

## Personnel Committee

**Wednesday, 15 September 2021 at 14:00**

**County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7QP**

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### AGENDA

1	Minutes of the last meeting held on 30 June 2021	3 - 6
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3	Declarations of Interests by Members and Officers:- (see note below) (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (b) Private Interests (pecuniary and non-pecuniary)	
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### **Notes**

- (1) Councillors are advised to contact their Research Officer for details of any Group Meetings which are planned for this meeting.
- (2) Members of the public wishing to inspect "Background Papers" referred to in the reports on the agenda or Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act should contact:-

Customer Services Centre 0300 500 80 80

- (3) Persons making a declaration of interest should have regard to the Code of Conduct and the Council's Procedure Rules. Those declaring must indicate the nature of their interest and the reasons for the declaration.

Councillors or Officers requiring clarification on whether to make a declaration of interest are invited to contact Sarah Ashton (Tel. 0115 977 3962) or a colleague in Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

- (4) Councillors are reminded that Committee and Sub-Committee papers, with the exception of those which contain Exempt or Confidential Information, may be recycled.
- (5) This agenda and its associated reports are available to view online via an online calendar - <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/dms/Meetings.aspx>



## **Minutes**

Meeting PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Date Wednesday 30 June 2021 (commencing at 10.30am)

### **Membership**

Persons absent are marked with an 'A'

### **COUNCILLORS**

Neil Clarke MBE (Chairman)  
Keith Walker (Vice-Chairman)

	Maureen Dobson	Stuart Wallace
A	Errol Henry JP	Gordon Wheeler
	John Longdon	Jonathan Wheeler
	Sheila Place	Yvonne Woodhead
	Helen-Ann Smith	

### **SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Cllr Jim Creamer for Councillor Errol Henry

### **OFFICERS COUNTY COUNCILLORS IN ATTENDANCE**

Pauline Allan and Bruce Laughton

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Sarah Ashton	Democratic Services Officer
Noel McMenamin	Democratic Services Officer
Marjorie Toward	Service Director – Customers, Governance and Employees
Gill Elder	Head of Human Resources
Jen Sheriston	Senior Media Officer
James Silverward	Executive Officer to the Senior Leadership Team

### **1. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP**

#### **RESOLVED 2021/14**

- 1) That the Committee membership and terms of reference for Personnel and Senior Staffing Sub Committee be noted.

## **2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2021, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The following apology for absence was received:

- Councillor Errol Henry (Other)

## **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

## **5. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

Chairman informed Members that he was interviewing 5 graduates on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021. Action: Corporate Communications to use this as a publicity opportunity to promote what NCC is doing for graduates.

Action: Cllr Dobson, a list of where the apprentices are across the County with reference to small business apprenticeships.

Action: Cllr Creamer, a list of what types of trades are applying for help with apprenticeships around the County.

## **RESOLVED 2021/15**

- 1) That the Committee supports the work that is already underway to improve employment opportunities particularly for those who have additional challenges in securing regular and meaningful employment.
- 2) That a review of the current apprenticeship strategy to ensure it aligns with the emerging priorities post covid in relation to key skill development be approved.
- 3) That the Committee agree to receive a further report in November which includes the refreshed Apprenticeship Strategy, and which has a focus on employability and job opportunities for those reaching the end of their 2-year apprenticeship.

**6. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL WORKFORCE AVAILABILITY, SICKNESS ABSENCE PERFORMANCE AND SUPPORT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

Members asked that a list of best practices referring to the National initiative 'Time to Talk' to be included in a future report to Committee

**RESOLVED 2021/16**

- 1) That the Committee agree to continue identifying actions outlined in this report and include them in the Employee Health and Well-being Action Plan, along with any further additions arising from the employee survey and the relevant workstream of the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Group.
- 2) That the Committee agree to receive a further report in September which provides information on quarter 1 2021/22 absence figures and workforce availability.
- 3) That the Committee agree to receive information regarding the newly added items to the action plan including the Midlands Engine sponsored pilot ProWork research project at September's Committee.

**7. WORKFORCE CHECK-IN SURVEY UPDATE**

**RESOLVED 2021/17**

The Committee consider the findings of the latest workforce check-in survey undertaken in April 2021 and that the actions as set out in paragraphs 17 and 18 of the report be approved.

**8. WORKFORCE RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

**RESOLVED 2021/18**

- 1) The Committee consider the progress on the implementation of the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy and the further actions identified. That the Committee agree to receive further updates on progress.
- 2) That the Committee approve the development of a revised People Strategy to support the implementation of the new Council Plan once approved.

## **9. WORK PROGRAMME**

Marjorie Toward informed Members that the Disability Confidence and Apprenticeship updates would be added to the work programme

### **RESOLVED 2021/19**

That the Committee agreed to the work programme being updated according to recommendations made during this meeting along with reports regarding Disability Confidence and Apprenticeships.

The meeting closed at 11.58am

**CHAIRMAN**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE  
AND EMPLOYEES****NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL WORKFORCE PROFILE  
INFORMATION 2021****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Personnel Committee with an updated annual summary of the diversity profile of the directly employed workforce of Nottinghamshire County Council and to seek approval to publish the information in line with the Council's public sector duty under the Equality Act 2010.

**Information and Advice****Background**

2. Since 2011, public sector employers with 150 or more employees, have a specific statutory duty to collect and publish annually relevant, proportionate, information about the profile of their direct workforce defined by their "protected characteristics", that is age, gender (including gender reassignment), race/ethnicity, disability, religion/belief and sexual orientation.
3. External comparison is made, where relevant data is available, in order to benchmark the diversity profile of the protected characteristics of the Council's workforce against that of:
  - The overall community of the population of the whole of Nottinghamshire using data drawn from the most recent (2011) national Census.
  - The Local Labour Market (LLM) of working age people (age 16-64) of Nottinghamshire as defined by the most recent Office of National Statistics (ONS), survey 2019.
4. If available, next year's Workforce Profile Information report will include updated information gathered as part of the 2021 Census but this is not yet accessible to be used in preparing this report.
5. The intention of the report is to provide the public with the information they need to hold public bodies to account for their performance on equality in employment and to enable employers to set themselves specific, measurable equality objectives. The equality objectives are reviewed every four years and a review of the current objectives will be undertaken as part of the work to develop a new People Strategy later this year.

6. The workforce profile information has previously informed and underpinned activities delivering the Council's People Strategy and various action plans which sit beneath it to ensure the Council has a diverse and inclusive workforce where all people are treated fairly and equitably with employment policies and practices which reflect our values and priorities as a Council. Where action is required, profile information can be used to provide a baseline and measure the impact of any actions taken. This year's report is an abridged version due to the unique situation around the Covid-19 pandemic and only includes information required to meet the Council's statutory obligations.
7. The unprecedented situation arising from the Covid-19 ongoing pandemic means it is vital that we understand the make-up of our workforce and ensure anyone with additional vulnerabilities is properly protected. As we move from response to recovery, the profile information will assist the cross-council officer Workforce Resilience and Recovery Group, to take steps to ensure that the Council has sufficient employees with the relevant skills to ensure continued delivery of high-quality services to local people as the Council builds back from covid.
8. The data will also be used to inform the review and development of actions to support the delivery of the Council's wider workforce planning priorities, including succession planning and talent management, to ensure that it the Council has a flexible and diverse workforce which provide the skills base to enable it to meet its future service priorities.

### **Basis of reporting**

9. The data in the **appended** report has historically been generated through the Council's Business Management System (BMS), based on the Full Time Equivalent (fte) occupancy of posts, rather than headcount.
10. The use of full-time equivalent data is a better measure of the relative impact of multiple employments which are consolidated, reflecting the complexity of working arrangements across the Council.
11. The latest annual workforce information for Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) reflects the position at June 2021 when the overall workforce of centrally employed permanent and temporary staff, many of whom are part time employees, stood at **5582.55** up from **5318.37 fte** the previous year, an overall increase of **264.18 fte**. This increase can be accounted for by the transfer of Children Centres back into the Council's employment from June 2020.
12. The nature of the authority's current relationship with schools means that the Council is unable to directly influence the recruitment, promotion and retention practices or associated action plans for improvement in non-maintained schools. As there is also no statutory obligation for a local authority to include data relating to employees of schools outside of their control, these employees are not included in this data set. Previous analysis has demonstrated that to include schools' data would introduce a significant variance in the percentage representation of employees by all protected characteristics when compared with the direct County Council workforce and it is therefore excluded. This approach to not include schools' information is adopted by other County Councils.
13. Data in respect of the successful candidate for each Council job vacancy is entered into the Council's Business Management System (BMS) at the point of recruitment. Whilst comparison



is a useful tool to enable trends to be identified and reflects the degree to which the County Council's workforce has changed over time, the previous 18 months are something of an anomaly with reduced recruitment and turnover due to factors relating to the Covid pandemic. Some of these issues continue to be reflected in the Council's ongoing ability to recruit appropriately qualified and skilled staff with a number of reported shortages across a range of services.

14. The full implementation of the e-recruitment portal enables the Council to report on the profile of applicants from 2017 onwards for the majority of its advertised vacancies which are now processed through this facility. This data is used to identify resourcing strategies and in workforce planning which will become increasingly valuable in the challenging recruitment context which many employers, including the Council, are now operating in.
15. Certain protected characteristics, including an employee's disability status, may change during their employment and can be updated direct by the employee on the Employee Self Service facility of the BMS system. Managers of those frontline employees without direct access to BMS are encouraged to liaise with individual employees with due sensitivity to update their personal information and ensure that it is completed on their behalf.
16. To continue to improve on levels of information sharing, previously referred to as disclosure, frequent reminders are issued to encourage individual employees to complete and update their personal information. These communications promote positive business reasons for collecting diversity data and provide reassurance that the information will be treated with utmost confidentiality.
17. Areas for ongoing improvement identified in this current report will form part of the detailed action plan which is being created to support the development of the Council's new People Strategy to enable delivery of the new Council Plan and currently, the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy.
18. The current workforce profile data is presented in detail in the attached **Appendix 1** and sets out the position in relation to:
  - a. Disclosure rates
  - b. The overall NCC workforce profile in relation to the protected characteristics of individual employees
  - c. The recruitment profile of applicants, shortlisted candidates and appointees by protected characteristics.
19. Underpinning this data is the ongoing impact on the Council's workforce numbers of the Covid pandemic, service review and redesign in response to organisational transformation and budget pressures, including headcount reduction, transfers in and out to other employers and natural turnover. The increase in this year's headcount can be explained by the TUPE transfer of Children Centre employees back into the Council and the need for additional capacity to meet the demands of the pandemic.
20. Further analysis will be required to determine whether this increase in numbers continues or the ongoing trend of reduction returns to being the norm. Turnover has reduced in the last 12 months from around 12% to 8% which is a significant change for this Council and one which

we will need to consider to identify if there has been a positive or negative impact on the overall diversity profile of the remaining workforce.

### **Commitment to Continuous Improvement**

21. The Council's emerging People Strategy will set out its strategic workforce planning priorities in response to the challenges it faces over the coming years and what workforce transformation is needed to deliver these priorities. The advent of the Covid emergency has brought into sharp focus the need to fully understand the workforce profile and the varying impacts of different groups of employees in terms of risk management and support.
22. The Council retains its strategic aspiration to be an Employer of Choice. This includes adopting good employment practices that are fair and equitable and acting as a role model to other employers who contribute to the economy of Nottinghamshire.
23. Key areas for action under this theme include:
  - Ensuring that the Council maximises and sustains its workforce capacity by creating a workforce drawn from across the wider labour market which is properly representative of all the communities in Nottinghamshire.
  - Evaluating and removing any identified barriers in the Council's recruitment and on-boarding strategy which might deter under-represented groups from joining the council's workforce and ensuring that associated processes are modern, accessible and inclusive.
  - Evaluating barriers to under-represented groups being in leadership positions, maximising potential and reflecting this in the identification of future leaders and senior managers.
  - Promoting diversity across the Council's workforce and ensuring it is reflective of the community served.
  - Reviewing reporting mechanisms to ensure the Council publishes and acts on information on its Gender Pay Gap in line with legal requirements from April 2018 onward and the most recently published data for January 2021.
  - Continuing to create an inclusive working environment by encouraging and supporting employees to respect and value others, treat others with fairness and honesty and to challenge poor behaviour.

### **Priority actions for improvement during 2021/22**

24. Working in conjunction with managers, employees, the self-managed employee support groups, trades unions, Corporate and departmental Equality Groups and partner organisations, priorities for action identified to date include:
  - Continuing to review the Council's key employment policies which includes ensuring they are fully compliant with all of the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and inclusive and accessible to all employees.
  - Assessing the level of diversity of background, experience and perspective across the leadership and management cohort to identify and eliminate barriers to under-represented groups being appointed to their first management post.

- Continuing to review our workforce profile to ensure that under-represented groups are encouraged to consider employment with the Council and are not disadvantaged in doing so. This will include considering how to develop the number of placements offered as part of the Leonard Cheshire Change 100 initiative through which the Council has previously taken on 4 disabled under-graduates and graduates on paid internships in services across the Council.
- Actively encouraging all managers to identify and make full and creative use of any reasonable adjustments, including redeployment, to recruit and support disabled people in work and retain them in employment wherever possible. This includes ongoing work to identify additional suitable positions and reflect this in the identification and development of leaders for the future.
- Addressing the under representation of women in the most senior posts in the Council by equipping them for more senior leadership roles through the next phase of the Council's Leadership Development Programme.
- Offering learning and development opportunities to support existing line managers to progress their careers as well as enabling aspiring managers to develop the skills to enable them to support employees experiencing stress and poor mental health. The ability to access expert advice and support through the Business Disability Forum from 1 September 2021 will be a significant enhancement to our current management guidance and support.
- Personnel Committee has previously recognised the council's improved status as being a Disability Confident organisation and is receiving information at this Committee on the work undertaken on our submission to achieve Disability Confident Leader accreditation.
- Continuing to develop appropriate managerial guidance and tools to support employees with a disability, to enable them to maximise their potential and be able to remain in work is a priority and work being led by the Corporate Director for Adult Social Care and Health under the workstream Employment and Health is providing opportunities for people previously excluded from paid employment through our developing supported internships. Although the initial start date of September 2020 has been deferred until January 2022 due to the current Covid situation.
- Continuing to work with staff support networks and trades union colleagues to encourage and support all employees, including employees from under-represented groups, in the existing workforce to maximise their potential, remain in the Council's employment and progress their careers.
- Increasing the percentage of younger employees in the Council's workforce by reviewing, expanding and refreshing the Council's approach to offering work based learning opportunities, including Apprenticeships, Graduate Traineeships, Kickstart and Work Experience as part of a refocused talent management strategy. A review of our existing strategy has been commissioned to ensure it is aligned with the Council's priorities of skills development and economic growth. As reported to

June's Committee we again had an exceptional response to our Graduate Trainee Programme and further updates on progress in this area will be reported to this Committee later this year.

- As part of the national Apprenticeship Levy introduced from 1 April 2017, the Council has revised and extended its Apprenticeship Programme and Apprentices are now directly employed, a significant proportion of whom will continue to be young people aged 16-24. We have also agreed to transfer a proportion of unspent levy to Nottinghamshire businesses to maximise our use of the available funding. This is another area which has proved challenging due to the global pandemic but work continues to be undertaken in this important area to develop future talent and create new employment opportunities across Nottinghamshire.
- Identifying how to better engage with and to provide a more robust baseline for the ongoing analysis of workforce profile data.
- The Council has a well-established network of employee support groups who provide regular updates to the Council's Corporate Equality Group (CEG) and will be involved through this forum in identifying and developing these actions.
- Maximise the skills and experience of older workers, support them to embrace change and new ways of working and retain their talent and skills in key areas, particularly where there are skills shortages.
- Further improving information sharing (disclosure rates) of protected characteristics by continuing to encourage existing employees to declare and update as necessary their personal data.

#### **Other options considered**

25. The County Council regularly reviews the way it presents this type of statistical information with the aim to make it as clear and as concise as possible. We have a legal duty to publish the attached information under the Public Sector Equality Duty so no other options were considered.

#### **Reason for Recommendation**

26. The County Council has a statutory duty to publish workforce information on an annual basis. It is important that elected members are aware of this information when determining the strategic direction of the County Council and other related policies.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

27. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of, crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Data Protection and Information Governance Implications**

28. The data in this report and the associated appendix cannot be attributed to individual employees and therefore protects their privacy. It is important to give our workforce confidence in how their information is stored and used to provide greater assurance with the intention of improving the numbers prepared to share this information. This also ensures the Council meets its legal obligations under data protection legislation.

### **Human Resources Implications**

29. The human resource and equality implications are implicit within the body of the report. The Corporate Equality Group will consider how to successfully implement the actions identified at its next meeting. Trades union colleagues will also be engaged at Central Joint Consultative and Negotiating Panel to encourage their members to share this information and to contribute to the further development of the identified actions.

### **Public Sector Equality Duty Implications**

30. The publication of this Workforce Information Report ensures that the County Council complies with its statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010. Actions undertaken by the Council to address any potential inequalities identified from the data as set out in the report would further support compliance with this duty.

### **Implications for Service Users**

31. This information will be made available to Service Users and the general public via the County Council's public website.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Members:

- 1) Approve the publication of the annual Workforce Information Report 2021 on the Council's public website in compliance with the Council's statutory public sector duty and consider the actions set out in the report.

**Marjorie Toward**  
**Service Director – Customers, Governance and Employees**  
**Chief Executive's department**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Gill Elder, Head of Human Resources on email: [gill.elder@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:gill.elder@nottsc.gov.uk) or 0115 9773837

#### **Constitutional Comments (KK 06/09/21)**

32. The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Personnel Committee.

#### **Financial Comments (RWK 06/09/21)**

33. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report.

#### **HR Comments (BC 06/09/21)**

34. These are set out within the body of the report.

#### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

#### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All



**Nottinghamshire  
County Council**

## **Workforce Profile Report 2021**

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## **Introduction**

The introduction comprises of three sections, details around the Equality Act and what relevance it has, the main purpose of this report and a short summary about NCC disclosure rates across various protected characteristic strands.

### **The Equality Act 2010**

This report is underpinned by our duty under the Equality Act. All public sector employers, including local authorities, have a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to publish the equality profile data it holds for its directly employee workforce on a regular annual basis. The latest workforce information for Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) is based on data at June 2021.

This data underpins the Council's commitment to ensuring that its employment practices and services are free from discrimination and prejudice and fulfil the core statutory duty placed on all public sector employers, including local authorities, to:

- monitor the profile of their workforce by the protected characteristics
- publish the relevant data on a regular basis (annually)
- identify any negative trends or issues and take any necessary action to address these.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide an annual summary of the profile of the workforce for Nottinghamshire County Council by its protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010. This year's report is an abridged version due to the unique situation around the Covid 19 pandemic and only includes information required to meet the Council's statutory obligations.

### **Disclosure**

Currently, NCC employees are able to update their own personal data using the Employee Self Service (ESS) facility on the Business Management System (BMS). Disclosure rates for gender and age can be extrapolated from payroll data and are therefore 100%.

The total number of employees within Nottinghamshire County Council is currently 7366.

