

## **Personnel Committee**

**Wednesday, 30 June 2021 at 10:30**

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

---

### **AGENDA**

1	Terms of Reference and Membership	3 - 6
2	Minutes of the last meeting held on 10 March 2021	7 - 10
3	Apologies for Absence	
4	Declarations of Interests by Members and Officers:- (see note below) (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (b) Private Interests (pecuniary and non-pecuniary)	
5	NCC Employment Opportunities for Young People	11 - 20
6	NCC Workforce Availability, Sickness Absence Performance & Support to Maintain Employee Health & Well-Being	21 - 40
7	Workforce Check-in Survey Update	41 - 50
8	Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy and Action Plan	51 - 56
9	Work Programme	57 - 60

### **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>

**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR - CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND  
EMPLOYEES****TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP****Purpose of the Report**

1. To note the membership and terms of reference of the Personnel Committee.

**Information**

2. The following councillors have been appointed to the committee:

Chairman – Councillor Gordon Wheeler  
Vice-Chairman – Councillor Jonathan Wheeler

Councillor Callum Bailey  
Councillor Maureen Dobson  
Councillor Bethan Eddy  
Councillor Errol Henry  
Councillor Richard Jackson  
Councillor John Lee  
Councillor Sheila Place  
Councillor Helen-Ann Smith  
Councillor Elizabeth Williamson

3. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the County Council on 27 May 2021 established the committee with the terms of reference. The exercise of the powers and functions set out below are delegated by the Full Council to the committee in relation to Personnel:
  - a. All decisions within the control of the Council including but not limited to those listed in the Table below
  - b. Policy development and approval in relation to personnel, subject to any necessary approval by the Policy Committee or the Full Council
  - c. Review of performance in relation to the services provided on a regular basis
  - d. Review of day to day operational decisions taken by officers
  - e. Approval of consultation responses except for responses to day-to-day technical consultations which will be agreed with the Chairman and reported to the next available committee following their submission
  - f. Approval of departmental staffing structures as required

- g. Approving all Councillor attendance at conferences, seminars and training events within the UK mainland for which a fee is payable including any expenditure incurred, within the remit of this committee and to receive quarterly reports from Corporate Directors on departmental officer travel outside the UK within the remit of this committee.
4. If any report comes within the remit of more than one committee, to avoid the report being discussed at several committees, the report will be presented and determined at the most appropriate committee. If this is not clear, then the report will be discussed and determined by the Policy Committee.
5. As part of the detailed work programme the committee will receive reports on the exercise of powers delegated to Officers.
6. The committee will be responsible for its own projects and may establish steering groups to consider projects. Where it considers it appropriate, projects will be considered by a cross-committee project steering group that will report back to the most appropriate committee.

<b>Table</b>
Responsibility for the pay, terms and conditions of service and training of employees except for approving the annual Pay Policy Statement which is reserved to the Full Council
Responsibility for employee relations including arrangements for consultation/ negotiation with Trades Unions and any matters relating to Trade Union recognition
Responsibility for health and safety related matters
Reviewing and recommending Employment Procedure Rules to the Council for adoption
Reviewing annually the overall staffing structure of the Council
Responsibility for Human Resources, Business Support, the Business Services Centre, the Customer Services Centre and Communications Team

## **SENIOR STAFFING SUB-COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE**

7. This is a sub-committee of the Personnel Committee.
8. The exercise of the powers and functions set out below are delegated by the Full Council to the Senior Staffing Sub-Committee:
  - a. Responsibility for the appointment and dismissal of, and taking disciplinary action against, senior employees as set out in the Employment Procedure Rules
  - b. It is to be noted that:
    - The appropriate committee chairman for the post being considered will always be appointed as a member of the Sub-Committee. Where the issue being considered relates to the Council's Chief Executive or a Corporate Director the Sub-Committee will have a membership of nine; otherwise the Sub-Committee will have a membership of five.

- The Sub-Committee will be required to follow the Council's Recruitment and Selection Code of Practice
- The procedures the Sub-Committee is required to follow are set out in the Employment Procedure Rules.

### **Other Options Considered**

9. None.

### **Reason for Recommendation**

10. To inform the committee of its membership and terms of reference.

### **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.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1) It is recommended that the committee's membership and terms of reference for Personnel and Senior Staffing Sub Committee be noted.

**Marjorie Toward**

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

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

**Sarah Ashton, Democratic Services Officer, 0115 9773962**

### **Constitutional Comments (KK 16/06/21)**

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

### **Financial Comments (SES 16/06/21)**

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

### **HR Comments (JP 17/06/21)**

14. Any HR implications are contained in 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



# Minutes

Meeting PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Date Wednesday 10 March 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
	Errol Henry JP	Gordon Wheeler
	John Longdon	Jonathan Wheeler
	Sheila Place	Yvonne Woodhead
A	Helen-Ann Smith	

## SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

None

## OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Sarah Ashton	Democratic Services Officer
Marjorie Toward	Service Director – Customers, Governance and Employees
Gill Elder	Head of Human Resources
Julie Forster	Group Manager – Business Support
Sarah Drury	Business Support Development Officer
Marie Rowney	Group Manager – Customers, Complaints, and Information
John Nilan	Group Manager – Health & Safety
Kaj Ghattaora	Group Manager - Procurement

## TRADE UNION IN ATTENDANCE

Adana Godden	GMB
Adrian Morgan	UNISON
Janes Minto	UNISON

## 1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2021, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

## **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The following apology for absence was received:

- Councillor Helen-Ann Smith (Medical)

## **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

## **4. BUSINESS SUPPORT REVIEW PROGRAMME**

### **RESOLVED 2021/07**

That the revised Business Support Structure in Appendix A of the report, be approved.

## **5. PERFORMANCE UPDATE AND CHANGES TO THE CUSTOMER SERVICES CENTRE OPERATING MODEL**

### **RESOLVED 2021/08**

- 1) That the new posts, revised structure, and operating model, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, effective from April 2021 be approved.
- 2) That the Committee agree to congratulate the Group Manager and the entire Customer Services team for all the excellent work they do and continue to do on behalf of the residents and customers of Nottinghamshire.

## **6. HEALTH & SAFETY SIX MONTHLY UPDATE**

### **RESOLVED 2021/09**

- 1) That the Committee agreed to congratulate the Health and Safety Team on achievement of ISO 45001:2018 and to publicise this significant achievement.
- 2) That the Committee agree to receive a Health and Safety update in Six months.



## **7. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) – RESOURCE IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS)**

### **RESOLVED 2021/10**

- 1) That the Committee agreed the posts listed in Table 1 of the report continue until 31 March 2022.
- 2) That the Committee agreed to receive periodic reviews of PPE provision throughout 2021/22, including a further review of supply in line with the Department of Health and Social Care planned review of PPE provision in April 2021.
- 3) That the Committee agree to receive further reports if staffing requirements were impacted by changes to PPE provision.

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

### **RESOLVED 2021/11**

- 1) That the Committee agreed to continue the 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) That the Committee agreed receive information on 2020/21 quarter 4 absence figures and workforce availability at the Committee meeting in April 2021.
- 3) That the Committee agreed to receive information regarding the Return to Work research project as this work develops at the Committee meeting in June 2021.

## **9. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT WITH THE COUNCIL'S WORKFORCE**

### **RESOLVED 2021/12**

- 1) That the Committee agreed to consider the development of an Employee Communication and Engagement Strategy at a future Committee meeting.
- 2) That the Committee agreed to commend the positive engagement that continues to enable the ongoing positive contribution of the workforce.

## **10. WORK PROGRAMME**

Marjorie Toward informed Members that the Disability update would not be available for the April meeting and as there were no other substantive items on the agenda proposed that the meeting of the 20 April 2021 be cancelled

### **RESOLVED 2021/13**

- 1) That the Committee agreed to the work programme be updated according to recommendations made during this meeting.
- 2) That the Committee agreed that if no substantive items were to be reported to the Committee on 20 April 2021 that the Committee meeting would be cancelled, (Clerk to notify Members and Officers in early April)

## **CLOSING COMMENTS**

As this could potentially be the last meeting of this Committee, the Members acknowledged and thank those Members who were retiring at the end of the current administration.

The meeting closed at 12.18pm

### **CHAIRMAN**

**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR – CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND  
EMPLOYEES****NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Elected Members on the range of employment and development opportunities Nottinghamshire County Council have available to young people and the measures the Council is taking to address the impact of the Covid 19 Pandemic on youth unemployment, including reviewing its Apprenticeship Strategy.

**Information**

2. With job prospects and living standards suffering under Covid 19, the role of the Council in supporting the local economy has never been so critical. The impact of the pandemic has been especially hard on youth employment and figures show a significant increase in young people claiming unemployment benefits. There is now, more than ever, the need for the Council to take a leadership role in creating new opportunities for young people, particularly those who have left care, have a disability or who are from an ethnic minority currently under-represented in the Council's or wider local workforce.
3. The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the number of new apprenticeship starts as it has on recruitment more widely. Clearly this has affected employers' ability to maximise the spend of the Apprenticeship Levy but the Council continues to seek creative ways of sharing this locally. The current situation provides us with a moment to reflect on what has been achieved so far in terms of apprenticeships but also presents a real opportunity to review our current strategy and better align it with the priorities emerging in the new Council plan around skills development.
4. The Council puts children and young people at the heart of everything it does and sets great store on its role in achieving better and consistently good outcomes with its range of existing support. This report will provide an overview and update on the existing programmes offered by the Council through the HR & Workforce and Organisation Development (HR&WOD) Service and will cover:
  - Work Experience
  - Kickstart Programme
  - Apprenticeships

- Graduate Programme
- Leonard Cheshire Change 100 interns

## **Work Experience**

5. The Council's work experience programme has been impacted by the measures in place as a result of Covid 19 due to the limitations of many services not being physically present in our buildings. As a result, a Virtual Work Experience Programme has been designed to initially accommodate requests for placements from schools but with future plans of offering opportunities to a wider audience and for specific professional areas.
6. The Virtual Work Experience Programme will be delivered through a learning platform linked to My Learning, My Career and through a collaborative externally facing workspace that participants will be allowed access to for the duration of their placement.

The programme includes:

- eLearning modules designed to build an understanding of working for the Council and authored to be young person friendly
  - a range of real-life examples, exercises, case studies and work tasks
  - guided sessions with a Council employee through the collaborative MS Teams space
  - reflective journals and evaluation sessions at the end of each day to consolidate learning
  - certificates of completion.
7. The School's programme will be launched in July with sessions offered through August as a trial and open to applicants from September. A specific programme aimed at 14–18-year-olds interested in a career in Social Work went live on 14<sup>th</sup> June. Developed in collaboration with a range of employees from both adult and children's social work teams and including current social work students, the programme will run for a week and will be repeated at intervals throughout the year.
  8. Most of the development of the Virtual Work Experience Programme has been delivered by the Level 3 Business Administrator Apprentice working in the HR&WOD team. This is a fantastic example of the creativity and innovation that young people can bring to the Council.

