North Lanarkshire Council
Report

Policy and Strategy Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref FW **Date** 04/12/25

One Workforce Annual Update

From Fiona Whittaker, Chief Officer (People Resources)

E-mail Whittakerf@northlan.gov.uk **Telephone** 07973 728628

Executive Summary

This report provides a comprehensive annual update for 2024/25 on the Council's progress towards delivery of the strategic priorities set out within the One Workforce Plan, which was agreed by Policy and Strategy Committee in December 2023. The report highlights some of the workforce improvements and changes that are being delivered across services through sustained focus and shows that progress continues to be made in dealing with known workforce gaps and issues.

Like many local authorities, North Lanarkshire Council continues to face a challenging range of constraints and historical issues which directly impact on its ability to recruit and maintain a skilled and motivated workforce. This ongoing challenge was most recently outlined in the Accounts Commission report *Delivering for the future: Responding to the workforce challenge* which was published in August 2025 and reflects an up-to-date position across all local authorities in Scotland.

Moreover, over the last 12 months, there is no doubt that the Council has continued to experience some of the workforce issues which are referenced in the Accounts Commission report, including the ongoing impact of an aging workforce, rising service demand in areas such as Health & Social Care, difficulties recruiting skilled professionals, and high levels of absence in some of our frontline services. When taken together with the need for us to both transform our operating model and build a digital ready, future skilled workforce, it's clear that we must continue to maintain a strong focus on building the workforce capacity and capability we need to both deliver our services and advance our progress in taking forward the Programme of Work and our ambitions as set out within The Plan for North Lanarkshire.

Importantly, the council has now fully established an effective approach to workforce planning that continues to underpin our efforts to proactively tackle our known challenges. This year's one workforce update report contains a full summary of our now refreshed and detailed bi-annual workforce plans for 2025-2027 across all services. These have been led by Chief Officers using a further refined and improved process; the resultant plans are detailed and thorough and they will further assist in our efforts to identify and target priority workforce areas for further investment and development. The strength of our workforce planning approach was most recently audited and endorsed as part of our Best Value Workforce Innovation Audit with outcomes reported to Policy and Strategy in 2024.

Additionally, and to support improved monitoring and oversight of the key workforce metrics which support our workforce plans and our strategic workforce priorities, the People Resources Service has developed a draft corporate workforce dashboard, which is included as an appendix to the report for Elected Member review. We have also included within the report, the early results from the pilot of both our refreshed employee survey, which has been built around the principles of fair work, and the final survey of our hybrid working staff to ensure that our arrangements in this area are working effectively.

These additional sources of strategic workforce information provide a strong foundation for advancing our objectives aligned to the One Workforce Plan in the coming years. They also fully support the recommendations within the Council's own Best Value Workforce Innovation Audit in 2024, and the priorities set out in the 2025 Accounts Commission report, with local authorities being encouraged to expand workforce insights, data and reporting and to focus on strong employee engagement, ensuring that staff are at the core of the council's transformation journey.

Early analysis across this wider suite of workforce data now available for this year's update report shows some encouraging workforce trends including that:

- The council is building a younger workforce with a reduction in our overall average age from 50 to 45.
- Our diversity mix is changing and shows positive recruitment in several core equalities areas.
- There is clear evidence within detailed service workforce plans that we are already planning for what will be required in our future workforce and developing effective solutions for known areas of skills shortage.
- Early indications from our pilot survey show that staff engagement within the Council is positive across several key indicators.
- 91% of hybrid staff have reported that they are doing 10 or more days in the office with some reporting that they are doing between 10 and 15 days in the office.
- 80% of hybrid staff feel that the permanent hybrid scheme supports them well in their role and responsibilities or has no impact.
- There is further evidence that the council shows a positive working culture within our people dashboard with relatively low numbers of cases relating to grievance and disciplinary matters across all services.

Whilst these trends represent clear broad positive indicators and improvements relating to our workforce, there nevertheless remain many difficult workforce challenges that will have an ongoing impact on our ability to maintain adequate workforce strength and depth across our services. These are outlined clearly by services in our recent workforce plans and are summarised below. Tackling these more complex systemic issues in an effective and lasting way will require time and sustained action across all services. This is especially true in a context where we expect further increased service demand; additional staff related savings; continued challenges with an aging workforce; difficulties with hard to fill posts and high levels of absence in key frontline services; all of which will result in additional burdens on our existing staff at all levels. What is clear from our recent workforce plans, is that all Chief Officers are working hard to mitigate these ongoing risks and operational challenges by continuing to maintain a strong focus on effective workforce planning, alongside taking all necessary proactive steps and actions to identify and address solutions to these issues.

The remainder of this report sets out a full progress update on our One Workforce Plan, service workforce plans and Strategic Workforce Priorities to 2028. This includes an outline of several areas where we have made good progress during 2024/25 that are highlighted in the body of the report against each priority. In addition, within the refreshed One Workforce

Delivery Framework, we have included some new areas of corporate work, and these will further support our continued efforts to build and maintain the council's workforce to meet both our ongoing operational requirements and our future strategic aims and ambitions.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Policy and Strategy Committee:

(1) Acknowledge the continued workforce and associated challenges and risks the Council is facing.
(2) Acknowledge the continued good progress made against the Council's One Workforce Priorities to 2028, our refreshed Service Workforce Plans and the rolling plan of work which supports the delivery of key actions set out at both corporate and service level.
(3) Acknowledge the further work that has been completed on the refreshed staff survey, hybrid survey and workforce dashboard.

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
Programme of Work	All Programmes of Work

1. Background

1.1 Over the last 12 months, the Council's services have continued to experience a range of pressures in building and maintaining their workforce capacity and capability, and accordingly our corporate HR risk level of 16 continues to reflect these challenges.

Accounts Commission Report - Local Government Challenges & Issues

1.2 During 2024 and early 2025, Audit Scotland conducted Best Value Workforce Innovation audits of all 32 local authorities, and this culminated in a final publication, issued by the Accounts Commission in August 2025 which sets out their opinion of the current workforce position in Local Government across Scotland. Their report entitled *Delivering for the future: Responding to the workforce challenge* outlines a number of key challenges that are impacting on all local authorities and makes recommendations for future work as set out below:

1.3 Local Government Challenges

- Councils face financial pressures and increasing service demands, impacting workforce wellbeing and recruitment.
- Workforce planning needs better alignment with strategic priorities, improved data use, and staff engagement.
- Staff are central to service delivery; councils must prioritize development, address absence, and embrace innovation.
- Recruitment & retention are impacted by a competitive labour market, pay erosion, and skills shortages.
- Health deterioration and demographic shifts intensify pressures on an ageing workforce.
- There are wellbeing concerns related to rising stress and mental health issues; staff feel less inspired.

Report Recommendations

1.4 The recommendations for all councils set out in the report include:

Workforce Planning	• Align workforce plans with corporate strategies. • Expand data collection and engage staff meaningfully.
Digital Technology	• Accelerate transformation and assess digital skills gaps. • Monitor impact on productivity.
Hybrid Working	• Formalise policies and measure outcomes.
Workforce Development	• Assess current skills and report on development impact. • Monitor agency staff use.
Shared Services	• Explore joint roles/functions and learn from successful collaborations.
Impact Measurement	• Strengthen scrutiny and develop reporting tools. • Use quantifiable metrics

Best Value Workforce Innovation Report 2024

1.5 The Council's Best Value Thematic Audit was undertaken by Audit Scotland in early 2024 and reported to Policy & Strategy in August 2024 (Best Value Audit Workforce Innovation). The report identified several areas of good practice including the fact that our service workforce plans are robust, covering key service challenges, gaps, and how the service needs to adapt, with references to the council's strategic priorities and how they will support delivery of the Programme of Work.