## **Data collection and definitions: as at June 2021**

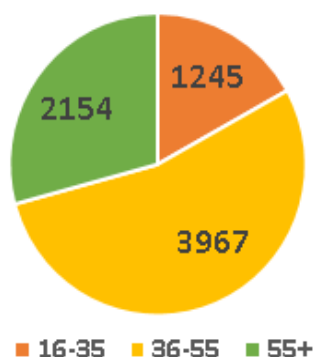
<b>Topic or Acronym</b>	<b>Definitions</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Who's included	Permanent NCC employees	Direct employees of NCC only
	Temporary NCC Employees	
Who's not included	Relief workers	
	Casual workers	
	Agency Workers	
Protected characteristics analysed	Gender	Data self-validated by employees on an on-going basis
	Ethnic group	
	Age	
	Disabled status	
	Sexual orientation	
	Religion/belief	
Heads/headcount	Number of individual employees	
BaME (we aim to avoid the use of this acronym and will be used only where absolutely necessary for data reasons)	All ethnicity categories other than British/English/Scottish/Welsh/N.Irish	
Disabled	Individuals who consider themselves to be disabled under the Equality Act 2010	
LGB	Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual	
NCC	Nottinghamshire County Council	
ASCH	Adult Social Care and Health	
C&F	Children & Families	
<b>Period/Year</b>	<b>Source of workforce profile data</b>	
April 2012 onwards	Business Management System	

## Profile of NCC Employees by Protected Characteristic

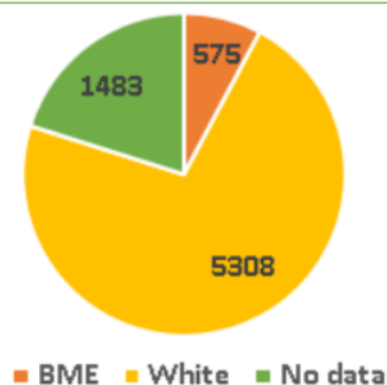
NCC Gender Profile 2021



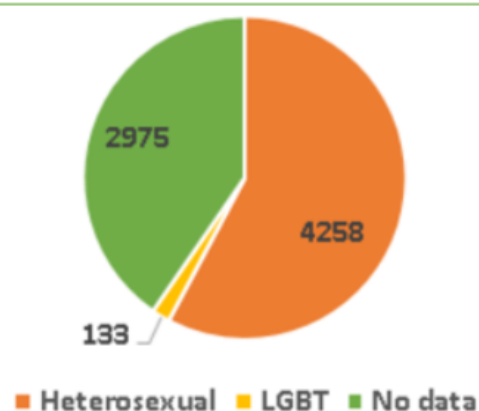
NCC Age Profile 2021



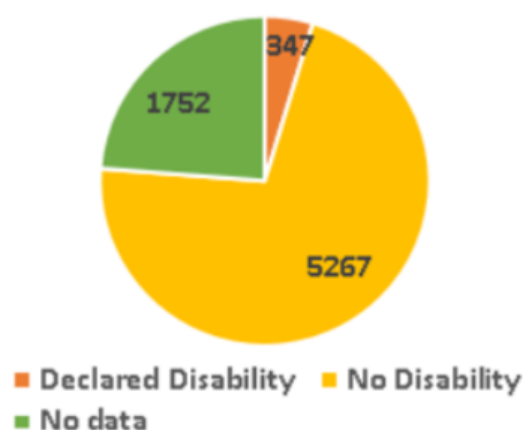
NCC Ethnic Origin Profile 2021



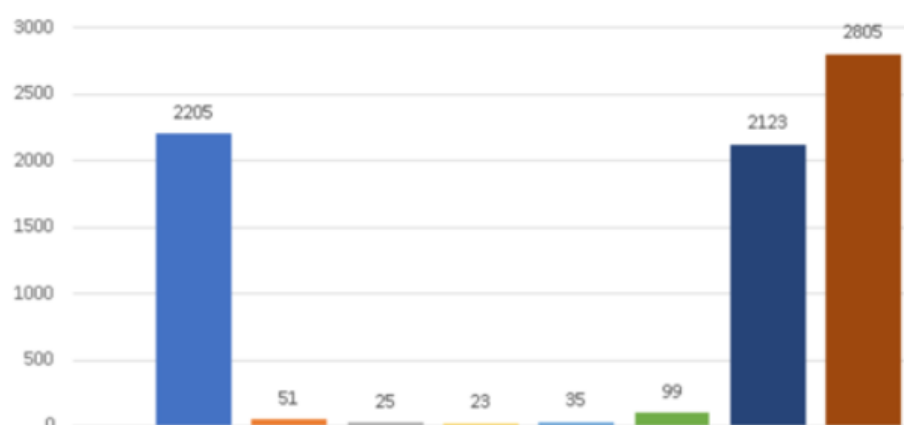
NCC Sexual Orientation Profile 2021



NCC Disability Profile 2021



NCC Religion Profile 2021



Christian	2205
Muslim	51
Hindu	25
Sikh	23
Buddhist	35
Other religion/belief	99
No religion/belief	2123
Not declared	2805

# NCC Recruitment Data Collection

From our recruitment database we have provided figures for the application, shortlisting and offer recruitment stages. We have examined these figures across the protected characteristic groups i.e. Gender; Ethnic Origin, Sexuality; Religion or Belief and Disability.

Due to Covid 19 pandemic, compared to last year there was a large reduction in number of applications overall.

## NCC Recruitment Data August 2021

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Applied</b>	<b>Shortlisted</b>	<b>Offered</b>		<b>All applications</b>	<b>Shortlisted</b>	<b>Offer made</b>
Female	848	704	528		80.15%	80.26%	83.02%
Male	212	195	108		19.85%	19.74%	16.98%
<b>Ethnic origin</b>	<b>Applied</b>	<b>Shortlisted</b>	<b>Offered</b>		<b>All applications</b>	<b>Shortlisted</b>	<b>Offer made</b>
Non BAME	850	727	539		82.11%	83.18%	85.42%
BAME	205	164	92		17.89%	16.82%	14.58%
<b>Sexuality</b>	<b>Applied</b>	<b>Shortlisted</b>	<b>Offered</b>		<b>All applications</b>	<b>Shortlisted</b>	<b>Offer made</b>
Bisexual	26	15	9		1.99%	1.62%	1.47%
Gay Man	15	16	12		1.71%	1.89%	1.96%
Lesbian	18	15	5		1.51%	1.35%	0.82%
Straight/Heterosexual	979	821	587		94.80%	95.14%	95.76%
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	<b>Applied</b>	<b>Shortlisted</b>	<b>Offered</b>		<b>All applications</b>	<b>Shortlisted</b>	<b>Offer made</b>
Christian	439	363	237		39.78%	38.89%	37.03%
No religion / belief	531	464	344		51.26%	52.37%	53.75%
Other religion or belief	99	76	59		8.96%	8.75%	9.22%
<b>Disability</b>	<b>Applied</b>	<b>Shortlisted</b>	<b>Offered</b>		<b>All applications</b>	<b>Shortlisted</b>	<b>Offer made</b>
Not Disabled	973	785	530		91.30%	91.07%	91.70%
Disabled	89	81	48		8.70%	8.93%	8.30%

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR- CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND  
EMPLOYEES****UPDATE ON NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S CORPORATE  
EQUALITIES ACTION PLAN****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek the approval of Personnel Committee to the attached Equalities Action Plan (Appendix 1), to be published on the Council's staff intranet, and agree to progress the actions identified within the plan.

**Information**

2. The Covid emergency has created many challenges for the Council's workforce and has highlighted some particular issues in the equalities agenda alongside the heightened awareness of issues relating to race equality, both of which have significantly raised the profile of this work over the last 12 months.
3. The increased risk to people with additional vulnerabilities due to ethnicity or long term health conditions has led to closer and more frequent engagement with the relevant self managed groups to discuss and address any issues arising from the ongoing situation.
4. Members will recall approving the Council's Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy at Personnel Committee in November 2020. This document sets out how we will ensure we have the right people, with the right skills and values, in place at the right time to enable us to meet our commitments to the people of Nottinghamshire as set out in the Council Plan whilst continuing to respond to the Covid pandemic. An extensive public and partner engagement exercise is currently underway to identify the priorities for local people as we rebuild post Covid and reflect these in a new Council Plan. A new People Strategy will be developed to underpin this and ensure we have the people we need to deliver on this.
5. The current Strategy identifies that successful delivery will rely on a series of underpinning action plans to ensure we seek to attract talent from the widest resource pools, that all employees are motivated and supported to give their best and to remove any barriers to employment and progression by ensuring our employment approaches are inclusive and accessible for all.

6. We also have obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires public bodies to:
  - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between employees.
  - Foster good relations between employees from different groups.
  - In addition, we are required to review our equality objectives every four years as part of the duty. This work will be undertaken as the new People Strategy is developed and will involve Corporate and departmental Equalities groups, the recognised trades unions and the staff support networks.
7. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnerships. The Council wants to be seen as an “employer of choice” where the contribution of all is equally recognised and valued and to ensure we attract high calibre candidates to all advertised roles.
8. Members have considered a number of different reports over the last 18 months on a range of activities which fall within the promoting equality agenda including the gender pay gap, Disability Confident, the Race at Work Charter, work experience activity and leadership development. We are continuing to review existing accreditations/memberships and explore other national schemes and awards to further promote and evidence our corporate approach.
9. In addition, each department continues to develop its own departmental equalities action plan which demonstrates the more specific actions which can be taken particularly in relation to services and commissioning. These plans are discussed in leadership teams, the departmental equalities groups, the Corporate Equality Group and with the recognised trade unions on an ongoing basis.
10. Further work will be undertaken to ensure there is improved consistency and quality in the completion of equality impact assessments to demonstrate the Council’s transparency in terms of the decisions it takes and in understanding the varying impacts of these decisions on the different population and workforce groups. The Equality Officer is currently undertaking a review into how these are completed, and involving colleagues from across the Council in a working party, to consider what changes may be required to make the assessments more relevant.

### **Other Options Considered**

11. The development of an equalities action plan is essential to demonstrating our commitment to promoting the Council as an inclusive place to work and where citizens feel they are treated in a fair and consistent way when accessing services. We aim to go beyond the level of statutory compliance and explore all opportunities to further progress our equalities agenda. The option to do nothing would expose the council to legal challenge and reputational risk under the various elements of discrimination legislation. However, it would also ignore the business imperative to maximise our draw to candidates and so attract the best talent to work with the Council.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

12. In seeking to be a community leader and employer of choice, there needs to be clearly identified actions with deliverable outcomes in order to measure performance and progress in the equalities area.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

13. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Data Protection and Information Governance**

14. There are no data protection implications arising from this report as all information is in relation to trends rather than named individuals' data.

## **Financial Implications**

15. There are no direct financial implications arising from the development of an equalities action plan to underpin the objectives set out in the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy and future People Strategy. Clearly the ability to identify future resourcing requirements and effective workforce planning are key components of an organisation which places value for money and efficiency at the heart of all that we do and to aim to be an organisation that is representative of the communities that we serve.

## **Human Resources Implications**

16. The Human Resources implications are implicit in the body of this report. The future success of the Council relies on our ability to plan effectively our future resourcing requirements and to recruit and retain employees with the necessary skills and experience to deliver on the commitments set out in the current and future Council Plans.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty Implications**

17. In seeking to maintain our position as an Employer of Choice, the ability to engage our current and future workforce is essential to our ongoing success. The themes identified in the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy apply to every part of the workforce and therefore there is no group of employees disadvantaged because of this report. Individual equality impact assessments will be prepared for particular activities where required

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that members:

- 1) Approve the attached Equalities Action Plan (Appendix 1).
- 2) Agree to receive an update on progress and to review the status of various actions in March 2022.

**Marjorie Toward**  
**Service Director – Customers, Governance and Employees**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Gill Elder, Head of Human Resources, on 0115 9773867 or [gill.elder@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:gill.elder@nottsc.gov.uk)

### **Constitutional Comments (KK 06/09/21)**

18. The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Personnel Committee.

### **Financial Comments (RWK 06/09/21)**

19. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report.

### **HR Comments (BC 06/09/21)**

20. The Human Resources implications are contained within the body of the report. The action plan will underpin the objectives set out in the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy and future People Strategy.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All



The purpose of this action plan is to identify and prioritise activity to deliver on the equality elements of the recently approved Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy which replaced the People Strategy to account for the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. It aims to stimulate engagement and discussion throughout the workforce using the recognised trades unions, the self-managed support networks and with teams and individuals through publication in Team Talk.

The Council aims to go beyond legal compliance under the Public Sector Equality Duty and to act as a community leader by promoting inclusion throughout our own workforce and to encourage this approach to partner and stakeholder organisations.

Priority Area	Objectives/Outcomes (specific) with update	Responsible Officer (s)	Timescale (time bound)
People	Update workforce profile information.	Tarig Singh/David Holmes	An update report is due for consideration at September 2021 Personnel Committee
	Promote importance of collecting employee data to ensure we understand the demographics of our workforce. This work is linked to the development of the Employee passport (please see below).	Equalities Officer (EO)	Immediate
	Equality impact assessments – a review has been undertaken following an audit report to improve understanding of when an EQIA is required and what they need to include to inform decision making. The form is being redrafted and guidance is being updated	EO/Cross department working party	Immediate
	Review and refresh the published equality objectives as required every 4 years under the Public Sector Equality Duty. Undertake this work to underpin the new People Strategy	Head of HR/EO/ CEG HR/Recruitment	March 2022 June 2021 onwards
	Employee passports – develop idea of digital personnel files where personal information including equalities data travels with the individual employee throughout their employment with NCC with the facility to be personally updated to create ‘mobile’ personal files.	Recruitment/EO	Ongoing
	Improve statistical information around recruitment to understand the points where candidates from particular groups drop out of our process and identify appropriate		

<b>People (continued)</b>	<p>actions from this analysis. Review BMS functions that will help to capture the relevant candidate pipeline data. Link this work to relevant WRES Metrics 2 and 8.</p> <p>Graduate Trainee Programme – promote NCC graduate development programme through self-managed groups as well as local universities to ensure under-represented groups are aware and have access to these opportunities. Review activity to date after 2021 selection process. Highly effective programme for recruiting fresh talent and increasing the number of younger candidates. NCC have taken on additional trainees this year</p> <p>Apprenticeships – include equality data for apprentices as part of the review of the apprenticeship strategy</p> <p>Leonard Cheshire Change 100 Interns – 4 interns started in 2021 despite limited opportunities due to Covid situation. Continue to assess the value of the programme in promoting NCC as a positive, inclusive place to work</p> <p>Development of action plan to promote our engagement with the Armed Forces Covenant to open up job opportunities to armed forces leavers and to continue to support reservists, former Forces personnel and their families. Work to date included in the Council’s submission leading to the award of Gold standard</p>	<p>Adrian McKiernan</p> <p>Lyndsey Woolmore</p> <p>Lyndsey Woolmore</p> <p>Neil Bettison/Steve Brooks/Ellen Cottee</p>	<p>Report to Personnel Committee Nov 2021</p> <p>November 2021</p> <p>Late autumn 2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<b>Leadership</b>	<p>ICS Leadership Programme – NCC has been offered several places on ICS leadership programme for Black and Minority Ethnic staff. Ongoing programme from September 2019</p> <p>International Women’s Day – identify key inputs to mark this and other key dates in the equalities calendar</p> <p>Support aspirant and existing managers from under-represented groups to apply for leadership roles through the promotion of the refreshed Leadership Development Programme. Explore how opportunities for shadowing, secondments and wider work</p>	<p>Lyndsey Woolmore</p> <p>Gill Elder/Lyndsey Woolmore/EO</p> <p>Corporate Equality Group</p>	<p>September 2021</p> <p>March 2021 onwards</p> <p>September 2021</p>

<b>Leadership (continued)</b>	<p>experience and self-directed learning can be developed and promoted to all including under-represented groups</p> <p>Disability Confident – NCC has moved from being Disability Confident Committed to Disability Confident. Elected members have agreed to further submitting validation assessment to become Disability Confident Leader. LW working on submission - Summer 21. Various work around NCC is helping to validate that work e.g. Leonard Cheshire internship programme.</p> <p>Continue to develop programme of Manager as Coach training and in-house coaching programme to support and enable employees across the workforce to be the best they can be and to further develop solution focussed approaches</p>	<p>Gill Elder</p> <p>Coaching Network</p>	<p>Update report to September 2021 Committee</p> <p>Ongoing promotion</p>
<b>Culture (continued)</b>	<p>Dying to Work - refresh guidance and support for people facing terminal illness to encourage the promotion of choice and to support employees and their families at the most difficult of times. Provide evidence-based information to reinforce our commitment on an annual basis</p> <p>Windrush – promote details of the Home Office Compensation scheme on the public website, the staff intranet, through partner organisations e.g. Inspire, trade unions, Corporate Equality Group and self-managed Black Workers Network. <b>A further article on Windrush was published in June 2021 to mark the national day.</b></p> <p>Membership of Stonewall membership has been reviewed in light of negative national publicity, concerns re value for money offered and the withdrawal of certain high level participants e.g. ACAS and the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Continue to explore alternatives to support LGBT + employees including the development of an internal model aligned more closely with the Council's objectives</p> <p>Gender Pay Gap – continue to develop our action plan to close the gap recognising that there are certain limitations in times of controlled recruitment</p>	<p>Gill Elder</p> <p>Gill Elder</p> <p>EO/Gill Elder</p> <p>Gill Elder</p>	<p>Actioned and to return to future CJCNP</p> <p>Actioned</p> <p>August 2021</p> <p>Ongoing - report to Personnel Committee on progress made</p>

	<p>Explore where proposed legislative changes are in relation to further work on addressing known pay gaps</p> <p>Continue to develop refreshed employment procedures which are intrinsically equitable and fair and appropriate for attracting and retaining quality employees to a modern accessible and inclusive public service organisation e.g. <b>Hybrid Working Model</b>.</p> <p>Development of guidance on the Menopause – current example of response to a specific request to develop guidance</p> <p>Promote a range of gender specific health and wellbeing initiatives as part of the review undertaken by Workforce Resilience and Recovery Group</p> <p>Promotion of training and awareness raising around those with caring responsibilities, Dementia Friends, Workplace Buddies, Mental Health First Aiders and ensuring our various support initiatives are inclusive, accessible and fit for purpose.</p>	<p>Gill Elder</p> <p>Joint work with Trades Unions &amp; staff networks</p> <p>Joint work with Trade Unions</p> <p>Various staff networks, HR, Public Health</p> <p>HR/CEG/Employee networks</p>	<p>in January 2021, next due January 2022 Consider expanding gap reporting to other protected characteristics once known if there is to be further legislation</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing and possibly a requirement of new legislation currently being considered</p> <p>Actioned subject to 6 monthly review</p> <p>Equalities Officer undertaking a wide ranging review of all equalities training - Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<b>Environment</b>	<p>Timewise – nationally recognised organisation who we have engaged with to maximise our flexible working offer with the intention of becoming a Timewise accredited employer. The work is not only around the physical environment but includes flexibility in terms of how, when and where work is delivered and how our future jobs are designed. Feedback from employee workshops demonstrate this is one of the most highly valued benefits NCC offers so we will continue to develop our overarching approach in this area</p>	<p>Joint work managers, trade unions and employees</p>	<p>Accredited December 2020 but work ongoing to broaden the offer and to build on identified actions Hybrid Working strategy approved July 2021</p>

	<p>Explore opportunities with our workplace coaches to develop special internships for young people with Education, Health and Care Plans to support them to be “work ready” and to offer genuine opportunities into the world of work</p> <p>Maximise the benefits of external funding streams e.g. Access to Work, ad hoc grants etc. to support and enable people with long term health conditions and disabilities to access and remain in work beyond an employer’s statutory responsibilities</p>	<p>Gill Elder/Louise Benson/Naomi Russell</p> <p>Joint work with services, networks and HR</p>	<p>Commitment for 3 special interns from January 2022 – delayed due to Covid pandemic</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
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This Equalities action plan in relation to employees is an iterative document, subject to consultation and expansion as we engage with internal workforce stakeholders including managers, employees, the recognised trades unions, the employee networks and partner organisations.

This draft action plan will be further developed and should be read in conjunction with the various departmental Equalities Action Plans, the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy and Action Plan and the specific plans to address the particular equalities strands.



**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR – CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND  
EMPLOYEES****DISABILITY CONFIDENT LEADER ACCREDITATION****Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide Elected Members with updated information on the Council's work towards gaining Disability Confident Leader accreditation and to seek their support and agreement to the content provided in the attached appendix Disability Confident Leader Validation template.

**Information**

2. Members received a report to Personnel Committee in May 2019 advising of the Council's accreditation as a Disability Confident Employer, the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) employer standard relating to the employment of people with disabilities. It was agreed that we would continue to work towards the highest level of accreditation, Disability Confident Leader. This was due to be submitted within the two year period following accreditation to Disability Confident, however this was extended by the DWP due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
3. It is considered important to demonstrate active commitment to becoming a recognised Disability Confident Leader to provide a focus for further development of the existing range of activities, procedures, provisions and guidance available to support the Council's managers to recruit, develop and retain people with disabilities. This level of accreditation also requires the Council to demonstrate leadership to external communities, partners and businesses and the attached submission seeks to reflect this commitment.
4. Members have previously provided their support for the work towards accreditation which is an important part of our submission as it demonstrates that the political leadership of the Council is fully supportive of the actions being taken.
5. In drafting the validation submission, consultation has taken part with the Disabled Employee Support Network, the recognised trade unions and their comments have been incorporated into the document. In addition, we have shared the information with Leonard Cheshire to consider the content and to act as an external "critical friend". Members will recall that the Council takes part in the annual Change 100 programme sponsored by Leonard Cheshire to provide four paid internships for graduates with disabilities and which has led to some of those interns gaining permanent employment with the Council when they have graduated.
6. To further support our work towards accreditation, we have joined the Business Disability Forum (BDF), a not-for-profit registered charity. Membership provides the Council with pragmatic support, expertise, advice and training and networking opportunities. The BDF

promotes best practice and work with organisations to set and influence policy so that it benefits both organisations and disabled people. Members include many of the UK's largest businesses and public sector employers.

