

# North Lanarkshire Council Report

## Policy & Strategy Committee

Does this report require to be approved?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Ref FW

Date

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## One Workforce – Delivering the Programme of Work to 2028

**From** Fiona Whittaker, Chief Officer (People Resources)

**E-mail** Whittakerf@northlan.gov.uk

**Telephone**

07973 728628

### Executive Summary

Following Policy and Strategy Committee approval of the new five-year Programme of Work to 2028, this report sets out the strategic workforce plan that is intended to enable the core aims and objectives of the programme of work and its wider ambitions linked to the Plan for North Lanarkshire. Specifically, our One Workforce Plan has a focus on ensuring that the Council has the required workforce capacity and capability to deliver on its strategic aims and objectives both now and in the future. This is in the context of a number of difficult workforce risks and challenges in our wider environment, which are fully detailed in this report. Delivery of the One Workforce Plan will be fully integrated within the wider “One Service” programme of work, aligned to our future operating model and its associated implementation and reporting arrangements.

Over the last 3 years, North Lanarkshire Council, like many other Local Authorities, has been operating in a very difficult labour market and wider economic context. This has resulted in our workforce capacity being squeezed at all levels by a range of pressures which are complex and often difficult to mitigate against. Some of these pressures are historical and ongoing, such as ringfenced budgets, pressure to make savings, and an aging workforce demographic. Others are more recent, and have brought new challenges, including much reduced local workforce availability; recruitment difficulties due to skill shortages; significant wage inflation resulting in compression of our pay spine, and the linked pay degradation of some of our important specialist and professional graded roles across a range of services and functions. In many areas, these issues have only compounded the workforce difficulties we were already facing across Local Government.

Despite these many challenges, and in taking forward its revised programme of work, the Council has proactively taken steps to manage the impact of this turbulent workforce environment, placing a strong emphasis on workforce planning over the last 3 years. This includes a range of actions to address gaps, including setting out detailed service level workforce plans with an agreed bi-annual cycle of refreshed plans in place, led by Chief Officers across all services.

Importantly, the Council's focus on driving detailed workforce plans has enabled us to progress with both the Best Value Audit recommendation, which highlighted that workforce plans should be taken down to service level, as well as addressing an ongoing need to tackle the historical demographic challenges we have been facing us for several years. This approach has also provided an opportunity for services to consider their plan for building a future workforce, and in particular transitioning our workforce to align with our

ambition and our future operating model and new programme of work. Given the wider workforce pressures now building across Local Government, we also expect increased scrutiny in this area from Scottish Government, Audit Scotland and the Accounts Commission, and our focus on this work puts us in a good position to demonstrate that we have plans in place to manage, where possible, the many workforce risks now apparent.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that the Council has a large, loyal and hardworking workforce, and our commitment to their engagement and support remains a core part of our workforce plan. This report includes the key themes and outcomes of our most recent Investors in People employee survey, and as part of our future plan for engaging staff we will be proposing to bring forward a revised plan over the next 12 months to establish an improved staff survey approach. This is with a view to ensuring that we can reach all of our staff at every level, to understand how we can get the best from them and support their contribution to our ambition. This underpins our wider commitment and intention as a fair work employer, who offers effective voice; opportunity; security; fulfilment and respect to our 15,000 employees, who are the foundation of our ability to deliver high quality services to our residents and communities every day.

The remainder of this report sets out our One Workforce Plan which includes our revised strategic workforce priorities to 2028; a summary of the key themes which have emerged from our 2023-24 service workforce plans and our supporting 18 month rolling plan of work. Importantly, our 18 month plans will include a number of important short to medium term workforce deliverables, such as our final hybrid working arrangements; our next phase approach to transitioning our future workforce to hubs as our vehicle for the delivery of community services, and work required to realign our pay and grading model to mitigate the difficult impact of recent pay awards and build a simplified pay structure which better aligns to our future ambition.

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### Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee:

- 1) recognise and acknowledge the key workforce and wider labour market challenges the Council is facing, and the associated risks and plan of work which will be required to address current and future workforce gaps and priorities.
- 2) approve the Council's One Workforce Priorities to 2028, their associated strategic aims and the rolling plan of work which supports the delivery of these aims.
- 3) note the proposed approach for follow up and tracking of the progress of this important work.

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### The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base
Ambition statement	(23) Build a workforce for the future capable of delivering on our priorities and shared ambition

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## Background

- 1.1 With the combined impact of the pandemic and Brexit and over the last three years, there is little doubt that our services have experienced a material shift in their ability to build and maintain their workforce, linked to challenges within the labour market both locally within North Lanarkshire and nationally. The effects of this have made it significantly more difficult for us to recruit and retain the workforce we need across a range of services and at all levels, and this has been reflected in an increased level of risk in our corporate HR risk summary.
- 1.2 North Lanarkshire's labour market continues to experience its lowest level of unemployment in 10 years, with an average of around 6,100 unemployed residents over the last 3 years in comparison to around 16,000 in 2013. This drop in available workforce has also been driven by sharp increases in economic inactivity over the last 3 years, with larger than normal numbers of residents taking themselves out of the workplace for a complex range of reasons including health and other caring responsibilities.
- 1.3 The net effect of this is that some of our frontline services have seen a significant reduction in local workforce availability for traditionally easy to recruit to roles. This impact has also been felt by other public sector partners including NHS Lanarkshire, and other private sector employers, with a number of business sectors reporting ongoing skills shortages and high numbers of unfilled vacancies.
- 1.4 Additionally, and like other Local Authorities, we continue to deal with wider financial pressures which impact directly on our ability to build and maintain our workforce capacity and capability. These include budget savings requirements and ringfenced budgets and funding, which force staffing level reductions and restricted recruitment in some services and a requirement to increase in others. These financial pressures can also create challenges in our ability to rapidly respond to increased service demand in critical frontline services, with the consequence of high levels of staff overtime and risks around staff burnout and increased levels of absence.
- 1.5 Over and above our ongoing funding and budget challenges, the Council's ability to build and maintain its workforce is now increasingly impacted by known or emerging national shortages in key Local Authority professional workforces including planning, environmental health, building standards, clerk of works, and several historical areas of shortage in health and social care, including social workers and occupational therapists. This can result in short term increases in costs to the Council where services are forced to use agency workers to cover critical posts.
- 1.6 With significant post pandemic pay inflation, and the linked impact of several years of heavily differentiated pay awards we have also seen our competitiveness and attractiveness as an employer decline, particularly for higher graded positions. Positively, it is hoped that recent large increases at the lower end of our pay spine, may help to attract staff for lower graded positions from other sectors such as retail and transport; however severe compression at the upper end of our pay spine has had the opposite effect on our ability to recruit to mid and senior level professional positions, including lawyers; accountants; architects; all IT disciplines (software developers, cyber/security specialists and network engineers); procurement professionals and project managers, who are now attracting a much higher salary in the private sector and elsewhere.

