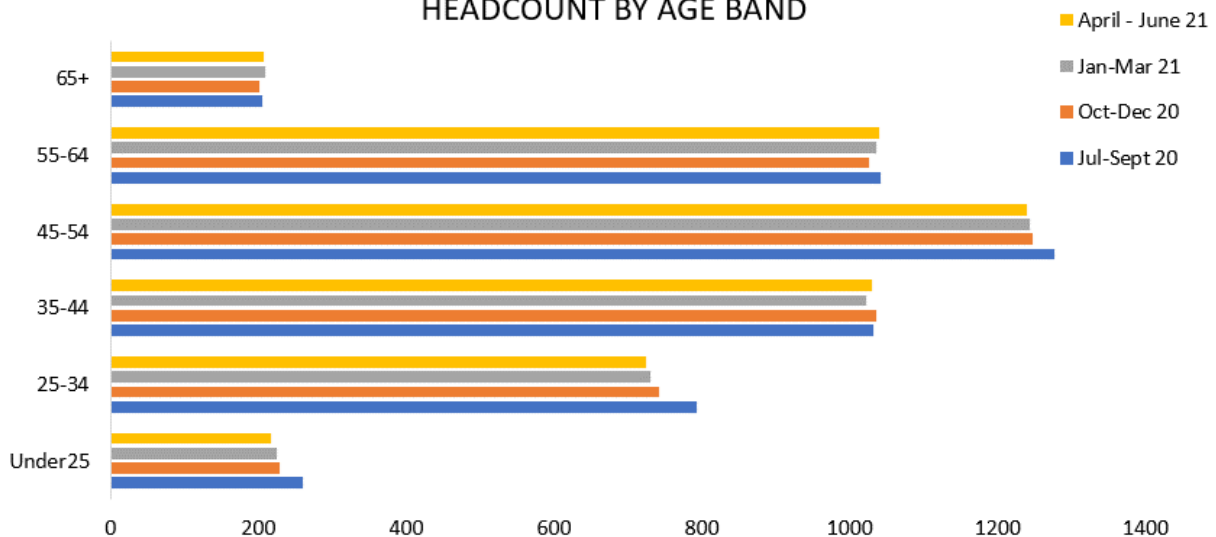
WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHICS

 Headcount	Current quarter	4461	 FTE	Current quarter	3468.5	 Disability	Current quarter	8.2%	 Ethnicity	Current quarter	3.1%
	Jan-March	4470		Jan-March	3467.5		Jan-March	8.4%		Jan-March	3.2%
	Oct-Dec	4482		Oct-Dec	3453.8		Oct-Dec	8.0%		Oct-Dec	3.1%
	Jul-Sept	4610		Jul-Sept	3496.3		Jul-Sept	8.0%		Jul-Sept	3.0%

% OF STAFF ON EQUIVALENT COUNCIL GRADES



HEADCOUNT BY AGE BAND



SICKNESS ABSENCE

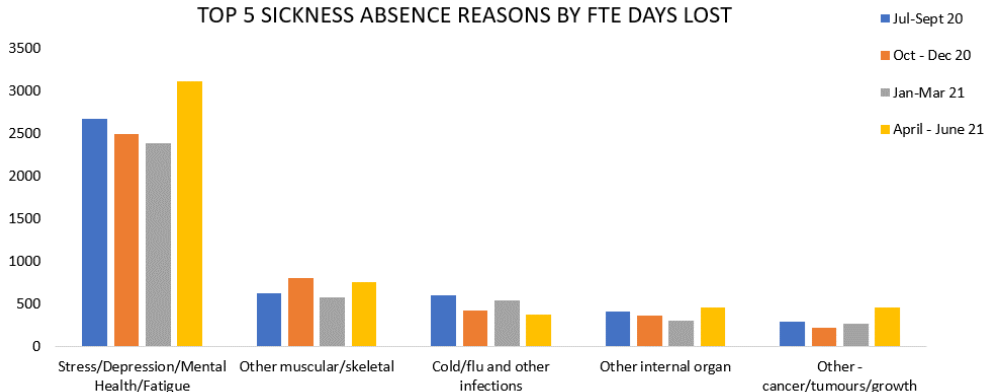
Working days lost per FTE for directorate

April - June 21

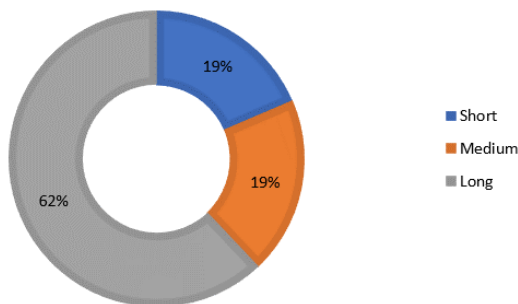
2.1

↑ an increase from last quarter (1.8)

TOP 5 SICKNESS ABSENCE REASONS BY FTE DAYS LOST



SICKNESS ABSENCE BREAKDOWN APRIL - JUNE 2021



Long term absence: 20 working days or more in the quarter
 Medium term absence: more than 5 days (less than 20)
 Short term absence: 5 days or less