1.6 The report outlined 3 areas for recommended action as set out below. These have now been actioned and details are summarised below and encompassed within the report and the workforce dashboard.

Area	Recommendation	Current Status
1. **Acting on staff engagement feedback**	As the council develops its staff engagement approach, it should ensure that as well as providing information to staff on council decisions, it also incorporates the views of staff and trade unions to support transparent decision making, and evidence how it is acting on findings from the Summer 2024 Roadshow sessions.	The Councils revised staff survey based on the fair work first framework, has now been fully developed and piloted in three services initially, covering more than 800 staff, with a plan to roll out to all services in the coming year. The content of the survey has been agreed with Trade Unions and includes questions relating to the Programme of Work and the Plan for North Lanarkshire.

		Further work to develop the survey and the next series of employee roadshows is underway and will be taken forward in early 2026.
2. Hybrid working policy	The council should continue to monitor the impact of its hybrid working approach. It should continually assess the impact of increasing the number of office days, in terms of performance, staff wellbeing, and recruitment and retention.	The Council's final hybrid working survey has been developed and issued to all relevant staff to assess the effectiveness of our permanent hybrid working policy which was implemented in late 2024.
3. Temporary workforce	The council should include data reporting on its temporary workforce as part of published workforce data, and once available it should include data on agency workers.	Data on temporary workforce is now included within the Workforce Dashboard and data regarding agency workers is currently reported through the Workforce Steering Group providing oversight and governance.

One Workforce Strategic Priorities

1.7 In the current challenging context, and with a requirement to make progression on building capacity in our workforce and making the required workforce changes which will enable the delivery of our future operating model, we consider that our One Workforce Strategic Priorities as set out below in figure 1 remain fully valid and aligned to the key areas of workforce change and risk that we need to progress.

Figure 1 – One Workforce Strategic Priorities to 2028

1.8 Set out in the remainder of the report below is a full summary of the key workforce challenges; our refreshed service workforce plans; a summary of our progress against the corporate One Workforce Plan and the detailed actions that will be taken forward in the coming year to address gaps and mitigate risks. Both the corporate action plan and highlights of the service actions are detailed under our six strategic workforce priorities.

2 Report

Summary of Service & Corporate Workforce Plans & Actions

Service Workforce Challenges

2.1 Whilst each service has outlined its own distinct challenges and priorities, several common themes have emerged from a full review of the detailed service plans. Taken together, these themes present a broadly consistent and up to date picture of the council's workforce challenges, aligning under six overarching themes:

Ageing workforce and succession

2.1.1 Many services are reporting a high proportion of staff over 50 across leadership, technical and frontline roles, creating ongoing and future workforce capacity and succession pressures. This is particularly evident in Adult Health & Social Care, where 55% of the workforce is aged 50 or over, and Land and Waste with 50% of staff expected to reach retirement age within the next two to three years. Similarly, FSS are reporting that 61.9% of staff are aged 50+ but positively and with focused action, this has reduced from 64% in 2023. Housing, Greenspace and Country Parks and Roads and Assets also report an aging workforce profile with Housing reporting more than 280 staff aged 50–59; Cemeteries Chargehands and Supervisors average age reporting as 58 and 59 respectively and 75% of roads inspectors aged 50+. At a corporate level, Strategy & Engagement report that 53% of the overall workforce are aged 50-59 therefore succession planning and knowledge transfer are key considerations.

Recruitment and retention in critical roles

2.1.2 Services continue to face challenges attracting and retaining staff due to rates of retirement, turnover, known market shortages and competition within the external labour market. This includes turnover in areas such as Adult Health & Social Care with 24 new social workers being recruited over a period of 12 months but 19 leaving. Similarly, 73 staff have been recruited into home support but 119 have left with the majority being due to retirement. Additionally, there are ongoing recruitment shortages in a variety of both frontline and professional/technical roles, which include skilled trades, technical specialists, drivers, catering and cleaning staff, planners, EHO's, clerk of works, quantity surveyors, IT specialists, solicitors, project managers, roads engineers, and some teaching posts. These shortages continue to place pressure on services, with some services having to rely on supply staff and an ongoing need for overtime in bigger frontline services to meet essential service demand. There has also been a rise in sponsorship enquiries from services, and requests for more flexible contracts and working hours to improve retention. Many services have introduced apprenticeship, trainee and graduate routes to build their own future workforce, but these need to be increased in scale and are sometimes limited by the availability of experienced mentors and managers to support and develop trainees.

Skills gaps and evolving service demands

2.1.3 There is widespread acknowledgement within service workforce plans of the need to build greater capability in future skills areas such as digital and AI. Several services report a mismatch between current workforce skills and those required to meet changing priorities. For example, Adult Health & Social Care report needing more staff skilled in complex care, digital case-management and a need to strengthen assessment and community-based support skills. Housing highlights the need for greater expertise in sustainability, fire safety and digitisation of processes. Land & Waste identify the need to upskill frontline staff to use more modernised digital equipment such as technical maintenance of vehicles, automated route planning and transitioning staff to more flexible remits, for example moving to multiskilled operatives. Across the organisation plans also call out a growing need to develop AI, data analytics and other technical skills such as cyber security. Other areas of focus include strengthening digital and data oversight with Finance & Technology, Audit & Risk and Legal & Democratic all emphasising the importance of having a better understanding of digital governance as the council adopts new technologies.

Workforce capacity and financial constraints

2.1.4 All services acknowledge that budget pressures and a need to deliver savings limit their options regarding the recruitment and development of staff to meet service demands both current and future, leading to prioritisation of workloads, use of supply and agency staff, increased overtime and delays in filling key posts. Workforce plans indicate that this issue is felt universally, but most acutely in key operational services which are subject to greater fluctuations in demand, high absence and an aging workforce profile. Adult Health & Social Care report difficulties in meeting increasing care needs within existing resources and both FSS and Land & Waste face challenges in covering essential roles across large, dispersed workforces, at times relying on overtime and agency staff.

Service Change and Transformation

2.1.5 As expected, and in line with our transformation goals, many services are undergoing organisational change that is reshaping their workforce profile, skills and ways of working. This includes proactively seeking to adopt new technologies or improve process and service efficiency alongside absorbing changes to legislative or statutory duties - such as new education and social-care policies and housing legislation. Education & Families is implementing the Empowered Clusters model, embedding a new senior-leadership structure and refining the early-years' operating model, alongside national reforms such as The Promise and new care and justice legislation. Adult Health & Social Care is adapting to national reforms in social-care delivery, implementing systems change to improve efficiency and shifting more provision to community-based settings in line with our operating model ambitions. There are also several service and structural reviews taking place across Enterprise and Communities with Housing responding to new duties under the Housing Act and Ask & Act and looking at systems change and process digitisation; Active & Creative Communities undertaking a review of their management structure and operating model to align with community hubs; FSS is reorganising to improve the flexibility and consistency of its services; Land and Waste are modernising specific functions, Roads & Assets through the rollout of the CONFIRM asset-management system and the exploration of AI-supported inspections; Protective Services shifting to a cloud-based case-management system; Greenspace implementing a new operating model and workforce changes linked to the Watersports Centre redevelopment; Place are undertaking a structural review to implement their new "Invest in NL" approach and Built Environment are undertaking digital and planned process improvements to strengthen efficiency and customer service.