- 1.7 Other market driven challenges have become apparent in lower-level roles such as mechanics and drivers, with salary inflation meaning that the Council is continually being priced out of the market in a competitive salary war for a fixed pool of skilled employees. For example, mechanics can now attract a salary of up to £45K in the wider recruitment market when our current grade for this role only allows for up to £28K. It should be noted that for equal pay reasons, and the fact that we are governed by a national collective bargaining arrangement, the Council is not easily able to adjust pay levels to compete with these types of market driven increases.
- 1.8 It is also worth noting that the impact of our most recent pay talks will see the minimum rate of pay for all Council employees rise to the equivalent of the top end of our current NLC3 grade, wiping out all spinal column points below this on our pay and grading model. Elected Members will also be aware that as part of the recently agreed SJC pay award, the Trade Unions have secured a commitment to explore a progression pathway to a minimum rate of pay of £15 by April 2026.
- 1.9 It is important to be clear that a future starting rate of pay of £15 would materially impact our current pay spine with this being equivalent to the current bottom point of an NLC7. Whilst increases in the pay of our lowest paid workers is broadly to be welcomed, Elected Members should be aware that a full-scale pay model restructuring exercise will be required to work towards this aspiration, bringing additional and as yet unquantified costs and risks for the Council, including equal pay risks.
- 1.10 The pandemic, and the now widely accepted incorporation of home working for previously office-based staff, has also impacted on our workforce model, with hybrid-working now a firm expectation in the terms and conditions for many professional roles. Whilst the move to hybrid working does offer real improved flexibility to many previously office-based staff, it also important to remember that it benefits a relatively small grouping of staff within the Council. This means that our proposed move to a final hybrid working scheme, summarised later in this report, must consider how we positively respond to this change in expectations around flexibility, whilst also taking a balanced approach as a fair employer who wishes to avoid creating a two-tier workforce.
- 1.11 The Council has over 15,000 employees and the vast majority of these employees are community based and out delivering our services to residents every day. In this respect it is important that we see our employees as “One Workforce” and this means that we consistently seek to create a fulfilling work experience for all staff, and one which will not only harness their best contribution but also support their mental health and wellbeing in a very challenging environment for Local Government.
- 1.12 Despite the difficult mix of workforce pressures and demands we now face, it is critical to remember that the Council is committed to and has a clear future vision for its workforce, and this remains inclusive, supportive and draws on the principles of fair work. This vision encompasses full consideration of how we improve our wider working environment for all staff, by seeking to advance our ambitious One Service programme of work, which will transform our future service delivery model and ensure that our staff operate in vibrant multi service workspaces within our hubs and out in our communities.
- 1.13 This means that even in the face of ongoing and difficult workforce pressures, and wider financial challenges and skills gaps, the Council is fully embracing the opportunity for services to think very differently about their future operating models, and consequently

the types of roles and workforce terms and conditions they will need to deliver our services in the future. Encompassed within our One Service and Digital North Lanarkshire programmes of work, this will include considering how technology will enable future service delivery models alongside mapping how staff will best operate to support services within a different future model of delivery, which is likely to require new types of roles, skills and patterns of work which are very different from those we rely on to deliver our services today.

- 1.14 There is no doubt that due to a combination of linked, but material factors it has never been more challenging for us to build and maintain a strong future workforce but given that this position is unlikely to ease in the short to medium term, it is more critical than ever that the Council is proactive and innovative in developing short, medium, and longer-term solutions. Much good work has already been undertaken within the services over the last 3 years, and examples are included within this report.
- 1.15 Additionally, this work needs to continue and increase, including building more pathways for key identified shortage areas; work to transition of our structures and pay model to a more simplified set of workforce groupings and an increased focus on growing our own at all levels by scaling up our use of work placements, traineeships, and apprenticeships.
- 1.16 With all of this in mind, and in our 2023-24 strategic workforce plans, our Chief Officers were asked to consider:
- What strategic drivers and changes are likely to impact on your service workforce in the next 12- 18 months?
  - What does your current workforce look like – what are its strengths and gaps?
  - How does your workforce need to change in light of the challenges ahead?
  - How are you properly addressing historical demographic gaps in your core frontline service workforce groups?
  - Are our current levels of investment in apprenticeships and pathways sufficient to close historical gaps and develop our future workforce?
  - What type of workstyles do we need to deliver on our future ambitions?
  - How can we improve equality and inclusiveness?
  - Do we have leadership strength and depth where it matters and a pipeline of future leaders who have the broader skills and knowledge required to support our future operating model?
  - How can we measure progress against our agreed actions?
- 1.17 As part of this work, Chief Officers also considered how their service operating models were likely to evolve and change in the future, setting out actions for their ongoing service development, aligned to the plan for North Lanarkshire; the future leadership and operating model and the new programme of work.
- 1.18 Given that a key driver for our service workforce plans is the mitigation of organisational risk, Chief Officers were also asked to identify a clear set of actions that could be taken forward in the short and medium term, and these actions will be monitored and reviewed with an agreed framework for tracking delivery and progress against stated outcomes.
- 1.19 Additionally, Internal Audit have agreed to provide independent assurance going forward on the adequacy of service workforce plans and the effectiveness of the

Council's approach to workforce planning as a whole. This work, is designed to offer assurance on the following:

- Has the Council developed and implemented effective workforce planning arrangements which incorporate clear corporate and service accountabilities for measuring workforce capacity and capability?
- Are short-term staffing pressures clearly identified and/or appropriately dealt with ensuring a focus on best value and/or effective service delivery?
- Do workforce plans reflect the number of staff needed to provide a safe or adequate level of service and do they reconcile financial savings with service sustainability?
- Has the Council put in place robust processes for developing longer-term workforce strength and depth? Do these plans and any associated actions, appear realistic and deliverable?
- Is an appropriate level of funding in place to invest in the development of the Councils workforce?
- Do workforce plans assess the impact of changes in service operating models and their implication for current and future staffing needs (numbers and skills)?

1.20 This work will ensure going forward that the Council maintains a strong focus on workforce planning and the associated actions required to manage and mitigate against the complex workforce risks we will continue to face in the coming years.

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## **2. Report**

### **2.1 Summary of Service Workforce Plans**

2.1.1 All Chief Officers have reflected the challenges outlined above in their detailed 23-24 service workforce plans, and in addition have highlighted other internal and external factors impacting on our workforce now. These factors include:

- the potential impact of planned national reform, including the national care service, education and local government reform
- the ongoing and immediate crisis of demand in Health & Social Care
- future skills demand which will arise as we develop our plans to net zero
- potential increased workforce demands and changes which will arise at service level from the new programme of work and associated ambitions
- the ongoing impact of not being able to recruit people to fill positions

2.1.2 Whilst each service has identified their own unique priorities, there are clear overlaps and patterns emerging from the actions and services will be asked to consider the need to work across services, in line with the One Service programme of work to develop joined up plans where appropriate to address the challenges.

2.1.3 The key summary themes which have arisen from our 2023/24 service workforce plans are:

- Concerns about pressures on workforce capacity due to ongoing staffing reductions and a need to accelerate digital enhancements and skills development to cope with this in the future.

- A need for the cross skilling/up skilling of staff within services to improve skills and efficiency, create better flexibility and resilience and to deal with peaks and troughs in work demand.
- A requirement to rethink, refine or materially change service structures and operating models to create progression and improve service operations and skills within staffing groups.
- An urgent need to look at sources of new/future workforce to replace an aging staff profile, including apprenticeships; traineeships; work placements and the relaxing of qualification requirements to offer a “work towards” approach, or redeploying and training internal staff in new skills.
- A need to further improve and speed up our current recruitment process which is slow, overly complicated and is contributing to difficulties in attracting and retaining candidates.
- Ongoing difficulties in recruiting to specialist roles and retaining existing staff across a range of functions and levels due to salary inflation and a very competitive labour market.
- A need for continued staff training and enhanced career pathways to support retention and ongoing staff development.
- A need to build a more diverse workforce profile across a number of services to ensure we are representative of our communities.

2.1.4 A number of examples of good work already underway are highlighted in our workforce priorities set out later in this report.

## 2.2 Our Workforce Demographic

2.2.1 An up to date profile of the Council’s workforce is set out in appendix 1, and this has been broken down by service for age, disability, and percentage of BAME employees. Although we have seen an improving picture in recent years in some services, our percentage of BAME employees remains low in comparison to our wider community profile and this will be a key area of focus in our workforce plan going forward.

2.2.2 It is important to note from our demographic profile that the Council has a predominantly female workforce, with a large percentage of females being in the 40-50 and 50+ age ranges. This profile is consistent with that found in other Local Authorities and is largely driven by the high percentage of females within the occupations covered by our larger frontline services, namely Education & Families and Adult Health & Social Care.

2.2.3 Additionally, levels of occupational segregation remain high linked to the nature of our services, with some services such as Community Operations and Housing Property having a disproportionately higher male than female profile, and others including Adult Health & Social Care and Education and Families having the opposite profile. Housing Management is the most balanced of the larger frontline services with an almost 50:50 male to female split.

2.2.4 The data shows that our employees are loyal and long serving, with an average length of service of around 13 years for both males and females and relatively low rates of staff turnover overall. The average age across the Council is 46, and this has reduced over the last 5 years having previously sat around an average of age 50.

2.2.5 The majority of our staff also live and work within North Lanarkshire itself, with over 70% living within our boundaries and those who live out with mainly coming from our higher graded and professional staff groupings. This pattern is consistent with our wider labour market profile.