## **Kickstart Programme**

9. The Kickstart Programme is a Government funded initiative for 16-24-year-old claimants of Universal Credit with employers offering a six-month paid work placement with training and development opportunities. The Council is registered with The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) as a Kickstart employer and placement proposals are submitted to the DWP for young people to apply.
10. A recruitment process has been developed so that a unique link to the placements on offer will be provided to the DWP and candidates can access the information and application form for the placement they are interested in via this link. This will ensure that only applications from young people meeting the eligibility criteria for the Kickstart Programme are able to apply.

11. The learning and development element has been designed to meet the criteria of the Kickstart Programme to develop work related skills. The content of the programme has been planned in collaboration with Inspire and will include access to the My Learning, My Career portal for relevant eLearning and professional development opportunities and will include:
- development of employability skills including CV's, application forms and interview skills
  - role specific development that may include a nationally recognised qualification where available
  - Functional Skills in English, Math and ICT if required
  - Personalised mentor support and guidance.
12. There are currently six placements submitted to DWP; three for Chief Executive's department; one from Place; one from Children and Families and the final one from a maintained school.
13. It is the intention that, wherever possible, the successful Kickstart applicant will progress after the six-month placement into either an apprenticeship or employment via a vacancy with the Council. The Apprenticeship budget that sits with HR&WOD team will be ringfenced to provide the employment costs for the progression into these apprenticeships if required.

## Apprenticeships

14. The Council's apprenticeship programme utilises the Apprenticeship Levy to offer learning and development opportunities via an approved apprenticeship standard to existing staff as continued professional development and through the conversion of appropriate vacancies to an apprenticeship or by the creation of entry to employment level apprenticeships additional to the staffing establishment.
15. There has been a steady increase in the number of young people employed on an apprenticeship programme with the Council, and whilst many of our Apprentices are existing employees, there has been a noted increase in the number of young people applying for apprenticeship vacancies. There are currently 219 Apprentices employed by the Council; 62 of these are under 25 years old and 11 apprentices are aged 16-18 years.

Corporate			
Department	Total	Status	
ASCH	43	CPD	83
C&F	27	Vacancy	26
Chief Executive's	62	Supernumerary	21
Place	31	Mandatory Qualification*	33
Total	163		163

\*Diplomas in ASC and Children's Residential

Table continued over page.

Schools	
District	Total
Ashfield	3
Bassetlaw	7
Broxtowe	7
Gedling	6
Mansfield	14
Newark & Sherwood	10
Rushcliffe	11
Total	58

16. There is a small budget within HR&WOD for the employment costs associated with the Apprenticeship Programme that are additional to the staffing establishment and this is prioritised for those aged 16 – 18 years; looked after children and Care Leavers and anyone eligible for an apprenticeship on completion of a Kickstart placement.
17. At Personnel Committee in October 2019, Members agreed that the Council would transfer the 25% unspent levy as approved by HMRC. This transfer has been prioritised for young people at risk of NEET status and an agreement is in place with Futures to offer employment support and an apprenticeship if the Council is not able to offer that professional route. To date there has not been the demand from young people for this service. A proportion of the Levy Transfer has been committed to providing apprenticeships and associated support for any young person in contact with Children and Families Department, specifically looked after children and care leavers. The agreement in place with Impact Futures provides young people with careers information, advice and guidance and employability skills where appropriate and to identify apprenticeship opportunities with a local employer that meets the young person's aspirations. Whilst the referral process is in place, there have only been two young people to date that have been identified for this service.
18. In addition to the Futures agreement, the Council has launched the Levy Transfer application for SMEs in Nottinghamshire or for Nottinghamshire residents to access apprenticeships. The criteria for applications align to the aims of the Council Plan and prioritise apprenticeships for disadvantaged groups and in areas where there are recognised skills shortages. The first application was received in August 2020 and to date there have been 33 successful applications funding 51 apprenticeships with a total commitment of **£468,500.00**.

### **Graduate Programme**

19. The Council's Graduate Development Programme is a two-year programme that is designed to shape the next generation of local government managers. Applicants should have graduated with at least a 2.1 degree within the last five years from one of the Nottingham Universities or be a Nottinghamshire resident. The scheme is also open to existing Council employees.
20. The programme offers a rotation of placements across the departments that are designed to build on knowledge, skills and behaviours and the participants undertake the Level 5 Departmental Manager Apprenticeship throughout the programme.

21. Now in its fourth year of being delivered in-house, the quality of applicants remains exceptionally high and with assessment centres and interviews being conducted throughout June, the new cohort of six will start in September. Members of this Committee had the opportunity at January's meeting to meet members of the different graduate trainee cohorts and question them on their experiences of the scheme. This was very positively received.

### **Change 100 Programme**

22. Working in partnership with Leonard Cheshire, the Change 100 programme is designed to open employment opportunities to disabled people who are either in their final year of university or have recently graduated. As part of the programme, the Council offers paid three-month internships for candidates over the summer.

23. The Council has been participating in the Change 100 scheme since 2017 with four placements available and continued to offer placements throughout the Coronavirus restrictions last year all be it at a reduction of one placement. Two of the participants in previous years have been successful in gaining employment with the Council as a result of their engagement in the scheme.

24. This year we again have capacity for four placements and have a number of options for participants to be matched to across all departments. The placements are due to start mid-June for three months and include development days with Leonard Cheshire for the participants and bespoke disability awareness sessions for the teams hosting the placements.

### **Other Options Considered**

25. As one of the largest local employers in Nottinghamshire, the Council has a lead role in identifying employment opportunities at varying levels for our residents. Engagement in the schemes identified above, ensures we maintain our offer to provide such opportunities and we continue to work with partner organisations to maximise our offer. Kickstart is a recent example of a new initiative which we have committed to, and further updates will be provided to future meetings as to the progress made on all these programmes of work. The option to do nothing would result in people who face additional challenges in accessing employment being left unsupported with the real possibility of falling into long term unemployment with all the issues associated with this.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

26. The Council seeks to build on its brand as an employer of choice and our commitment to these initiatives provides demonstrable proof of the work underway to improve employment chances which has an overall positive impact on the local economy. Having a programme of work which provides work experience opportunities to enable young people to see what opportunities are available for them within the Council provides a potential talent pipeline for future recruitment particularly in hard to recruit to areas. Given the age profile of our current workforce, encouraging younger residents to consider the Council as a place they can begin and develop their careers, is critical to guaranteeing the Council can access new employees with the relevant skills, knowledge and experience to ensure the future success of the Council on delivering its identified priorities.

27. The development and implementation of the Council's Recovery Framework and new Council Plan with a renewed focus on economic recovery and regeneration post covid provide the opportunity to review the Council's approach to employment for young people within this wider context and maximise the potential opportunities and improve outcomes for young people.

## **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 data protection issues arising from this report as all the information contained is generic and cannot be attributed to individual employees or local businesses.

## **Financial Implications**

30. Financial implications to the Council are for the employment costs of participants in the Graduate Programme, Change 100 and the Apprenticeship Programme. Finances relating to the Kickstart scheme are drawn down from DWP grants and utilise existing funding initiatives available to Inspire through Education and Skills funding. The delivery of Apprenticeships is funded through the Council's levy payments. The transfer of unspent levy to Nottinghamshire employers and residents ensures these funds are maximised and remain in the local economy.

## **Human Resources Implications**

31. The range of programmes for young people on offer enables the Council to maximise career development opportunities and to develop an effective talent pipeline by expanding the offer of in-work training to ensure its workforce has the right skills and knowledge required in a modern, public service organisation.

## **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. The recommendation to transfer levy funds with a focus on delivering opportunities for under-represented and vulnerable groups of young people supports the Council in meeting its statutory obligations.

## **Smarter Working Implications**

33. Any smarter working implications will be considered as part of the emerging Hybrid Working Policy which will apply to relevant sections of the Council's workforce.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members of Personnel Committee:

- 1) Support the work that is already underway to improve employment opportunities particularly for those who have additional challenges in securing regular and meaningful employment.
- 2) Approve a review of the current apprenticeship strategy to ensure it aligns with the emerging priorities post covid in relation to key skills development.
- 3) Agree to receive a further report in September 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.

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

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:** Lyndsey Woolmore, Acting HR, Workforce and Organisational Development Senior Business Partner, Tel. 01159932720 or email [Lyndsey.woolmore@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:Lyndsey.woolmore@nottscc.gov.uk)

### **Constitutional Comments [KK 16/06/21]**

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

### **Financial Comments [SES 16/06/21]**

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

36. Financial implications to the Council are for the employment costs of participants in the Graduate Programme, Change 100 and the Apprenticeship Programme. Finances relating to the Kickstart scheme are drawn down from DWP grants and utilise existing funding initiatives available to Inspire through Education and Skills funding. The delivery of Apprenticeships is funded through the Council's levy payments and any unspent levy is removed by HMRC after 24 months. The transfer of unspent levy to Nottinghamshire employers and residents ensures these funds are maximised and remain in the local economy.

### **HR Comments [JP 17/06/21]**

37. The initiatives described in the report support the Council's overall objectives in supporting young people in employment.

## **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

Table showing the range of Apprenticeships currently being undertaken and the associated costs

<b>Apprenticeship</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Number of apprentices</b>	<b>Total Costs Committed</b>
Adult Care Worker	2	14	£37,800.00
Associate Project Manager	4	8	£58,155.00
Business Administration	2	9	£18,000.00
Business Administration	3	4	£19,798.00
C&YP Workforce: Residential Childcare	3	20	£45,000.00
Care Leadership and Management: General Adult Social Care	5	3	£5,880.00
Chartered Manager Degree	6	8	£120,883.00
Commercial Procurement and Supply	4	7	£63,000.00
Customer Service Practitioner	2	2	£7,930.00
Customer Service Specialist	3	1	£3,848.00
Data Analyst	4	3	£37,990.00
Data Scientist	6	1	£19,000.00
Digital Marketer	3	1	£10,400.00
Horticulture & Landscape Operative	2	1	£5,000.00
HR Consultant/Partner	5	1	£6,900.00
Improvement Leader	6	3	£39,996.00
Improvement Practitioner	4	2	£10,818.00
Infrastructure Technician	3	1	£15,000.00
Intelligence Analyst	4	1	£11,000.00
Internal Audit Practitioner	4	2	£18,000.00
Lead Adult Care Worker	3	5	£13,750.00
Lead Practitioner in Adult Care	4	5	£33,500.00
Leader in Adult Care	5	4	£26,000.00
Learning and Development Consultant/Partner	5	2	£14,000.00
Learning and Development Practitioner	3	1	£2,500.00
Operations/Departmental Manager	5	29	£192,975.00
Production Chef	2	12	£54,000.00
Property Maintenance Operative	2	1	£8,876.00
Regulatory Compliance Officer	4	2	£12,000.00
School Business Professional	4	11	£60,000.00
Senior Leader	7	1	£18,000.00
Senior Production Chef	3	10	£40,000.00
Software Developer	4	2	£36,000.00
Supporting Teaching and Learning in Physical Education and School Sport	3	2	£5,500.00
Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools	2	2	£8,300.00

Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools	3	2	£8,300.00
Teacher	6	3	£27,000.00
Teaching Assistant	3	30	£135,000.00
Team Leader/Supervisor	3	4	£16,200.00
Transport Planning Technician	3	1	£12,000.00
Total		221	£1,278,299.00

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

1. To provide Elected Members with updated information on workforce availability and sickness absence for quarter 4 2020/21. In addition, the report seeks approval to continue to identify new actions to add to the Employee Health and Well-being Action Plan to support the Council's workforce as we develop a new hybrid working model to define the future of how, where and when work is delivered.