Workforce wellbeing, inclusion and engagement

2.1.6 Many services highlight staff wellbeing concerns and pressures arising from service delivery demands and other planned structural and transformational changes, particularly in intensive frontline services. This includes concerns over rates of mental health absence in several services including Adult Health & Social care who note the challenge of sustaining frontline workforce capacity in the face of rising service demand, compounded by the introduction of new systems and ways of working and high levels of overtime. Similarly, Education & Families note high levels of mental health related absence in the teaching workforce, as well as challenges in sustaining the wellbeing and resilience of frontline social workers, particularly given the demanding nature of the role and the high proportion of staff already in older age brackets. FSS and Land & Waste also report challenges with absence and turnover in manual roles, with additional challenges around high levels of absence related to bone muscle and joint issues given the physical nature of these roles and the age demographic of the workforce. In terms of inclusion, services are reporting more positive improvements, with Place increasing its proportion of staff from minority ethnic backgrounds from 2% in 2023 to 5% in 2025, whilst other services such as Audit & Risk, highlight the need to improve diversity, particularly at senior and professional levels. Several services, including Adult Health & Social Care and Education & Families, also emphasise the importance of building a workforce that better reflects the diversity of the local population, with particular attention to inclusive recruitment and progression pathways in under-represented roles.

Plans & Actions

2.2 The full One Workforce plan of work is outlined in detail in the One Workforce Delivery Framework that is attached in appendix 1. This includes progress highlights for 2024/25 and our rolling plan for 2025/26. A summary of relevant actions planned within service workforce plans are summarised below.

Priority 1 – Managing Workforce Transition

2.3 The key strategic objectives aligned to this priority are:

- Map how our services will evolve their delivery model.
- Maintain a strong focus on workforce planning.
- Deliver effective workforce change.
- Review our pay and grading model.
- Maintain effective workforce policies.

Corporate Actions – Progress & Highlights

2.4 Key highlights aligned to our corporate plan of work under this priority include that:

2.4.1 All budget savings and service reviews with a direct workforce impact aligned to previous decisions taken by the Council have been fully progressed in line with the Council's managing workforce change policies. This includes the full progression of agreed savings within our CLD service, completion of the redesign of our ASN workforce and the review of clerical support in Adult Health & Social Care. In the coming year, People Resources will continue to support Chief Officers and Managers to effectively deliver future service and structure reviews and any decisions taken as part of future budget savings that have a workforce impact.

2.4.2 The People Resources Service continue to support strong workforce planning across the council and from March and September 2025, Chief Officers from all services were engaged in developing their detailed Workforce Plans for the period 2025–2027. These were completed utilising an improved process with a focus on several critical areas including a full consideration of the workforce impact of known and planned service changes; establishing an up-to-date picture of workforce data and demographics; assessing capacity and formulating strategies for dealing with gaps and planning for future workforce skills needs. Importantly, all plans have a clear action plan set out for each service outlining work to be taken forward over the next two years, and this will be monitored as part of the One Service Board.

2.4.3 Work to complete the mapping of the next evolution of service operating models aligned to community hubs and our wider operating model transformation is underway, and this is being led by the Operating Model Delivery Manager supported by the OD Business Partners. A fuller update on this will be provided within the Leadership and Operating Model update paper which will be presented at Policy & Strategy in December.

2.4.4 Work continues on phase 1 of the review of our pay and grading model, with the Project Board now fully established and trained. The alignment of the Council's pay and grading model to the COSLA scale is now complete and was processed in August 2025 along with the implementation of the pay award for SJC staff. Additionally, a further up to date analysis of key areas of risk within our current model has been obtained from the Independent Technical Adviser, and this is currently being used to inform the remaining work aligned to complete phase 1. A fuller update on this review, including the remaining work to be concluded in phase 1 will be presented to Finance and Resources in Cycle 1 of 2026.

2.4.5 Under our commitment to maintaining effective workforce policies, we will be taking forward 2 key changes during early 2026 namely:

Update to our Flexible Retirement Guide

2.5 North Lanarkshire Council is required to update its Flexible Retirement Guide in response to a directive from the Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA), dated 6 August 2025, which confirms that rejecting applications solely on the basis of cost is legally unfair and unreasonable. Previously, the Council declined applications where a financial cost was identified; however, under the revised guidance, all applications must now be assessed individually, taking into account service delivery requirements, personal circumstances, and potential cost mitigation strategies such as delayed recruitment or restructuring of the post. In addition, the appeals process has been strengthened, and following agreement with the trade unions, any applications refused since August 2024 will be reviewed to ensure fairness and transparency. The Council's Pension Discretion Policy has been amended to reflect its legal obligation to consider associated costs in line with the SPPA directive, supporting equitable, transparent, and legally compliant decision-making across all flexible retirement applications.

Long Service Award Scheme

2.6 Following a motion to Council from Elected Members the council has been asked to further consider recognition of the valuable contributions made by long-serving employees. Accordingly, consideration is now being given to the introduction of a formal Long Service Awards scheme.

2.7 Currently, several local and public sector organisations operate long service recognition schemes. Such initiatives are known to foster a culture of appreciation and respect, contributing positively to employee morale and retention. However, any proposed scheme must be carefully evaluated in terms of cost implications and potential equality considerations.

2.8 The Council is exploring a low-cost, meaningful approach to recognise service milestones at 25 and 40 years. The following options could be considered:

- Additional Annual Leave
- Voucher Equivalent to Monetary Value

2.9 All proposed options will be subject to detailed costing, consultation with CMT and the trade unions and approval at Committee. Any final decision will be aligned with the Council's One Workforce Plan, reinforcing our commitment to valuing employee loyalty and fostering a positive and inclusive working environment. Development of the scheme will take place over the next few months, with implementation anticipated in early 2026.

Planned Service Actions - Highlights

2.10 Highlights of relevant planned service actions aligned to the managing workforce transition priority are set out in the table below.

Service Directorate	Workforce Actions
Chief Executives	• Legal and Democratic plan to review job descriptions and evaluations to ensure stronger alignment with service priorities and future workforce needs. This includes stronger partnership working with HR and Finance & Technology services through cross-training and shared knowledge opportunities. • Legal & Democratic also plan to modernise systems, establish continuous improvement programmes and apply digital solutions where possible, with a requirement for public facing service transformation and modernisation through enhanced digital platforms, improving accessibility for diverse service users, enabling self-service offering alternatives to in-person transactions all of which will impact on the skills of the current workforce. • Finance & Technology are preparing to undertake a workforce review in relation to AI implementation, data cleansing and recent outputs from improvement workshops, noting that the future service workforce requirements will be shaped by a need to support an increasingly wider digital infrastructure including public Wi-Fi, third-party connectivity across community-focused venues such as leisure centres, public access computing, community hubs, and learning spaces including considerations for security, IOT, AI and OOH support.