- 2.2.6** The Council also employs large numbers of part time staff, which account for just under 45% of our staffing group overall, with the majority of these being female and in frontline services roles. This impacts differentially on the average rate of pay for our female staff and our male staff and is the main contributing factor to our existing gender pay gap. It should be noted that these part time staff are on full employment contracts, but they work a variety of reduced hour shifts, which often suit their family circumstances or wider caring commitments. Additionally, a number of frontline staff already hold more than one contract with the Council.

## **2.3 Local Government Skills Shortages**

- 2.3.1** Through work now underway at a national level and within the Glasgow City Region, it is becoming clear that a number of Local Government shortages are the result of deeper structural and funding issues within our wider skills and education system, with insufficient numbers of people being trained or progressing through the FE and HE sector in some of these key Local Government professions, alongside fierce market competition for the much-reduced pool of qualified and experienced candidates who are left. This concerning position was highlighted recently by Audit Scotland [Planning for skills | Audit Scotland \(audit-scotland.gov.uk\)](#) and identified in detail in the subsequently commissioned Withers report into our higher education system published by the Scottish Government in May 2023. [Fit for the Future: developing a post-school learning system to fuel economic transformation - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#) .
- 2.3.2** By way of illustrating the shortage problems that are now directly impacting on our workforce, a national workforce survey of all Local Authorities, completed in September of this year, has established that almost 90% of Local Authorities are already reporting severe difficulties in recruiting planners. Additionally, research undertaken in May 2022 by Heads of Planning Scotland (HOPS) and the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), on behalf of the Scottish Government, estimated that in 2022, across Scotland there were an estimated 74 FTE vacancies in planning roles at a range of levels, and that over the next 10-15 years, 600 planners will be needed to meet replacement demand and an additional 130 planners will be needed to cover a projected 11% growth in the Scottish planning sector up to 2030.
- 2.3.3** Despite this clear articulation of current and future demand by relevant professional bodies, there remains only one undergraduate degree in planning in Scotland at Dundee University, and we understand that there are a limited number of places (less than 15) available to Scottish students annually, with a significantly larger number of places being offered to overseas students who predominantly return to their home country on completion of their degree. Until recently, Glasgow University were offering a 2-year postgraduate conversion degree in city planning, but this required a relevant prior qualification and was very costly (around £12K) for Local Authorities who have had to fund it in full. We have now been made aware that this course has also been withdrawn and this is only one example of the now apparent HE/FE supply gap which has contributed to some of the shortages we now face in Local Government.
- 2.3.4** Given the nature of these challenges the Council is seeking to lead the development of Local Government wide solutions to some of our known gaps, including work now underway within the Glasgow City Region (GCR) on a pathway and potential graduate apprenticeship for qualified Planners. This will be delivered by working with relevant Local Authorities in GCR and engaging directly with FE and HE partners within the region. The plan is to develop a blueprint approach for this skills shortage area which



can be applied to other areas of critical identified shortage, including Environmental Health Officers, Building Standards Officers, and Quantity Surveyors.

- 2.3.5 Other areas of more local work to address shortages will include the engagement of our Built Environment Sector Board, which is in the process of agreeing its strategic aims for this next phase. As part of early discussions, we have identified work required to create a local shared pathway, and potential shared apprenticeship opportunity for building a pool of qualified and experienced Clerk of Works, which is a priority workforce shortage for both the Council and wider partners within the Construction and Built Environment sector across North Lanarkshire.
- 2.3.6 Additionally, the Council is fully linked to other work underway through COSLA and other national bodies including OCSWA (Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser) to look at the development of pathways and a potential graduate apprenticeship in Social Work. When developed, this can be used by the Council and all other Local Authorities to significantly augment existing Social Worker trainee programmes, which are currently very limited due to challenges with available funding. It should be noted that we already have a waiting list of existing Health and Social care staff who would be willing to take on additional qualifications, to fill these roles but we are currently unable to fund additional training places.

## 2.4 **Our One Workforce Priorities**

Considering the known strategic workforce challenges we face over the next 5 years and linked to our ambition to transform our operating model, figure 1 below sets out the six One Workforce Priorities which will support the delivery of our programme of work to 2028. These encompass the work that will be required to deliver our ambition to build a strong and skilled workforce to support our future operating model, as well as work required to deal with the workforce challenges we face in the short to medium term. Our aims aligned to each of these priorities is detailed below, and a full rolling 18-month plan of work to support their delivery is set out in appendix 2.

**Figure 1 – One Workforce Priorities**



#### **2.4.1 Priority 1 - Managing Workforce Transition**

With continued work to shape our future leadership and operating model, and our hub building programme progressing well, there is now a requirement for us to ensure that we are planning for and implementing changes which will support the transition of our workforce in line with this future model. This includes work required to support the reshaping our services, define revised structures and roles; manage the impacts of savings decisions on our workforce; realign our pay and grading model and maintain a strong focus on workforce planning to address skills and labour supply gaps. Where required, we will also work to put in place revised or refreshed workplace arrangements, terms and conditions and policies which align to and support this workplace ambition.

##### **Our strategic aims for this priority are:**

- To deliver effective workforce change and transition to our future operating model, managing service realignments and re-structures, including the establishment of new structures and roles; the delivery of workforce changes arising from savings implementations; digital skills and new ways of working and any relevant local or national policy changes which will impact on our workforce model over the next 5 years.
- To undertake an ongoing mapping exercise to define how our services will evolve their workforce service delivery models over the next 5 years, agreeing a clear transition plan, and relevant supports and policies to achieve this through the One Service programme of work.
- To maintain a strong ongoing focus on effective workforce planning, and the delivery of ongoing actions to address gaps and risks, with fully refreshed bi-annual workforce plans and updates on risks and the progression of agreed actions.
- To complete a detailed review and full realignment of our pay and grading model to mitigate against pay compression, recruitment risks and to simplify grades and structures in line with our future operating model.
- To ensure that all relevant workforce policies, processes and terms and conditions are appropriately reviewed and re-aligned where required to support our future operating model and overall workforce ambition.

##### **Highlighted work already underway**

In line with work required to transition to our future operating model, all services have been asked to complete a consistent template to set out their service delivery models' including workforce profiles with a view to mapping how these will evolve over the next 5-years and as our hub offering and community based operational footprints continue to grow.

Analysis of initial proposals set out by services will be carried out during November and December 2023 to support joint planning with the hub strategy team linked to the Strategic Asset Review and Investment Strategy report in December. Additionally, through the One Service Board all Chief Officers with their nominated service lead will be asked to present their plans to progress their own workforce transition to our future operating model, enabling support and challenge on proposals set out and further opportunities to be discussed or proposed this will be a rolling programme in the coming 12 months.

Through this process all services are considering which of their functions could be operated in a more streamlined, integrated and placed based model and which should remain within a more corporate or North Lanarkshire wide service delivery footprint to maximise economies of scale and efficiency of service delivery. Further thought will also need to be given to the opportunity for shared services in line with ongoing financial challenges and planned public reform.

Aligned to all of this, our workforce plans will form a key pillar of this ongoing process of realignment and transition and as we define revised structures and new roles and structures to support our revised delivery model. This will be fundamental as we design the operating model for town and community hubs from the bottom up, with greater focus on the required workforce roles, skills and behaviours we will need to deliver prevention and early intervention within a more universal service delivery offering for our residents who need support at a community level.

#### **2.4.2 Priority 2 - Pathways for Progression**

With significant external pressures on pay, skills gaps and an ongoing tight labour market, it has never been more important that the Council seek to offer progression and opportunities for promotion to employees. This includes offering career progression to existing staff, and those who are unemployed and seeking employment, or a career change across North Lanarkshire through our wider employability programmes, linked to our Brighter Futures programme of work and our role as a significant employer within North Lanarkshire.

**Our strategic aims for this priority are:**

- To maintain a strong leadership, development and progression offer to staff, including, learning and development, supported qualifications, graduate apprenticeships and other supported development and skills pathways which enable onward progression and promotion.
- To continue to work with services, and nationally with key partners, to identify new opportunities for traineeships and other funded skills and qualification pathways including new graduate apprenticeships for key areas of skills shortage.
- To become an accredited inclusive recruiter, fully adopting the SCQF Qualification Framework to enable the Council to incorporate a formal "work towards" and qualifications equivalency approach into our grading and recruitment processes.