**Information**

2. Members received a report to Personnel Committee on 10 March, which demonstrated that the level of workforce availability had increased since the dip at the beginning of 2021. Previous reports have indicated that availability had remained relatively stable throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. The level of availability has fluctuated between 85 and 89% of the workforce and takes into account people unavailable to work due to sickness absence, annual leave or for any other approved reason. This figure has risen to between 89 and 93% during May 2021 with some slight fluctuations around the Easter holidays in April and over the two May Bank Holidays as employees continue to be encouraged to take their annual leave to provide rest and recuperation from the intensity of the current ways of working. The Corporate Leadership Team continue to receive daily information regarding the levels of workforce availability to ensure accurate resource planning is in place to continue to meet the demands of the pandemic alongside increased delivery of "business as usual".
3. The current situation continues to have an impact on people's mental and physical well-being 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 well-being. A further Workforce Well-being Check In survey of all Council employees was undertaken at the end of April 2021 and there is a report to this Committee on today's agenda providing information on the results of the survey, the number of returns and what further steps will be taken in response to the responses provided. Whilst still broadly positive with a similar level of response to the previous survey conducted in May 2020, there are reported levels of increased anxiety about the future return to offices as well as specific individual concerns which are being addressed.

4. Information contained in Appendices A to D indicates the annual 12 month rolling picture regarding sickness absence. The figure for **quarter 4** 2020/21 is 8.68 days, down from the previous quarters of **9.02 days** in **quarter 3** and **8.96 days** for **quarter 2**. The average figure with Covid related sickness absence removed reduced from **8.3** days in quarter 1 to **7.82** days in quarter 2. Quarter 3 saw a further improvement standing at **7.40 days** and **quarter 4** has reduced again to **7.07 days** which places us just 0.07 over our stretch target of 7 days per annum per employee as agreed by this Committee. This provides a full 12 months' information where quarter on quarter the level of sickness absence has reduced where Covid-related absence, including reaction to vaccinations but not long covid, has been removed.
5. The rolling 12 months of data provides useful insight into absence trends. We have considered the 12-month period prior to the pandemic and will continue to monitor absence levels to see if the current level of improvement can be sustained for the next twelve-month period.
6. Appendix B shows the breakdown of reasons for absence with Stress/Depression being the highest in all departments except Place. We have undertaken previous work to reduce the use of "other" as an absence category and this work will continue to ensure we have the most accurate information regarding the reasons for employee sickness absence. Further work will be undertaken to understand why "Not assigned" is continuing to be used as this is not an absence category and is used when nothing is input into the selected field on BMS.
7. The identified actions below are put in place to provide managers with a range of tools to enable them to support their teams and individual employees. These include:
  - Training Mental Health First Aiders, workplace buddies and promoting these services along with the Workplace Chaplaincy
  - Involvement in national initiatives such as Time to Talk
  - Increased content on the intranet pages signposting where support can be accessed
  - Creating development packages for managers to enable them to more effectively support their team members experiencing poor mental health
  - Involvement in 2 Midland Engine funded pilots with Loughborough and Derby universities. The first is a 6 month pilot of how people can be supported to return to work after a period of longer term absence. The second is a three-year study specifically relating to sharing resources around supporting people experiencing issues with their mental health.
  - Currently exploring committing to the green ribbon campaign This is Me, looking at the standards of the Thrive at Work scheme and adopting the principles of Every Mind Matters
  - Daily content published on the Council's intranet during Mental Health Awareness Week which ran from 10<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> May 2021 including the launch of the Workforce Well-being Newsletter which delivers well-being advice and support direct to employees' inboxes
  - Targeted content for Learning at Work week from 16<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> May offering learning opportunities to encourage self help and awareness of well-being issues

- The offer of access to the NHS resource for a free Talking Therapy open day taking place on 26<sup>th</sup> May to professionals working across Nottinghamshire which provides support to employee well-being or to access employment support for people struggling with their mental health and who are anxious about returning to their workplace.
- Commissioning of trauma counselling for targeted groups of employees.

Further measurement and analysis of the various identified actions is required to understand what makes a difference to our employees and to determine the numbers of people accessing the various support measures. This will further inform future actions required.

### **Other Options Considered**

8. The Council recognises 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 well-being offer is kept under constant review and has been extended throughout the pandemic as new needs are identified and fresh resources become available. The actions are supported by the provision of accurate real time employee data and information to ensure that the actions we put in place are targeted and relevant to the Council's workforce.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

9. The Council seeks to support and enable its workforce through a comprehensive support package 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 further 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 current and emerging Council Plans and various departmental strategies. It is also recognised as a positive recruitment and retention tool.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

10. 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**

11. 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**

12. There are no direct financial implications arising from the content of this report as any costs arising from engagement in regional and national programmes of work will be met from existing service budgets. 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**

13. 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 ongoing 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 continuing 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 well-being 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**

14. Work has been undertaken to understand the potential additional risk factors presented by Covid-19 to specific groups of employees including Black and Minority Ethnic employees and those with relevant disabilities and long-term health conditions. Targeted actions have been identified to address these specific issues and we continue to encourage employees to take up the offer of vaccination when offered to do so. 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 outlined in this report and include them in the Employee Health and Well-being Action Plan and along with any further additions arising from the employee survey and the relevant workstream of the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Group.
- 2) Agree to receive a further report in September 2021 which provides information on quarter 1 2021/22 absence figures and workforce availability.
- 3) 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.