	• Finance & Technology are also planning to review current job descriptions to see if roles can be reconfigured to broaden out skills and knowledge across the team with an intention to set up a small review team to support better cross working across both functions, greater consistency in approach and sharing of best practice. • People Resources are planning to review and realign their back-office functions and processes to better integrate newly implemented systems, improve workflow and communication and create stronger cross skilling between teams with better alignment to services. • Audit & Risk are planning to strengthen digital governance capabilities and oversight of AI use across the Council.
Enterprise & Communities	• Place will undertake a review of the current management structure and grades within Planning, particularly at 3rd tier manager level, to assist with succession planning and attraction. • Place also report demand pressures within the Invest in NL/ Major applications team, with a number of complex planning applications anticipated. There is a need to review the current resources and management structure to ensure sufficient capacity to deal with these applications efficiently. • Additionally, Place also have a requirement to ensure adequate resources to deliver the Mid-Market Rent (MMR) Programme, and will undertake a review of the resource required to deliver the programme as well as the increased social rent target. • ACC are planning a review of the operational management team to align roles to deliver against the wider community hub and community engagement model and in addition continued consideration of a rationalised estate for both sports facilities and libraries is likely to result in associated changes in the staffing model. • The new Housing Ask and Act requirement could potentially have an impact in workforce demand, and the service will make an assessment of this when guidance from the Scottish Government has been issued. • Fleet services are planning ongoing structural changes to improve efficiency, ensure compliance with governance, legislative and policy requirements and supporting the transition to digital solutions to improve customer experience and driving service improvements. • FSS report that they will be reviewing hospitality services with potential impact to staff and operating models which will be agreed through the review process. They will also be undertaking a restructure of community facilities management including the introduction of a new supervisor level for caretaking.

	and will be directly impacted by the council's programme of new build schools and community hubs over the next 5 years with additional support required from the service. • The Greenspace & Country Parks Service report that the Cemeteries workforce is dealing with the twin pressures of an expanding asset portfolio to maintain, and an ageing workforce resulting in higher absence and turnover, with weekend overtime frequently deployed to keep up with interments. • Land and Waste will be progressing the introduction of more automated and data-driven route planning through new systems, with an increased focus on recycling performance and compliance with national circular economy targets. • Trading Standards is experiencing resourcing challenges, and the team faces limitations in delivering a fully effective consumer and legitimate business protection service with some statutory duties being more of a challenge.
Adult Health & Social Care	• Adult Health & Social Care intend to finalise their new operating model, align resources and maintain overview of performance until revised service provision is fully functional. This work includes progressing better joined up services across health and social care, operating as multi-disciplinary teams, with a need to realign and remodel support roles to meet demand and ensure resource is allocated in the right place. • There will also be a requirement for better defined roles and responsibilities around assessment and planning, which will be key to the new operating model going forward. • The service also intends to continue to review structures and introduce a training and development plan to support the successful operation of the new model.
Education & Families	• Education & Families are planning to support and embed the new ASN model, building capacity within the ASN workforce by taking forward improved communication and secondment opportunities. • The service notes that with several large-scale transformational change programmes recently completed or underway, including Additional Support Needs, Early Learning and Childcare, Senior Management Team and Family Support, strong change leadership will be key to avoiding challenging impacts on service delivery. • The Service will also require more Teachers in order to implement the SG 21hrs class contact policy and preparatory work around workforce planning. Preparatory work has been underway for several years and will continue via measures such as the teacher induction scheme, the use of fixed term

	contracts and internal ring-fenced posts as well as external recruitment campaigns.

Priority 2 – Pathways for Progression

2.11 The key strategic objectives aligned to this priority are:

- Identify opportunities for funded skills and qualification pathways.
- Improve recruitment processes & progress inclusive recruitment.
- Work with Routes to Work to provide employment to residents.
- Maintain a strong development offering for staff.

Corporate Actions – Progress & Highlights

2.12 Key highlights aligned to our corporate work under this priority include that:

2.12.1 The Council continues to invest in the development of funded qualification pathways, particularly to close identified professional skills gaps. Key areas of progress over 2024/25 include the full approval and completion of the Graduate Apprenticeship framework for Social Work, where over the past year, North Lanarkshire Council has worked in partnership with the University of the West of Scotland (UWS), Skills Development Scotland and the Scottish Government to develop the programme which launched in September 2025. This will enable the council to progress an initial cohort of 6 council staff onto a fully funded study route to become a qualified Social Worker, with plans for a regular intake into the programme thereafter. The programme will offer additionality within our already comprehensive Social Work Hub ensuring that we have a robust future pipeline of Social Workers.

2.12.2 Additionally, in January 2025, the council partnered with the University of the West of Scotland to launch a Graduate Apprenticeship (GA) in Planning, with three Trainee Planning Assistants now in post. This marks a significant step in tackling workforce gaps identified in the Place workforce plan.

2.12.3 Progress has also been made on the establishment of a new funded pathway and trainee position for Clerk of Works, which has proved a very difficult role to fill over the last few years. Priority work is also underway to progress a work-based learning solution for the development of a future pipeline of Environmental Health, and Trading Standards Officers, both of which have a significantly aging workforce profile.

2.12.4 Work is being finalised on improvements to our overall approach to recruitment with a new standalone policy being finalised; completion of an automatic systems link between iTrent and MyJobScotland, to eliminate double handling and facilitate automatic posting of jobs; the development of three new application forms that are more appropriate for different levels/types of jobs and the simplification of our shortlisting processes to improve the recruiting process overall. All work is expected to be complete in early 2026.

2.12.5 Work will also be prioritised in early 2026 to look at ways in which we can improve our recruitment tracking and advertising for hard to fill roles, particularly those aligned to support the delivery of our programme of work and capital programme such as Quantity Surveyors, Planners and Project Managers.

2.12.6 We also continue to work effectively with our partner Routes to Work to offer entry level opportunities to residents who have struggled to gain employment in the labour market. Over the last 12 months this has resulted in the following successes through ring fenced recruitment:

- 8 Catering Assistants
- 4 Cleaners
- 1 Facility Assistant
- 4 Support Assistants in the Employee Service Centre
- 2 Streetscene Operatives
- Interviews taking place throughout October in Land & Waste for more opportunities.

2.12.7 In addition, 3 Routes to Work clients from previous recruitments have been offered permanent posts and 2 have been promoted into full time NLC7 grade roles.

2.12.8 To further support and accelerate the ongoing transformation of our services and in consultation with Chief Officers around future skills needs within our senior manager population, the People Resources Services have now developed a Transformational Leadership Programme which will initially be targeted at 3rd and 4th tier officers. The key elements of the programme are set out below and will include service design, process improvement and digital modules alongside other complex change leadership skills and development:

- Scottish Approach to Service Design (SAtSD)
- Process Mapping and Lean Thinking
- Successfully Leading Complex Change
- Understanding Equalities Responsibilities
- Programme Management Skills
- Influencing for Results
- Cultivating a Digital Mindset (linked to the new Digital Competencies Framework being developed)

2.12.9 The programme will be piloted and refined in early 2026 and rolled out to all eligible staff thereafter.

Planned Service Actions - Highlights

2.13 Highlights of relevant planned service actions aligned to pathways for progression are set out in the table below.

Service Directorate	Workforce Actions
Chief Executives	• Legal and Democratic intend to secure funding, recruit to traineeship posts, deliver structured case exposure and mentoring and monitor external legal spend for skills and knowledge gaps. • Legal & democratic have a structured progression framework that supports internal mobility and development, ensuring staff can prepare for future specialist and leadership roles. Staff are actively encouraged to pursue external training and qualifications, such as the BA Leadership Qualification and HNC in Business Administration, to strengthen career readiness. • Legal & Democratic report a need for workforce upskilling in digital advocacy, case management systems, and specialist areas (climate law, data protection claims, procurement challenges).