- To significantly improve the speed and effectiveness of our recruitment processes to ensure we are not disadvantaged in the labour market.
- To continue to work closely with our Employability service and Routes to Work ALEO, to offer and expand where possible our number of work placements and other entry level employment opportunities offered within the Council to local unemployed or underemployed residents and those furthest from the labour market.

### **Highlighted work already underway**

Over the last few years, the Council's Building Standards team have continued to invest in a full pathway to build a future pipeline of building standards professionals in an ongoing hard to recruit area. This utilises existing qualifications in place, including a Graduate Apprenticeship in Construction & the Built Environment delivered by Napier University. Over 13 Graduate Apprentices have been taken on via this route and work is now underway to explore how the qualification can be linked to a recently launched modern apprenticeship in Building Standards which was launched in 2022 by UHI (University of Highlands and Islands) in Inverness to address the skills gap in this area. In recognition of the significant difficulties which have been experienced in recruiting to critical ICT disciplines, Business and Digital are continuing to make best use of the Council's apprenticeship levy funding, with graduate apprenticeship qualifications being progressed in MSc Cyber Security, BSc Hons in IT Software Development and MA Hons in Information Technology Management for Business. Business and Digital have also reconfigured several hard to recruit to roles to provide entry level internships and Graduate developer roles.

In advance of the development of a graduate apprenticeship in social work, the Council has recently used monies received from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to augment its existing social worker scheme to offer additional places on our trainee programme for existing staff. This funding also allows us to fast-track students who are already part way through their qualification to achieve it in a shorter timescale.

A number of operational services have now developed career pathways with clear progression and qualification routes, many of which are supported directly by the Council. These include Facility Support Services, Built Environment, Cemeteries, Fleet, Housing, Protective Services, Street Scene and Waste Solutions.

Over the last 3 years the Council has built a much stronger relationship with our Employability team and Routes to Work ALEO, with direct engagement around known Council vacancies which are suitable for placing those on employability programmes, and a guaranteed interview scheme now in place for candidates progressing via this route. In the last 12 months, around 46 staff have been employed through this route in roles across the Council, with 4 of these linked to our commitments under the promise and some staff progressing onwards to promoted posts.

### **Priority 3 - Next Generation Council Workforce**

As the Council continues to manage an aging workforce profile across many of its services, it is critical that we have plans in place to build our next generation workforce. This includes continuing to invest in our modern apprenticeship programme, extending our summer work placement programme for school leavers, and considering wider work placement opportunities for young people, including foundation apprenticeships. This work fully aligns to our wider ambitions under our Brighter Futures programme of work, with the intent for the Council, as one of the largest employers in North Lanarkshire to engage our young people in schools more directly to consider a career in Local Government and as a foundation for our future workforce.

### **Our strategic aims for this priority are:**

- To continue to support a strong Modern Apprenticeship (MA) offering, particularly aligned to areas where we have known workforce gaps and an aging workforce profile.
- To scale up our summer placements programme across all services and building on the good work already underway.
- To investigate the use of foundation apprenticeships, student placements and a graduate scheme as a route to engaging talented young people in a career in Local Government.
- To build linked pathways directly from school into these programmes with onwards progression to more senior roles within the Council.

### **Highlighted work already underway**

To significantly improve the engagement of our young people in a career in Social Work, in 2023 the Council undertook a 6-week summer placement scheme within our Health & Social Care service, and 23 opportunities were identified across the services including hard to fill areas in the joint equipment store and home support. These places were given to young people identified from across our schools and other programmes including our pathways programme. 53 applications were received from senior phase pupils, and 28 students were interviewed with 23 offered a 6-week contract and 6 of these young people coming from a BAME background. All students completed their 6-week contract and were fully engaged in the work; 19 have since been offered sessional contracts, with 1 student having secured an NLC7 role in Home Support and another now engaged in a modern apprenticeship in Health & Social Care.

We have continued to promote and develop the Council's modern apprenticeship scheme with a wide range of programmes in place across our services, and a full yearly winter and summer recruitment campaign. This covers both traditional areas with strong offerings including horticulture, greenspace, and housing as well as new areas with known gaps, including a recent service led initiative to develop a new 2-year Modern Apprenticeship programme in our Regulatory Services Team. Our summer programme for 2023 saw the recruitment of 55 MAs across a range of services with a further winter campaign planned for December 2023.

Aligned to this several services are looking to restructure unfilled vacancies to create new MA and trainee positions. For example, Financial Solutions are now re-introducing their Trainee Accountant programme, having struggled to fill Accountant vacancies over the last 12 months, with Business and Digital taking an increased number of MA trainees in areas such as digital applications support, digital technology software development and cyber security.

#### **2.4.3 Priority 4 - Vibrant & Flexible Workplace**

The Council's desired future workplace model, aligned to its longer-term operating model was agreed with Policy and Strategy Committee in December 2021, and this was focused on enabling staff to work within and closer to their communities. Included within this was acknowledgement of the shift we have seen our workplace dynamic linked to new expectations on flexibility and the predominance of hybrid working as a permanent feature of many workplaces. In this next phase of our workplace model, we are now seeking to incorporate a permanent hybrid working scheme, but within a much wider approach linked to building a vibrant, mixed use, office and community-based workplace environment which accommodate the needs of all staff. This includes work undertaken over the last 3 years to establish staff hubs in a range of accessible

community-based locations across North Lanarkshire with our most recent hub established at Broadwood in Cumbernauld.

**Our strategic aims for this priority are:**

- To establish and implement a final Hybrid Working Scheme for all staff currently in scope, within a wider framework linked to our operating model and focused on building a vibrant mixed use offering of office and community-based workplace environments across North Lanarkshire.
- To invest in, develop and promote our town and community hub and other flexible community-based workspaces for all staff, engaging with different employee groups to help shape and design how these will evolve as we transition to our future operating model and over the next 5 years.
- To build a digitally enabled, skilled and knowledgeable workforce, who can work efficiently and flexibly within our community-based locations, linked to our broader Digital North Lanarkshire, and Resilient People programmes of work including the roll out of our Trauma Informed Practice workforce culture.
- To maintain a strong offering of HR policies and other supports which continue to support staff to work flexibility, as an employer of choice and in line with the new Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Bill, and associated changes which will be introduced in 2024.

**Highlighted work already underway**

Following nearly two years of having interim arrangements in place for hybrid working, and with a much-reduced requirement to protect staff from Covid infection, the Council is now in a position where it wishes to progress with a more permanent Hybrid Working Scheme. The current scheme covers 1278 employees, and this number is being further reviewed in line with the future service workplace requirement mapping exercise which is underway to support hub planning.

In developing this scheme, the Council fully recognises that there has been a shift in employee expectations around hybrid working, and alongside this we have taken into consideration staff views around retaining flexibility, and other material factors, including our desire to maintain a vibrant workplace environment and culture. Accordingly, we are now proposing the development of a permanent Hybrid Working Scheme which will incorporate a balanced 50:50 approach to hybrid working. This scheme, when developed and approved, will represent a permanent contractual change to the terms and conditions for hybrid workers and will specifically include:

- An increase in the minimum number of days that hybrid staff are expected to be in the workplace in a 4-week period from 6 to 10 days.
- The introduction of a clear fixed 5 day rotational weekly working pattern for hybrid staff, which ensures that staff numbers in our office locations are spread evenly throughout the week.
- The longer-term encouragement of hybrid staff to use our increasing number of community-based workplace hubs as alternative work locations, as we roll these out in the coming years.
- The retention of permanent homeworking as an option through our Smarter Working Policy, and only as a reasonable adjustment for specific health or business reasons which may need to be in place for staff who need require this level of workplace support.

The development of the permanent scheme will also incorporate a review of other historical flexibilities offered to this staff grouping, including existing flexible working arrangements and our flexitime system, and this work will be undertaken between November 2023 and January 2024. It should be noted that a permanent revised contractual right for all hybrid staff to split their working time 50% in the office and 50% at home, represents a significant improvement to the contractual right to flexibility previously offered to this group of staff prior to the introduction of home working during the pandemic.