**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 16/06/21)**

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

**Financial Comments (SES 16/06/21)**

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

**HR Comments (JP 17/06/21)**

17. 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



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

Appendix A

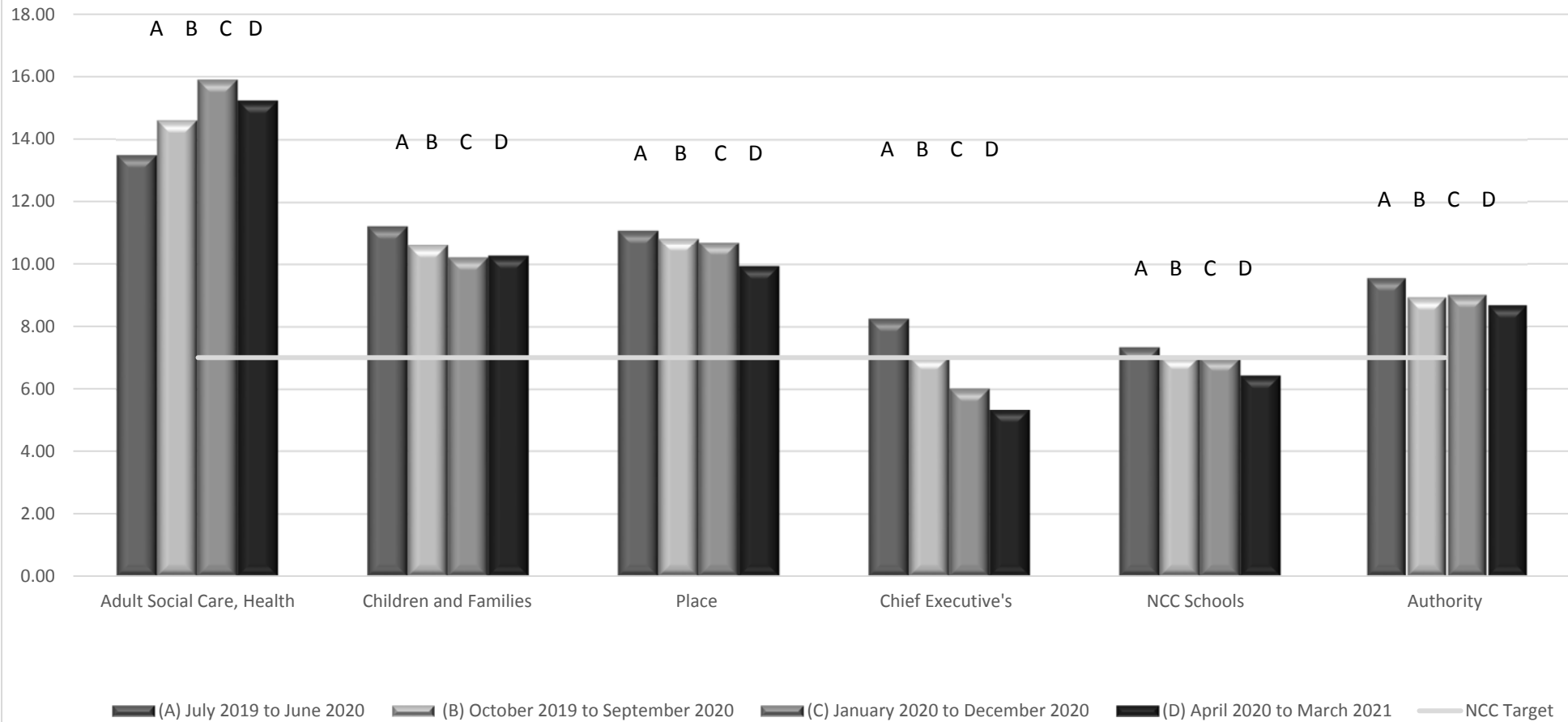
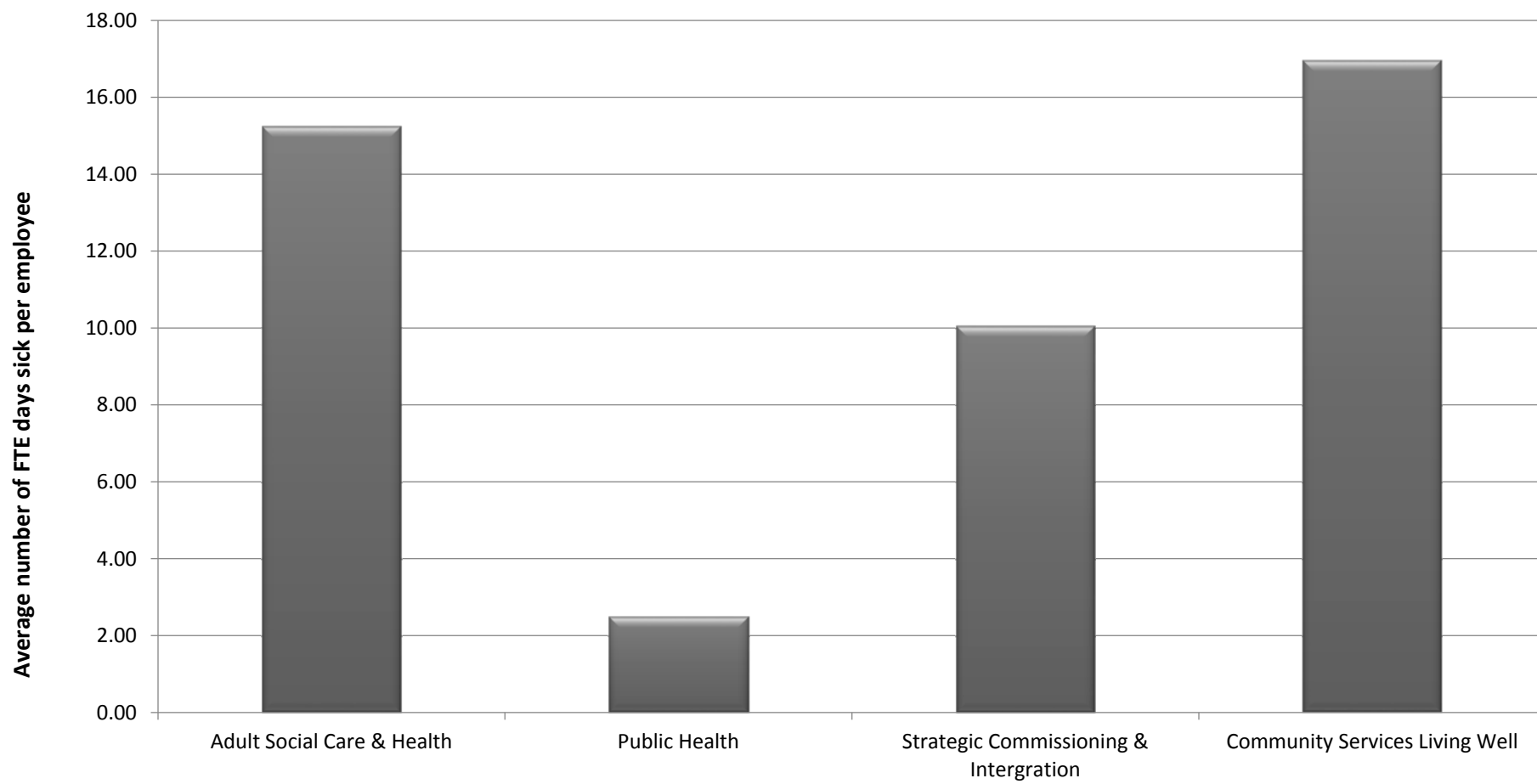
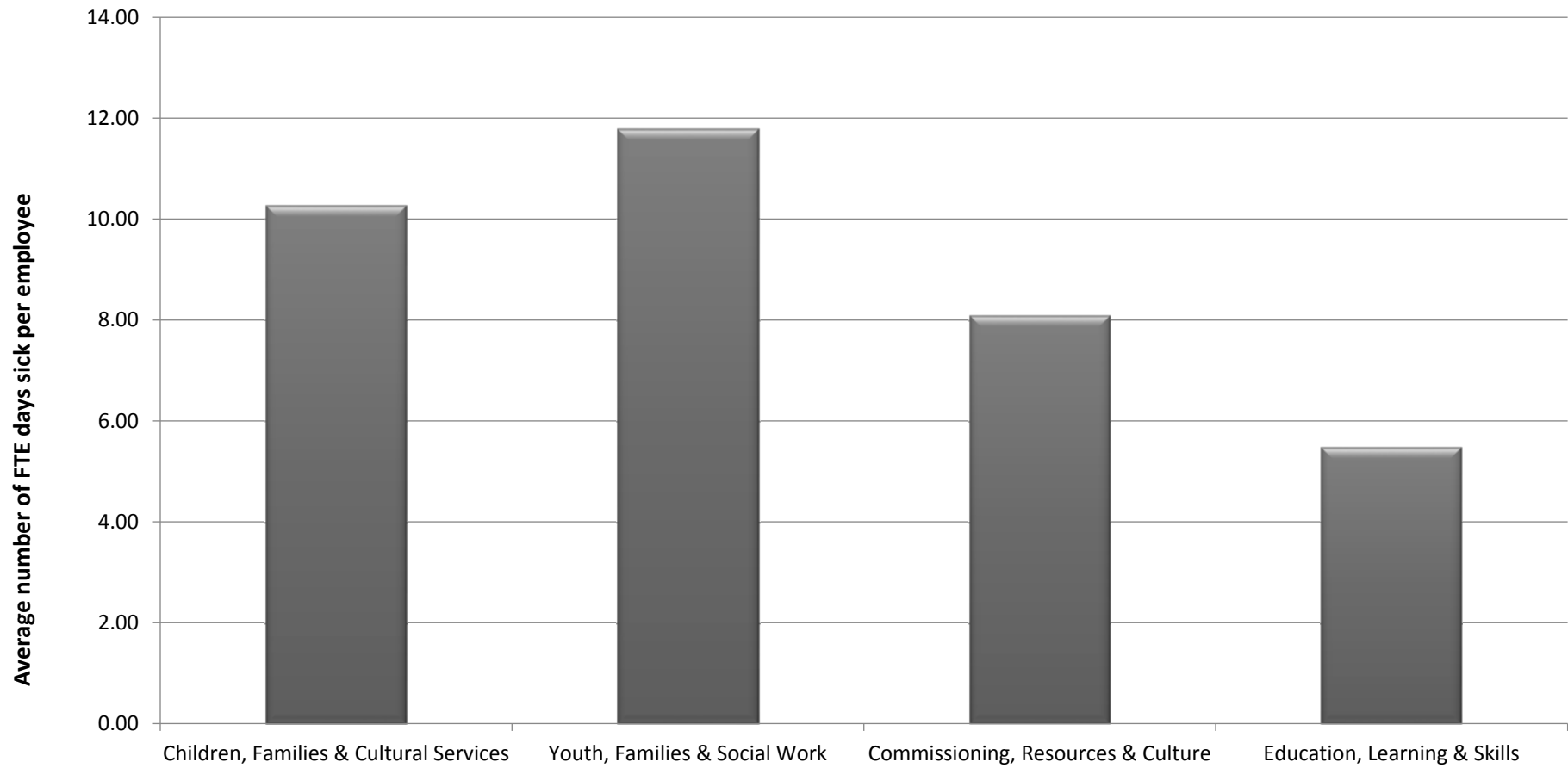