TURNOVER

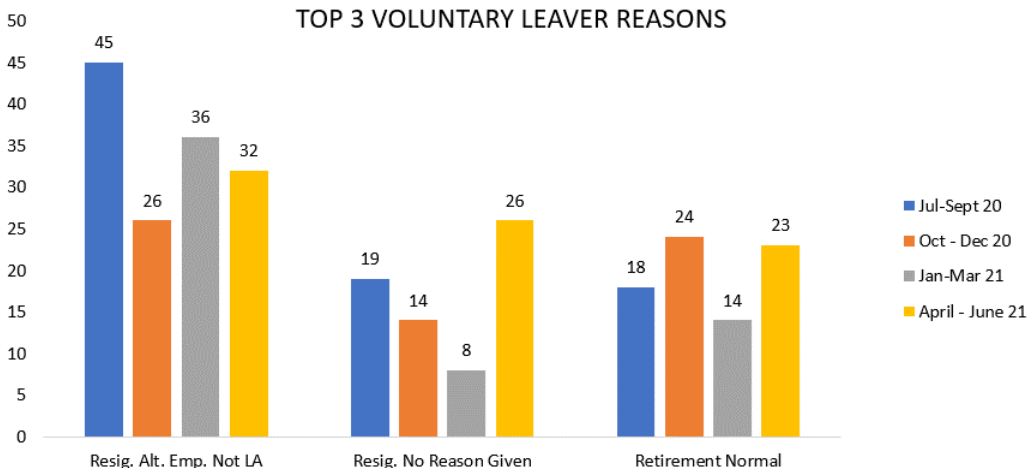
Leavers under 25 years old

Current quarter	15
Jan-March	7
Oct-Dec	8
Jul-Sept	18

Leavers with less than 1 years' service

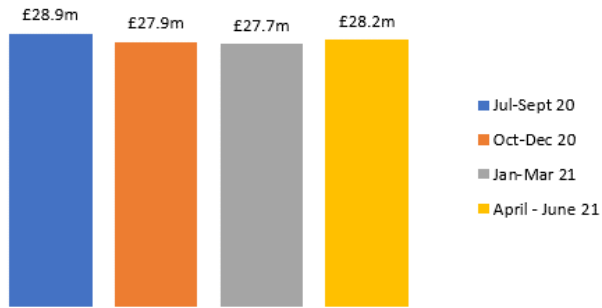
Current quarter	15
Jan-March	13
Oct-Dec	13
Jul-Sept	14

TOP 3 VOLUNTARY LEAVER REASONS

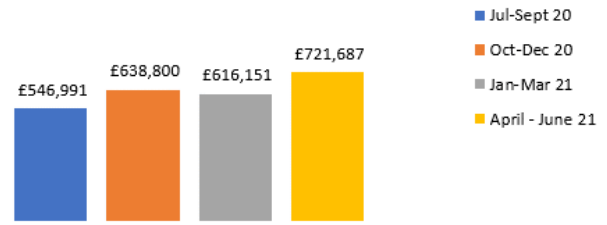


EMPLOYEE COSTS

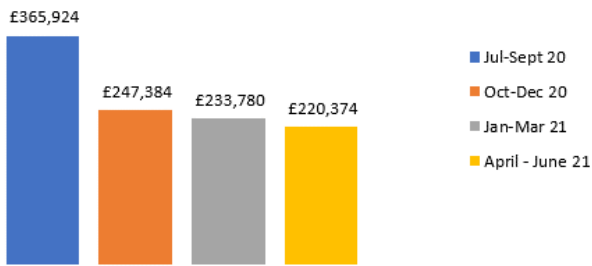
PERMANENT EMPLOYEE SALARY COSTS



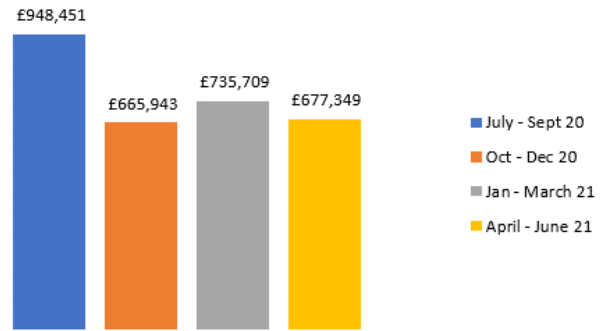
SICKNESS ABSENCE COSTS



CASUAL EMPLOYEE SALARY COSTS



AGENCY COSTS



ADVISORY CASES

Disciplinary

	New cases this quarter	Variance from previous quarter
Current Quarter	12	-6
Jan-March	18	7
Oct-Dec	11	1
Jul-Sept	10	-2

Absence & Health

	New cases this quarter	Variance from previous quarter
Current Quarter	140	11
Jan-March	129	-24
Oct-Dec	153	21
Jul-Sept	132	38

Grievance

	New cases this quarter	Variance from previous quarter
Current Quarter	3	-5
Jan-March	8	4
Oct-Dec	4	-4
Jul-Sept	8	6

Improving Work Performance

	New cases this quarter	Variance from previous quarter
Current Quarter	5	0
Jan-March	5	4
Oct-Dec	1	-3
Jul-Sept	4	2