	• Finance & Technology expect to see new demand for hybrid skill sets that will combine technical expertise with service design, change management, and stakeholder engagement. • Finance & Technology will also identify suitable training programmes for leadership and management and encourage uptake from existing staff and will review and develop formal mentoring opportunities. • Audit & Risk report a need to support staff to further develop their skills across relevant areas including technological and methodological skills, project management skills, digital skills, sector and cross-government knowledge. • Audit & risk also report that there is a gap for a dedicated counter fraud resource (as highlighted in a previous audit report and noted on the risk register). • People resources have identified a need for up skilling and cross skilling within the Employee Service Centre to support the integration of new systems and facilitate a deeper understanding of the full range of Council wide Terms and Conditions of Employment across the various services.
Enterprise & Communities	• Place and Housing both reference the need for experienced mentors to support trainees. • Due to continued recruitment difficulties, Housing will further review the Housing Advisor NLC7/9 Grade, specifically the criteria for progression from NLC7 to NLC9. • Housing will also develop a closer integration pathway to allow staff development and widen opportunities for career progression to address succession issues. • Place notes that consideration needs to be given to current grade progression for Roads Engineer Trainees to improve prospects of being able to retain them. • Additionally, place will create an Assistant Manager post to support the Invest in NL Manager to help manage workload; co-ordinate input from other services/ consultees, sign off planning approvals and prepare/present committee reports. • Asset & Procurement note that continued challenges in recruiting staff to professional and technical roles are likely to continue and require the service to grow their own talent. • Built Environment reports that existing national and local workforce strategies have strengthened the operational resilience of the service with actions taken in recent years around the progression of Graduate Apprenticeships within the Service. This has gone some way to addressing their high age demographic. • Fleet report that the recruitment of seven new employees has enabled the workshop to operate at

	full capacity, with apprentices and semi-skilled Workshop Assistants currently progressing towards a full qualification in Mechanics. Fleet Technicians are also gaining valuable experience through collaboration with our Fleet Inspectors, supporting the development of a consistent and skilled workforce. • Roads & Assets report that recruitment of street lighting staff, including inspectors is an issue across Central Scotland. The service are considering a restructure to change the role to a technician with different qualification requirements and are also considering a modern apprenticeship route. The Assets Team has also created a number of new roles for graduate apprenticeships and a possible modern apprenticeship. • FSS are considering their approach to addressing shortages for cleaning supervisors as current compression within the council's grade structures means that the salary differential makes it unattractive for cleaning staff to apply for these roles. • Greenspace & Country Parks experience difficulties in recruiting to gravediggers, cemeteries chargehands and arborists. The service has introduced an MA programme to grow a pipeline of talent through an MA programme that will move candidates through Cemetery Asset Operative roles and potentially on to Gravedigger, Chargehand and Supervisor. • Land and Waste are considering further structure changes to support multi-skilled roles and flexible deployment across land and waste functions, transitioning current role titles—such as Refuse Collector, Gardener, Driver 1, Streetscene Operator, and Recycling Attendant to a unified title General Operative. The service proposes to gradually phase in the new title as part of the recruitment process for new employees. • Land and Waste are also considering upskilling initiatives to provide training to current staff to address skill gaps, in HGV driving, mechanical and technical maintenance and modern playground equipment upkeep. • Assets & Procurement will explore further opportunities to develop technicians by supporting them to undertake further study to achieve relevant qualifications. The service will also focus on training and developing staff inhouse including supporting graduates to become fully qualified Quantity Surveyors.
Adult Health & Social Care	• Adult Health & Social Care reports a continued commitment to build resilience, grow their own talent and create opportunities for individuals to progress into qualified roles. The service now has several programme pathways that support employees to become Social Workers.

	• To strengthen leadership capacity within social work, the implementation of a comprehensive Leadership Programme tailored specifically for Senior Social Workers (SSW) and aspiring SSWs will enhance strategic thinking, decision-making, and team management skills, while fostering resilience and innovation in complex care environments • The service also reports that increasing demand and complexity of individuals requiring support, risks putting additional pressure on teams and that they are committed to ensuring that direct delivery workers have the skills, knowledge and to deliver complex care packages. The service has recently reviewed its organisational training and development plan, introducing a range of additional learning opportunities for staff directly delivering services. • Additionally, they have reviewed the Social Work Induction material and are utilising a range of tools developed through the Healthcare Improvement ScotlandNational Induction Framework/Programme.
Education & Families	• Education & Families report changes in the focus of roles across their service as well as the introduction of new roles including: increasing focus on inclusive practice, trauma-informed approaches, and digital pedagogy for teachers and head teachers; a requirement for greater involvement in multi-agency planning and wellbeing strategies for Cluster Improvement Leads and Educational Psychologists and enhanced collaboration between Social Workers Family Support Workers and education teams to deliver whole-family support. • Education & Families also note that leadership and change management will be key as services restructure and evolve, to drive innovation and sustain improvement. • The service also notes a requirement to focus on building skills in leading cluster teams, managing delegated budgets, and driving improvement through data-informed planning.

Priority 3 – Next Generation Workforce

2.14 The key strategic objectives aligned to this priority are:

- Maintain a healthy apprenticeship offering with linked pathways from school.
- Maintain a strong summer placement offering across services.
- Take forward a new graduate/intern scheme to develop a pipeline of future managers.

Corporate Actions – Progress & Highlights

2.15 Key highlights aligned to our corporate work under this priority include that:

2.15.1 The Council continues to progress and grow its Modern Apprenticeship scheme with offerings for new pathways for young people. Following an extensive recruitment campaign, 56 MA's were recruited in 2025, completing our full allocation of MA from just the summer recruitment. New MA programmes include a shared MA programme with NHS Lanarkshire and Health and Social Care MAs within our Home Support Teams.

2.15.2 Our Summer Placement Programme continued to grow in 2025 with 191 young people successfully placed in a variety of disciplines both within the Council and our external partners. Notably all 191 placements completed the programme and additionally we introduced an employability award to complement the experience gained by the young people with 177 completing the award. Importantly the programme is now delivering real outcomes and opportunities for young people including employment within the Council and a summary of this is provided below:

Internal Programme

- 19 young people secured sessional contracts within Enterprise and Communities
- 22 young people secured sessional contracts within Adult Health and Social Care
- 1 young person gained part time employment with the Council
- 2 young people commenced a Modern Apprenticeship with the Council
- 1 young person commenced a Graduate Apprenticeship with the Council

External Programme

- 5 young people commenced a Modern Apprenticeship
- 1 young person commenced a Graduate Apprenticeship
- 5 young people gained part time employment
- 2 young people gained full time employment
- 1 young person commenced pre- apprenticeship training

2.15.3 Additionally, the council is currently investigating the feasibility of a summer intern programme which would support the development of succession pipelines for our middle and senior management levels. Management succession issues have been highlighted by a number of services in their workforce plans. This would be based on a similar programme currently run by Glasgow City Council and would be ringfenced to recent graduates with a North Lanarkshire postcode, or those who are in their final year of study. This would include direct engagement with universities in degree subjects that are currently hard to fill such as Quantity Surveying, Architecture, Law and Accountancy.