Our permanent Hybrid Working Scheme is now in development and following wider consultation with staff and discussion with Trade Unions regarding existing and future flexible working arrangements, the content of the permanent scheme will be presented to Finance and Resources Committee for final approval in cycle 1 of 2024, with contract variations issued prior to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

#### **2.4.4 Priority 5 - Employee Engagement & Wellbeing**

The Council has a strong track record of engaging with and supporting the wellbeing of staff, and with continued high rates of mental health related absence across our workforce, and in wider society, this area will remain a core workforce priority in the years ahead. As we go forward, and with many changes planned within the Council, it will be increasingly important that we also have strong engagement with our employees at every level, particularly as we progress to implement our new Programme of Work and our ambition to transform our services in the future. This priority therefore reflects our desire to both support staff and to engage them in our journey and our ambition for the Council in the years ahead.

##### **Our strategic aims for this priority are:**

- To build on our previous IIP survey approach, by developing a broader staff survey and engagement plan, which fully engages our staff at all levels, aligned to our Programme of Work, our One Service programme and linked to our responsibilities as a fair work employer under the key pillar of effective voice.
- To continue to deliver the aims and objectives within both our Mental Health Strategy, and Managing Attendance Policy, including maintaining a strong health and wellbeing offering to all of our employees and through our service based mental health groups.
- To maintain a strong wider staff support and benefits offering under our Workwell NL banner, providing staff discounts and other health and wellbeing supports to help with cost-of-living challenges, including our salary sacrifice schemes.

##### **Highlighted work already underway**

As part of work being done to support the councils Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy and to assist in improving attendance levels, several initiatives have recently been promoted directly within our frontline services. These include various mental health related sessions for managers and employees both council wide and also targeted sessions for Education & Families and Adult Health & Social Care. We have also recently promoted Health Kiosks in Waste & Fleet that have allowed employees to check key health indicators, including weight and blood pressure. These kiosks have been surprisingly well utilised with the data provided being useful to both staff individually, and to provide wider insight into the health & wellbeing of this group, which will allow targeted interventions to be put in place. Further Mental Health related

sessions are planned from now until March next year and the kiosks will be extended out to other areas of Enterprise & Communities and then other services.

Work is also underway with VITA (a new physio service) to develop an action plan for Adult Health & Social Care in regard to musculoskeletal issues amongst Home Support Workers, with a view to reducing absence levels and improving overall health & wellbeing in this area. It should be noted that Homecare currently has the highest levels of absence of any area within the Council.

With respect to employee engagement, historically, the Council's main employee survey has been through our IIP accreditation, and our last full assessment was undertaken in 2021. As is being experienced by a number of organisations, the IIP assessment process is now viewed as resource intensive, costly and often does not allow us to fully access the views of our frontline staff. To illustrate this, an interim assessment was undertaken over the summer period of 2023 with 9253 staff across all services surveyed via an online assessment (We Invest in People Survey) with some paper copies made available for employees who do not have on-line access. Although the outcomes are positive as highlighted below, a response of 1545 was received, this equates to a very low 17% return rate and would only marginally be viewed as statistically valid. In addition, the Council has developed significantly in terms of own capabilities with regards to its ability to survey its own staff directly, including our recent hybrid working and healthy working lives surveys which have received much better response rates (in excess of 60%) from staff.

Going forward, and in line with a full plan of staff engagement which is being put in place around the programme of work, scheduled for spring 2024, it is proposed that a revised staff engagement and survey approach will be developed and rolled out over the next 2 years. This will include an improved approach to fully engaging our frontline staff and will more clearly align with our commitments as a fair work employer, and better demonstrate how we are engaging our staff in the development of our future operating model and programme of work.

Key highlights from our interim IIP assessment include that:

- 87.3% of people feel that their role enables them to work well with others.
- 85.7% agree that their work is interesting.
- 84.9% of people look for improvement ideas from their colleagues.
- 83.2% agree that their behaviour reflects NLC's values
- 80.2% feel encouraged to use initiative in their role.

#### **2.4.5 Priority 6 - Equality & Inclusion**

As a Local Authority we are now making good progress on the delivery of our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty, and this includes a clear commitment to shift the diversity of our workforce profile, including signing up to the Race at Work Charter in 2021, and the appointment of our first Executive Sponsor for race within the Council. Other areas of work which are included is our ongoing commitments as a Disability Confident Leader and our Equally safe at work delivery plan. This work will continue to be a priority in the years ahead and it is integral to our intention to build a future workforce which better reflects the needs of our communities.

**Our strategic aims for this priority are:**

- To deliver on the actions set out in our newly integrated Equalities Delivery Plan, which includes all strands of our work and to measure



our progress through our corporate action plans and established Equality Outcomes Performance Framework.

- To refresh our Equality Strategy and Outcomes in 2024/25 to ensure that they continue to be aligned with our ambition in this area.
- To ensure going forward that all of our HR and workforce policies are inclusive and reflective of our equalities commitments.
- To continue to support and drive the work of the Equalities Board, and associated service Champions and their Service Equality Plans.
- To ensure clear oversight, governance and strong sponsorship of our Equalities & Inclusion agenda, through our Elected Member Equalities Champion, our Executive Sponsor for Race and regular reporting to the Wellbeing & Tackling Poverty Committee.

### **Highlighted work already underway**

As part of our commitments under the race at work charter and given the disproportionately low numbers of Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic employees in the Council workforce the Equalities Board Service Leads are taking a positive action approach to drive change within their services.

In Education and Families where schools are known to have high numbers of BAME pupils, the service is looking at how it can create specific posts for BAME teachers to ensure that the staff group is representative of the wider pupil base. Similarly, our Social Work service is currently developing actions in support of BAME recruitment and retention. Specifically, adapting the interview process to be more inclusive so as BAME Social Workers have a better chance of success and providing peer support to BAME Social Workers already working in the council to increase retention.

Work has also begun to engage with specific BAME community groups, including most recently our Congolese community group to explore their views about working with the Council and to engage them around future opportunities in areas where we have shortages.

Additionally, the Council has recently completed work on a number of inclusive policies, including our Sexual Harassment Policy, our Hormonal Change and Menopause Policy, both of which will be considered and approved by Committee in Cycle 4 of 2023, and our Disability policy which is currently in development and likely to be brought forward in early 2024.

### **Next Steps**

- 2.5 Following approval by Policy and Strategy, our One Workforce Plan will be taken forward under the governance of the One Service Board, with progress reported via the One Service Programme and planned regular updates to Committee. This will include maintaining an updated rolling One Workforce plan of work to support the delivery of our priorities and strategic aims to 2028.
- 2.6 Services will continue to progress with their detailed Service Workforce Plans through 2024/25 with update reports presented to CMT twice yearly. A full refresh of Service Workforce Plans will be undertaken in 2025/26 in line with our agreed 2 year cycle.

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### **3. Measures of success**


- 3.1 Progress against priorities and actions identified within the One Workforce Plan and associated rolling 18 month delivery plan.

- 3.3 Continued strong workforce planning and associated delivery of actions to manage and mitigate ongoing risks and close identified gaps in our current workforce.
- 3.4 Positive ongoing survey feedback from staff regarding their engagement in the overall programme of work and as the council transitions its operating model in the coming years.

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**4. Supporting documentation**

- 4.2 Appendix 1 – Updated Demographic Profile
- 4.3 Appendix 2 - One Workforce Plan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fiona Whittaker', with a stylized, cursive script.

**Fiona Whittaker**  
**Chief Officer (People Resources)**

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## 5. Impacts ( <http://connect/report-template-guidance> )

### 5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty

Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website?

<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments>

Yes ☐ No ☐

### 5.2 Financial impact

Does the report contain any financial impacts?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

### 5.3 HR policy impact

Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts?

Yes ☒ No ☐

If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources?

Yes ☒ No ☐

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

The development of the Council's permanent Hybrid Working Scheme will be taken forward through our normal consultation and approval procedures and as outlined in the report.

### 5.4 Legal impact

Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

### 5.5 Data protection impact

Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to [dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk)

Yes ☐ No ☐

**5.6 Technology / Digital impact**

Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

**5.7 Environmental / Carbon impact**

Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

**5.8 Communications impact**

Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

**5.9 Risk impact**

Is there a risk impact?