#### 7. Our membership benefits include:

- Access to the Forum's Advice Service via email and telephone: answering strategic and day-to-day questions.
- A Disability Business Partner to help make full use of our Business Disability Forum membership.
- Department for Work and Pensions 'Disability Confident' Level 3 (DCL3) review and validation: validation document plus best practice advice; one-hour consultative phone call; recommendations to help inform and plan. We have shared our submission with our Business Partner for further validation.
- Online access to the Disability Smart Benchmark self-assessment tool, designed to help build our strategy around getting it right on disability as it affects our organisation.
- Access to the Global Business Disability Framework, a global tool to enable disability inclusion around the world.
- Introductory pack of customer communication guides, people manager guides and briefings (circa 28 publications), plus discounted licencing for use of all content resources on our intranet. We are creating a Disability Hub on our intranet to enable employees and managers to access this extensive information.
- Policy review service, focusing on disability-smart best practice – up to five policies reviewed annually. This will further assist with our ongoing work on making Equality Impact assessments more effective.
- Wide-ranging programme of training and events – some free as part of membership, including networking events, the Disability Smart Awards ceremony and Technology Taskforce events; and others discounted, including professional development courses and seminars.
- Mental health e-guidance module 1 for our intranet, plus discounted access to modules 2 & 3.
- Advice on our annual workforce surveys, including question and language review.
- Unlimited access to the Knowledge Hub offering resources that include information sheets, toolkits and case studies to support you to deliver disability-smart business.
- Monthly communications such as a Member newsletter, legal updates and Technology Taskforce newsletter.



- Networking: one-to-one connections, events, and via social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).
- Use of the Business Disability Forum logo on our email signature, job adverts, public website and intranet.
- Further opportunities to share our experiences by hosting (with free places given in exchange) and speaking at BDF events.
- Branding and sponsorship opportunities across BDF websites, communication channels, publications and social media.
- Signposting to other specialist services, including site audits, web development, consumer research and mystery shopping.

Membership and access to the resources highlighted above will significantly enhance our existing provision.

8. Members have continued to question the support we provide for employees with mental health issues. To further extend our offer in relation to this, we have also recently engaged with a local organisation Bipolar Lift to provide additional support to colleagues with a bipolar diagnosis to enable them to continue to work and manage their condition effectively. Engagement with Bipolar Lift will also raise awareness for managers and colleagues about this condition.

### **Other Options Considered**

9. The Disability Confident standard is a nationally recognised accreditation which allows employers to demonstrate their commitment to becoming fully inclusive and which goes beyond the basic statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010. As such, no other options were considered. The Council wants to demonstrate to our current and future workforce our achievement of the Disability Confident Leader standard and ensure we continue to undertake meaningful actions to remove any barriers to employment with the Council.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

10. The Council seeks to support and enable its workforce and the active pursuit of Disability Confident Leader accreditation demonstrates real commitment to our existing workforce in attracting and retaining talented individuals and highlights the Council's community leadership role as being an exemplar employer in relation to the employment of people with disabilities.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Data Protection and Information Governance**

12. There are no data protection or GDPR issues arising from this report as all the information contained is generic and cannot be attributed to individual employees.

## **Financial Implications**

13. There are no direct financial implications arising from the content of this report as there is no charge made for Disability Confident Leader accreditation and any costs arising from completing the identified actions will be met from existing service budgets.

## **Human Resources Implications**

14. The Council recognises that its most valuable asset is its employees and seeks to demonstrate its commitment to attracting and retaining people from all communities. We want to provide opportunities to support and enable people with disabilities to access employment with the Council and show that we are committed to genuine inclusivity through a range of identified actions contained in the attached validation template.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty implications**

15. The attainment of Disability Confident Leader accreditation will demonstrate our ongoing commitment to meeting and wherever possible exceeding the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 1) Agree to renew their support for the Council's application to become a Disability Confident Leader.
- 2) Acknowledge the content of the attached validation template submitted to the Department of Work and Pensions to be considered as part of the accreditation process.
- 3) Agree to receive a further report to a later Committee providing the outcome of our submission and outlining any further actions required in support of our ongoing commitment to providing a fully inclusive workforce.

**Marjorie Toward**  
**Service Director – Customers, Governance and Employees**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Gill Elder, Head of Human Resources, on [gill.elder@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:gill.elder@nottsc.gov.uk) or 0115 9773867

#### **Constitutional Comments (KK 25/08/21)**

16. The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Personnel Committee.

#### **Financial Comments (SES 24.8.21)**

17. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

#### **HR Comments (JP 31/08/21)**

18. The actions set out within the report and validation template demonstrate the Authority's ongoing commitment in supporting people with disabilities.

#### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

#### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All





## Disability Confident Leader Validation template

## Appendix

The following template can be used by your independent validators to challenge your self-assessment and confirm that you are delivering against all of the core actions as a Disability Confident Employer, are employing disabled people and taking action to record and report on disability, mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.

You should complete the evidence column which will be used by your validator to challenge your self-assessment.

The amount of evidence required will vary depending on the size and nature of the business. The guidance for each criteria is included in the [Disability Confident employer \(level 2\) self-assessment pack, which you can download from GOV.UK.](#)

<b>Business/Organisation name</b>	<b>Nottinghamshire County Council</b>	
<b>Disability Confident Reference number (DCS00xxxx)</b>	<b>DCS005692</b>	
<b>Validator's name (organisation, group, forum or Disability Confident leader)</b>		
<b>Date of validation</b>		
<b>Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business - The employer must have agreed to all the following actions.</b>		
<b>Criteria</b> <b>As a Disability Confident employer, my business is:</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Validator comments or further action required</b>
1. Actively attracting and recruiting disabled people to help fill your opportunities (including jobs, apprenticeships, internships, work experience, etc.	The Council's commitment to enabling everyone to achieve their employment potential is outlined in the <a href="#">Employment and Health Strategy</a>  The Council is committed to employing and retaining employees who have a disability, as	

**Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business** - The employer must have agreed to all the following actions.

	<p>stated in the <a href="#">Guidelines for Managers on Recruiting Disabled People</a>.</p> <p>The Council's <a href="#">Recruitment Statement</a> states that any applicant who has a disability should be shortlisted for interview where they meet all the essential shortlisting criteria or they meet the essential shortlisting criteria taking into account any reasonable adjustments which can be made.</p> <p>The Council's job application form states the Council's commitment to developing positive practices to promote equality in employment, and a guarantee of an interview to disabled candidates who meet the essential shortlisting requirements.</p> <p>The Council participates in the Leonard Cheshire Change 100 Internship Programme, which brings together employers and disabled graduates to offer paid work placements.</p> <p>The Council attends a number of jobs fairs and careers outreach events throughout the year for various audiences, including attending the Armed Forces Covenant Job Shop</p> <p>The Council has produced '<a href="#">Guidance on advertising to attract under-represented groups</a>'</p>	
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**Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business** - The employer must have agreed to all the following actions.

	which provides guidance on placing job adverts in the disability press and on disability websites	
2. Providing a fully inclusive and accessible recruitment process.	<p>To ensure that people involved in the recruitment process at the Council are Disability Confident and know how to support disabled applicants the Council provides specific guidance for managers on <a href="#">Employing Disabled People</a>, created in consultation with the Council's Disabled Employees Support Network.</p> <p>Managers are also required to undertake 'Recruitment and Selection' e-learning, which includes information on equality and disability. All members of staff are required to complete "Treating People Fairly" e-learning.</p> <p>Vacancies are advertised with a detailed job description and person specification which clearly set out what the job holder is required to achieve.</p> <p>The online recruitment system has been tested by members of the Council's Disabled Employees Support Network and different formats are available. Applications are submitted online, but alternative methods of submitting application forms are available</p>	

**Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business** - The employer must have agreed to all the following actions.

<p>3. Offering an interview to disabled people who meet the minimum criteria for the job.</p>	<p>The Council's <a href="#">Recruitment Statement</a> states that any applicant who has a disability should be shortlisted for interview where they meet all the essential shortlisting criteria or they meet the essential shortlisting criteria taking into account any reasonable adjustments which can be made.</p> <p>The Council's job application form states the Council's commitment to developing positive practices to promote equality in employment, and a guarantee of an interview to disabled candidates who meet the essential shortlisting requirements. The application form provides an opportunity for applicants to declare their disability alongside the information on the interview guarantee.</p> <p>The Council identifies the core elements of a job and makes these known in the job advert, job description and person specification that is published with each job advert.</p>	
<p>4. Being flexible when assessing people so disabled job applicants have the best opportunity to demonstrate that they can do the job.</p>	<p>Managers have been provided with guidance on making reasonable adjustments <a href="#">Guidelines for Managers on Recruiting Disabled People</a>. and can also seek advice from the HR Service.</p> <p>Applicants are asked if any reasonable adjustments are needed to allow them to be</p>	



**Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business** - The employer must have agreed to all the following actions.

	<p>considered for the job and to attend an interview.</p> <p>A range of assessment tools are available to managers and advice given on any potential bias which can be implied from the use of any one of these</p>	
<p>5. Must proactively offer and making reasonable adjustments as required.</p>	<p>The Council actively encourages all managers to identify and make full use of reasonable adjustments when the duty arises.</p> <p>Guidance on reasonable adjustments and what this might include is available to all managers:  <a href="#">Guidelines for Managers on Recruiting Disabled People</a></p> <p>The Council also promotes flexible working and disability leave, which can support disabled people to enter the Council's workforce and remain in employment whilst managing their disability.</p> <p>Where financial assistance is provided through the Access to Work scheme, the Council commits to cover a proportion of any associated costs of recruiting, inducting and retaining a disabled person when required.</p>	



**Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business** - The employer must have agreed to all the following actions.

<p>6. Encouraging our suppliers and partner firms to be Disability Confident.</p>	<p>In accordance with Equality Act 2010, and Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council's procurement strategy sets out our priority to encourage our suppliers to support our commitment to equality, fairness and transparency; to be responsive to the needs of our communities; to meet the diverse needs of all users to ensure no one group is disadvantaged and to commit to developing a diverse and inclusive workforce. All providers with whom we contract for services are required to have sound equality policies and procedures in place which ban discrimination/bullying, provide diversity training for their staff which is inclusive of all the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 and revise their policies regularly.</p>	
<p>7. Ensuring employees have appropriate disability equality awareness training.</p>	<p>The Council ensures all employees have sufficient disability equality awareness through a range of learning and development opportunities that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treating People Fairly – mandatory training for all staff underpinning how we provide our services and work together. Covers the Law and personal attributes and behaviours</li> <li>• Autism Awareness</li> </ul>	

**Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business** - The employer must have agreed to all the following actions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicating with Deaf Customers</li> <li>• Deafblind Awareness</li> <li>• Equality Impact Assessments</li> <li>• Learning Disability Awareness</li> <li>• Accessible Information (covers legislation, The Councils responsibilities, how to create accessible information and supporting people with communication difficulties)</li> <li>• Unconscious Bias</li> <li>• Active bystander</li> <li>• Bereavement</li> <li>• Mental Health First Aider course</li> <li>• Personal Resilience</li> <li>• Parkinson's awareness</li> <li>• Dementia Friends – working towards making Nottinghamshire more Dementia Friendly covering how dementia effects a person and what you can do to make a difference</li> <li>• Attendance Management and Wellbeing – includes employee well-being policies, the role of Occupational Health Unit, disabilities, impairments and protected characteristics</li> </ul>	
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**Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business** - The employer must have agreed to all the following actions.

	<p>In addition to the above courses, all employees have access to a catalogue of personal development learning topics that include sections on equality and diversity, resilience, values, well-being, self-awareness and emotional intelligence</p> <p>Further specialist learning and development opportunities covering a range of disabilities are available for staff within our adult and children social care teams</p>	
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## Disability Confident Leader Validation template (Annex A)

### Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business

The employer must have agreed to at least one of the following activities.

Activity	Evidence	Validator comments
1. Providing work experience.	<p>We have a comprehensive work experience programme starting from Year 10 onwards that includes specific modules for Looked After Children and Care Leavers.</p> <p>We also offer work experience placements to adults looking at a career change or returning to work.</p> <p>There is also a wide range of opportunities for placements from local universities to specific teams within the Council that offer work experience relevant to the study. Most noticeably for social work, occupational therapists and post graduate Public Health courses</p> <p>Applicants for all work experience programmes are asked about any reasonable adjustments or additional support needs they have.</p> <p>Following the Covid 19 pandemic, we are developing a range virtual work experience</p>	



## Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business

The employer must have agreed to at least one of the following activities.

Activity	Evidence	Validator comments
	package that will be accessible through a dedicated eLearning portal	
2. Providing work trials.	A small number of work trials in place of interviews have been offered to applicants with Autism and Asperger's for our apprenticeship programme	
3. Providing paid employment (permanent or fixed term).	<p>6.38% of the Council's workforce have declared that they consider themselves to have a disability as of April 2020, an increase from 5.77% in 2019</p> <p>Two interns have retained employment with the Council as a result of their participation on the Change 100 programme</p>	
4. Proving apprenticeships.	<p>The Council currently has 166 directly engaged apprentices and 55 engaged through our schools. We promote apprenticeship opportunities in a range of places to promote our offer to all parts of our existing and future workforce.</p> <p>The Apprenticeship salary budget managed by the Workforce and Organisational Development</p>	



## Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business

The employer must have agreed to at least one of the following activities.

Activity	Evidence	Validator comments
	<p>team is ringfenced for apprentices from groups vulnerable to NEET status</p> <p>A number of apprentices have disclosed a range of learning disabilities, predominantly dyslexia, and one apprentice was redeployed from the Councils supported employment programme when changes were made to the team</p>	
5. Providing a traineeship.	<p>The Council currently contract our Traineeships for 16 – 24year olds to Inspire Learning. Inspire is Community Benefit Society developed as part of an innovative strategy led by the Council to manage some of its libraries and cultural services across Nottinghamshire.</p>	
6. Providing paid internships or support internships (or both).	<p>The Council partners with Leonard Cheshire to deliver the Change 100 programme of internships for disabled students and graduates.</p> <p>A representative of the Council supports the national recruitment to the scheme by participating in assessment centres.</p> <p>The Council has participated in the Change 100 programme since 2017 and have offered a variety of opportunities for interns across</p>	



## Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business

The employer must have agreed to at least one of the following activities.

Activity	Evidence	Validator comments
	<p>departments each summer. The Council offers four placements a year and whilst 2020 placements were impacted by Covid 19, still successfully supported intern placements working remotely.</p> <p>The managers, mentors and wider teams that are hosting an intern all receive disability and employment training sessions as well as ongoing support from Leonard Cheshire during the programme which is in addition to our own comprehensive learning programme.</p> <p>Two interns have retained employment with the Council as a result of their participation on the Change 100 programme</p>	
7. Advertising vacancies and other opportunities through organisations and media aimed particularly at disabled people.	<p>All vacancies are advertised on the Council's website.</p> <p>Recruiting managers have the option to post the vacancy to a number of other online recruitment and social media sites including LinkedIn.</p> <p>The Council has produced '<a href="#">Guidance on advertising to attract under-represented groups</a>' which provides guidance on placing job adverts in the disability press and on disability websites</p>	





## Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business

The employer must have agreed to at least one of the following activities.

Activity	Evidence	Validator comments
	<p>such as Disability Now magazine, Able Magazine and Disabilityjobboard.com.</p> <p>Apprenticeship opportunities are advertised on the National Apprenticeship Service website and circulated to local employability and Careers IAG services</p>	



## Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business

The employer must have agreed to at least one of the following activities.

Activity	Evidence	Validator comments
8. Engaging with Jobcentre Plus, Work and Health Programme providers (If you're in Scotland contact <a href="#">Fair Start Scotland</a> ) and local disabled people's user led organisations (DPULOs) to access support when required.	<p>All of our vacancies are available to the Jobcentre Plus for people attending the Work and Health programme to apply.</p> <p>The Council publishes a list of organisations across Nottinghamshire who represent people with protected characteristics. These organisations can be contacted for support, advice or consultation</p>	
9. Providing an environment that is inclusive and accessible for staff, clients and customer.	<p>All Council buildings are DDA compliant</p> <p>The Council is committed to ensuring that the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees is followed in a positive and proactive manner</p> <p>The Council has developed and implemented an Accessible Communication Policy that ensures the Accessible Information Standard is complied with. The scope of the Standards extends to individuals (and parents/carers where appropriate) who have information and/or communication support needs which are related to or caused by a disability, impairment or sensory loss.</p>	



## Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business

The employer must have agreed to at least one of the following activities.

Activity	Evidence	Validator comments
	The Council uses a range of customer focussed digital platforms as a source of information, access services and to establish two-way engagement	
10. Offering other innovative and effective approaches to encourage disabled people to apply for opportunities and supporting them when they do.	<p><b>I-work team</b> – offers support to Nottinghamshire residents who have a learning disability or Asperger's to find a job, set up a work trial and continues support once a position has been secured.</p> <p><b>Employment Training Hub</b> – offers employment and training opportunities to Nottinghamshire residents who have a learning disability, autism or Asperger's. The programme aims to get people ready for paid employment through a range of activities in a work environment</p> <p><b>Engage2Employ</b> – supports Nottinghamshire young people aged 16 – 25 not in Education, training or employment who have a learning disability or Asperger's to find work placements that will lead to sustained employment</p>	



## Theme 2 – Keeping and developing your people

The employer must have agreed to all the following actions.