Planned Service Actions - Highlights

2.16 Highlights of relevant planned service actions aligned to next generation workforce are set out in the table below:

Service Directorate	Workforce Actions
Chief Executives	• The Finance & Technology service has made a concerted effort to "grow its own" over the last few years, through modern apprentices, summer placements and encouraging and supporting existing staff to undertake qualifications. The Trainee

	Accountant programme has been reestablished and has been extended to the next level with assistant accountant trainee programme under development. Similarly, the Technology service has made good use of both Modern Apprenticeship and Graduate Apprenticeship frameworks across a range of IT and Cyber Security qualifications to focus on building a next generation workforce. • Finance & Technology also expects to lose several skilled, experienced managers/leaders over the next few years and the service are continuing to review opportunities available to more junior members of staff who could progress to managerial levels. • Legal and Democratic have secured funding for a Solicitors Traineeship Programme with three additional 24-month traineeship posts, providing early career legal professionals with structured training, mentoring, and sector-specific experience. • Legal & Democratic have also continued to invest in Modern Apprenticeships within business support pathways for young people into long-term employment. Positive outcomes are already evident, with a Modern Apprentice in Licensing successfully securing a full-time position. • Audit & Risk intend to review career pathways for the Audit & Risk Assistant and assess potential to create an additional post at this level to increase entry level posts to the teams or consider increased role of trainee accountant placements. The NLC6 Audit & Risk Assistant was an action following the 2023 Strategic Workforce Plan to introduce a career entry point to this team. • Audit & Risk are also planning to create a permanent trainee accountant post with a development pathway to become a qualified auditor. • People Resources support several development pathways across the service for both professional HR qualifications and graduate apprenticeships. In addition, the service supports a yearly cohort of Modern Apprentices many of whom have progressed into entry roles within the employee services centre. • Given their aging workforce profile, Strategy & Engagement are looking for ways to enable career progression pathways the 11% of the overall workforce who are aged 18-29, as well as investing in both Graduate and Modern Apprenticeships.
Enterprise & Communities	• Place currently have 7 Trainee posts across the 3 teams who are being supported to gain relevant professional qualifications which has knock on resource implications for the workload of the teams. • Place have also created a new pathway by introducing a Trainee Clerk of Works (NLC3) that will study for the degree in Construction and the Built Environment (Building Surveying) as a graduate apprentice for four years and will then be able to apply

	for a Clerk of Works (NLC9) post. A new Senior Clerk of Works is also being recruited to line manage Trainee Clerk of Works. • Given the difficulty that Place are experiencing in filling critical professional roles, consideration will also be given to creation of additional trainee posts, particularly Quantity Surveying and Civil Engineering, subject to capacity to provide necessary support and supervision/ mentoring. • ACC report real challenges in recruiting Lifeguards. The service has attempted to address this through providing training programmes for young people, for example, lifeguard qualifications (RLSS), and are proposing to explore this further. The service also takes in a large number of young people on placement and this often leads to employment opportunities and assists with workforce challenges. • Fleet report a new requirement for a Plant apprentice. This role will ensure there is a succession plan within the workshop, aligned to an industry wide gap in the market for this role. • Land and Waste report difficulties recruiting a younger demographic into the service but will be looking at succession planning with apprentices working towards qualification. • Protective Services report that the introduction of the Trading Standards Practitioner post in 2020 has been particularly successful, resulting in one employee progressing into a permanent NLC11 Trading Standards Officer role and the recruitment of an additional Practitioner. Furthermore, the service has established trainee positions across both Trading Standards and Environmental Health, which have proven highly effective. To date, two trainees have now secured permanent roles. • Given a need to increase awareness of the resilience planning function and a shortage of officers with this skill, Protective Services are planning to take a summer intern from risk management students at GCU to develop internal training pathways, with specialist qualifications and will explore funding opportunities to expand the team. • Housing are considering a graduate programme to support future demand for Housing Officers and Income Maximisers where they have a relevant qualification but need trained in Housing.
Adult Health & Social Care	• Adult Health & social Care report that there remains a shortage of staff with advanced skills in mental health. To help address this, the MHO Traineeship Scheme has been introduced, enabling two social workers to temporarily fill posts while undertaking their Mental Health Officer training. • Additionally, they will continue to offer summer placements as a career progression route along with shadowing, mentoring and coaching for new staff; a

	targeted recruitment campaign is being considered to further promote careers within the sector and encourage uptake of the MHO trainee scheme to build capacity.
Education & Families	• Education and Families are focused on building career pathways and secondment opportunities in key areas including ASN specialists, STEM and Digital Education Specialists. • The Service is also planning to use a variety of strategies to support succession planning with an ageing workforce, such as secondment and cpd opportunities, summer placements, modern apprenticeship, career pathways and vocational education programmes.

Priority 4 – Vibrant & Flexible Workplace

2.17 The key strategic objectives aligned to this priority are:

- Continue to build a vibrant mixed use offering of office and community-based workplace environments for all staff.
- Invest in a digitally skilled workforce, who can work efficiently and flexibly within our community-based locations.

Corporate Actions – Progress & Highlights

2.18 Key highlights aligned to our corporate work under this priority include that:

2.18.1 Significant work has been undertaken over the last 12 months to enhance workspaces and facilities for staff working our community facing services for example recent investment in our Bellshill Depot for our Fleet and Waste services with plans to also further adapt and utilise this space for other services. A full outline of this work will be included within the Leadership and Operating Model report which will be presented to Policy & Strategy in December.

2.18.2 Work to deliver the digital skills programme continues under the leadership of the Digital NL Programme of Work, with key deliverables including:

- Utilising information from the digital skills survey to identify digital skills gaps
- Creating and developing digital leadership skills to create a culture of digital first approach with competent and capable leaders to support digital development
- Ongoing work on a digital skills competency framework to assist with skills gaps identification and planning. This will be supported by a self-assessment tool for staff to identify their current level of digital skills and identify development for the future.
- Investment in upskilling our staff to enhance their digital capabilities.

Planned Service Actions - Highlights

2.19 Highlights of relevant planned service actions aligned to vibrant & flexible workplace are set out in the table below.

Service Directorate	Workforce Actions
Chief Executives	• Legal and Democratic are looking to develop digital and process training programmes and rotate staff to build multifunctional skills. • Legal & Democratic also note a requirement to build digital competence, including the ability to work with case management systems, digital dictation, and e-democracy platforms. • Finance & Technology are promoting agile working for technology staff to promote a flexible, fully collaborative workforce, this will support the expected rise in community hubs, pop up services and agile work practices across the Council. • Finance & Technology are also supporting staff to be resilient in working with technological changes whether it's software development, infrastructure projects, cyber security or service management. • Audit & Risk note that the Council's hybrid scheme has been beneficial in attracting external candidates who do live further away to minimise the commute days. • Strategy & Engagement note that the Councils hybrid and flexible work policies support attraction and retention for employees who live locally and have seen success with modern apprenticeships which have provided valuable career paths for local talent.
Enterprise & Communities	• The Place service operates a hybrid model for most employees, however whole teams can be site based and working out in all-weather with potentially hazardous conditions, i.e. Clerk of Works, Parking Services and Engineer Technical Officers with other employees working a combined pattern of home/office/site visits. • ACC expect that changes to the Employment Rights Bill on the use of casual contracts are anticipated and are likely to impact on the use and practices with the casual workforce across the service. The service also reports that it benefits from a local workforce, with a predominantly site-based staffing group who live and work in NLC. • Fleet are planning to consolidate their workshop within the Bellshill site and this location will be for all vehicle repairs, services and MOTs (including taxi tests). They also report that upskilling in electric equipment and new technology will be required for the current workforce. • FSS report that with the roll out of Digital devices to frontline staff, processes will be required to be adapted to ensure efficiency across the service. This may also require ongoing digital support and upskilling for all staff. • In Land and Waste 67% of the workforce are static workers and 33% of the workforce are agile/ hybrid which reflects the frontline nature of the service. • Greenspace & Country Parks will be required to review current roles against changes within the new Burial Regulations and associated digital requirements and reconfigure roles and skills accordingly. Additionally, the drive to digital cemeteries

	maintenance will require improved digital processes across the cemeteries workforce (frontline and support). • Protective Services report that service has a higher rate of employees who reside out with North Lanarkshire Council thanks average, and the hybrid policy has proved beneficial in recruiting and retaining employees. • Roads & Assets report that implementation of AI will enable more automation of surveys, which will change the way inspectors need to operate. Efficiencies should free up time to address conflicting demands, however a higher level of IT skills will be required (historically inspectors have come through from front line squads).
Adult Health & Social Care	• Adult Health & Social Care reports that since the introduction of flexible retirement in 2019 there have been 76 successful applications across all grades and service areas, this is helping the service to retain experience and knowledge whilst it focuses on growing its next generation workforce.
Education & Families	• Education & families expect that increasing use of digital tools and data systems will require upskilling in areas such as cyber security, digital learning platforms, and data analytics. • The service expects a wider digitisation of predominantly administrative processes to be a key lever in achieving efficiency and effectiveness across service including schools, hubs and central teams, requiring a more digitally skilled workforce within broader more agile remits designed to promote continuous improvement and a more responsive service user journey.