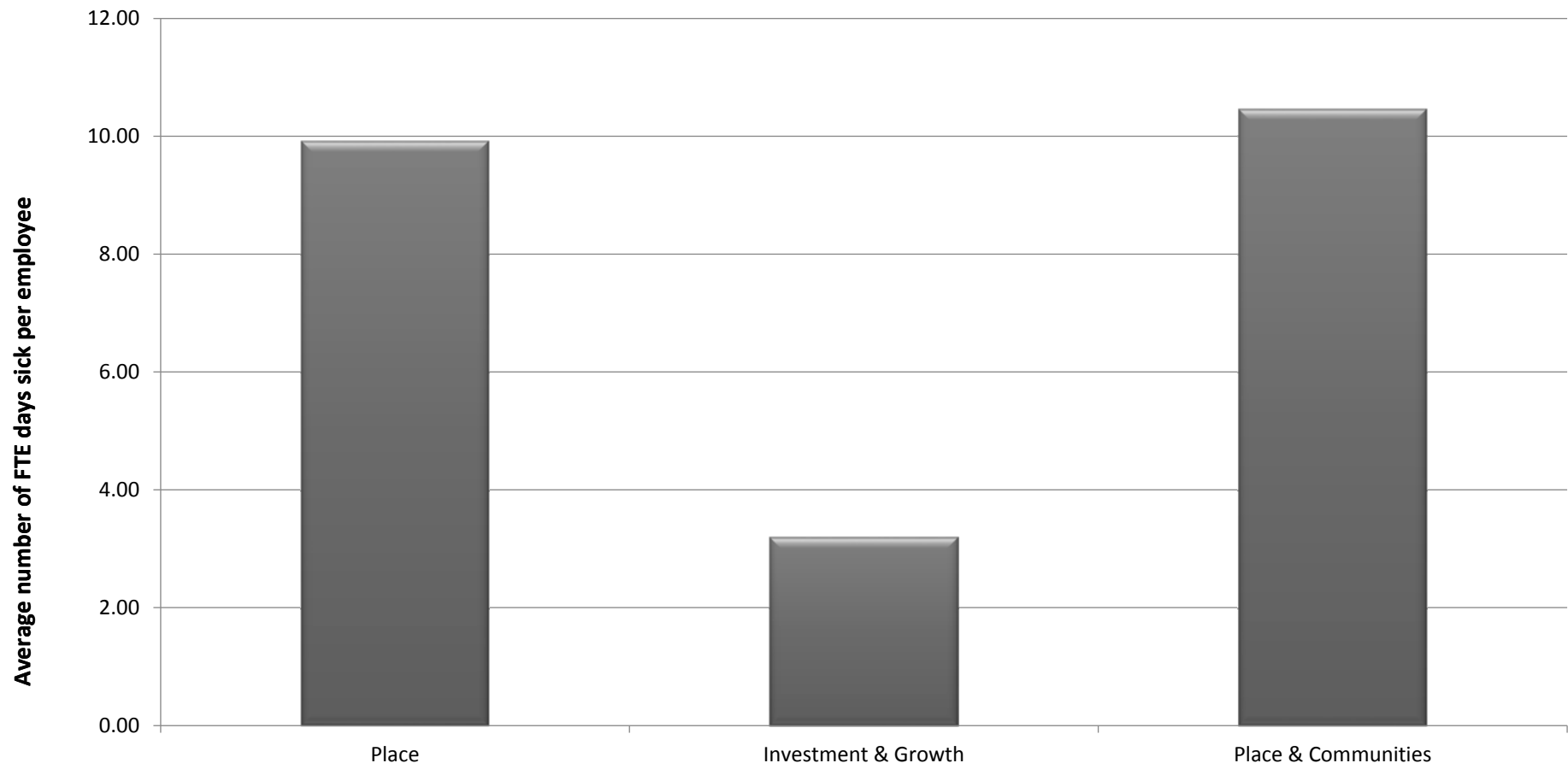
Chart 2 ASCH April 2020 to March 2021



**Chart 3 Children and Families April 2020 to March 2021**



**Chart 4 Place April 2020 to March 2021**



**Chart 5 Chief Executive's April 2020 to March 2021**

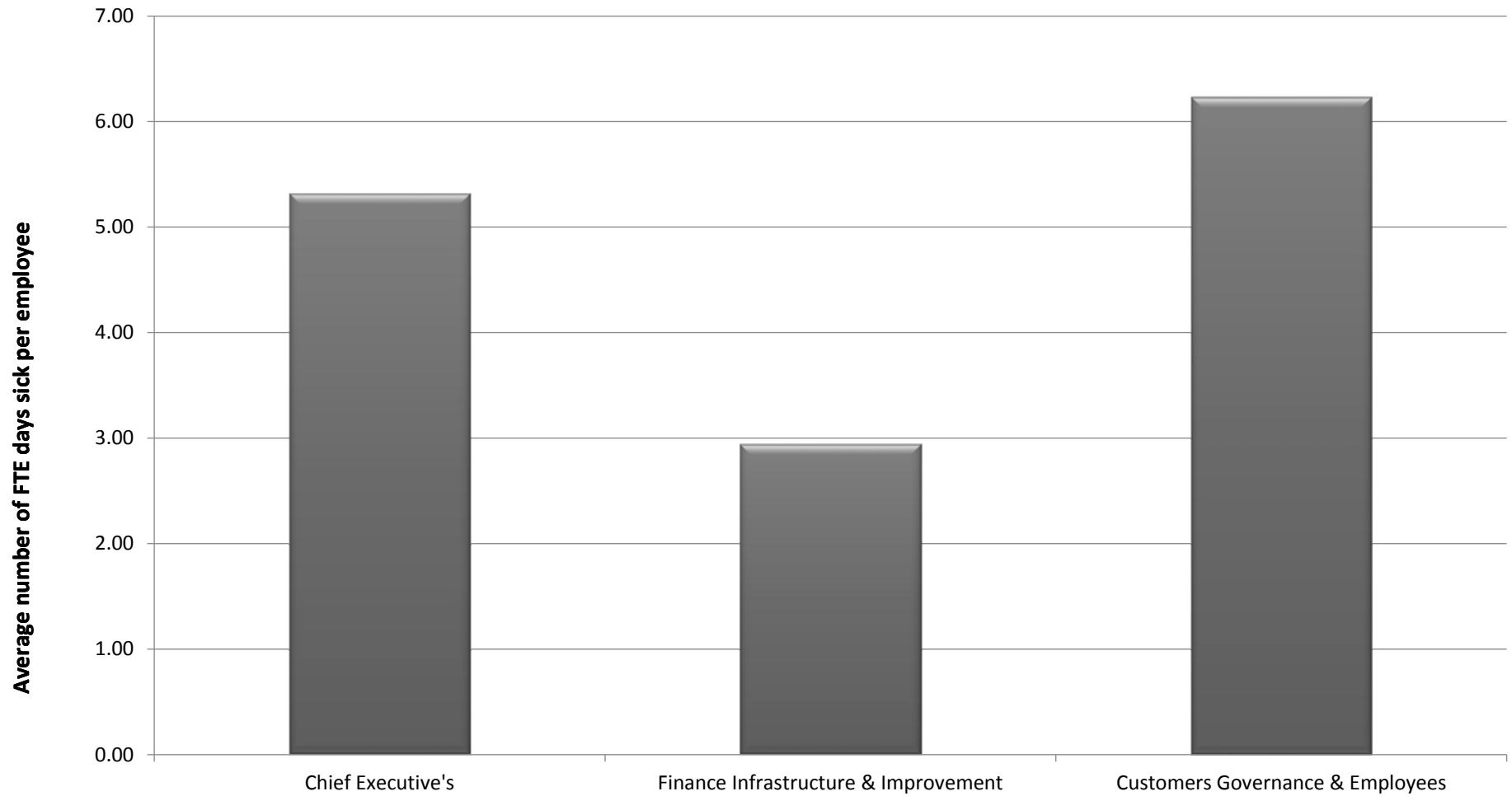


Table 1. Sickness Levels over rolling 12 month basis by Department

	(A) July 2019 to June 2020	(B) October 2019 to September 2020	(C) January 2020 to December 2020	(D) April 2020 to March 2021
<b>Adult Social Care, Health</b>	13.51	14.62	15.91	15.24
<b>Children and Families Place</b>	11.23	10.63	10.22	10.27
	11.09	10.85	10.71	9.93
<b>Chief Executive's</b>	8.25	7.06	6.02	5.32
<b>NCC Schools</b>	7.33	7.07	6.99	6.43
<b>Authority</b>	9.55	8.96	9.02	8.68

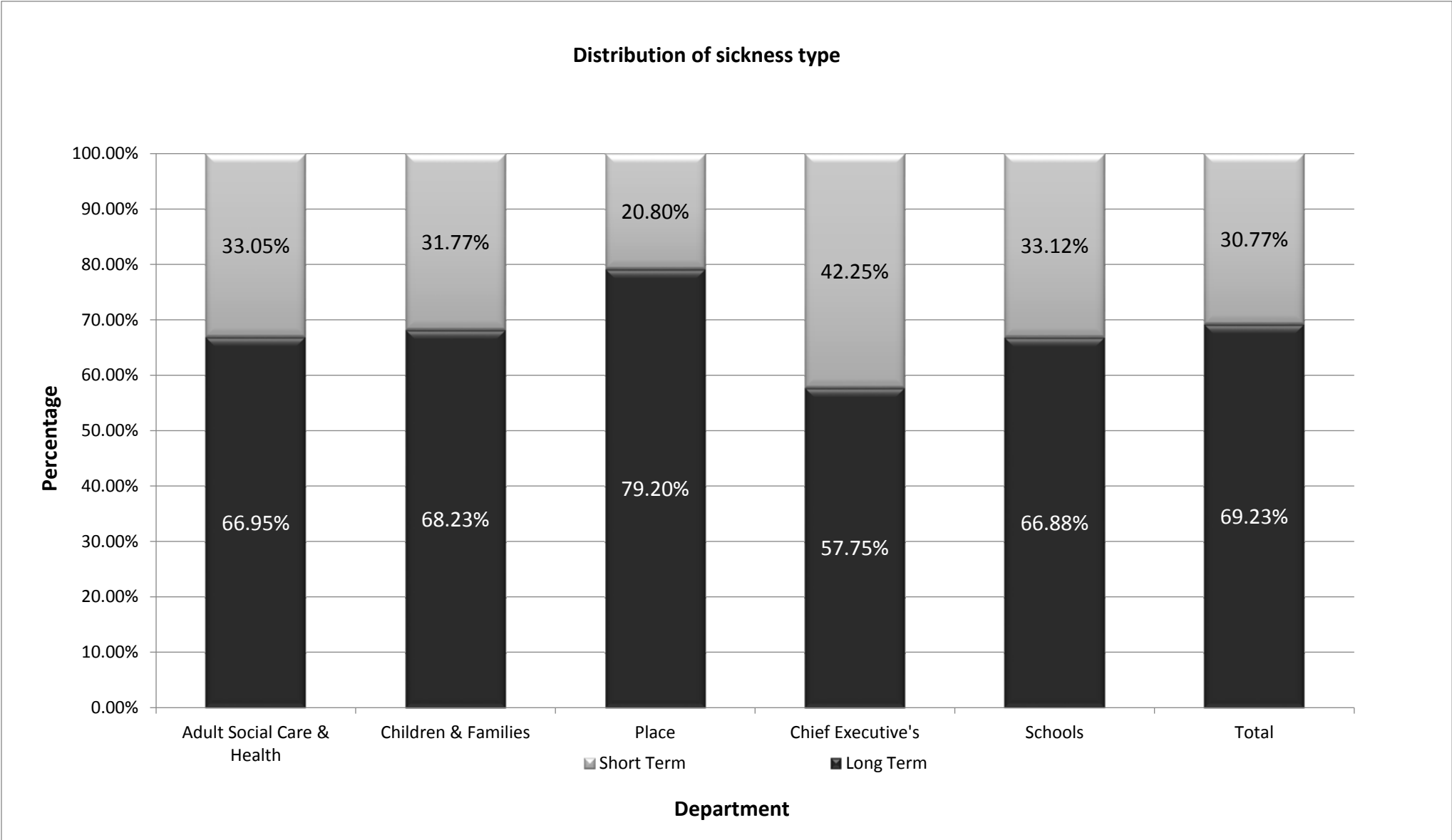


Appendix B

	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	3.16%	3.90%	15.46%	1.62%	1.68%	2.71%	11.13%	10.63%	12.72%	0.17%	2.84%	0.33%	2.91%	27.80%	0.00%	2.96%
Children and Families	3.89%	3.95%	13.93%	2.67%	1.66%	3.10%	5.71%	6.25%	11.91%	1.52%	2.11%	0.10%	3.41%	37.79%	0.78%	1.22%
Place	5.18%	3.03%	9.04%	1.36%	4.87%	2.95%	19.23%	10.95%	15.72%	0.30%	3.07%	0.02%	4.12%	16.87%	0.00%	3.28%
Chief Executive's	2.40%	7.39%	3.78%	3.54%	2.18%	3.63%	6.21%	22.00%	12.06%	0.60%	3.46%	0.87%	7.50%	23.67%	0.00%	0.72%
Schools	3.44%	5.75%	32.50%	1.60%	0.61%	2.51%	5.94%	9.49%	10.53%	0.86%	3.48%	0.14%	4.98%	17.89%	0.17%	0.12%
Totals	3.88%	4.10%	11.65%	2.11%	2.66%	3.02%	11.18%	10.79%	13.26%	0.68%	2.76%	0.23%	3.99%	27.21%	0.24%	2.23%