Criteria As a Disability Confident employer, my business is:	Evidence	Validator comments or further action required
<p>1. Promoting a culture of being Disability Confident.</p>	<p>The Council strives to ensure it goes beyond the requirement of the Equalities Act and prides itself on being accredited as a Disability Confident Organisation. the Council is also a Stonewall Top 100 employer and has schemes to support LGBT and Black employees through the Proud Ally and Anti-Racism Ally programmes.</p> <p>The Council has three well established staff groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled Employees Support Network</li> <li>• Black Workers Network</li> <li>• Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Staff Network</li> </ul> <p>which provide support and professional development opportunities for employees and are important consultation forums for reviewing policies and services.</p>	

	<p>The Council has created <a href="#">Guidelines for Managers on Employing Disabled People</a>, created in consultation with Corporate Disabled Employees Support Network, which details the benefits of employing disabled people, and the Council's commitment to employing disabled people. "Treating People Fairly" is one of the Council's core values.</p> <p>The Council encourages employees to disclose information on any disabilities they may have. Employees are encouraged to update their equality information held on the HR System BMS, with regular reminders issued. 83% of employees have confirmed their disability status as of April 2020.</p> <p>The proportion of employees who classify themselves as having a disability has increased from 5.14% in April 2017 to 6.38% in April 2020.</p> <p>The Council, working with the Trade Unions, has reviewed how employees share information around their disability and any required adjustments with a view to streamlining this process, currently badged as a 'disability passport.'</p> <p>The Council's <a href="#">Harassment Complaints Procedure</a> details the Council's policy and processes for making a complaint, informally</p>	
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	<p>and formally, on any grounds including disability discrimination.</p> <p>The Council regularly consults with employees about their perceptions of issues, barriers and concerns. The Corporate Equality Group meets regularly, and the Council's staff groups are represented by their respective chairs, including the Disabled Employees Support Network chair. Feedback from the Network is shared at the Corporate Equality Group meetings.</p> <p>The Council has reviewed its key employment policies and ensured that they are fully compliant with all the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and inclusive to all employees.</p> <p>The Council's Disabled Employees Support Network organises an event in November to celebrate Disability History Month, in collaboration with public sector partners.</p>	
2. Supporting employees to manage their disabilities or health conditions.	<p>The Council supports its employees to manage their disabilities and health conditions.</p> <p>The Council provides support for employees who become disabled or experience health problems via the Council's Occupational Health Service, which provides early intervention, promotes active case</p>	

	<p>management to assist with rehabilitation and supports return to work following long term absence.</p> <p><a href="#">Disability Leave</a> is also available to support employees who have a disability, who need to take time off work for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment. This is not recorded as sickness and does not count for sickness absence trigger purposes.</p> <p>The Council also supports employees through offering flexible working patterns and home working and is currently working with Timewise to develop the Council's flexible working offer and become a Timewise accredited employer.</p> <p>Guidance has been produced on <a href="#">supporting employees with terminal illness, and the</a> Council also signed up to the TUC Dying to Work Charter in 2016, to signal its commitment to supporting employees who are diagnosed with a terminal illness.</p> <p>The Council's <a href="#">Guidelines for Managers on Recruiting Disabled People</a> provides guidance on making reasonable adjustments to support employees. Where financial assistance is provided through the Access to Work scheme to cover a proportion of any associated costs of retaining a disabled person in the workplace, the Council is committed to supporting costs</p>	
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	<p>associated with the Access to Work scheme as required</p> <p>The Council has an extensive range of support and information to all employees on managing their Health and Wellbeing with a dedicated page on the Intranet under <a href="#">Employee Wellbeing</a></p> <p>This page includes information on a range of topics and links to the support networks for employees that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health First Aiders</li> <li>• Workplace Chaplaincy Service</li> <li>• Workplace Buddy Scheme</li> <li>• Workplace Health Champions</li> <li>• Links to other support organisations external to the Council</li> <li>• The Council's counselling service</li> </ul> <p>There is also information on discounted gym membership, cycle to work scheme, flu jabs, eye vouchers and the health cash plan that is available to all employees.</p> <p>These pages are updated regularly and have specific sections on in response to Covid 19</p> <p>The Council also provides support for employees assessed as having dyslexia and</p>	
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	<p>has produced associated management guidance.</p> <p>The recognised Trade Unions are engaged in joint working with Council managers and HR colleagues to further develop employee health and wellbeing initiatives.</p> <p>The Council is a platinum award winning wellbeing winner</p>	
<p>3. Ensuring there are no barriers to the development and progression of disabled staff.</p>	<p>The Council is committed to ensuring there are no barriers to the development and progression of staff with disabilities.</p> <p>The highest representation of disabled employees at the Council is in mid-level professional (8.21%) and line management posts. 4.30% of the Council's top paid 5% of staff stated that they have a disability in 2020.</p> <p>The Employee Performance and Development Review (EDPR) and Support and Supervision processes are arenas for all employees to discuss training and development on a regular basis.</p> <p>Appropriate support is offered to employees when attending learning and development courses. The booking process asks employees to identify any additional needs they may have, which are reviewed by the HR, Workforce and Organisational Development Business Support</p>	

	<p>Team and appropriate arrangements made. All venues used for direct delivery are accessible. An evaluation form is sent to every training course attendee which allows employees to feedback on any accessibility issues.</p> <p>The E-learning system that the Council uses is compatible with most screen reader software.</p> <p>There is a taxi service in lieu of authorised car user allowances for eligible employees, which is promoted on relevant job descriptions.</p> <p>The council has developed an in-house coaching network which is promoted across the workforce as a mechanism to allow employees to work with a trained coach on areas of development outside of traditional line management arrangements</p>	
4. Ensuring managers are aware of how they can support staff who are sick or absent from work.	<p>Managers are providing with a range of support and guidance on supporting staff who are sick or absent from work.</p> <p>Special consideration is given to employees that require leave that is directly associated with their disability</p> <p>There is a clear process for managing absence detailed in the Attendance Management Procedure, published on the intranet. The employee induction checklist requires</p>	

	<p>managers to discuss the absence/sickness procedures with staff in their first week.</p> <p>The Attendance Management Procedure requires managers to maintain contact with staff who are absent from work through regular telephone or written correspondence and a pre-arranged visit after four weeks' absence.</p> <p>Guidance on managing stress in the workplace is available for managers and risk assessments can also be undertaken at an individual level by the manager and employee.</p> <p>The Wellness Action Plan is available to all employees to identify how to identify stressors and what you can do to keep well at work</p> <p>The Stress Return to Work Questionnaire is also available for managers to complete with the employee when planning an employee's return to work following stress-related absence.</p> <p>Managers are also supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Occupational Health Service</li> <li>• The HR Service</li> <li>• Guidance and support on making reasonable adjustments for employees with a disability.</li> </ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance for managers on supporting employees diagnosed with a terminal illness</li> </ul> <p>The Redeployment Policy states the Council's commitment to retaining the services of employees who as a result of disability, illness or injury may be "at risk" of losing their existing job. This commitment extends to making an adjustment to their existing job to enable them to continue working wherever possible. The Policy sets out the Council's processes for the redeployment of employees.</p>	
5. Valuing and listening to feedback from disabled staff.	<p>There are a range of opportunities for all employees to provide feedback.</p> <p>Employee Health Check surveys are regularly undertaken in Children's and Adult's Services.</p> <p>Six Employee Workshops were held for staff across the County in 2018 with 550 employees attending. The two-hour workshops were hosted by the Chief Executive Anthony May to hear people's views about what it's like to work for the Council. Feedback was also sought via email for those staff who did not attend a session.</p> <p>The Chief Executive also has a regular blog which encourages employees' feedback and</p>	



	<p>throughout the Covid 19 pandemic there have been a number of Chief Exec's Q&amp;A sessions with employees</p> <p>The Workplace Buddy scheme was developed following a staff survey and focus groups to ascertain what activities employees would find most helpful in preventing them suffering from stress or becoming depressed and help them remain at/return to work.</p> <p>The Change 100 interns provide feedback on their placements to allow the Council to improve the programme in future.</p> <p>The Council has a self-managed Disabled Employees Support Network for Council employees who identify as having a disability. The chair of the Network attends the Corporate Equality Group, and feedback from the Network is shared at the Corporate Equality Group meetings.</p> <p>The Employee Performance and Development Review (EDPR) and Support and Supervision processes are also arenas for all employees to speak about their needs and ambitions.</p>	
6. Reviewing this Disability Confident employer self-assessment regularly.	<p>This is the first detailed review since October 2018. Quarterly reviews on progress will be built into the programme to develop our approach</p>	



	Our application has received the support of elected members as part of Personnel Committee who have supported this submission and have requested regular updates	
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## Theme 2 – Keeping and developing your people.

The employer must have agreed to take at least one of the following activities.

Activity	Evidence	Validator comments
1. Providing mentoring, coaching, buddying and or other support networks for staff.	<p>NCC provides a wide range of support for staff including:</p> <p>An accredited <a href="#">Mental Health First Aiders</a> scheme offering a first port of call, listening ear and signposting service for employees</p> <p>A <a href="#">Workplace Chaplaincy service</a> – offering independent confidential support to employees.</p> <p>A <a href="#">Volunteer Workplace Buddy Scheme</a> – providing support for employees returning to work after a significant period of long term absence. The buddies help to support reintegration into the workplace and help sustain the employee's ongoing attendance at work.</p> <p><a href="#">Workplace Health Champions</a> who are network of employees that provide information about healthy lifestyles to all employees</p> <p>Managers can refer staff to a formal Counselling Service provided by an external provider, via the HRWOD team. and</p>	

	<p>Employees can self-refer to telephone Counselling scheme</p> <p>A <a href="#">coaching network</a> which provides coaching for employees from a network of training and qualified coaches. Employees can self-refer or be referred by their manager. Workplace coaching can assist with personal growth and building confidence and resilience.</p> <p>A <a href="#">Disabled Employees Support Network</a> provides support for Council employees who identify as having a disability. The Network aims to support, help and offer guidance, challenge discrimination in the workplace on the grounds of disability, promote awareness of issues which affect people with disabilities and advise on making Council services and policies more inclusive of people with disabilities. All council employees who identify as having a disability are entitled to up to 3 hours per month away from their workplace to attend the meetings and/or get involved in network activities. The Network reports into the Corporate Equality Group.</p>	
2. Including disability awareness equality training in our induction process.	<p>The Council ensures all employees have sufficient disability equality awareness through a range of learning and development opportunities that includes:</p>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treating People Fairly – mandatory training for all staff underpinning how we provide our services and work together. Covers the Law and personal attributes and behaviours</li> <li>• Autism Awareness</li> <li>• Communicating with Deaf Customers</li> <li>• Deafblind Awareness</li> <li>• Equality Impact Assessments</li> <li>• Learning Disability Awareness</li> <li>• Accessible Information (covers legislation, The Councils responsibilities, how to create accessible information and supporting people with communication difficulties)</li> <li>• Unconscious Bias</li> <li>• Active bystander</li> <li>• Bereavement</li> <li>• Mental Health First Aider course</li> <li>• Personal Resilience</li> <li>• Parkinson's awareness</li> <li>• Dementia Friends – working towards making Nottinghamshire more Dementia Friendly covering how dementia effects a</li> </ul>	
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	<p>person and what you can do to make a difference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance Management and Wellbeing – includes employee wellbeing policies, the role of Occupational Health Unit, disabilities, impairments and protected characteristics</li> </ul> <p>In addition to the above courses, all employees have access to a catalogue of personal development learning topics that include sections on equality and diversity, resilience, values, wellbeing, self-awareness and emotional intelligence</p> <p>Further specialist learning and development opportunities covering a range of disabilities are available for staff within our adult and children social care teams</p> <p>The employee induction checklist requires managers to inform new starters about the self-managed staff groups (including the Disabled Employees Support Network) and the Council's Equality and Diversity policy.</p>	
3. Guiding staff to information and advice on mental health conditions.	<p>The Council provides information and advice to employees on mental health conditions via:</p> <p>The <a href="#">Career Development Portal</a> launched in October 18 which contains information and advice on a range of subjects including stress,</p>	

	<p>resilience and wellbeing. Specific information and advice are also available for managers on mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>‘Personal Resilience’ and ‘Emotional Intelligence’ e-learning is available to all staff.</p> <p>‘Mental Wellbeing – Managers Guide’, ‘Developing Mental Toughness’ and ‘Emotional Intelligence’ e-learning is available to managers.</p> <p>A network of Workplace Health Champions (who have attending a Royal Institute of Public Health Level 2 in Understanding Health Improvement course) cascade information about healthy lifestyles to colleagues.</p> <p>The wellbeing intranet pages were relaunched in January 2020 and provide advice and information on Covid 19, mental health wellbeing, support available at work, and contact details for relevant health and wellbeing organisations.</p> <p>The Council recognises a number of Health and Wellbeing campaigns that all involve some events designed to raise aware and offer support to employees. Including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time to Talk Day (February)</li> </ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress Awareness Month (April)</li> <li>• World Health Day (7<sup>th</sup> April)</li> <li>• Deaf Awareness week (May)</li> <li>• Mental Health Awareness week (May)</li> <li>• Men's Health Week (June)</li> <li>• World Suicide Prevention Day (10<sup>th</sup> September)</li> <li>• MacMillan Coffee Morning (September)</li> <li>• World Mental Health Day (10<sup>th</sup> October)</li> <li>• World Aids Day (1<sup>st</sup> December)</li> </ul> <p>Recent initiative around Time to Talk day had virtual drop in sessions hosted by our Mental Health First Aiders and Chaplaincy service, with talks on promoting positive mental health and sitting yoga sessions</p>	
4. Providing occupational health services if required.	NCC has an Occupational Health service for employees.	
5. Identifying and sharing good practice.	The Council is a member of a number of public sector networks seeking to maximise best practice and to utilise knowledge and experience of Public Health and integrated Care System colleagues to promote positive health and wellbeing messages	



6. Providing human resource managers with specific Disability Confident training	HR staff receive ongoing awareness training and information on how to promote employment with the council to disabled people	
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**As a validator will also need to confirm actions below:**

<b>Reporting on disability, mental health and wellbeing</b> You are taking action to record and report on disability, mental health and wellbeing in the workplace, by referring to the Voluntary Reporting Framework.		
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Validator comments</b>
<b>That as a business you are employing disabled people?</b>	<p>The latest workforce information for Nottinghamshire County Council is based on data at April 2020.</p> <p>The Council encourages employees to disclose information on any disabilities they may have. Employees are encouraged to update their equality information held on the HR System BMS, with regular reminders issued. 83% of employees have confirmed their disability status as of April 2020.</p> <p>The proportion of employees overall, including, those who classify themselves as having a disability has again increased to 6.38% in April 2020</p>	



<b>That you are using the Voluntary Reporting Framework and are collecting information</b>		
<b>Are reporting or intend to do so within the next 12 months in line with the Voluntary Reporting Framework.</b>		





**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR - CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND  
EMPLOYEES****HEALTH AND SAFETY SIX MONTHLY UPDATE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Members on ongoing health and safety support and development.
2. To seek approval for the 2021-2022 Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan (Appendix A)

**Information****Health and Safety management system development**

3. The first ISO45001 continuing assessment audit was undertaken by the British Standards Institute (BSI) over two days 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 2021.
4. This audit examined progress since the successful award of ISO45001 in January 2021 and looked at how the management system is being developed to reflect the requirements of the new ISO45001 standard.
5. No major nonconformities were identified and work to close out pre-existing minor system improvements noted. These are mainly administrative and document management requirements and are being addressed within a new ISO45001 intranet-based toolkit due to be launched late 2021.
6. The next planned BSI audit date is 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022.
7. Key developments since January are:
  - A revised ISO45001 compliant Corporate Health and Safety Policy statement
  - Simplified and reduced number of safety forms now designated F45 from former SR-safety record forms
  - A more user-friendly risk assessment format (F45-1) with a staff communication record incorporated
  - A manager's health and safety arrangements self-audit tool (F45-2) which will inform the annual governance arrangements audit of teams and services - substantial, reasonable, or limited assurance levels of compliance.

8. Having successfully achieved ISO45001 during the pandemic, work is now taking place in conjunction with Nottingham University in respect of ISO45003, a new standard that works alongside and complements ISO45001 focusing on Psychosocial risk.
9. This is a guidance standard not requiring formal accreditation or audit and as such can be implemented at minimal cost providing a benchmark against best practice for work in the areas of behavioural safety, psychological health, safety and wellbeing. For example staff counselling, mental health first aid, stress management and wellbeing initiatives and will therefore compliment and supplement work already underway in these areas.
10. This is particularly timely emerging from the pandemic with foreseeable issue of staff anxiety, social isolation and personal impacts arising from Covid 19 and broadens the opportunities for joint working with HR colleagues and the occupational health service.

### **Health and Safety action plan**

11. The attached action plan, Appendix A was reviewed as draft by BSI at the July audit and found to reflect the key safety priorities.
12. It is intended that the development of future health and safety plans are overseen by Health and Safety Compliance Board with progress tracking reported at the board along with a more formal management review split between April and September meetings. This will meet the requirement of planning and management review under the ISO45001 standard.

### **Corporate building reoccupation**

13. The health and safety team are supporting a broader corporate building reoccupation working group as we transition from the statutory Covid related requirements and control measures into a new hybrid working model.
14. In order to provide intelligence led decisions we have implemented a programme of reoccupation checks that can be upscaled as staffing numbers increase. A three-point check focuses on the effective implementation of emergency procedures, infection prevention and control measures including the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) reoccupation requirements, particularly ventilation and staff confidence on their return to office working. The latter including behavioural aspects and psychosocial elements.
15. Emergency procedures prove to be challenging with pre pandemic arrangements now having to be re-thought. Low building occupancy has led to a significantly reduced number of volunteer fire wardens and first aiders present in county office estate and presents additional evacuation planning issues for those requiring assistance (Personal Evacuation Plans).
16. Mitigation work with corporate property, facilities management and with Arc fire safety specialist is underway to address the issue. A review of fire warden zones has taken place and options being considered include new building and fire safety inductions for all staff, enhanced frequency of evacuation practices, an app logging emergency cover availability to zones, and enhanced use of the proximity card system.

17. A key measure to limit Covid transmission is a high degree of natural ventilation. During the pandemic ventilation and air conditioning systems were reviewed by Corporate Property and those systems with recirculation capability only, were isolated. The three-point check verifies that buildings are being ventilated, mainly by opening windows. Window stickers have been distributed advising staff of the ventilation requirement and not to close. There will be inevitable tensions between ventilation and the maintenance of a comfortable working temperature as we move towards autumn.

### **Water safety and drowning prevention**

18. 2021 has seen an increase of inland open water drowning events. We have reviewed the risk assessments for the open water the Council and its partners have responsibility for. We have supported drowning prevention education events held at the National Water Sports Centre and adjacent (across the river) Colwick Park, both impacted on in hot weather by unauthorised open water swimming and large crowd numbers.
19. We are supporting and working with the Nottinghamshire Water Safety Partnership to develop a Nottinghamshire drowning prevention policy.
20. In 2019 we held a successful water safety education event at County Hall, something we are looking at planning for again with partners for next year.

### **Work with schools**

21. 2021 has seen a strong buyback of health and safety support through our 'Services 4 Schools' offer. Feedback from schools on the advice and support provided to them during the pandemic and on a continuing basis has been very positive.
22. Most of the advice and support continues to focus on Covid control measures and work has been undertaken on both whole school and individual staff risk assessments reflecting the changes made by the recent relaxation of Government guidance. This removes existing requirements around face coverings and social distancing in the classroom environment.
23. The new risk assessments highlight key points for self-administration by school leaders and places emphasis on ventilation, hygiene and cleaning regime reflecting the HSEs broader non-school guidance.

### **Ongoing Support to the Personal Protective Equipment cell**

24. Work continues to support PPE distribution and safe use. Face fit testing requests have reduced but it will be important to retain capability to step this up if required again and look at a programme of updates and face fit retests for high risk areas.
25. Support continues with the Community Asymptomatic (lateral flow) testing programme and routine, now monthly, compliance visits to both static and mobile testing sites. We have additionally supported the City Council with risk assessments of refuges for vulnerable people and hotel-based asylum seeker sites.

## **Other Options Considered**

26. No other options have been considered.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

27. Elected members require visibility of health and safety performance, compliance and risk control measures in place to make informed decisions affecting the Council's health and safety risks.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

28. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Data Protection and Information Governance**

29. There are no implications arising directly from this report as no individual or personal data or information is used.

## **Financial Implications**

30. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

## **Human Resources Implications**

31. These are outlined in the body of the report. The health and safety support provided in line with government guidance aims to ensure the continued health, safety and wellbeing of staff.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty Implications**

32. The proposals in this report meet the Council's existing commitment to meeting, and where possible exceeding, the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 1) Recognise the work of the Health and Safety team in achieving the ISO 45001 standard and support the work underway to work towards the ISO 45003 standard
- 2) Approve the action plan attached as Appendix A.
- 3) Receive a further Health and Safety update report in six months.