Yes ☒ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?

Workforce risks have been fully captured in the Corporate HR risk and are also reflected in service risk registers.

**5.10 Armed Forces Covenant Duty**

Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.

**5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact**

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

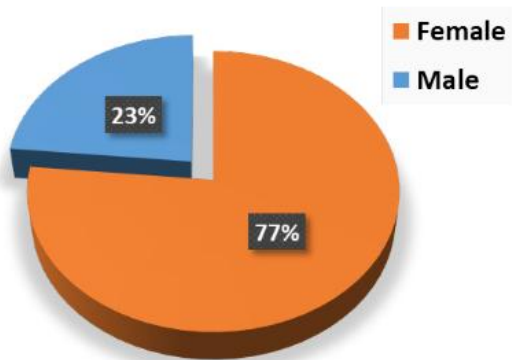
If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐

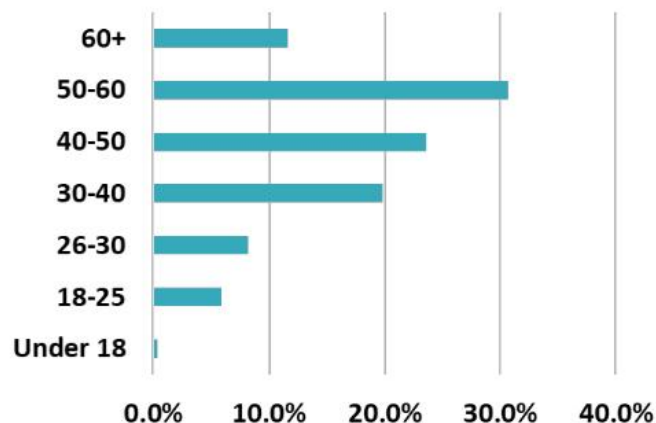
# Appendix 1 – Council Workforce Demographic Profile

Benj



### Gender Profile



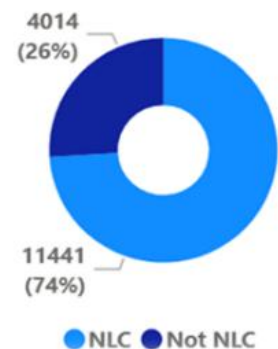
### Age Profile



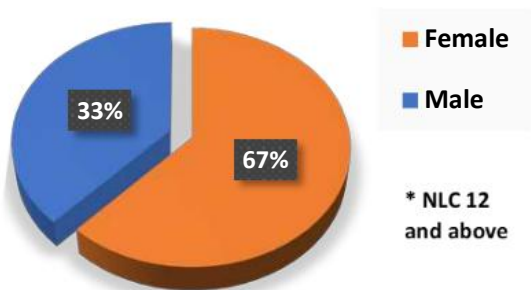
### Average Salary, Age and Length of Service by Gender

	Headcount	FTE	Avg Sal	Avg Age	Avg LOS
	15455	13,040	28.0K	46	13
	Female	FTE	Avg Sal	Avg Age	Avg LOS
	11860	9,679	26.6K	46	13
	Male	FTE	Avg Sal	Avg Age	Avg LOS
	3595	3,360	33.0K	47	12

### Lives in North Lanarkshire

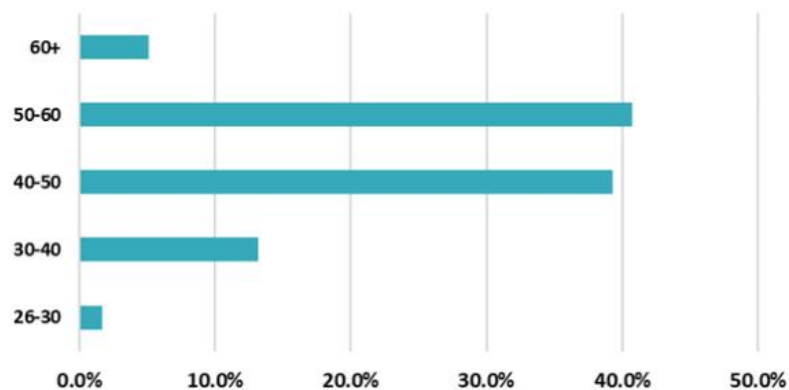


### Managerial\* Roles by Gender



\* NLC 12 and above

### Managerial\* Age Profile

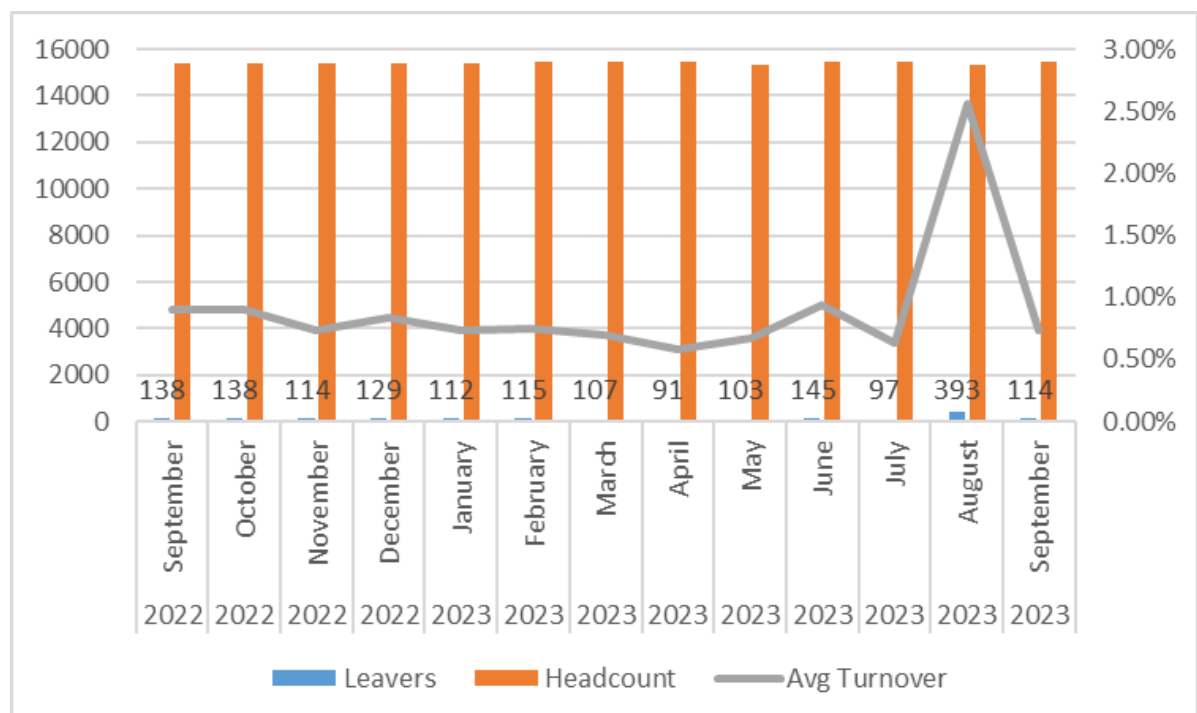


## Appendix 1 – Council Workforce Demographic Profile

### Service Demographic Breakdown

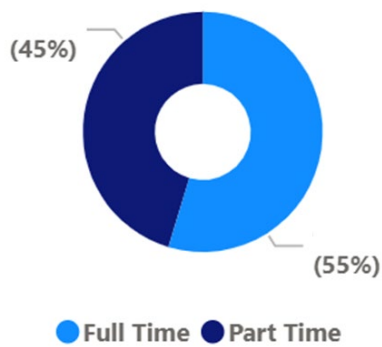
Service	%>50 years old	%	%	%	Disability
		Female	Male	BAME	
Adult Health and Social Care	54%	89%	11%	0.92%	3.22%
Asset & Procurement	64%	83%	17%	1.07%	2.33%
Audit & Risk	73%	73%	27%	0%	0%
Business and Digital	52%	41%	59%	2.76%	3.23%
Community Operations	59%	13%	87%	0.92%	2.37%
Education & Families	32%	83%	17%	5%	2.57%
Financial Solutions	40%	76%	24%	1.05%	3.83%
Housing Management	52%	58%	42%	0.99%	4.23%
Housing Property	40%	35%	65%	0.46%	2.76%
Legal & Democratic	46%	86%	14%	5.04%	4.12%
People Resources	30%	84%	16%	1.49%	4.95%
Place	32%	40%	60%	1.99%	1.99%
Strategic Communication & Engagement	37%	69%	31%	3.7%	4.59%