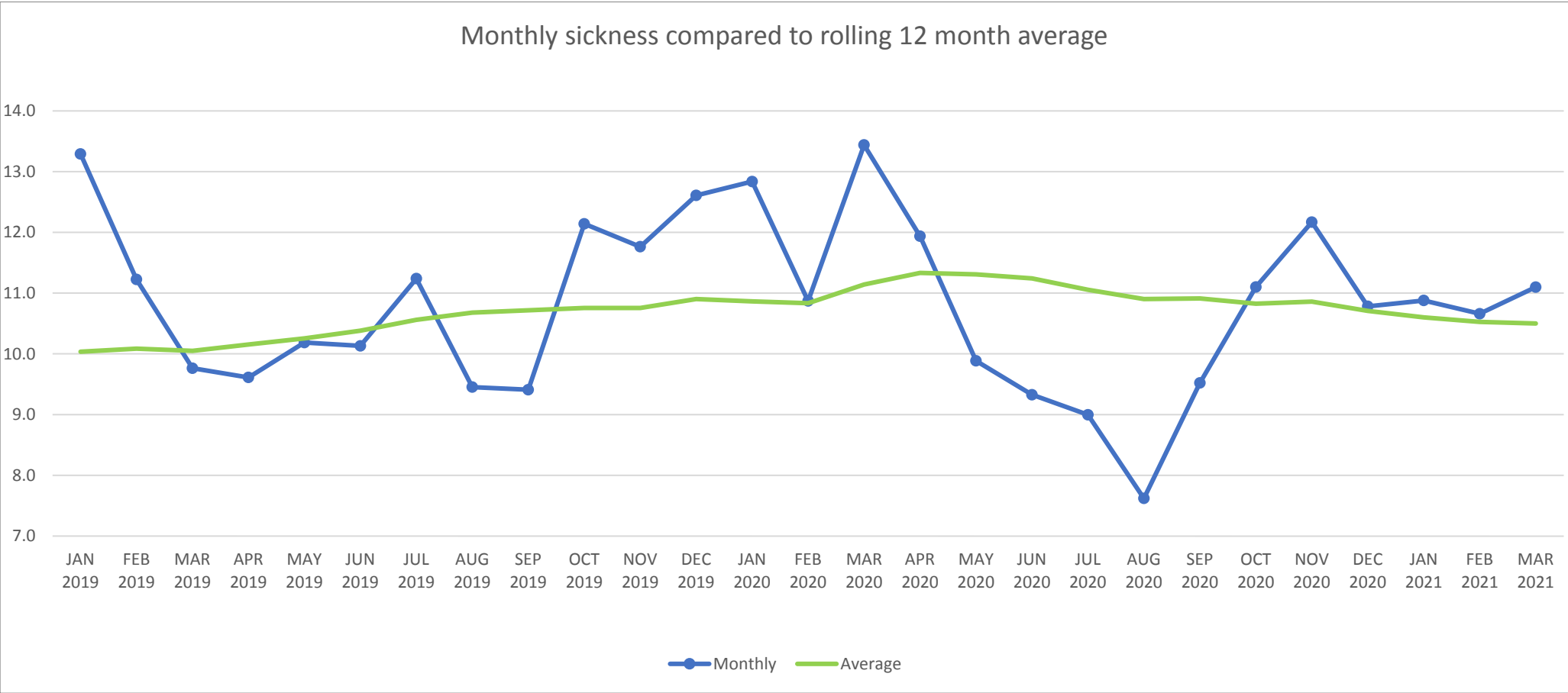


Appendix C: Long and Short Term Sickness





Appendix D





**Additional Absence Information**

	<b>0 Days</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>28+</b>
Adult Social Care & Health	775	78	96	73	45	42	17	24	21	19	341
Chief Executive's	808	88	71	35	25	27	14	16	10	5	67
Children & Families	1449	103	85	61	37	43	17	28	25	9	303
Place	1632	90	95	57	54	72	25	28	30	8	262
Total	4664	359	347	226	161	184	73	96	86	41	973

	<b>Percent with no sickness</b>	<b>4 weeks or more</b>
NCC	58.8%	12.3%
Adult Social Care & Health	44.6%	19.6%
Chief Executive's	64.6%	5.4%
Children & Families	60.1%	12.6%
Place	64.4%	10.3%

	<b>Dismissal Capability</b>	<b>Retirement III Health</b>
Adult Social Care and Health	0	9
Chief Executive's	0	5
Children and Families	1	4
Place	0	10
	1	28

	BVPI12 (exc CoronaVirus)	BVPI12 (all)	CoronaVirus BVPI12
NCC Directly employed	<b>9.45</b>	<b>10.53</b>	1.07
Adult Social Care & Health	13.76	15.24	1.49
Children, Families & Cultural Services	8.92	10.27	1.35
Place	8.95	9.93	0.97
Chief Executive's	5.09	5.32	0.23
Schools	4.18	6.43	2.26
<b>NCC &amp; Schools</b>	<b>7.07</b>	<b>8.68</b>	1.61



**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR - CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND  
EMPLOYEES****WORKFORCE CHECK-IN SURVEY UPDATE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform Elected Members of findings of workforce check-in survey undertaken in April 2021 and to seek approval for further detailed analysis of findings to be undertaken to develop a focussed action plan.

**Information**

2. The Council took the decision to ask all office-based employees who could work from home to do so from Monday 16 March 2020 and closed all its buildings to the public from 24 March 2020. As reported in previous committee reports, the Council's workforce has responded positively to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many have been flexible in altering their duties, working hours and where they work from to ensure the Council can continue to deliver critical services to its most vulnerable residents.
3. The Covid pandemic has presented many challenges in how key workforce messages are communicated to different audiences. Some, such as the initial directive to work from home in March 2020, were necessarily instructive. However, over the course of the last 15 months, there have been opportunities to engage more collaboratively with our workforce and seek their views which has helped shape our response and will further inform the future of work as we edge towards recovery and beyond.
4. In the early stages of the pandemic, it was considered important to capture the mood of how individual employees were feeling as part of our ongoing engagement with them. An employee well-being survey was therefore undertaken in late May 2020 to "check-in" and get feedback on how employees were feeling and identify what further support they required to continue delivering services during the Covid emergency.
5. The survey closed on 26 May 2020 with 2,761 responses received. This represented approximately 40% of the Council's workforce. 95% of employees who completed the survey responded positively to questions in relation to the Council's overall response to COVID-19; how the Council's overall response related to their role and how well informed they felt by their line manager. Satisfaction levels in relation to communication with and support from managers and employees were around 90%. There was 80% satisfaction level with wellbeing information

and support and having the tools to do their job. Overall, 75% were satisfied with their health, safety and wellbeing whilst working during the pandemic.

6. The valuable intelligence gathered as a result of this exercise has enabled us to:
  - Shape a Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy and associated Action Plan, which were approved by Personnel Committee in November 2020. The strategy set out to define the “new normal” for the Council’s workforce and to address how the Council’s future workforce would be developed and supported to respond positively and flexibly to the new challenges emerging as we respond to the second phase and recovery from the pandemic.
  - Refresh the employee health and wellbeing action plan in September 2020 to include new measures directly linked to the Covid-19 situation and fill any gaps in our provision. This enabled us to support our employees’ wellbeing and resilience and organisational resilience as we respond to the second phase and recovery from the pandemic.
7. It was agreed as part of Workforce Resilience and Recovery Action Plan that further surveys, alongside other tools such as the webinars and question and answer sessions would be used to gather additional information from a wide cross section of the Council’s workforce.
8. As part of this, a series of virtual Question and Answer sessions have been instigated, enabling the Chief Executive and Corporate Leadership Team members to engage directly with employees. To date, two events have taken place, one with an invited audience drawn from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees to address specific issues and the second was an open event to discuss the culture of the organisation and to understand our employees’ experiences of what it is like to work for Nottinghamshire County Council. These events are ongoing and future subjects will include recognition, development and engagement. The feedback from these events has been positive and employees have welcomed the opportunity to discuss key issues with senior leaders of the organisation.
9. As part of our ongoing engagement with staff, a second workforce “check-in” survey was undertaken in April 2021. A full summary of the survey findings is attached as Appendix 1. In total, 2,248 responses were received. This represents approximately 30% of the Council’s workforce. The survey focussed on workforce wellbeing and future working arrangements and thinking forwards to when restrictions around work bases are lifted.

## **Workforce wellbeing**

10. The findings of the survey indicate that 77% employees feel satisfied with their health, safety and wellbeing at work and in particular feel able to talk regularly with their manager about their workload and any stress related issues. This shows satisfaction level has increased by 2% since the last survey in May 2020. Many employees commented positively about the support that they have received over the last year, although some have felt pressures with their workload and have struggled to switch off from work.
11. 73% of those surveyed reported feeling able to maintain a healthy work/life balance. Comments made by employees in respect of work/life balance suggest that many employees who have moved to home working over the last year have seen an improvement due to the

flexibility, lack of commute and greater time for themselves, whilst others have found it more difficult to maintain a boundary between work and home due to the lack of separation.

12. 77% of those who surveyed feel that they are a valued member of a team. Some employees reflected on missing face to face time with colleagues, both on a personal level and in terms of the ad hoc conversations that support with work. Employees are keen to see that moving forwards, they will have the opportunity to spend time with their team – some through regular face to face team meetings, some through collaborative working opportunities, and some through working alongside their colleagues in the office.
13. 56% employees reported that they feel the Council prioritises their wellbeing, with 61% feeling that the Council provides appropriate resources that enables them to care for their personal wellbeing. There has been a drop in the satisfaction level in terms of wellbeing information and support received by employees since the last survey. This suggests that we need to do more to raise awareness of the support available to employees, ensure that the support available continues to meet employees' needs and ensure that managers are encouraging employees to prioritise their wellbeing. We plan to hold engagement events with employees to better understand the reasons for and further develop our response to these findings.

### **Future Working Arrangements**

14. The survey asked employees how they imagined themselves working in the future. Overall, 48% of employees responded see themselves as doing a blend of office and home working, 32% see themselves as being primarily home based, and 6% primarily office based, with 9% working in the community and the remainder in other settings. The percentage varies depending on the services that employees work in.
15. The survey also asked how employees are feeling about a potential return to some level of office-based working. Responses were evenly split between those who reported feeling positive or optimistic, those who reported feeling anxious or apprehensive, and those feeling mixed or neutral.
16. The survey gave employees the opportunity to identify what would support them to feel confident about their future working arrangements. The key themes identified were as follows:
  - Employees want to be engaged in and kept informed about future changes to working arrangements. It is key that individual needs are taken into account.
  - Employees want to have the autonomy to work flexibly and to choose when and how to work whilst balancing service needs with their personal circumstances.
  - Employees want to be equipped to do their role effectively, whether from home or in the office. This includes equipment, consideration of financial support for home working and access to office space being coordinated so that employees can be confident they will be able to sit with their teams.
  - Employees want to know about the clear expectations around their working arrangements.
  - Safe working places – employees want assurance that work bases are Covid-secure.

## **Next Steps**

17. Next steps include a more detailed analysis to be undertaken by the Council's Workforce Resilience and Recovery Group, the Smarter Working (Hybrid Working) programme team, and departmental leadership teams to understand what concerns, drives, motivates our employees in different service areas across the Council. It is unlikely that there will be a "one size fits all" solution. Therefore, further analysis will enable actions to be linked to existing workstreams and further focussed actions to be developed, where required.
18. In response to the survey findings, a series of frequently asked questions (FAQs) will be developed and published before the end of June. FAQs will also be used to raise awareness about information, advice and support available for employees to remain well and healthy in and outside of work. A calendar of future engagement opportunities will also be developed, so that employees understand how they can further contribute to shaping the way that the Council works in the future.

## **Other Options Considered**

19. Ongoing engagement with our employees is critical for our success. In addition to online surveys, the Council will continue to adopt a range of tools to engage its workforce in developing its response to the ongoing pandemic and the future of work beyond the current situation. There is not one single initiative or response which will deliver this, so a multi-faceted, blended approach is the recommended way forward, using new technologies where appropriate, to ensure the Council's workforce is fully engaged in the development and ongoing improvement of our services.

## **Reason for Recommendation**

20. It is vital that we do not lose the opportunity to take the learning from the current situation and use it to inform the future direction of the design and delivery of the Council's services. The Council's employees are integral to developing new ways of working and service delivery and as such understanding what they have valued in the emergency will be critical to moving forward positively as things begin to be more normalised.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

21. 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**

22. There is no personal information about named individuals contained within the body of the report.

## **Financial Implications**

23. There are no direct financial implications arising from the content of this report.

## **Human Resources Implications**

24. Employee communication and engagement are key tools to ensuring the Council has a committed, energetic and healthy workforce. Throughout the pandemic, we have continued to engage with the recognised trade unions and the self-managed groups. The opportunity to have direct discussions with employees as well as through their representatives and self-managed groups, provides invaluable insight into what the workforce feels about the Council as an employer and allows us to target resource and effort into addressing any emerging issues. This approach has been very positive and well received and has facilitated joint problem solving when issues have arisen.

## **Smarter Working Implications**

25. Findings of the latest staff survey will inform the development of future vision for Smarter Working (Hybrid Working) which takes account of changes to working practices and staff culture since the COVID-19 Pandemic began.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Members:

- 1) Consider the findings of the latest workforce check-in survey undertaken in April 2021 and approve the actions as set out in paragraphs 17 and 18 of this report.