**Marjorie Toward**  
**Service Director - Customers, Governance and Employees**  
**Chief Executive's Department**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

John Nilan, Team Manager – Health & Safety [john.nilan@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:john.nilan@nottsc.gov.uk) or 0115 8040380

### **Constitutional Comments (KK 25/08/21)**

33. The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Personnel Committee.

### **Financial Comments (SES 24/08/21)**

34. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

### **HR Comments (JP 31/08/21)**

35. The Council has an ongoing commitment to managing Health and Safety. Planning and performance review are key requirements of the Health and Safety Management System.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All





## SR58: Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan 2021-2022

Department:	<b>Corporate</b>	Service/School:		Team:	<b>Health and Safety</b>
Approved by:		Date:	<b>April 2021</b>	Review dates:	<b>Review Sept 2021</b>

**Comment** - Covid 19 continues to impact on the delivery of the plan and priorities will flex according to need

<b>Subject: Effective occupational health and safety management systems</b>					
<b>Ref:</b>	<b>Action and Expected Result</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Comments, Progress &amp; Result Update</b>
<b>1.1</b>	<p><b>Health and Safety management system</b></p> <p>Embed ISO45001.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove reference to BS 18001</li> <li>Renew H&amp;S policy statement</li> <li>Review safety manual A section</li> <li>Develop management ISO45001 toolkit</li> <li>Revise SR form &amp; document control</li> <li>New management arrangements SR60 to be developed</li> <li>Review how changing context and scope are considered</li> <li>Define management review process</li> </ul> <p>Adult Social Care (ASCH) to be brought into ISO45001 scope</p>	<p>Health and Safety</p> <p>(Reporting to Health and Safety Compliance Board)</p>	<p>April 2021</p> <p>Progress to be commenced by 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Policy statement completed Feb 21</p> <p>Work commenced on management tool kit</p> <p>Former SR forms now designated F45</p> <p>Risk assessment reviewed and implemented F45-1</p> <p>First continuing assessment visit undertaken 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021</p> <p>Management review via Compliance Board April &amp; September</p> <p>Initial work in ASCH with quality and improvements</p>

Subject: Effective occupational health and safety management systems					
Ref:	Action and Expected Result	Lead	Timescale	Priority	Comments, Progress & Result Update
1.2	<b>Safety Management Culture</b>  Increase focus on Behavioural Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site inspections 3 point check to examine behavioural safety</li> <li>• Pop up H&amp;S contact points to discuss staff concerns and barriers to safe working-include on check visits</li> <li>• Ensure safety messaging is focused and continuous, via intranet</li> </ul>	Health and Safety	Implement from July 2021	Medium	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish KPIs for management safety tours:</li> <li>• Directors 1 per year</li> <li>• Group managers 2 per year</li> <li>• Team managers 4 per year</li> </ul>	Directors and Group/Team Managers	Jan 2022		On hold due to Covid 19, commence as occupation increases
1.3	<b>Review supporting policies and guidance</b>  in line with changes to current legislation and best practice including temporary Covid 19 related guidance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H&amp;S policy A1</li> <li>• A section 3-16</li> </ul>	Health and Safety	Ongoing	Medium	Policy revised Feb 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review inputs and information feeds for legislative and guidance change</li> </ul>	Health & safety	Oct 2021		Establish update sharing process with partners ARC & VIA



Subject: Health & Safety Compliance and Risk Management					
Ref:	Action and Expected Result	Lead	Timescale	Priority	Comments, Progress & Result Update
2.1	<b>Audit and Quality Assurance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revise audit template to account for ISO 45001</li> <li>Revise Schools audit template to account for ISO 45001</li> <li>Inspection programme inc behavioural safety aspects</li> <li>Implement remote auditing</li> </ul>	Health and Safety	July 2021	Medium	Completed
			Oct 2021		Now in reoccupation 3 point check  Remote audit training undertaken BSI Audit standard procured
2.2	<b>Personal Safety - Lone working device</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PeopleSafe App roll out to NCC mobile phones</li> <li>Supporting training package and procedure</li> <li>Second phase to review training and managing potential aggression techniques</li> </ul>	Laurance Jones	From April 2021	High	Link into H&S toolkit
		Health and Safety Jannine Harris	Dec 2021	Medium	
2.3	<b>Office Reoccupation</b>		June 2021	High	

	Implement proactive monitoring of safe working arrangements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency procedures</li> <li>• Infection prevention and control- Ventilation, handwashing and building cleaning, (HSE requirement)</li> <li>• Staff confidence in safe working arrangements</li> </ul>	Health and Safety			
2.4	<b>Home &amp; Hybrid- Working Arrangements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor health and safety impacts of prolonged home and hybrid working including</li> <li>• Suitability of equipment provided</li> <li>• Incidents in the home environment</li> <li>• Review how ISO45003 (Managing Psychosocial risks) complements ISO45001</li> </ul>	Health and Safety ICT/ HR	Ongoing  Dec 2021		Work commenced with Nottingham University, (wellbeing, mental health first aid, counselling) Post Covid foreseeable risk

Subject: Improved Awareness & Competence					
Ref:	Action and Expected Result	Lead	Timescale	Priority	Comments, Progress & Result Update
3.1	<b>Mandatory H&amp;S training requirements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review refresher training time frames</li> <li>• Review mandatory training</li> <li>• Review health and safety training offer – eLearning Online /remote Face to face delivery</li> </ul> Learning from Covid19 processes including core H&S eLearning module and manager self learning links for ISO45001	Health and Safety  Learning and workforce development  Information governance	By October 2021	Medium        Medium	Commenced -included as part of 45001 communication plan to be implemented from October 2021       Competency matrix updated to reflect new courses

3.2	<b>Water safety</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued work through Nottinghamshire Water safety partnership and supply chain partners to raise awareness.</li> <li>Work to develop Nottinghamshire drowning prevention policy with water safety partnership</li> <li>Support awareness raising events summer 2021 and plan for water safety event Summer 2022</li> </ul>	Steve Robins Health and safety	Ongoing	Medium	County Hall with partnership support
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Subject: Premises and Facilities Management					
Ref:	Action and Expected Result	Lead	Timescale	Priority	Comments, Progress & Result Update
4.1	<b>Premises and Protective Security</b>  Ensure corporate buildings have assessed security risks and have effective incident response plans in place  Plans are exercised and tested  Monitor pending <b>Protect</b> legislation implications for <b>publicly accessible locations</b>	C&FM facilities NPOs Health and Safety  C&FM facilities NPOs	April 2022	Medium	Specific action re County Hall and PPE store security reports rep police advice
4.2	<b>Emerging risk from Reoccupation, Hybrid Working, organisational change and transformation</b>  Maintenance of emergency arrangement cover in corporate buildings and touch down areas sufficient trained persons available for:	Health and Safety	September 2021	Very High	Monitor to ensure effective cover during 3 point checks and report to Property Reoccupation Group

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First aid emergencies</li> <li>• Fire evacuation</li> <li>• Implementation of personal evacuation plans</li> <li>• Other premise evacuations</li> <li>• Responding to internal alarms lift/panic</li> </ul>	C&FM Facilities management  Property Corporate NPO			test arrangements by enhanced evacuation tests
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**(All departments will be required to develop action plans to identify the measures/steps being taken to prioritise, eliminate and reduce identified risks and address any outstanding issues or areas of concern with a particular focus on this Action Plan)**

**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR – CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEES****NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL WORKFORCE AVAILABILITY, SICKNESS ABSENCE PERFORMANCE AND SUPPORT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLBEING****Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide Elected Members with an update on the current position of workforce availability and sickness absence for Quarter 1 2021/22 and to seek approval for the ongoing actions contained in the Employee Health and Wellbeing Action Plan and any new actions identified as part of the Workforce Resilience and Recovery work stream.

**Information**

2. Members received a report at June's Committee which demonstrated that the level of workforce availability throughout the Covid-19 pandemic had remained relatively stable. The level of availability fluctuated between 85 and 89% of the workforce and took into account people unavailable to work due to sickness absence, annual leave or for any other approved reason. This figure has dipped recently due to more colleagues using carried over annual leave but also because there are increased numbers of people self isolating. Since the easing of lockdown restrictions, we have moved from daily to weekly reporting to Corporate Leadership Team. This is still sufficiently frequent to enable areas causing concern to be identified and relevant action be taken to address any shortfall in essential resourcing requirements.
3. The current situation continues to have an impact on people's mental and physical wellbeing and monitoring of this is ongoing. The Workforce Resilience and Recovery Group, chaired by Marje Toward, Service Director - Customers, Governance and Employees, has an identified workstream on employee health and wellbeing. This is being led by a manager from Children and Families department with input from colleagues from across the Council. A regular Newsletter has received positive feedback; it provides tips and information on how employees can manage their health and wellbeing whilst at work, be that at home, in an office or in our communities.
4. Further developments include renewing our lapsed membership of the Business Disability Forum which provides a range of advice and information on how managers can support people with long term health conditions whether they fall under the legal definition of the Equality Act 2010 or not. We are also working towards accreditation for Thrive at Work which requires the Council to evidence how it supports people maintain good mental health.

5. Information contained in Appendices A to D indicates the annual 12 month rolling picture regarding sickness absence. The figure for **Quarter 1 2021/22** is **8.49 days** a slight **decrease** from **8.68 days** for Quarter 4 2020/21. The average figure with Covid related sickness absence removed increased in Quarter 1 to **7.34 days** from **7.07** days in Quarter 4. The figures will continue to be monitored to allow for further analysis to ascertain whether the current overall improvement can be sustained and how far hybrid working has been a factor in supporting the reduced levels of sickness absence.
6. Casework arising from the application of the council's various employment procedures continues and there have been 2 dismissals under the Attendance Management procedure and 26 ill health retirements in Quarter 1. Work continues with managers to ensure the focus on improving attendance is not diminished whilst attention is concentrated on the response to the pandemic and absences requiring attention continue to be highlighted to managers and HR surgeries continue to be offered virtually.
7. Members have previously expressed a particular interest in the mental health and wellbeing of the workforce. We are reviewing the number and type of contacts received by the trained mental health first aiders to understand the level of need and whether further training is required. There have been some complex issues for the mental health first aiders to deal with and there is a need to ensure they receive the appropriate level of support themselves and maintain appropriate boundaries in fulfilling this voluntary role. Part of the review is considering how information is gathered to provide an evidence trail to protect both the employee and the trained mental health first aider. We are adding to the existing package of support through our developing engagement with a local National Lottery funded charity Bipolar Lift.
8. The Health and Safety update report mentions the new ISO 45003 standard and joint work will be undertaken to identify the benefits of using this first global standard which provides practical guidance on managing psychological health in the workplace. It provides guidance on the management of psychosocial risk, as part of an occupational health and safety management system and includes information on how to recognise the psychosocial hazards that can affect workers, such as those that arise from home working. It offers examples of effective, simple actions that can be taken to manage these and improve employee wellbeing.
9. The work mentioned at Committee in November 2020 with Loughborough University has been further developed. This is a research study to investigate what employees need to assist an early return to work. The Council has been selected to be part of this pilot and is the largest local employer to be involved. This return to work support project has been launched to managers and their teams at the end of January with further communications published early February, seeking employees who fit the stringent criteria to participate and engage in the pilot exercise. We have extended our involvement as there remain relatively low numbers of employees who met the criteria who are prepared to participate. Once the findings have been evaluated, they will be reported back to this Committee as part of this updated report.
10. Appendix E provides additional information on the nature of absences across our workforce. It is important to note that in Quarter 1 over 56% of employees had no sickness absence and of the remainder, 12.4% of recorded absence had extended beyond 28 days, classified as long term absence. Whilst we do not ignore long term absence and the figures in paragraph 6 indicate continued management of longer term cases, managers need to focus on the 30% of absence ranging from 1 to 28 days to wherever possible preventing it from becoming long term.

We are aware of issues where employees are awaiting surgery or treatment for chronic conditions but are experiencing delay in their treatment due to the pressure on the NHS in responding to the continuing impact of Covid.

11. The employee health and wellbeing action plan (Appendix F), previously approved by Members, forms the basis of the work stream in the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Group with a view to further refreshing the offer. Discussions are continuing with the recognised Trades Unions and the various self-managed groups to ensure our support package meets the needs of all, any gaps in provision are identified and the action plan retains its currency.

### **Other Options Considered**

12. The Council continues to recognise that its workforce is its most valuable asset and needs to be prepared and protected during the current emergency and beyond through the range of activities identified here. We continue to build on the existing guidance, toolkits and risk assessments available to assist managers to support their team members. The Council's employee wellbeing offer is kept under constant review and has been extended throughout the pandemic as new needs are identified and fresh resources become available.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

13. The Council seeks to maximise the attendance and contribution of each employee to ensure it has the capacity to continue providing essential services to its most vulnerable citizens as the pandemic extends into 2021. The provision of an extensive support package for employees is one way to ensure the workforce remains engaged and continues to work effectively to meet the aims and objectives outlined in the Council Plan and various departmental strategies. It is also recognised as a positive recruitment and retention tool.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

14. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Data Protection and Information Governance**

15. There are no data protection or GDPR issues arising from this report as all the information contained is generic and cannot be attributed to individual employees.

### **Financial Implications**

16. There are no direct financial implications arising from the content of this report. However, there is clearly a cost to the measures put in place to support and protect the workforce during the current situation. Developing a comprehensive package of support has contributed to making employees feel valued and ultimately will have a positive impact on turnover and recruitment.

## **Human Resources Implications**

17. The Council recognises that its most valuable asset is its employees and it would have been unable to deliver and continue to provide services to its most vulnerable citizens without their invaluable and continuing contribution. The range of activities outlined in this report in terms of support and protection has enabled every individual to make their own contribution and ensured their positive engagement throughout. The work commissioned through the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Group is identifying what the future of work will look like and what tools are required to successfully deliver this. The health and wellbeing of our employees is essential to assist the workforce move forward in a flexible and supported way, to take on new responsibilities, be enabled to utilise technology and to maximise the organisational and individual benefits of agile working.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty Implications**

17. Work has been undertaken to understand the potential additional risk factors presented by Covid-19 to specific groups of employees. Targeted actions have been identified to address these specific issues most recently the promotion of Vaccination Conversation Events arranged by Health partners to dispel concerns regarding the vaccines to people from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority communities. We continue to engage with the recognised Trade Unions and Council's self-managed groups and support networks to ensure we take full account of the concerns and needs of the entire workforce.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 1) Agree to the continuing work to deliver the identified actions in the Employee Health and Wellbeing Action Plan and to the inclusion of any additions arising from the relevant workstream of the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Group.
- 2) Agree to receive a further report in November 2021 which provides information on Quarter 2 2021/22 absence figures and workforce availability.

**Marjorie Toward**  
**Service Director – Customers, Governance and Employees**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Gill Elder, Head of Human Resources, on [gill.elder@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:gill.elder@nottsc.gov.uk) or 0115 9773867



### **Constitutional Comments (KK 24/08/21)**

18. The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Personnel Committee.

### **Financial Comments (SES 24.08.21)**

19. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

### **HR Comments (JP 31/08/21)**

20. The human resources implications are set out in the body of the report. Significant activity has been undertaken to develop support and initiatives to maximise employee attendance.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All



Appendix A - Chart 1. Average number of days sickness per employee for the authority by department

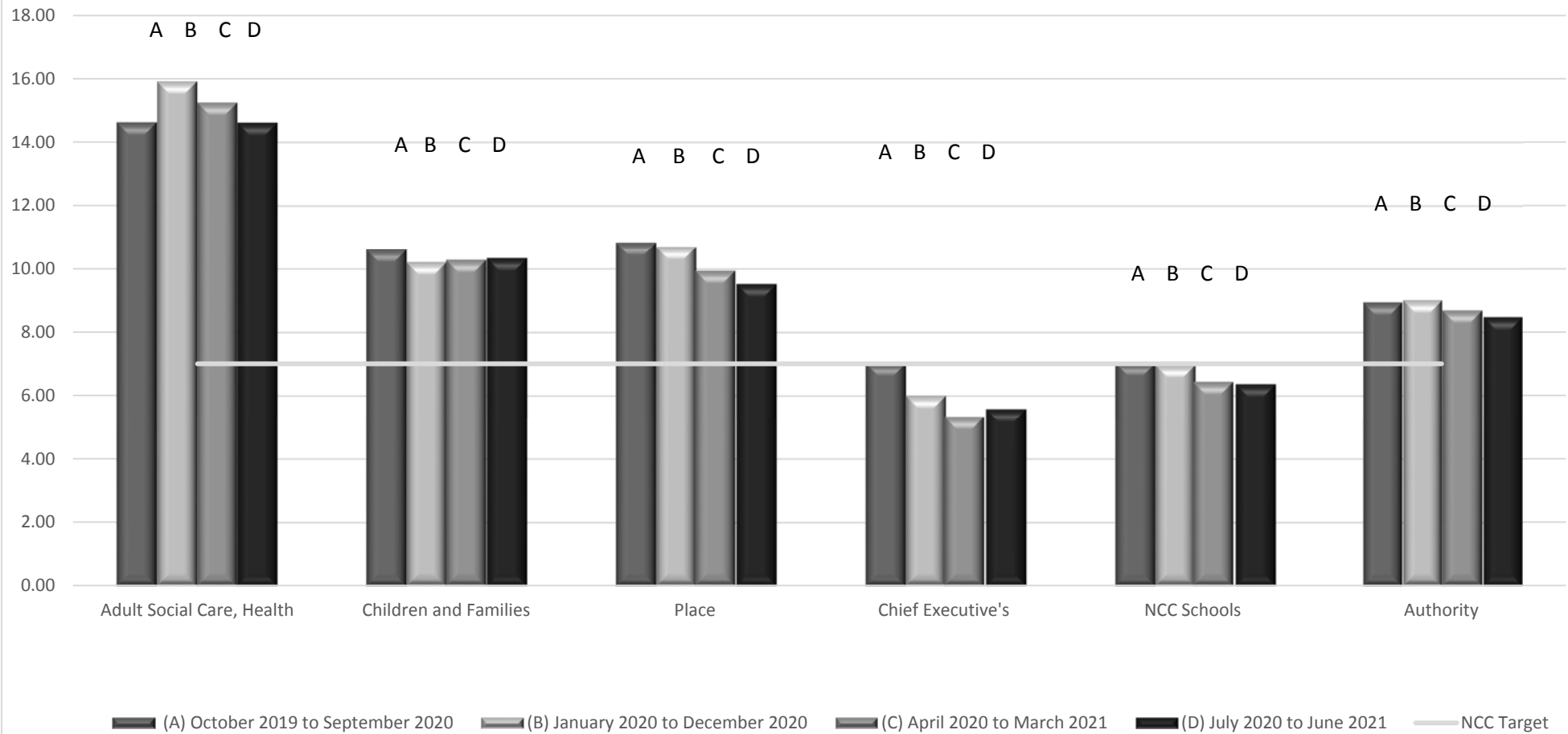
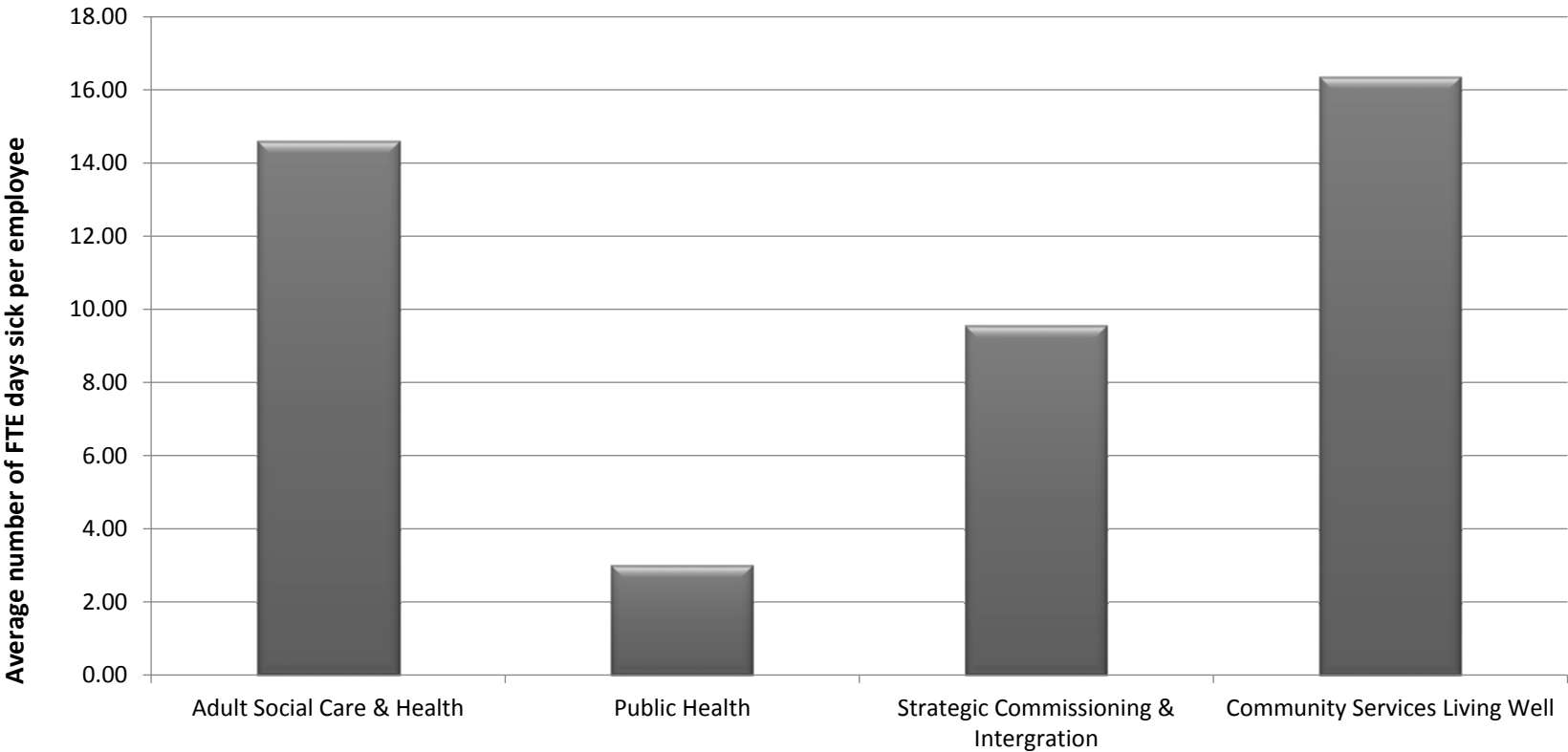
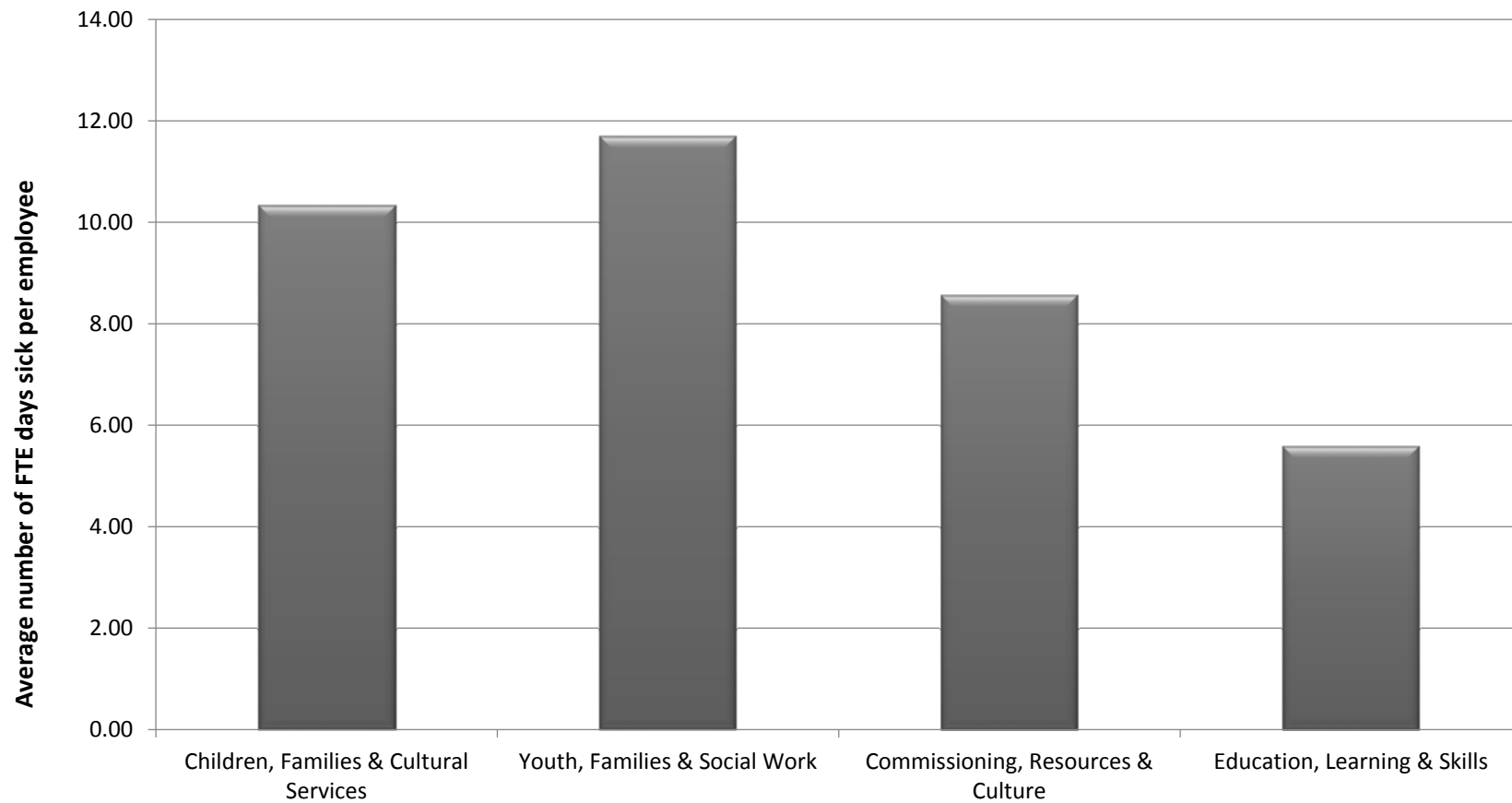