### Employee 12 Month Turnover

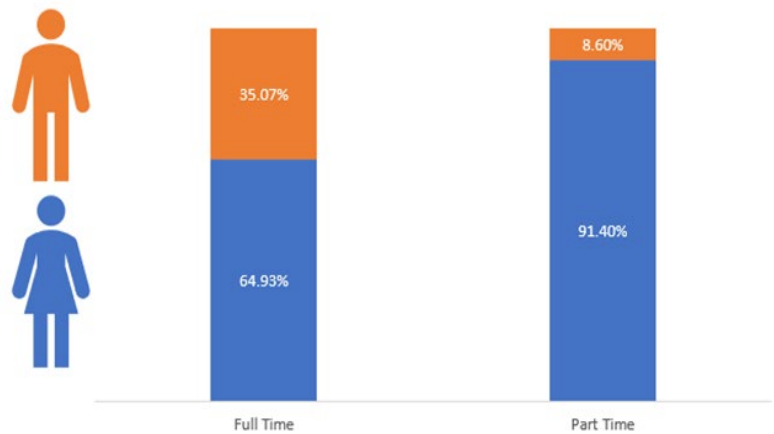


## Appendix 1 – Council Workforce Demographic Profile

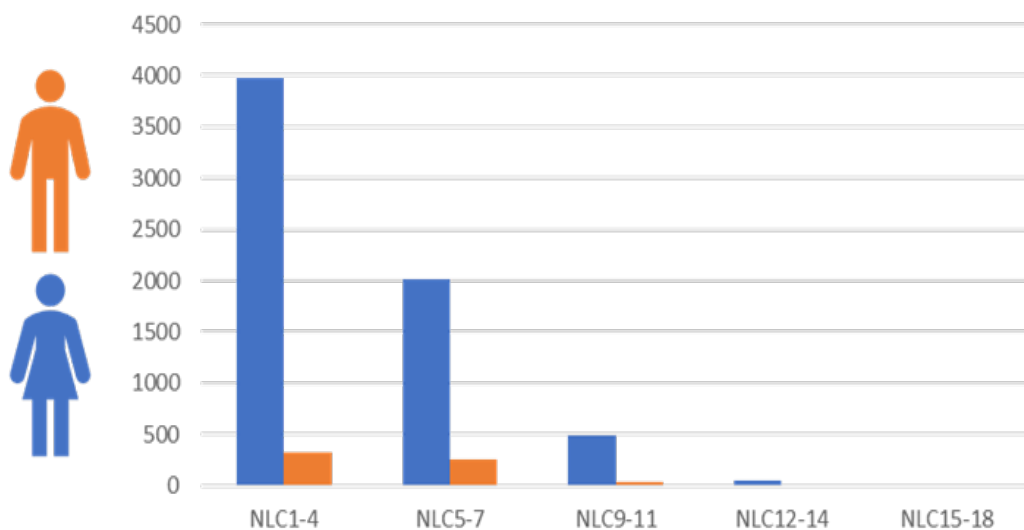
### Working Pattern



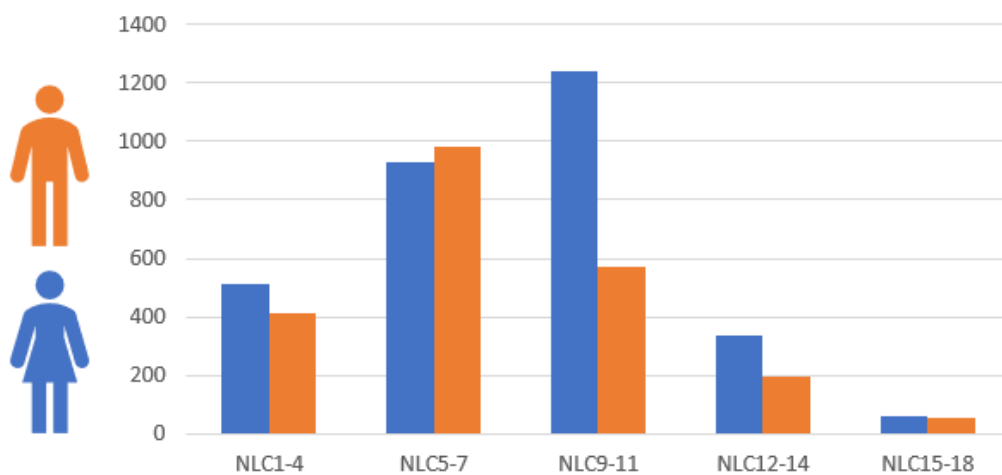
### Working Pattern by Gender



### Working Pattern by Grade – Part Time



### Working Pattern by Grade – Full Time



## Appendix 2 One Workforce Strategic Delivery Plan for 2023/24 and 2024/25

Rag Key: <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Complete. <span style="color: green;">■</span> In progress, on track. <span style="color: orange;">■</span> In progress, requires focused action. <span style="color: red;">■</span> Paused or not progressing.				
1. Managing Workforce Transition				
Actions	Description	Current position	RAG Status	Comment
1.1 Support the delivery of all ongoing workforce and structure changes arising from agreed operating model revisions and savings exercises.	The people resources team will continue to lead on the delivery of workforce changes linked to agreed and future savings, along with ongoing service realignments linked to our future operating model and One Service programme of work. This will be undertaken in partnership with Services and Trade Union colleagues.	All current changes are progressing well and will be delivered in line with agreed timescales including savings to April 2026.		
1.2 Continue with organisation and workforce mapping process for identifying transition plans for future workforce models and structures as these proceed and evolve over the next 3-5 years.	The Council will be required to undertake an ongoing process of mapping and improving our workforce models and structures, including where and how staff currently work to deliver our services and to determine how this will change as we move to a hub-based community delivery model. This will be aligned within the One Service programme of work.	First phase mapping complete. Analysis will be undertaken during November and December 2023.  Next phase work will be scoped in Q1 of next year in line with wider hub delivery programme.		Work is progressing aligned to the leadership and operating model programme but is at an early stage in terms of future modelling.
1.3 Complete a full review of the Council's single status pay and grading model and implement approved changes.	Successive differentiated pay awards have resulted in significant compression of the Council's single status pay and grading model, which is now required to undergo a full review of all grades. This work is complex with potential risks and costs which need to be managed. A full review of the model is expected to take a number of years to complete.	Professional desktop review of pay and grading model is now complete, and phase 1 options are in development. Full report to committee planned for Cycle 2 2024 and this will lay out the proposed work required for phase 1 following the application of the 23/24 SJC pay award.		Currently awaiting outcome of 23/24 pay award to fully progress. Current proposal likely to have a further impact on the bottom end of our pay scales.



## Appendix 2 One Workforce Strategic Delivery Plan for 2023/24 and 2024/25

1.4 Progress actions from 23/24 Service Workforce Plans in 2024/25 with a full refresh of plans in 2025/26.	Given know workforce challenges and risks, a robust ongoing process for workforce planning requires to be in place across all services to manage known risks. Detailed action plans must be in place to support these plans with a focus on the progression of actions.	Actions from 2023/24 plans are currently being progressed and will be reported through CMT with an update to committee in Q3 2024.		
2. Pathways for Progression				
Actions	Description	Current position	RAG Status	Comment
2.1 Maintain our leadership and learning and development offering for all staff within budget constraints.	The Council has limited funding to allocate to leader and staff development however we have maintained where possible our leadership and learning and development offering through Learn NL. Going forward we will look for additional work-based development opportunities to grow staff through rotational placements and other development opportunities including mentoring.	The Council maintains a full ongoing learning and development offering under Learn NL for all staff and has a bespoke leadership Offering for Education and Families and Social Work. We will continue to look for opportunities to grow this where funding is available.		
2.2 Maintain and extend our Graduate Apprenticeship Scheme.	The Council's graduate apprenticeship scheme has been running successfully since 2018 with 96 staff in progress or having completed their qualification. The operation of the scheme will be critical going forward to help address identified shortages in key professional and specialist areas.	2023 Cohort enrolled in August 2023 with 10 students starting in Aug/Sept 2023. 2024 process will begin in March 24 seeking nominations.		New graduate apprenticeship frameworks will be progressed in the first half of 2024 aligned to work underway within Glasgow City Region and our developing University Partnerships.