Priority 5 – Employee Engagement & Wellbeing

2.20 The key strategic objectives aligned to this priority are:

- Implement a new staff survey which fully engages our staff at all levels, aligned to our Programme of Work, and our responsibilities as a fair work employer.
- Maintain a strong staff health & wellbeing support and benefits offering under our Workwell NL banner.

Corporate Actions – Progress & Highlights

2.21 Key highlights aligned to our corporate work under this priority include that:

Staff Survey Pilot

2.21.1 The development of the council's new staff survey is now complete, and the survey has been piloted in 3 services covering more than 800 staff in both corporate functions and frontline services. The survey questions are simple, straight forward and designed to be used at all levels within the organisation. All questions are aligned to the Fair Work First Framework, and they have been shared with our Trade Union colleagues for their input and agreement.

2.21.2 The key pillars of the Fair Work First Framework promote employee engagement across a range of important measures aligned to:

- **Effective Voice:** Promotes safe, constructive dialogue where employee views are actively sought, heard, and acted upon.

- **Opportunity:** Ensures equal access to employment and progression, meeting legal obligations and promoting fairness.
- **Security:** Supports stable employment, predictable working hours, and income security.
- **Fulfilment:** Encourages meaningful work that enables skill development, autonomy, and career growth.
- **Respect:** Fosters a culture of dignity and respect for all, regardless of role or status.

2.21.3 Questions have also been added to align with and measure employee understanding of and engagement with the Council's Programme of Work and the Plan for North Lanarkshire and these will be used to support and measure the impact of future roadshows.

2.21.4 The survey is currently being piloted in three service areas, two large corporate services, and one frontline service. The services currently piloting the survey include People Resources and Finance and Technology and Fleet. Data from Fleet is limited at this stage due to its later inclusion in the pilot and the fact that the survey is still open.

2.21.5 67% of the staff who have completed the survey are not managers with the remainder being managers or senior managers. The majority of staff completing the survey are full time employees and there were more females (66%) than males (33%) completing the survey, reflecting the Council's known demographic.

2.21.6 Key highlights from the questions are set out below:

Key strengths	Areas for consideration
Effective Voice 71% of staff agree or strongly agree that they are provided with information about the Council's vision and plans for the future. 84% of staff agree or strongly agree that they understand what is expected of them in their role. 76% of staff agree or strongly agree that their manager is open to discussions about their work and works with them to forward plan	**Effective Voice** 62% of staff agree or strongly agree that they feel encouraged and confident to improve the way we do things. 62% of staff agree or strongly agree that they have the opportunity to provide input to how their service or team operates. 66% of staff agree or strongly agree that they feel safe to express their views and ideas.
Opportunity 68% of staff agree or strongly agree that they receive feedback from their manager on their work. 68% of staff agree or strongly agree that they feel encouraged to perform at the best of their abilities. 69% of staff agree or strongly agree that they have all the information they need to do their job well.	**Opportunity** 65% of staff agree or strongly agree that in the past year they have undertaken learning activities that have helped improve their performance. 65% of staff agree or strongly agree that they feel confident that they will be supported to advance their career should they wish. 65% of staff agree or strongly agree that their manager supports them to improve their performance.
Security 79% of staff agree or strongly agree that they have clear duties and Responsibilities. 74% of staff agree or strongly agree that their manager supports them when their work is challenging. 85% of staff agree or strongly agree that they know how to access Council policies to support them if they have difficulties affecting their work.	**Security** 52% of staff agree or strongly agree that they are consulted about decisions that could affect their role or their terms and conditions. 64% of staff agree or strongly agree that their manager discusses and agrees their work priorities with them regularly. 66% of staff agree or strongly agree that their manager communicates effectively when changes are planned in their service.
Fulfilment 69% of staff agree or strongly agree that they feel their efforts are valued within their team and service. 80% of staff agree or strongly agree that they are confident that they have the knowledge, skills and tools they need to do their job well. 80% of staff agree or strongly agree that they feel they have support from their colleagues and work jointly to achieve team goals.	**Fulfilment** 66% of staff agree or strongly agree that their work is meaningful and gives them a sense of purpose. 66% of staff agree or strongly agree that they understand how what they do makes a difference in our communities. 65% of staff agree or strongly agree that their working environment enables them to do their job well.
Respect 84% of staff agree or strongly agree that they are treated with respect by their colleagues 94% of staff agree or strongly agree that they are aware of the Council's code of conduct 86% staff agree or strongly agree that their manager shows confidence in their abilities.	**Respect** 71% of staff agree or strongly agree that the culture in their team is positive, supportive and trusting. 64% of staff agree or strongly agree that the council supports the health and wellbeing of its employees. 65% of staff agree or strongly agree that the council supports and encourages employees from disadvantaged backgrounds.

2.21.7 Key insights across all questions include that:

- respect and values are strong across the board, especially in peer relationships and personal conduct.

- role clarity and support systems (e.g. knowing expectations and accessing policies) are well established.
- job satisfaction and purpose are evident; with many staff feeling their work is meaningful and impactful.
- Commitment to the council is high, suggesting a stable and loyal workforce.

2.21.8 Encouragingly questions within the **Respect** pillar of the framework are the highest scoring questions across the survey.

2.21.9 The question with the highest disagree scores is "I am consulted about decisions that could affect my role or my terms and conditions" with 21% disagree or strongly disagree.

2.21.10 All questions score 20% or under for disagree, and for strongly disagree the range of responses is between 1% and 6% with no question scoring more than 6% for strongly disagree.

2.21.11 Additional questions also show that 82% of staff agree or strongly agree that the council has a good relationship with Trade Unions and 79% of staff agree or strongly agree that they are happy to continue working for the council for the foreseeable future.

2.21.12 Staff were also asked directly what they most enjoyed about working for the council and the most common responses were:

- Flexibility, which includes hybrid working, flexitime, and work/life balance with staff appreciating the ability to manage their schedules.
- Benefits and positive mentions of pension schemes, holidays, and overall terms and conditions.
- Making a Difference with many feeling their work has purpose and positively impacts the community.

Hybrid Working Survey

2.22 A refreshed hybrid survey was issued to all eligible staff in early October with an overall return rate of 66%. The majority of staff (860) responded to all questions with some responding to the main questions only. Hybrid employees are primarily based within Chief Executives and Enterprise & Communities services with a small number in the corporate teams within Education & Families and Adult Health & Social Care.

2.23 In terms of grades the majority of respondents sit within grades NLC10 to NLC12 (337 respondents) with the remainder between NLC5 and NLC9. There are 103 more senior management staff who responded in grades NLC13 to NLC18.

2.24 The key themes from the survey are:

2.24.1 The majority of staff are adhering to the scheme with 640 staff self-reporting that they are currently doing 10 or more days in the office over the period of a month with 142 staff reporting that they are doing between 10 and 15 days in the office.