Chart 2 ASCH July 2020 to June 2021



**Chart 3 Children and Families July 2020 to June 2021**



**Chart 4 Place October July 2020 to June 2021**

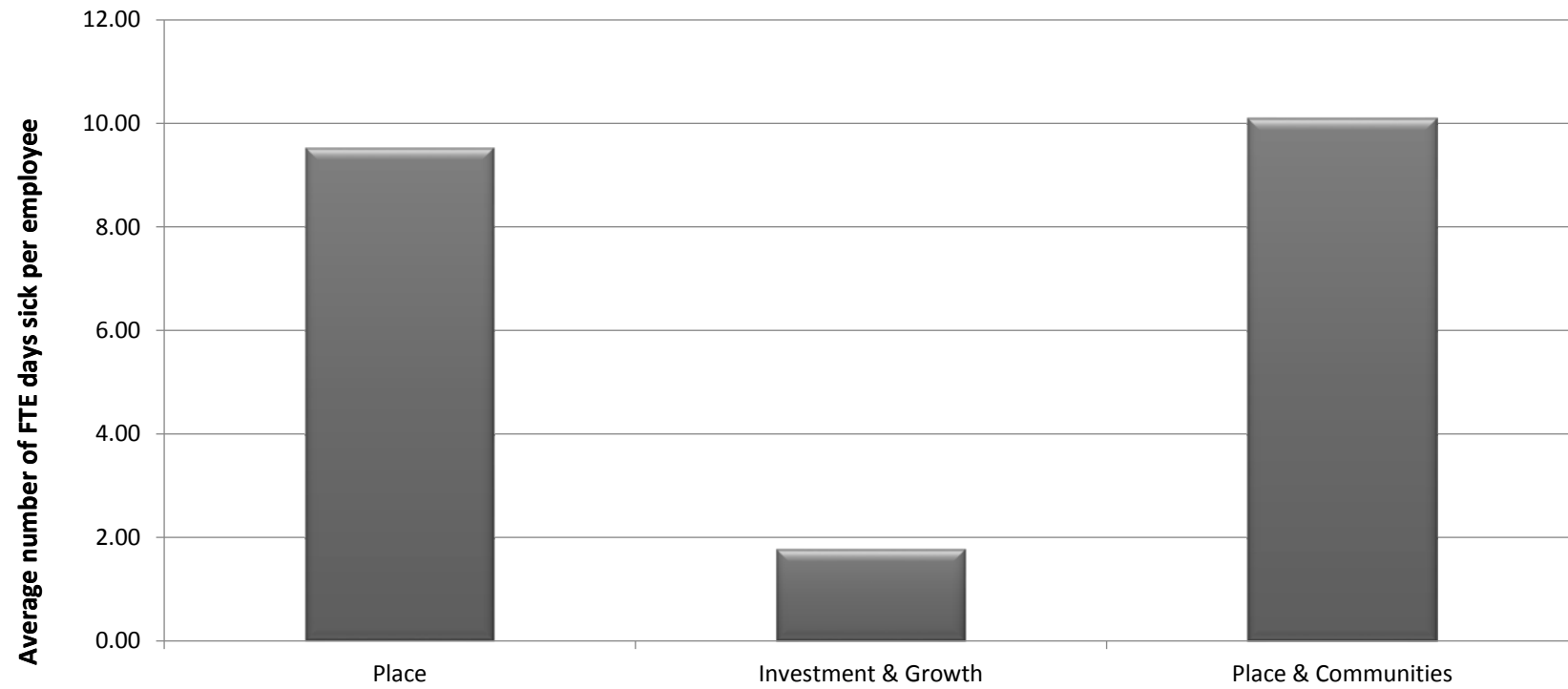


Chart 5 Chief Executive's July 2020 to June 2021

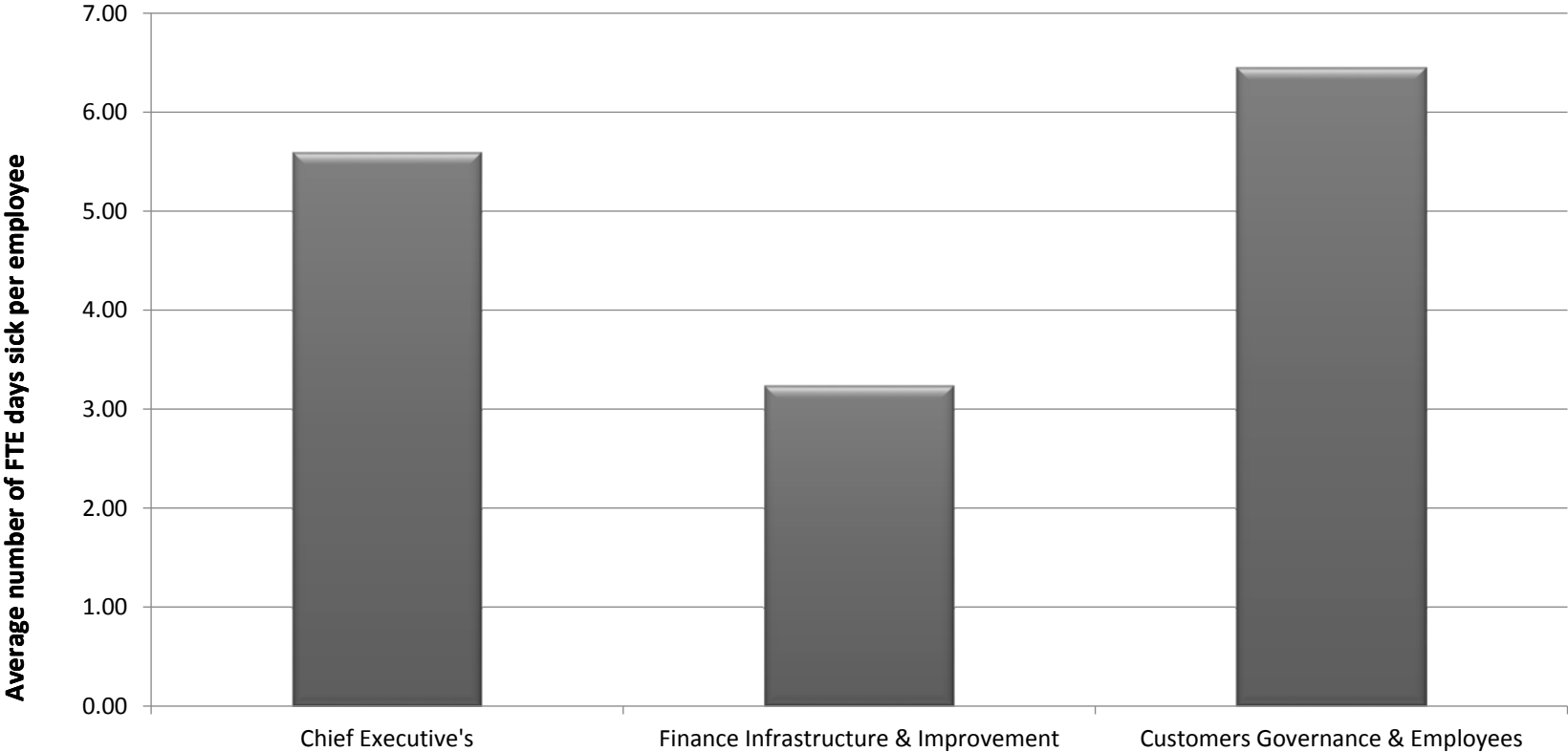


Table 1. Sickness Levels over rolling 12 month basis by Department

	<b>(A) October 2019 to September 2020</b>	<b>(B) January 2020 to December 2020</b>	<b>(C) April 2020 to March 2021</b>	<b>(D) July 2020 to June 2021</b>
<b>Adult Social Care, Health</b>	14.62	15.91	15.24	14.61
<b>Children and Families</b>	10.63	10.22	10.27	10.35
<b>Place</b>	10.85	10.71	9.93	9.53
<b>Chief Executive's</b>	7.06	6.02	5.32	5.60
<b>NCC Schools</b>	7.07	6.99	6.43	6.39
<b>Authority</b>	8.96	9.02	8.68	8.49

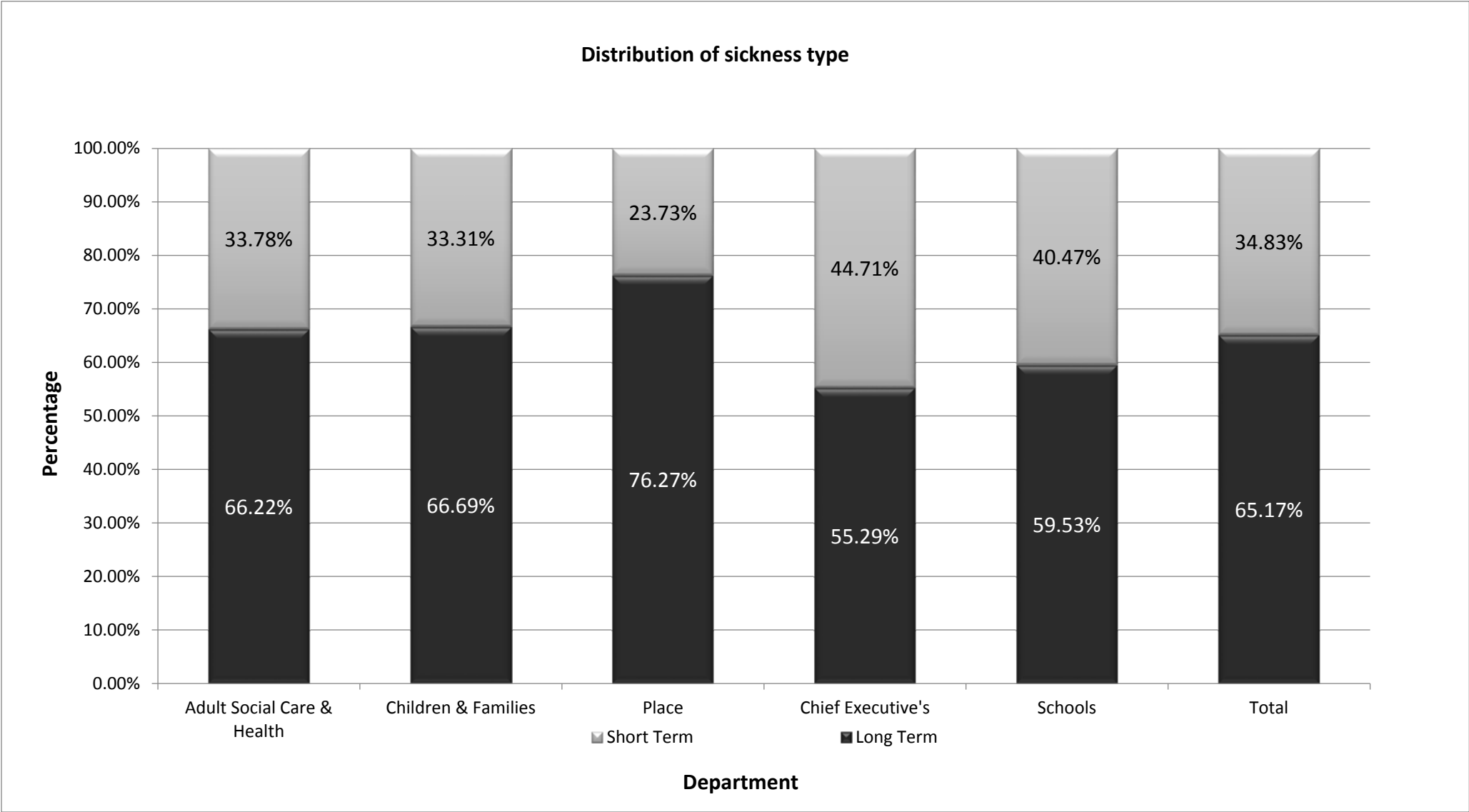


Appendix B

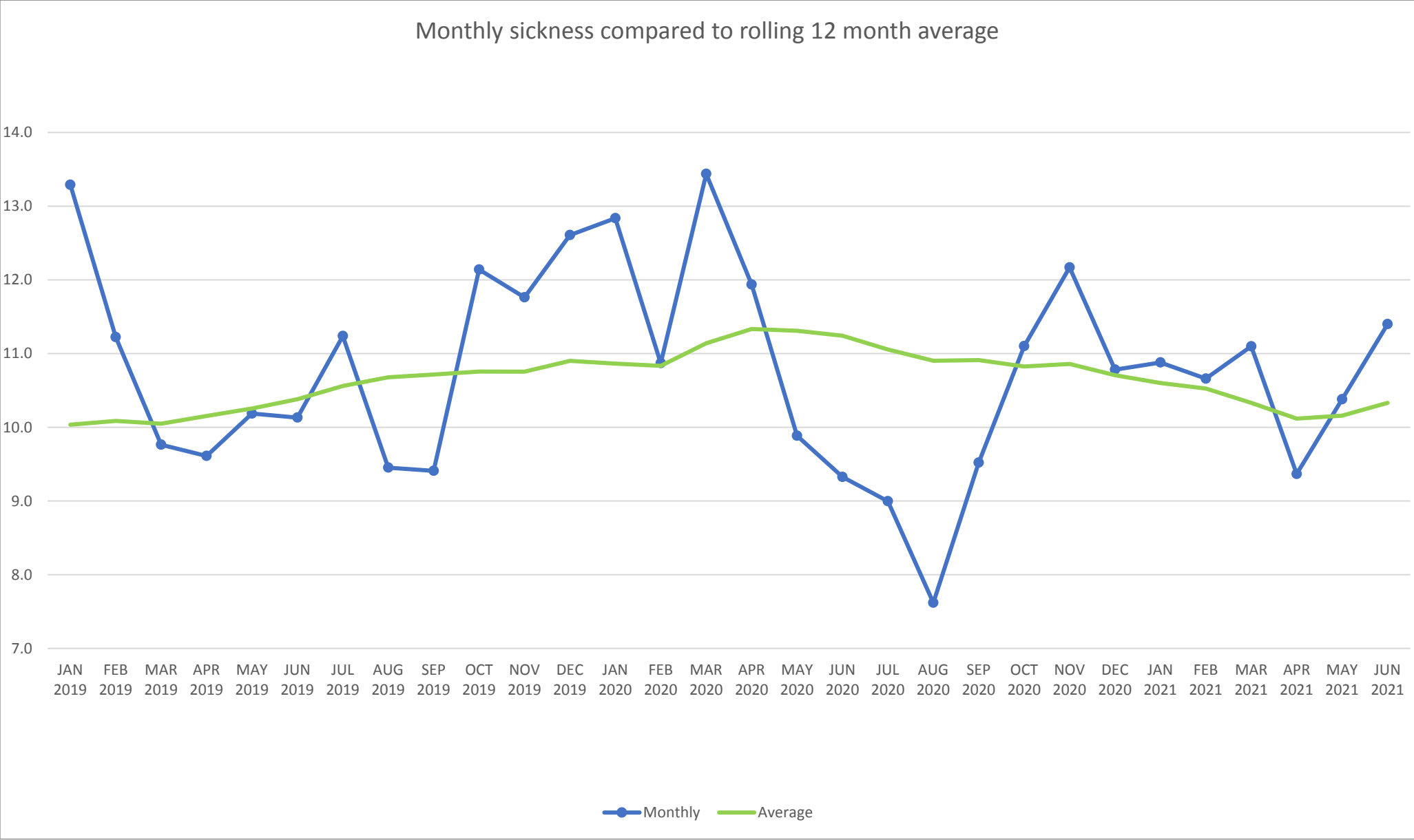
	Back Problems	Cold/Flu/Sore Throat	Corona virus	Headache/Migraine	Heart/Circulation	Infection	Muscular/Skeletal	Op/Post Op Recovery	Other	Pregnancy Related	Respiratory	Skin Disorder	Stomach/Digestion	Stress/Depression	Terminal Illness	Not assigned
ASCH & Public Protection	4.50%	3.27%	9.03%	2.70%	1.91%	2.96%	10.54%	10.64%	13.71%	0.23%	2.27%	0.11%	2.61%	32.13%	0.00%	3.40%
Children and Families	3.29%	3.17%	15.78%	3.30%	2.14%	2.24%	7.80%	6.61%	12.28%	1.45%	1.41%	0.10%	3.68%	35.84%	0.02%	0.90%
Place	6.19%	2.40%	6.03%	1.28%	4.69%	2.03%	23.44%	10.43%	13.74%	0.51%	2.17%	0.27%	4.60%	19.52%	0.00%	2.69%
Chief Executive's	1.55%	4.75%	7.52%	2.83%	1.52%	2.62%	11.49%	16.00%	12.66%	0.66%	1.86%	0.83%	6.77%	27.84%	0.00%	1.10%
Schools	4.32%	4.80%	19.94%	2.63%	1.43%	2.53%	5.57%	10.91%	15.40%	1.30%	3.70%	0.18%	5.71%	21.44%	0.02%	0.13%
Totals	4.20%	3.19%	10.30%	2.57%	2.60%	2.47%	12.82%	9.88%	13.15%	0.73%	1.93%	0.22%	3.87%	29.87%	0.01%	2.19%