## Appendix 2 One Workforce Strategic Delivery Plan for 2023/24 and 2024/25

2.3 Complete a review of our higher duties policy arrangements	The Council's higher duties policy supports employees to take on new and promoted remits on a temporary basis. This now needs to be reviewed to support and align with our programme of work and to more easily enable staff to take on development opportunities and contribute to projects and programmes.	Review underway and expected to be completed by the end of Dec 23. The revised policy will be agreed by CMT thereafter and taken to committee for final approval in Q1 24.		
2.4 Incorporate the SCQF (Scottish Qualifications & Credit Framework) qualifications into our job grading and recruitment processes to become an inclusive recruiter.	Incorporation of the SCQF framework will allow the Council to become an inclusive recruiter, providing us with the ability to undertake qualifications equivalency and recognise relevant experience where people fail to meet the required qualification on the essential criteria. This will help to widen our potential pool of candidates for key supervisory and manager shortage areas such as in Waste and Fleet.	A paper will be brought forward in Q1 of 2024, with committee approval in Cycle 2 and implementation thereafter during 2024.		Initial discussions have been held with the Scottish Qualifications Authority who are positively supporting our move in this direction.
2.5 Improve the speed and effectiveness of our recruitment processes.	Work is required to improve the speed and effectiveness of our recruitment processes to ensure that we are not disadvantaged in the recruitment market.	An improvement plan has been developed and is being implemented over Nov, Dec and Jan with improvements expected to be in place during Q1 24/25.		Work to map our end-to-end recruitment process and timelines has been completed and a dashboard created to target areas where timelines could be shortened.
2.6 Extend our engagement with Employability and Routes to Work to fill vacant and hard to fill roles at entry level.	Over the last 2 years, the Council has worked successfully with Routes to Work to place unemployed residents into temporary entry level roles within the Council. In a number of	This work will be ongoing throughout 2023/24. Where suitable recruitment arises the people resources team are in direct contact with colleagues in Routes to Work.		

## Appendix 2 One Workforce Strategic Delivery Plan for 2023/24 and 2024/25

	areas this has resulted in permanent roles being offered with onward promotion prospects.			
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## Appendix 2 One Workforce Strategic Delivery Plan for 2023/24 and 2024/25

3. Next Generation Council Workforce				
Actions	Description	Current position	RAG Status	Comment
3.1 Continue with our Modern Apprentice programme to support service workforce plans.	The Council has continued to extend and grow its modern apprenticeship programme particularly to support known and ongoing workforce gaps across our services.	We have recently completed a successful summer intake of MA's in a broad range of areas such as Health & Social Care, Housing, Digital, Early Learning & Childcare (ASN Schools), Parks and Gardens.		2023/24 winter recruitment campaign currently in the process of being launched.
3.2 Extend our annual work placements scheme for senior phase pupils and school leavers to align to workforce plans and gaps.	Our 2023 summer placement scheme has been very successful with around 30 senior phase and school leaver pupils taking up a six-week placement across a range of services.	Work will begin in early 2024 to scope out the next annual summer placement scheme, identifying key priority areas that are hard to fill and aligned with our workforce plans.		
3.3 Explore the use of Foundation Apprenticeships for key areas of the Council workforce where there are known shortages and to build pathways direct from school.	The Council does not currently offer Foundation Apprenticeships within our own services, and this is a priority area which has been identified for 2024. There are currently a range of Foundation Apprenticeship frameworks which are relevant to areas identified within our workforce plans.	Work will begin in 2024 to identify relevant FA framework, particularly those which can be linked in direct progression pathways to Graduate Apprenticeships.		Foundation Apprenticeships are at SCQF level 6, typically higher than Modern Apprenticeships which are mainly at levels 4 and 5.

## Appendix 2 One Workforce Strategic Delivery Plan for 2023/24 and 2024/25

4. Vibrant & Flexible Workplace				
Actions	Description	Current position	RAG Status	Comment
4.1 Develop and implement the Council' final Hybrid Working Scheme.	Following a number of years of interim arrangements, the Council will now to move to the implementation of its final Hybrid Working Scheme which impacts around 1300 previously office-based staff.	The revised final scheme will be fully developed during November and December 2023 with a view to achieving full Committee approval for the new scheme in Q1 2024 and implementation thereafter.		
4.2 Develop our community-based workplace settings, promoting and tracking staff usage of our community hubs as these develop and expand.	We will continue to support the further development of our community-based workplace offering aligned to our leadership and operating model and under our One Service programme of work.	Work will be ongoing through 2023/24 and 2024/25 to continually survey the usage of our current facilities and encourage and promote staff, including those who are hybrid working, to increase the use of our community facilities.		
5. Employee Engagement & Wellbeing				
Actions	Description	Current position	RAG Status	Comment
5.1 Build from our current IIP staff engagement approach by developing a broader staff survey strategy which supports our programme of work and engages staff at all levels.	The Council's need to establish a broader staff survey approach which allows us to engage staff at all levels in our programme of work and our future ambition and operating model. This will be taken forward under our One Service programme of work and aligned to the Councils wider commitments under fair work.	Work not yet started but will commence in early 2024/25 within the One Service Programme of work.		
5.2 Continue with our current programme of	Our levels of mental health related absence have materially reduced in recent years	Work will continue in 2023/24 and 2024/25 with our programme of work		

## Appendix 2 One Workforce Strategic Delivery Plan for 2023/24 and 2024/25

work designed to continue to provide staff support for mental health & wellbeing and reduce levels of mental health related absence.	through targeted action and support; however, this area remains our most significant reason for absence overall. Good progress has been made on the development and implementation of our wider mental health strategy with service-based groups now established across all services.	to reduce Mental Health related absence with targeted work planned for early 2024 to improve rates of absence in Teaching and Health & Social Care.		
5.3 Maintain and extend where appropriate our successful range of staff benefits and supports through our Workwell NL offerings.	We continue to get good engagement with our staff benefits under our Workwell NL platform which includes staff discounts and a range of salary sacrifice schemes.	Our offering will be extended in 2023/24 with the launch of our recently agreed Electric vehicle salary sacrifice scheme, and we will continue to monitor and review all of our schemes and their usage and benefits.		
<b>6. Equality &amp; Inclusion</b>				
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Current position</b>	<b>RAG Status</b>	<b>Comment</b>
6.1 To implement our integrated Equalities Delivery Plan which now includes all strands of our work under one plan.	Our Equalities Delivery Plan and associated framework of measures will ensure the progression of all of our Equalities programmes including our commitments under the Race at Work Charter, Equally Safe at Work and Disability Confident Leader.	Work is progressing well across all programmes, with a disabled employee event planned on 4 December 2023 to mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities.		
6.2 To continue to support the work of our Equalities Board.	Our Equalities Board was established in early 2023 and has representation from all services across the Council. The work of the Board involves oversight of the plan, and more importantly, establishing and driving service level equalities plans in each of our services and the sharing best practice.	Service level Equalities plans have now been established in each service and SMT's are endorsing and taking forward these plans during 23024 and 24/25. The Equalities Board will also be involved in refreshing our Equalities Strategy and Outcomes during 2024/25.		
6.3 To ensure going forward that our HR	Our HR policies are critical to supporting our equalities plan and desired outcomes and	New policies have been developed in the areas of Menopause and Hormonal		

## Appendix 2 One Workforce Strategic Delivery Plan for 2023/24 and 2024/25

<p>policies and relevant and inclusive and that they support our equalities outcomes.</p>	<p>will be kept under review to ensure that they are aligned. Where required new policies will be developed to support our delivery plan.</p>	<p>Change and Sexual Harassment and these will be approved by Finance and Resources Committee in Cycle 4 of 2023/24. A disability policy is also in development and this will be brought forward for approval in Q2 of 2024/25.</p>		
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