**Marjorie Toward**

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

**Chief Executive's Department**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:** Lucy Peel, Group Manager – Service Improvement, Children and Family Services on 0115 9773139 or [lucy.peel@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.peel@nottsc.gov.uk)

## **Constitutional Comments KK 16/06/21)**

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

## **Financial Comments (SES 16/06/21)**

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

## **HR Comments (JP 17/06/21)**

28. Any HR implications are implicit within 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



# Workforce Check-In Survey

April 2021



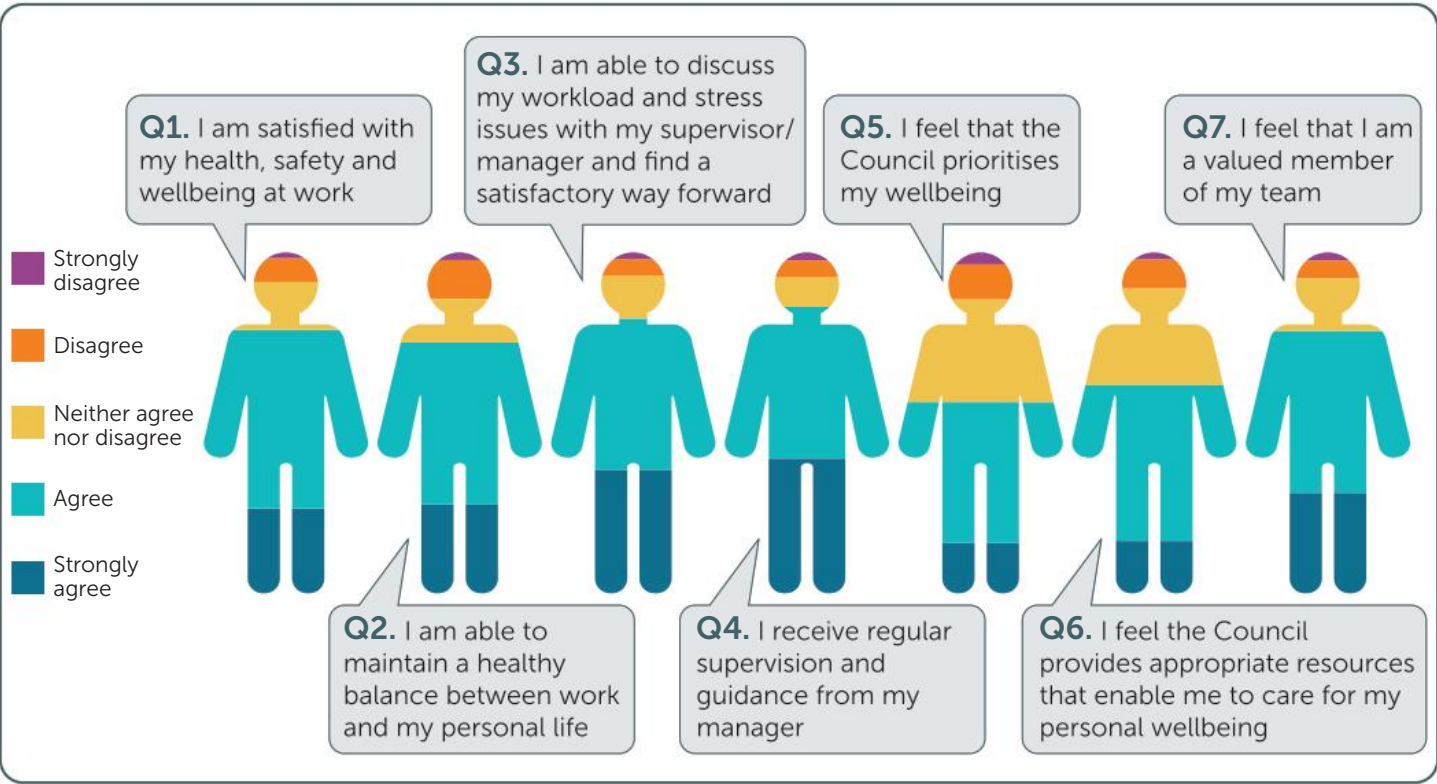


# Headline Findings

Thank you to all colleagues that took part in the workforce check in survey that took place in April 2021. In all we had 2,248 responses from employees. These are the headline findings from the survey. We recognise that colleagues who completed the survey work in a wide range of roles, and in a variety of different working circumstances, therefore further, more detailed analysis is being undertaken and will be considered by the Council’s Workforce Resilience and Recovery Group, the Smarter Working programme team, and departmental leadership teams. This will enable focussed actions to be developed, where required.

## Workforce Wellbeing Findings

The first part of the survey focussed on employee wellbeing. The findings are summarised below:



The findings indicate that the majority of employees feel satisfied with their health, safety and wellbeing at work and in particular feel able to talk regularly with their manager about their workload and any stress related issues. Many colleagues commented positively about the support that they have received over the last year, although some have felt pressures with their workload and have struggled to switch off from work.

Almost three quarters of those surveyed feel able to maintain a healthy work/life balance. Comments made by employees in respect of work/life balance suggest that many colleagues who have moved to home working over the last year have seen an improvement due to the flexibility, lack of commute and greater time for themselves, whilst others have found it more difficult to maintain a boundary between work and home due to the lack of separation.

Over three quarters of those surveyed feel that they are a valued member of a team. Some colleagues reflected on missing face to face time with colleagues, both on a personal level and in



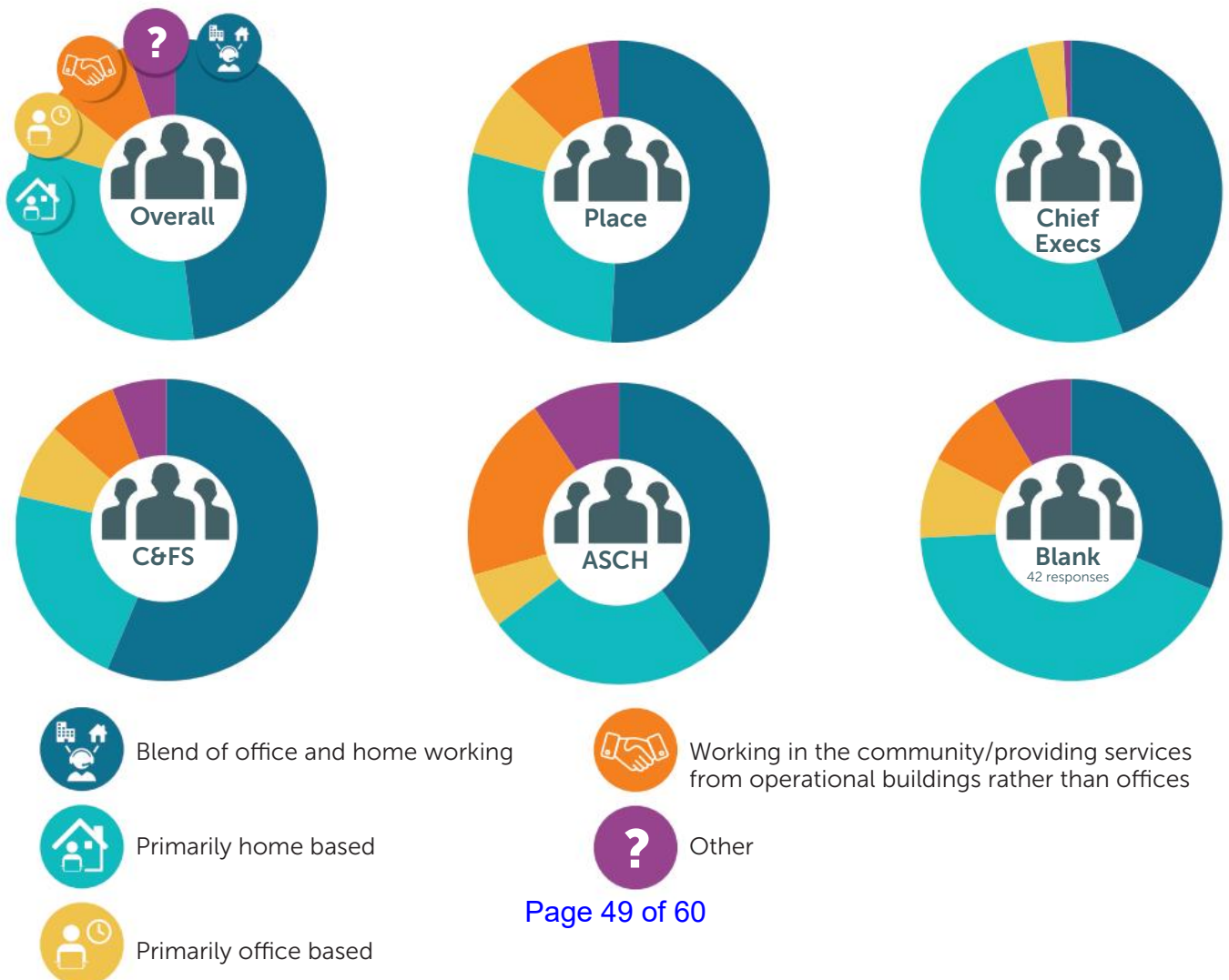
terms of the ad hoc conversations that support with work. Colleagues are keen to see that moving forwards, they will have the opportunity to spend time with their team – some through regular face to face team meetings, some through collaborative working opportunities, and some through working alongside their colleagues in the office.

Just over half of colleagues reported that they feel the Council prioritises their wellbeing, with a slightly higher number feeling that the Council provides appropriate resources that enables them to care for their personal wellbeing. This suggests that we need to do more to raise awareness of the support available to colleagues, ensure that the support available is meeting colleagues' needs, and also ensure that managers are encouraging employees to prioritise their wellbeing. We will plan some engagement events to further develop our response to these findings.

## Future Working Arrangements

The second part of the survey focussed on future working arrangements and thinking forwards to when restrictions around work bases are lifted. The survey asked colleagues how they imagined themselves working in the future. Overall, **48%** of colleagues responding see themselves as doing a blend of office and home working, **32%** see themselves as being primarily home based, and **6%** primarily office based, with **9%** working in the community and the remainder in other settings. As you might anticipate, the percentage varies depending on the service that colleagues work in.

### How do you imagine yourself working in the future?



The survey also asked how colleagues are feeling about a potential return to some level of office-based working. Responses were fairly evenly split between those who reported feeling positive or optimistic, those who reported feeling anxious or apprehensive, and those feeling mixed or neutral.