Appendix C: Long and Short Term Sickness



Appendix D



## Additional Absence Information

	0 Days	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	28+
Adult Social Care & Health	737	71	98	79	52	44	24	31	17	24	332
Chief Executive's	709	90	59	43	28	35	14	16	6	8	68
Children & Families	1384	120	89	64	43	50	21	28	21	13	320
Place	1588	123	112	79	49	70	21	32	28	15	256
Total	4418	404	358	265	172	199	80	107	72	60	976

	Percent with no sickness	4 weeks or more
NCC	56.2%	12.4%
Adult Social Care & Health	43.0%	19.4%
Chief Executive's	61.1%	5.9%
Children & Families	57.6%	13.3%
Place	61.5%	9.9%

	Dismissal Capability	Retirement Ill Health
Adult Social Care and Health	0	7
Chief Executive's	0	6
Children and Families	2	5
Place	0	8
	2	26

	BVPI12 (exc CoronaVirus)	BVPI12 (all)	CoronaVirus BVPI12
NCC Directly employed	<b>9.17</b>	<b>10.22</b>	1.05
Adult Social Care & Health	13.29	14.61	1.32
Children and Families	8.72	10.35	1.63
Place	8.96	9.53	0.57
Chief Executive's	5.18	5.60	0.42
Schools	5.11	6.39	1.27
NCC & Schools	<b>7.34</b>	<b>8.49</b>	1.15

The purpose of this action plan is to identify and prioritise a range of activities to support and enable employees to maintain their physical and mental wellbeing and to provide advice and guidance to the workforce including managers to maximise performance and reduce the incidence of preventable sickness absence. The work is

Key Objective	Actions	Responsible Officer (s)	Timescale	Progress update	Other comments
<b>Reduce stress and tackle presenteeism</b>	Implement wellbeing initiatives, including suitable learning interventions arising from the health checks undertaken in C&F and ASCH departments.	Bev Cordon/Sue Jeffery- HR Senior Business Partners	Ongoing	HR surgeries in absence area “hotspots” continue to be undertaken virtually.	This area of work benefits from joint working approaches with the recognised trade unions.
	Monitor completions of EPDR's	Workforce & OD Team	From June 2021	New e-learning offer around workplace health and wellbeing is now in place. Wellbeing highlighted in the supervision agenda  EPDR is now available online	Many EPDRs were deferred due to focussing on the Covid response and a Council-wide communication in early September 2020 acknowledged this. Further reminders are due to be sent early September to remind managers of the importance of their completion

<b>Facilitation of flexible working</b>	Improving Workforce Mobilisation	Smarter Working Team ICT	Ongoing	Hybrid working model approved July 2021	Transition arrangements in place to October 2021
	Engage Timewise to maximise the use of flexible working	Michelle Richardson – HR senior practitioner	Ongoing to deliver identified actions agreed with Timewise	Successful roll out of equipment to enable flexible working. Availability of ICT pop – up shops for immediate assistance.  Employee engagement through survey May/June 2021	Further developments in line with Hybrid Working Strategy  The Pop-up shops have enabled employees to access immediate support with ICT issues. Further Q&A sessions planned to continue to inform this work
<b>Developing the existing wellbeing promotion and prevention offer</b>	Implement MIND's Thriving at Work as part of the Council's employee support package.	Bill Iliffe – HR senior business partner.	August 2021	Meeting with representative from MIND took	Guidance for employees and line managers has been prepared to complement the use



	Adopt wellness action plans to encourage employees to self-manage their own wellbeing with the support available from NCC.	WOD Manager	Ongoing	place prior to lockdown	of wellness action plans. Additional support has been put in place to address concerns regarding the impact of Covid situation and the future of work more generally
<b>Employee engagement and awareness</b>	<p>Continue to work with trade unions to build on the managers guide to mental wellbeing.</p> <p>Promote national awareness raising events /days</p> <p>Encourage open discussion about wellbeing and mental health</p>	<p>Gill Elder – Head of HR</p> <p>Lyndsey Woolmore – WOD Senior Business Partner /Tarig Singh, Equalities officer</p>	Ongoing	<p>The My learning My career portal has been updated to include further support tools.</p> <p>Work with colleagues from trade unions, Public Health and the Communications team to ensure</p>	

<b>Promote the use of the Stress Audit Tool</b>	<p>Create a “whole Council” approach to addressing identified issues.</p> <p>Develop a mechanism to further engage with employees to gauge how they are feeling about work and to seek their views on the support package in place.</p>	Gill Elder – Head of HR	Ongoing	a joined-up approach.	Engagement Strategy developed as part of the Workforce Resilience and Recovery workstream June 2021 ongoing
	Continue to provide an effective stress audit tool and associated action planning process to enable managers to identify and action plan to address any stress issues at local level	Occupational Health and Wellbeing team  Health and Safety Team	Ongoing	Review of internal communications already underway  Review use of the current “Well-Worker” system	Research the potential for an improved, more cost effective, system
<b>Develop and embed a Coaching Culture across NCC</b>	Ensure all NCC managers are equipped to appropriately support employees on an individual basis	<p>Lyndsey Woolmore – WOD senior business partner.</p> <p>Adrian McKiernan – WOD business partner</p>	April 2021 onwards	Review the current Manager as Coach offer to ensure it reflects the maturity of	A refreshed tender is to be produced to ensure that the new refresher programme extends the coaching

				<p>coaching experience across NCC.</p> <p>Consider expanding the number of qualified coaches in the coaching network</p>	<p>experience across the Council.</p> <p>Recruiting further qualified coaches would enable better, targeted representation to reflect the employee support networks.</p>
<b>Continue to raise awareness of mental health in the workplace</b>	<p>Enable NCC employees to access counselling through third party provider (Care First) for work related issues through management referral.</p> <p>Develop mindfulness e-learning materials to complement existing e-learning offer</p>	<p>Joseph Parker – HR senior business partner</p> <p>Lyndsey Woolmore – WOD senior business partner</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>August 2021</p>	<p>Review the current contract arrangements with Care First.</p> <p>Regularly promote the availability of the counselling service through HR casework and publicity via the intranet.</p>	<p>Promotion of the availability of the counselling service encourages open dialogue regarding mental health. Now a direct employee referral provision</p>
	Undertake joint work with Public Health colleagues to refresh the support available to any employee	Sophie Spencer – HR BP1 and Public Health	September 2020	Work initiated and progress made regarding domestic abuse	

	impacted by domestic abuse			but wider collaboration stalled due to capacity issues arising from the pandemic	
<b>Ongoing promotion of support available for workplace health</b>	Continue to promote health care schemes and support available to NCC employees, such as Westfield Health care Scheme as well as our extensive internal offer	Lyndsey Woolmore – WOD senior business partner	Ongoing	Promote the availability of schemes through events such as wellbeing at work and health and safety week	
	Use the employee wellbeing pages on the intranet to promote healthier lifestyles and preventative measures	Lyndsey Woolmore- WOD senior business partner OHU team Public Health	Ongoing	Continued promotion of national campaigns	
<b>Promotion of workplace health</b>	Recruit further workplace health champions across all NCC bases.	Heather Bennett- WOD business Partner	May 2020	A further recruitment of workplace health champions to take place in Autumn 2021	
	Promote and support the Mental Health First Aider's Network	MH First Aiders	Ongoing		
	Promote the wider support available to employees, including the buddying scheme and chaplaincy service	Gill Elder/Lyndsey Woolmore	Ongoing	MHFaiders have been trained and are active across NCC workbases	Initial take up of informal chats with MHFAiders has been very successful . Further

					analysis underway to determine the level and types of contact
	<p>Refresh the Council's accreditation to retain platinum wellbeing at work award.</p> <p>Work with colleagues in Public Health to promote wellbeing events throughout the year</p> <p>Maintain a Smoke Free workplace</p>	<p>WOD senior business Partner</p> <p>Public Health</p> <p>HR Business Partners</p> <p>Trade Unions</p> <p>NCC Health and Wellbeing Board</p>	<p>Autumn 2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Public Health have refreshed the Wellbeing at Work scheme and a new submission will be undertaken</p> <p>Support Public Health on workforce implications of NCC Tobacco Declaration Plan and fulfil duty of care in respect of creation of a Smoke Free working environment of all employees</p>	<p>Review as necessary to ensure continued effectiveness/impact of NCC Smoke Free Workplace policy in practice.</p>

All of the above will be in addition to ensuring that the Council continues to deliver on achievements to date, including continued support for initiatives such as the Dying to Work charter, Time to Talk events, promotion of flu vaccinations and promotion of effective systems for workload management.

The HR & WOD teams will continue to provide guidance and learning opportunities to enable and encourage employees to manage their own wellbeing whilst ensuring that supportive measures are in place through continuing to work pro-actively with colleagues in Public Health and the recognised trade unions.

Our work towards and to maintain various accreditations including Disability Confident, Thriving at Work and Timewise will support and underpin our existing health and wellbeing provision

Employee Health and wellbeing will be a key strand in the emerging People Strategy and Action Plan which will seek to put in place a range of measures to prepare, support and enable employees to continue to deliver services as the Covid-19 situation continues and help frame the new world of work.

**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR – CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE, AND  
EMPLOYEES****TEMPORARY STAFFING RESOURCES FOR THE MCCLOUD PROJECT****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of the report is to seek approval from Personnel Committee to the establishment of additional temporary resources required within the Pension Administration Team in order to comply with the Court of Appeal McCloud judgement.

**Information****Background**

2. Nottinghamshire County Council is the administering authority for the Nottinghamshire Local Government Pension Fund. There are currently 494 Scheme Employers and a total membership of 142,832. Membership is comprised of active members, deferred members and pensioners. The Pension Administration Team delivers a full range of pension administration activities to all its membership including the processing of estimates, retirements into payment, death of scheme members and divorce sharing orders. This team also provides support and guidance to all Scheme Employers.
3. The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is a statutory scheme with regulations made under the Superannuation Act 1972 and the Public Service Pensions Act 2013. The LGPS is a defined benefits scheme based, since 1 April 2014, on 'Career Average Revaluated Earnings' (CARE). Prior to the move to CARE in 2014 the LGPS was a final salary scheme.

**Background to the Court of Appeal McCloud Judgement**

4. The case came about when R Sargeant, a firefighter employed by the London Fire Brigade, was 44 years old or more on 1 April 2015, she would have been entitled to remain in the Firefighters' Pension Scheme – a final salary pension fund that has a normal pension age between 50 and 55, a deferred pension age of 60 and an accrual rate of 1/60.
5. Because she was younger, Ms Sargeant was moved to the new Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015, which is a career average revalued earnings scheme.

6. After a legal battle that saw firefighters and judges joining forces to claim discrimination on the grounds of age, Ms Sargeant and her peers were granted their claim by the Court of Appeal in 2018. And in June 2019, the Supreme Court refused the government's application to appeal the court case, by then known as McCloud, which marked the end of the legal process.
7. The case through the Courts identified unjustified age discrimination in transitional protection arrangements in the Judicial and Firefighters' Pension Schemes. However, in relation to the LGPS, this difference in treatment exists between two groups of LGPS members:
  - those who were in service on 31st March 2012 and were within ten years of NPA on 1st April 2012, therefore benefiting from underpin protection and 'better off' than the second group; and,
  - those who were in service on 31st March 2012 and were more than ten years from NPA, were not eligible for underpin protection and therefore 'worse off' than the protected members (as they were not guaranteed a pension of at least the level they would have received in the final salary scheme).

### **Impact of the Proposals**

8. The previous report presented to Personnel Committee on 10 September 2020, detailed the impact of McCloud on members benefits, employers within the LGPS and the administration of the Fund.
9. The McCloud proposal will have a major impact on the Pension Administration Team for various reasons:
  - a. Pension processes will require to be reviewed and updated in line with the McCloud underpin protections.
  - b. The Fund will be required to collect data regarding hours changes and service breaks to enable the calculations for qualifying members since the 1 April 2014 to be undertaken. Scheme employers will have a statutory obligation to provide this data to the Fund back to 2014. This will include not only additional members covered by the underpin, but those who were previously covered as well. Retired members may also be affected, and arrears may be payable, which may also bring several pension tax complications to consider and communicate.
  - c. Retrospective calculations performed on all eligible pensioners which may result in backdated pension adjustments being determined and require putting into payment.
  - d. McCloud underpin protections being determined and applied to eligible members.
10. Initially it had been estimated that 24,000 members records within the Nottinghamshire Pension Fund would be affected. Further work has been completed that indicate that this figure is higher at 29,000 records across all members who have a current underpin.
11. Communication to employers and members will be essential. The key focus for members will be for them to know that the underpin will be applied to them without the need for any action on their behalf, but also understand when their benefits will be reviewed. Employers will also



need to understand the requirement to provide historic and ongoing data to enable the Scheme benefits to be calculated. The Scheme Advisory Board have an implementation group to help provide documents to pension funds.

## Review of Resource Requirements

12. The resourcing requirements of the McCloud project have been considered against the wider work of the Pension Office, both currently underway and planned. Alongside the statutory requirements of McCloud, the Pension Office is supporting the delivery of -
  - a. **Guaranteed Minimum Pensions (GMP) reconciliation project** - HMRC have identified errors in their systems and through no fault of its own the Fund is required to undertake work to reconcile and rectify the issues. The details of this ongoing project have been the subject of separate reports to Pensions Committee. At a high level the Fund has been required to undertake a financial reconciliation as well as to reconcile individual members details of the GMP held against a member's pension record with that held by HMRC.
  - b. **Transforming Pension Administration through digital development and new ways of working programme** - the Nottinghamshire Pension Funds programme which is underway will deliver a range of digital services which include increased automation, significantly reduced manual inputting and amending of member data ensuring that employers fulfilling their responsibilities as a scheme employer within the Fund and for scheme members to be able to access their pension record 24/7.
  - c. **National Pensions Dashboard** - the Nottinghamshire Fund will be required to input to the national pensions dashboard. The aim of which is to provide clear and simple information about an individual's multiple pension savings, including their state pension. This national initiative will also help individuals to reconnect with any lost pension.
  - d. **Pensions Scheme Act 2021** - the implementation of the Act will come via regulation changes which are due in the Autumn and will have implications on pension administration in a number of ways such as stronger Pension Regulator powers, pensions dashboards, transfer scam prevention and more.
13. At Pension Committee on 10 September 2020, Members approved the funding for a temporary McCloud Project Manager. Establishment of this post was approved by Personnel Committee on 16 September 2020. The Project Manager was recruited and commenced in post on 4 May 2021.
14. As stated in the Pension Committee report of 10 September 2020 and Personnel Committee Report of 16 September 2020, further work has been undertaken to determine the additional resources required to enable the Fund to meet its obligations as part of the McCloud judgement.
15. The funding of additional temporary resources, as detailed in the table below, was approved by Pension Committee on 29 July 2021. The additional resources are initially required for a period of 2 years from appointment and this will be kept under review –

Post Title	Number of posts required and grade	Cost per annum (shown at the top of grade) including oncosts	Total cost per annum
Practitioner Pension Administration	1 x Grade 5	£36,169	£36,169
Pension Administration Level 1	3 x Grade 4	£30,465	£91,395
Pension Administration Level 2	3 x Grade 3	£26,521	£79,563
Employer Support and Compliance Officer	1 x Grade 5	£36,169	£36,169
Pension System Team Functional Support Officer	1 x Grade 5	£36,169	£36,169
Data Officer	1 x up to Grade 5 – job to be evaluated	£36,169	£36,169
<b>Total Cost including oncosts per annum</b>			<b>£315,634</b>

16. The resourcing requirements are broken down as follows –

- a. **Pension Administration** (including Practitioner Pension Administration and Pension Administration Level 1 and 2) – This team will lead the work on recalculating benefits for 29,000 members including putting revised benefits into payment and ensuring the correct underpin protection is applied to all other eligible members.
- b. **Employer Support and Compliance Officer** – this key role will lead communications and provide support to all Scheme Employers and will work closely with the Data Officer.
- c. **Data Officer** – following discussions with other LGPS Funds the project has determined that a Data Officer post is required, and work is underway to design the job description which will then be submitted for evaluation. This role will monitor, chase, and reconcile all data returns from Scheme Employers which will be critical to enabling the Fund to meet its statutory obligations as part of the McCloud project. This post will also link into the Data Audit and improvement workstream of the Transformation Programme and work to support the Fund to meet the Pension Regulator requirement to improve the quality of data held by the Fund.
- d. **Pension System Officer** – this post will be responsible for loading all McCloud data returns and ensuring that member records are updated accordingly, as well as ensuring that the

McCloud software modules are loaded, tested and operational with the Civica Universal Pension Administration system.

17. Following funding approval from Pension Committee, approval is now sought from Personnel Committee to the establishment of the temporary additional resources.
18. Recruitment to the temporary McCloud project team will be in line with the County Council's recruitment and selection process and would commence as soon as possible to ensure that resources complete their induction and extensive training program prior to the requirement to commence McCloud activities.
19. Experienced staff from the Pension Administration Team will be eligible to apply for secondments to the project with appropriate back fill arrangements implemented ensuring that business as usual activities are not impacted.

### **Other Options Considered**

20. The Pension Fund has a legal requirement to ensure that the McCloud judgment is correctly applied to all eligible pensioners and members of the Nottinghamshire Pension Fund.
21. Absorb the McCloud project work into the existing work of the administration team. However, this is not considered to be a feasible option as this would have very significant implications and disruption for the delivery of the current business as usual, as well as the legal obligation to deliver the McCloud project.
22. Engage external resources to undertake the McCloud project on behalf of the Fund. However, the preferred option to setup a temporary project team is in line with the approach taken by other LGPS Funds.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

23. This will be a significant project for the Pension Fund which requires additional temporary resources to ensure that the Fund fulfils the statutory requirements of the McCloud judgement.
24. Advice and support from the Scheme Actuary and their extensive knowledge and understanding of the LGPS regulations and the McCloud judgement will provide the Nottinghamshire Pension Fund McCloud project with a quality assurance role.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

25. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Data Protection and Information Governance**

26. The project, by its very nature, involves reconciliation, sharing and processing of personal and sensitive data. This is covered by existing arrangements and agreements with scheme employers and scheme members.

## **Financial Implications**

27. It is estimated that the costs of the temporary additional resources as detailed in paragraph 15 for an initial period of two years will be approximately £315,634 per annum including oncosts. Pension Committee approved the funding for these post from the Pension Fund at the meeting on 29 July 2021.

## **Human Recourse Implications**

28. Appointment to the additional temporary McCloud project resources will be through the Council's agreed recruitment and selection procedures.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that :

- 1) Members approve the establishment of the additional temporary project resources as detailed within the report for an initial period of two years following approval by Pension Committee at its meeting on 29 July 2021, the costs of which will be funded by the Pension Fund.

**Marjorie Toward**  
**Service Director – Customers, Governance and Employees**  
**Chief Executives Department**

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## **Constitutional Comments (KK 25/08/21)**

29. The proposal in this report is within the remit of the Personnel Committee.

### **Financial Comments (SES 24/08/21)**

30. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 27 of the report.

31. It is estimated that the costs of the temporary additional resources as detailed in paragraph 15 for an initial period of two years will be approximately £315,634 per annum including oncosts. Pension Committee approved the funding for these posts from the Pension Fund at the meeting on 29 July 2021.

### **HR Comments (JP 31/08/21)**

32. The temporary posts will be recruited to as set out at paragraph 18.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- McCloud Update Resource Report Personnel Committee 16 September 2020

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All



**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR – CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND  
EMPLOYEES****ADDITIONAL RESOURCE FOR THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION  
SCHEME – PENSION SCAMS****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Personnel Committee to the establishment of an additional Technical and Regulations Officer required to support the delivery of the requirements of the Pension Regulators pledge to combat pension scams, the requirements of Pension Scheme Act 2021 regarding combating pension scams and the Nottinghamshire Pension Fund pension scam action plan shown in the attached Appendix 1.

**Information****Background**

2. Since April 2017, pension scam losses totalling £30,857,329 have been reported according to complaints filed with Action Fraud, says the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and The Pensions Regulator (tPR).
3. Scammers target pension pots big and small, with reported losses ranging from under £1,000 to as much as £500,000. However, the true number of victims is likely to be much higher as savers fail to spot the signs of a scam and don't know how much is in their pension pots. A 2019 survey by Action Fraud reported that individual loss is about £82,000. The Pension Regulator reports this figure being higher at £91,000.
4. Pension scams are on the increase in the UK. Every day fraudsters are using sophisticated ways to part savers from their money and the internet and advances in digital communications mean these kinds of scams are getting more common and harder to identify. A lifetime's savings can be lost in moments.
5. Scammers design attractive offers to persuade people to transfer their pension pot to them, often setting "time-limited" offers or deadlines to pressure individual's into releasing their money.

6. During the pandemic the Pension Regulator, the Financial Conduct Authority and the Money and Pension Service worked together and issued help and guidance to protect pensions savers from becoming the victims of scams.

7. At the start of the Pandemic, Charles Counsell, tPR's Chief Executive said:

*"Pensions remain a safe long term investment for your retirement and it's important to avoid hasty decisions about cash that's taken a lifetime to build. We urge you not to transfer your pension into another arrangement now and regret the decision later. If you're worried about your pension savings, take the time to understand what options you have available. There is no need to rush."*

*"For those who have a final salary pension, staying in your existing scheme is still likely to be the best long-term arrangement. All savers should be very cautious about making changes at this time."*

*"More than ever before, you should visit The Pension Advisory Service website for impartial guidance before making any decision about your retirement or get financial advice from a Financial Conduct Authority authorised financial adviser."...*

### **What is a pension scam**

8. Since April 2015 members of pension schemes have had more choices about how they can access their pension pot than in the past. Scammers know this and will try to lure people with promises of upfront cash and one-off "deals" with guaranteed high returns.

9. Pension scammers have changed their modus operandi over time. A few years ago, it was about setting up a sham pension scheme and encouraging people to move from their bona fide scheme into a sham. More recently, it is about just encouraging people to come out of their pension scheme into a vehicle that is being used for investment fraud.

### **How to spot a pension scam**

10. The importance of educating people so that they can spot the signs of a scam and they do not hand over their money in the first place is paramount.

11. There are some common tell-tale signs that mean it could be a scam, for example:

- a. Unsolicited approaches by telephone, text message, email or in person. Since January 2019, there has been a ban on cold calling about pensions. This means individuals should not be contacted by any company about their pension unless they've asked them to contact them.
- b. When a firm does not allow you to call it back.
- c. Where individuals are forced to make a quick decision, are pressured into doing so, or are encouraged to transfer their pension quickly and send documents by courier.
- d. Where contact details provided or published on a website are only mobile numbers or a PO box address.
- e. When the company claim they can help you or a relative unlock a pension before the age of 55, sometimes known as pension liberation or pension loans. Only in very specific cases, such as ill health, is this possible.
- f. When a company claims to know of tax loopholes or promise extra tax savings.



## Pension Regulator – Pledge to Combat Pension Scams

12. Before transferring an individual's pension to another arrangement, the Pension Regulator expects Schemes to: *"Identity unusual or concerning patterns, such as spikes in CETV requests or the same adviser across a multitude of requests"*.
13. As we know the freedom and choice reforms have exacerbated scams. Prior to 2015, pension liberation scams were prevalent, where savers were encouraged to access their pension prior to age 55. Since this time, freedom and choice has opened up new opportunities for scammers, in particular investment scams, typically using both defined benefit transfers and people accessing their defined contribution pension under the pension freedom rules, to convince people to pay a lump sum into a fraudulent fund or bank account.
14. Not every pension scam can be prevented. The Pension Regulator is asking trustees, providers, and administrators to pledge to do what they can to protect scheme members and follow the principles of the Pension Scams Industry Group (PSIG) Code of Good Practice.
15. The Pension Regulator states ***"Pledging to combat pension scams shows your intent to protect your members. It tells your members and the pensions industry that you are committed to stopping scammers in their tracks. Once you have taken the pledge it's up to you and your scheme or organisation to take action."***
16. At Pension Committee on 29 July 2021, Members approved the Nottinghamshire Pension Fund's commitment to sign up to the Pension Regulators Pledge to combat pension scams, thereby demonstrating its intent to protect its members.
17. Signing up to the Pledge means that the Nottinghamshire Pension Fund is now committed to undertake the 3 Steps of the Pledge laid down by the Pension Regulator. as detailed below-
- a. **Step 1** - Details the requirements of the Pledge and the action required by Nottinghamshire Pension Fund -

Requirement of the Pledge	Action required by Nottinghamshire Pension Fund
Regularly warn members about pension scams	Develop and deliver an annual pension scam communication plan to include - <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Annual Benefit Statements</b> - All Members to receive the ScamSmart leaflet with their Annual Benefit Statement</li><li>• <b>Transfer Requests</b> - review due diligence checks</li></ul>
Website messaging	Nottinghamshire Pension Fund website – as part of the website review refresh pension scam section
ScamSmart campaign	Support the TPR and FCA campaigns – through social media, emailing members and adding fresh content to website

Encourage members asking for cash drawdown to get impartial guidance from Money Helper	Not available to the LGPS
Get to know the warning signs of a scam and best practice for transfers by completing the scams module in the Pension Regulator Trustee Toolkit.	All Nottinghamshire Pension Administration staff, Pension Committee and Pension Board members to complete the scams module
Studying and using the resources on the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), ScamSmart website, tPR Scams information.	Review and use content to update website and member communications
Considering becoming a member of the Pension Scams Industry Forum	Investigate the benefits to becoming a member
Take appropriate due diligence measures by carrying out checks on pension transfers and documenting pension transfer procedures	See Appendix 1 – Action Plan
Clearly warning members if they insist on high risk transfers being paid	Ensure transfer process includes required “concerns” communication and audit trail for high risk transfers
Report concerns about a scam to the authorities and communicate this to the scheme member	Agree and document the process for reporting scams to Action Fraud and other appropriate authorities. Update website with details

- b. **Step 2** - Once the Fund is able to demonstrate that it meets the requirements of Step 1 it can complete the “Self-Certify you meet the pledge to combat pension scams” form on the Pension Regulator website stating **“I self -certify that we raise awareness, educate ourselves and protect savers”**.
- c. **Step 3** - Once the self-certification has been submitted the Fund will receive confirmation from the Pension Regulator together with details outlining next steps.

### **Pension Scheme Act 2021 – combat pension scams**

- 18. The Pension Scheme Act 2021 received Royal Assent in February 2021. The Act is primarily aimed at strengthening the powers of the Pension Regulator in order to protect scheme members. The implementation of the Act will come via regulation in due course. There are a number of provisions within the Act. The provision relevant to this report is “Transfer scam prevention”. The details of the Act will be the subject of a further report to Pension Committee.
- 19. The Scam prevention regulations are expected to be in place in early Autumn 2021 and will remove the statutory right of a scheme member to transfer their pension out where there is no genuine employment link between the member and the occupational pension scheme the transfer would be destined for.
- 20. The proposal is for there to be additional requirements which administrators must work through:
  - a. If the transfer is to a type of receiving scheme which presents a low scams risk (public service schemes, authorised Master Trusts, and personal pensions), then the transfer may proceed.
  - b. If not, then the transfer may proceed if certain evidence is provided, e.g. an employment link between the member and the occupational pension scheme, or residency in the same

financial jurisdiction as the scheme for qualifying recognised overseas pension scheme (QROPS).

- c. If neither of the above apply, the presence of any "red flags" will allow the transfer to be prevented, while if there are any "amber flags" the transfer may be paused whilst the member takes guidance about the possibility of scams.
21. The Work and Pensions Committee (WPC) published its report on the first part of their inquiry, Protecting pension savers — five years on from the pension freedoms: Pension scams. The WPC calls on the Government and regulators "to act quickly and decisively to protect pension savers". It warns that commonly cited figures of the scale of pension scamming are likely to substantially underestimate the problem, and says that the move online by pension scammers has been a recurring theme of its inquiry. It makes over 30 individual recommendations, under four main headings
- a. Recording and reporting
  - b. Prevention
  - c. Enforcement
  - d. Supporting pension scam victims.
22. The Pension Scams Industry Group (PSIG) has produced an update to their voluntary code of good practice on combating pension scams. The code is based around three principles:
- a. They should raise awareness of pension scams for members and beneficiaries.
  - b. They should have robust, proportionate, and compliant processes for assessing whether a receiving scheme may be operating as part of a pension scam, and for responding to that risk.
  - c. They should generally be aware of the known current strategies of the perpetrators of pension scams in order to inform the due diligence they need to undertake and should refer to the warning flags set out in TPR guidance, FCA alerts and by Action Fraud. The code now comprises a framework document, practitioner guide (setting out the due diligence steps when schemes assess the scam risk of a requested transfer), resources pack and technical guide, plus a summary of the changes since the last version. The changes reflect developments from the Pensions Regulator (including its letter for members considering transferring from DB to DC schemes, and its guidance for trustees to highlight Pension Wise and encourage members to take regulated advice) and recent initiatives from the Financial Conduct Authority, along with Pensions Ombudsman determinations and court rulings. The code suggests that scheme administrators consider using the phone to better engage with the member during the due diligence process and reminds them to maintain appropriate records and management information. PSIG expects to produce a further update later in the year when the new regulations are published.

## **Review of Resource Requirements**

23. The transfer scam prevention provision within the Pension Scheme Act 2021 builds on the already existing requirement for Pension Funds to carry out due diligence in relation to a transfer request.
24. An additional set of due diligence checks will be required to be undertaken by Pension Administration with transfers to be divided into four categories based on risk. For transfer to

occupational pension schemes, Funds will need to confirm the member has demonstrated an employment link with the scheme before the transfer takes place.

25. Those wishing to transfer to a qualifying recognised overseas pension scheme (QROPS) will need to prove an employment link or demonstrate residency in the same financial jurisdiction as that of the scheme to which they wish to transfer.
26. All other schemes will be subject to a flag regime. Members will have to show they have taken guidance over the transfer in amber flag circumstances.
27. In order for the Nottinghamshire Pension Fund to ensure that it is able to implement the Regulations changes in respect of “Transfer Scam Prevention” in accordance with the Pensions Scheme Act 2021 and its obligations to protect its members from pension scams as detailed within the report, together with the delivery of the pension scam action plan at Appendix 1 an additional Technical and Regulations Officer will be required.
28. This additional capacity within the Pension Technical and Regulations Team will ensure that the Nottinghamshire Pension Administration Team has sufficient resource:
  - a. To fulfil its requirements to the Pension Regulators pledge to combat pension scams.
  - b. Ensure that all due diligence checks are completed for all transfers. Enabling the production of transfer quotes and estimates to be undertaken by Pension Administration Team and all due diligence checks to be undertaken by the Technical and Regulations Team.
29. Following funding approval from Pension Committee, approval is now sought from Personnel Committee to the establishment of an additional 1 FTE Technical and Regulation Officer post at a Grade 5 up to £36,169 per annum including oncosts.

### **Other Options Considered**

30. Do nothing. This is not considered to be a viable option and may potentially expose the Nottinghamshire Pension Fund and its members to undue risk, reputational damage, and action by the Pension Regulator.
31. Absorb the work required to “pledge to combat pension scams”, pension scam action plan and additional due diligence transfer checks resulting from the Pension Scheme Act 2021 into the Pension Administration Office. However, this is not considered to be a feasible option as it would have very significant implications for the time taken to complete a transfer.

### **Reasons for Recommendation**

32. Pension scams are an increasing issue and becoming ever more sophisticated.
33. The Nottinghamshire Pension Fund has a duty to protect its members and the reputation of the Fund.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

34. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public-sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Data Protection and Information Governance**

35. A Data Privacy Impact Assessment is not required.

## **Financial Implications**

36. The financial implications for the additional Technical and Regulations Officer is covered in paragraph 29. Pension Committee approved the funding for this post from the Pension Fund at the meeting on 29 July 2021.

## **Human Resources Implications**

37. Appointment to the additional Technical and Regulations Office post will be through the Council's agreed recruitment and selection procedures.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that :

- 1) Members approve the establishment of the additional Technical and Regulations Officer to support the delivery of the requirements of the Pension Regulators pledge to combat pension scams, the requirements of Pension Scheme Act 2021 regarding combating pension scams and the Nottinghamshire Pension Fund pension scam action plan shown in Appendix 1 as detailed within this report following approval by Pension Committee, at its meeting on 29 July 2021 with the costs being funded by the Pension Fund.

**Marjorie Toward**

**Service Director – Customers, Governance and Employees**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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**Constitutional Comments (KK 25/08/21)**

38. The proposals in this report are within the remit of Personnel Committee.

**Financial Comments (SES 24/08/21)**

39. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 36 of the report.

40. The financial implications for the additional Technical and Regulations Officer is covered in paragraph 29. Pension Committee approved the funding for this post from the Pension Fund at the meeting on 29 July 2021.

**HR Comments (JP 31/08/21)**

41. The HR implications are set out in the body of the report including the establishment of an additional post identified at paragraph 29. Recruitment to the post will be undertaken in line with the Councils HR procedures including recruitment and redeployment policies.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All

**Appendix 1 – Nottinghamshire Pension Fund – Pension Scam Action Plan - Approved by Pensions Committee on 29 July 2021**

	Action	Timeframe	Owner
1.	<p><b>End to end review of the current pension transfer process</b> including review of all due diligence measures and <b>develop a checklist process</b> for completion for each transfer.</p> <p>Note: an initial review was undertaken at the start of the pandemic (March 2020). A further review is intended to ensure the process and procedures are in line with the “pledge to combat pension scams” and the scam provision within the Pension Scheme Act 2021.</p>	By the end of 2021	Pension Administration Office
2.	<p><b>Commit to the Pension Regulator Pledge to Combat Scams</b></p> <p>Step 1 - Complete all the required actions</p> <p>Step 2 – Submit Self Certification to Pension Regulator</p> <p>Step 3 – Confirmed by the Pension Regulator once self-certification has been submitted.</p>	Timeframe to be determined once additional Technical and Regulations Officer recruited.	Group Manager, Business Services Centre in conjunction with the BSC Pension Team Manager
3.	<b>Utilise the “Our Pledge to Combat Pension Scam” logo</b>	Linked to Action 2	Technical and Regulations Team supported by Pension Systems Team
3.	<p><b>Pension Scam online training module</b> via the Pension Regulator Trustee Toolkit is completed by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pension Administration Staff</li> <li>• Pension Committee Members</li> <li>• Pension Board Members</li> </ul>	By the end of October 2021	BSC Pension Team Manager in conjunction with Demonstrate Services for Pension Committee and Pension Board Members.
5.	Review and develop ongoing <b>Pension Scam communication plan</b>	Ongoing – links to action 1,2 and 3.	Technical and Regulations Team
6.	Pension Scam section to be added to the <b>Pension Administration Annual Performance Report</b>	Next Report Due June 2022	BSC Pension Team Manager





**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR - CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND  
EMPLOYEES****CUSTOMER SERVICE UPDATE AND PLANS****Purpose of the Report**

1. To present an update to members on the performance and plans of the Customer Service Team in terms of statistics, feedback, improvements and plans for the remainder of this financial year.

**Information**

2. The presentation will cover:
  - a. Performance information from April-August 2021
  - b. Progress made against quarterly priorities during Quarter 1 and 2
  - c. High volume areas and impacts
  - d. MyNotts update
  - e. Work that is scheduled to be completed by Nottinghamshire County Council Customer Service Design and Build Team
  - f. Planned development activities for the remainder of 2021/22.

**Reasons for Recommendation**

3. To update members on the performance to date and raise awareness of planned improvement activities as part of the team's overall recovery plan.

**Statutory and Policy Implications**

4. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Data Protection and Information Governance**

5. Within the current options there is no intention to capture any detailed personal information relating to customers and users. Information Governance colleagues are being involved in the project at all stages to ensure compliance and security of data is considered throughout and any potential issues identified, and risks mitigated. The development of personalisation within the App will take email addresses and district location only.

## **Finance Implications**

6. There are no financial implications at this stage. Should the additional work proposed move forward with ICT and Cantarus (MyNotts App Supplier) there may be additional costs associated. If this is the case a further report will be brought to committee for approval.

## **Human Resources Implications**

7. There are no Human Resources implications arising from this report.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty Implications**

8. All plans in place and work planned will consider any implications in terms of equality.

## **Implications for Service Users**

9. The aim of the Customer Service team is to provide front door access to all council services. It needs to provide support and guidance through all access channels the team manage including phone, email, online forms, SMS/Text, the website and MyNotts App. Part of the teams role is that of continuous improvement and to make it as easy as possible for residents, visitors, partners etc to access council services and to provide links to the wider Nottinghamshire organisations.
10. In reviewing processes, technological and automated developments, consideration will be given to the needs and abilities of all residents who access services to ensure that any approaches developed do not disadvantage any groups.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1) That members consider the proposed priorities and agree developments and work plans.

**Marjorie Toward**

**Service Director - Customers, Governance and Employees**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Marie Rowney, Group Manager Customer Service, [marie.rowney@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:marie.rowney@nottscc.gov.uk)

Tel: 0115 9772054, Mobile: 07540 272161

**Constitutional Comments (KK 25/08/21)**

11. The proposal in this report is within the remit of the Personnel Committee.

**Financial Comments (SES 24/08/21)**

12. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

**Human Resources Comments (JP 31/08/21)**

13. There are no HR implications contained in this report.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All



**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR - CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND  
EMPLOYEES****WORK PROGRAMME****Purpose of the Report**

1. To consider the Committee's work programme for 2021 / 2022.

**Information**

2. The County Council requires each committee to maintain a work programme. The work programme will assist the management of the committee's agenda, the scheduling of the committee's business and forward planning. The work programme will be updated and reviewed at each pre-agenda meeting and committee meeting. Any member of the committee is able to suggest items for possible inclusion.
3. The attached work programme has been drafted in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman and includes items which can be anticipated at the present time. (meeting dates and agenda items are subject to review in light of the ongoing COVID-19 period). Other items will be added to the programme as they are identified,
4. As part of the transparency introduced by the new committee arrangements, committees are expected to review day to day operational decisions made by officers using their delegated powers. It is anticipated that the committee will wish to commission periodic reports on such decisions. The committee is therefore requested to identify activities on which it would like to receive reports for inclusion in the work programme.

**Other Options Considered**

5. None.

**Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

6. To assist the committee in preparing its work programme.

**Statutory and Policy Implications**

7. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and

the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the Committee considers whether any amendments are required to the Work Programme.

**Marjorie Toward**  
**Service Director – Customers, Governance and Employees**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**  
**Sarah Ashton, Democratic Services Officer, Tel: 0115 977 3962**

## **Constitutional Comments (HD)**

8. The Committee has authority to consider the matters set out in this report by virtue of its terms of reference.

## **Financial Comments (NS)**

9. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **Background Papers**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All

## Personnel Committee Work Programme

Title	Brief Summary of Agenda Item	Lead Officer	Report Author
<b>3 November 2021 - 2pm</b>			
Graduate Development Programme	Update on progress	Marje Toward	Adrian McKiernan
Review of communications functions	Approval of implementation of recommendations from review of approach to communications	Marje Toward	Luke Barrett
NCC Workforce Availability, Sickness Absence Performance and Support to Maintain Employee Health and Wellbeing (Quarter 2 - 2021/22)	Quarterly update and review of progress against action plan	Marje Toward	Gill Elder
Update on review of Apprenticeship Strategy	Update on review	Marje Toward	Gill Elder
<b>15 December 2021 - 2pm</b>			
To be confirmed			
<b>26 January 2022 - 2pm</b>			
Gender Pay Gap	Annual update report and approval of actions and publication of data	Marje Toward	Gill Elder
People Strategy	Approval of People Strategy 2022-2025 to enable delivery of the Council Plan	Marje	Gill Elder
NCC Workforce Availability, Sickness Absence Performance and Support to Maintain Employee Health and Wellbeing (Quarter 3 - 2021/22)	Quarterly update and review of progress against annual action plan	Marje Toward	Gill Elder
<b>9 March 2022 - 2pm</b>			
Health and Safety Update	Update on health and safety activity and issues and approval of actions	Marje Toward	John Nilan

<b>20 April 2022 - 2pm</b>			
NCC Workforce Availability, Sickness Absence Performance and Support to Maintain Employee Health and Wellbeing (Quarter 4 - 2020/21)	Quarterly update and review of progress against action plan	Marje Toward	Gill Elder
<b>25 May 2022 - 2pm</b>			
To be confirmed			
<b>13 July 2022 - 2pm</b>			
To be confirmed			