**If you have been working from home over the last year, how do you feel about the potential return to some level of office-based working?**



**21.75%**  
Positive



**15.46%**  
Optimistic



**15.15%**  
Neutral



**14.79%**  
Mixed



**16.72%**  
Apprehensive



**16.13%**  
Anxious

The survey gave colleagues the opportunity to identify what would support them to feel confident about their future working arrangements. The key themes identified were as follows:

- Colleagues want to be engaged in and kept informed about future changes to working arrangements – it is key that individual needs are taken into account
- Colleagues want to have the autonomy to work flexibly and to choose when and how to work – to balance service needs with their personal circumstances
- Colleagues want to be equipped to do their role effectively, whether from home or in the office – this includes equipment, consideration of financial support for home working and access to office space being coordinated so that colleagues can be confident they will be able to sit with their teams
- Give clear expectations for how colleagues can work – so that colleagues know what is expected of them and they can be confident in the decisions they're being enabled make over working arrangements
- Ensure that office bases are safe places for colleagues to work – colleagues want assurance of the measures that are in place to ensure that work bases are Covid-secure

## Next Steps

In response to the survey findings, a series of frequently asked questions will be developed and published before the end of June. A calendar of future engagement opportunities will also be developed, so that colleagues understand how they can further contribute to shaping the way that the Council works in the future.

The Corporate Leadership Team would like to thank colleagues for their engagement to date.

**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR - CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND  
EMPLOYEES****WORKFORCE RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY STRATEGY AND ACTION  
PLAN****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Elected Members on the progress of Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy Action Plan and next steps.

**Information**

2. The Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy and associated Action Plan was approved by Personnel Committee on 18 November 2020. The strategy aims to ensure that the Council continues to develop its strategic approach to having the right people, with the right skills, at the right time, with the right development and support in place, to deliver the Council's published priorities and objectives outlined in the Council Plan and within the context of managing and delivering services in the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and beyond.
3. The strategy sits within the context of cross-cutting transformation, an increasingly challenging financial position and the ongoing Covid situation requiring us to work differently and more efficiently. It recognises that the Council's workforce is its most valuable asset, and this position has been reinforced by the contributions of so many during the Covid outbreak. Their safety and that of service users continues to be of primary importance. It also recognises that some people have continued to work with little change since the pandemic outbreak whilst for others the changes have been significant, and that this situation is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.
4. The strategy provides a platform to define the "new normal" for the Council's workforce and address how the Council's future workforce will be developed and supported to respond positively and flexibly to the new challenges emerging as we respond to the further phases and recovery from the pandemic. The strategy provides a route map to transition to a new People Strategy to support delivery of the new Council Plan which is currently being developed.
5. The Workforce Resilience & Recovery Strategy is underpinned by a set of core principles and is broadly divided into the following themes:
  - Organisational culture

- Leadership development
- People development
- Employee health and well-being
- Smarter working and the working environment.

6. This strategy has been developed through the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Group which draws its membership from across the Council's departments. A distributive leadership approach is used with focussed task and finish groups to develop and implement specific proposals within the action plan that would build on and develop existing work underway corporately and in departments. This ensures wider buy in and avoids duplication of effort. Priority workstreams include recognition and reward; developing a homeworking package of measures; review of employee health and well-being support, organisational and individual resilience and internal communication and engagement with employees.

## **Key Actions**

7. Over the last few months, a number of actions have been taken or are proposed to progress the activities listed in the Action Plan. Details are set out below:

## **Communication and engagement with employees**

8. A key aspect of the implementation of the strategy is communication and engagement with employees from across the Council, including front line workers. The work undertaken as part of the various priority workstreams of the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Action Plan focuses on a range of activities which seek to maintain and build on levels of existing employee engagement and commitment. To support this aim, the work to develop a Council Employee Communications and Engagement Strategy is underway and a draft version with an associated action plan will be brought to a future Personnel Committee for consideration and approval.
9. Over the course of the last 15 months, several measures including well-being surveys and a series of virtual Question and Answer sessions with Chief Executive and Corporate Leadership Team members have been instigated to engage more collaboratively with our workforce and seek their views which has helped shape our response to covid and will further inform the future of work as we move towards recovery and beyond. These exercises have enabled us to discuss the culture of the organisation and to understand our employees' experiences of what it is like to work for Nottinghamshire County Council. Members will consider a separate report later in the meeting to find out about the findings of latest workforce check-in survey undertaken in April 2021.
10. A Reward and Recognition event has been arranged to take place in July 2021 at Rufford Country Park to recognise the work of employees who have gone above and beyond the call of duty during the pandemic. The date of this event is subject to change due to weather or change in national Covid 19 restrictions and government advice. This is the first event in what is intended to be an ongoing programme of activity to recognise and value the work of Council employees. This includes reviewing and updating the long service award scheme and developing further corporate reward and recognition events, in addition to the activity already underway in departments.

## **Learning and development**

11. Whilst all face-to-face training activity was suspended at the beginning of lockdown, the Council have continued to provide the learning opportunities via online learning or through the virtual classroom environment. During the early stages of pandemic, the focus of learning and development activity shifted from the Council's existing wide-ranging development programme to a focus on equipping employees to move to delivering critical front-line services. Over 45,000 units of on-line training in areas such as infection control, basic social care, safeguarding and other refresher training were provided to ensure critical services could continue to operate in the early phases of the pandemic. This was supported by essential face-to-face training in areas such as lifting and handling.
12. We have continued to work with our external training providers to move the Council's overall development offer to virtual arrangements enabling the full training programme to now be reinstated to ensure that as much of the current training programme usually available can still be accessed and completed as move towards recovery. In addition, we have continued to respond to requests from departments and have added other opportunities to the training catalogue such as Bereavement Support training, additional financial advice and a wealth of online support materials relating to wellbeing.
13. Work is now underway to ensure that employees and managers have the tools, techniques and are equipped to work in new ways going forward as part of the Council's hybrid working approach. This will include refreshed leadership and management training to develop confident leaders able to operate and empower staff to work differently, collaboratively and encourage innovation and creativity in a climate of inclusivity, trust and high performance. This will be supported by further guidance, toolkits, training and development for our employees to embed digital and key skills and approaches necessary for this new working environment.

## **Employee health and well-being support**

14. The employee health and wellbeing action plan was refreshed and approved by Personnel Committee in September 2020 to include new measures directly linked to the Covid-19 situation and fill any gaps in our provision. This enabled us to support our employees' wellbeing and resilience and organisational resilience as we responded to the pandemic. The most recent survey results tell us that more work is required to promote the package of measures already available, review and develop this with greater input from employees from across the Council to ensure their needs are met and they continue to feel valued and supported by the Council.
15. During the pandemic the Occupational Health Unit have continued to operate their service, delivering support and medical advice to managers and employees. Utilising available technology, clinic appointments have been carried out on a telephone referral basis.
16. In order to further support staff during this difficult time a 24-hour counselling help line was launched which staff could access quickly and directly without management referral. A range of additional tools, information, training and support on mental health issues has been made available to staff to supplement the existing materials. This includes signposting staff to new materials as they are being developed by organisations such as Mind and other organisations

specialising in this field. Particular attention is being paid to supporting staff with bereavement, in either a personal or work context, with additional tools and materials.

### **Smarter working and the working environment**

17. The Action Plan has a specific strand on smarter working which will further embed the principles of flexible working across the Council's workforce. Discussions with Timewise, managers and trades union colleagues helped us to recognise that working flexibly is something many employees' value and that it can also benefit the Council and people for whom we provide services. We were accredited as a Timewise employer on 11 December 2020. This accreditation is awarded in recognition of the commitment the Council has made to increasing opportunities for flexible working for our workforce. Timewise is the recognised sector leader in developing innovative solutions around flexible working and therefore the Council wanted to align itself with their accreditation process to demonstrate ongoing commitment to meet the expectations of our workforce as a modern public services employer whilst continuing to meet priorities for service delivery.
18. The Working from Home Hub was launched to share tips and resources with our employees for better and more productive working from home. The Hub is being updated with supporting guidance for hybrid working and to signpost employees to additional support and advice available externally. The Workforce Resilience and Recovery Group will continue to work with the Smarter Working programme team to develop and implement the Council's new Hybrid Working Policy once approved.

### **Other Options Considered**

19. The option of not reviewing the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Action Plan in light of learning from our response to the pandemic could be considered but this would mean that the Council's workforce would be poorly placed to respond to current and future needs as we move into the next phases of covid, then recovery and the "new normal".

### **Reason for Recommendation**

20. The previous People Strategy and underpinning information in the Workforce Plan provided a framework for Members and senior officers to make informed decisions in respect of budget setting and future resourcing requirements in a world before Covid-19. However, the pandemic has created a new set of challenges and opportunities to move more quickly towards new ways of working. It is anticipated that the way we are working now will continue indefinitely and become the "new normal" and we need to consider what changes are required to ensure our workforce are adequately prepared, supported, equipped and developed for the immediate future. The Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy and actions to deliver this will ensure the foundations are in place and help the Council and its workforce transition to a revised People Strategy developed to enable the delivery of the new Council Plan, once this is approved.



## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

21. 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**

22. There is no personal information about named individuals contained within the report.

### **Financial Implications**

23. There are no direct financial implications arising from the content of this report.

### **Human Resources Implications**

24. 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 in the current emergency and on the future commitments made to the citizens of Nottinghamshire.

### **Smarter Working Implications**

25. Findings of the latest staff survey will inform the development of future vision for Smarter Working which takes account of changes to working practices and staff culture since the COVID-19 Pandemic began.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Members:

- 1) Consider the progress on the implementation of the Workforce Resilience and Recovery Strategy and the further actions identified and agree to receive further updates on progress.
- 2) Approve the development of a revised People Strategy to support implementation of the new Council Plan once this has been approved.

**Marjorie Toward**  
**Service Director – Customers, Governance and Employees**  
**Chief Executive’s Department**

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

Gill Elder, Head of HR on 01159773867 or [gill.elder@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:gill.elder@nottsc.gov.uk)

#### **Constitutional Comments (KK 16/06/21)**

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

#### **Financial Comments (SES 16/06/21)**

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

#### **HR Comments (JP 17/06/21)**

28. The human resources implications are implicit in the body of the report and will continue to be the platform for employee engagement with the Corporate Leadership Team, departmental leadership teams, the workforce and their nominated representatives.

#### **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>September 2021 (date to be advised)</b>			
Workforce Profile Information 2021	Analysis of workforce information, agreement of actions and approval of publication of data	Marje Toward	Gill Elder
Corporate Equalities Action Plan	Update on the Corporate Equalities Action Plan, identification and approval of actions	Marje Toward	Gill Elder
Health and Safety Update	Update on health and safety activity and issues and approval of actions	Marje Toward	John Nilan
Customer Services Update	Update on work of the Customer Services team	Marje Toward	Marie Rowney
NCC Workforce Availability, Sickness Absence Performance and Support to Maintain Employee Health and Wellbeing (Quarter 1 - 2021/22)	Quarterly update and review of progress against action plan	Marje Toward	Gill Elder
<b>November 2021 (date to be advised)</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
Disability Confident Leader Accreditation – Update	Update on accreditation	Marje Toward	Gill Elder
Update on review of Apprenticeship Strategy	Update on review	Marje Toward	Gill Elder

<b>January 2022 (date to be advised)</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>March 2022 (date to be advised)</b>			
Health and Safety Update	Update on health and safety activity and issues and approval of actions	Marje Toward	John Nilan
<b>April 2022 (date to be advised)</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