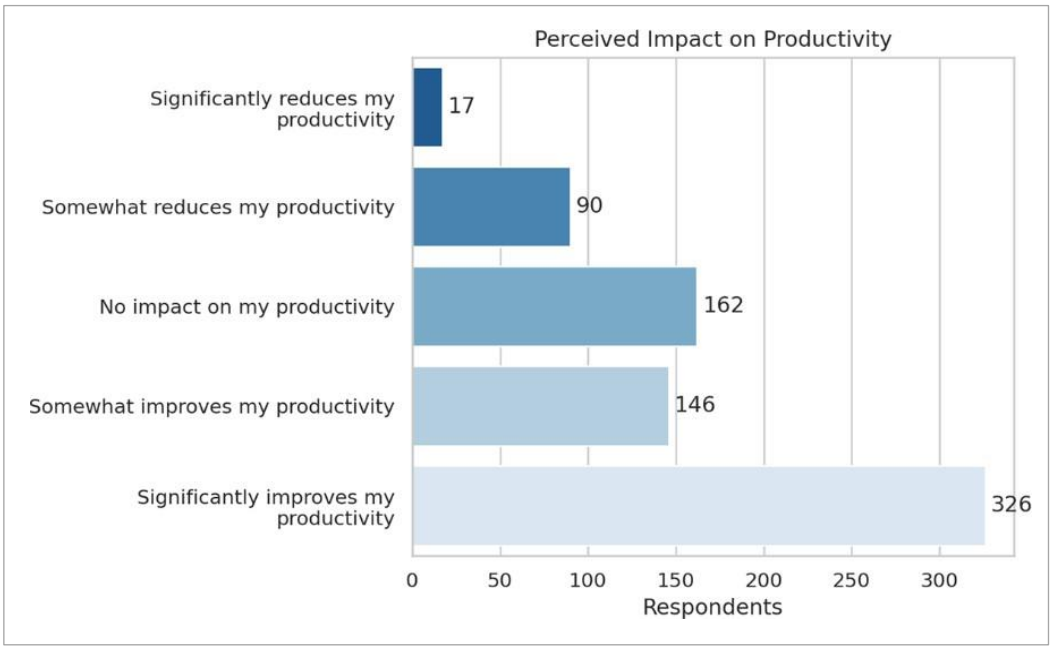
2.24.2 Where staff are doing less than 10 days reasons reported for this include service needs and a requirement to attend site and community meetings.

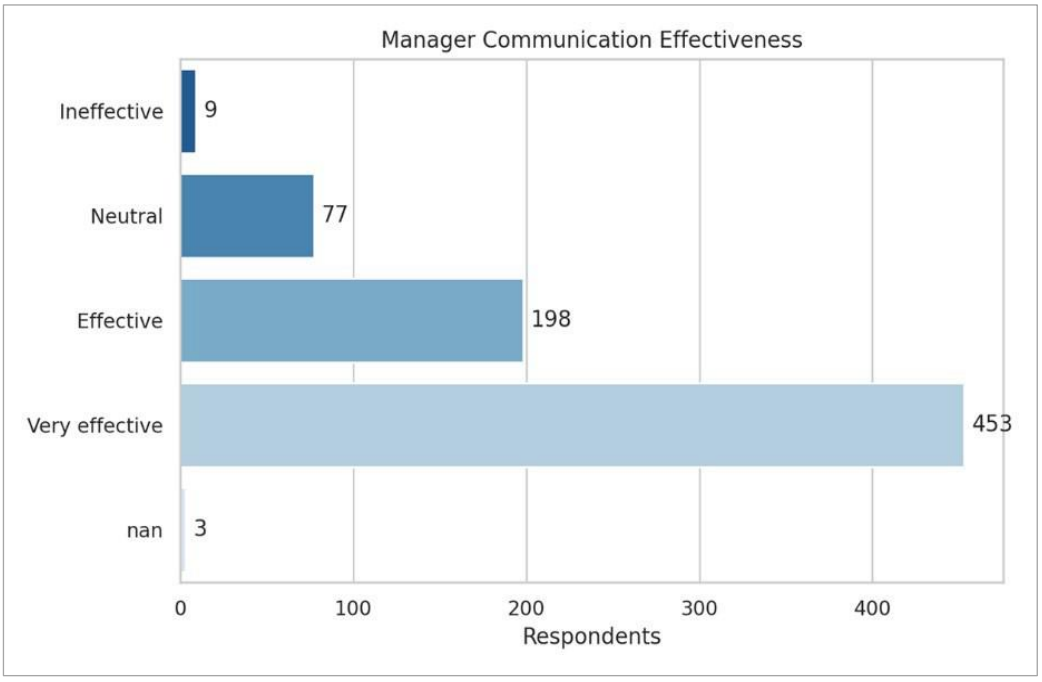
2.24.3 Satisfaction with the current hybrid scheme is very high with 510 staff reporting that they are either satisfied or very satisfied with our current hybrid arrangements, and a further 157 staff reporting that they are neutral on the matter.

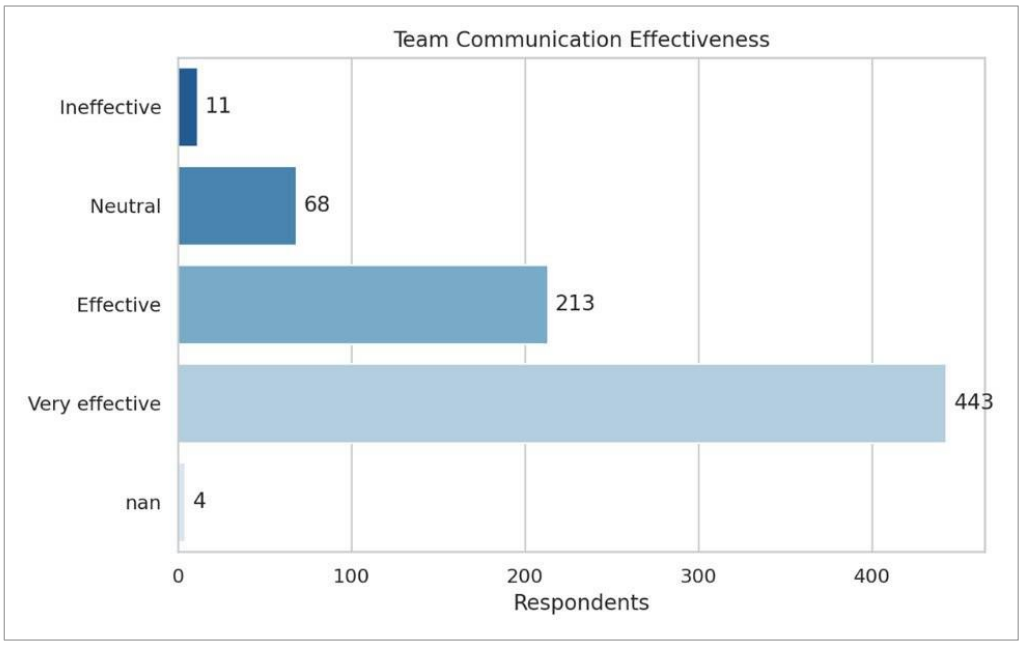
2.24.4 The majority of staff who responded to this question are of the view that the hybrid scheme supports their roles and responsibilities, with 437 staff reporting that it fully supports them in their role, a further 249 reporting that it mostly supports them in their role or that it makes no difference.

2.24.5 In terms of questions relating to work life balance 605 staff report that hybrid working has improved their work life balance and 510 staff report that it has made them less stressed, with a further 179 reporting that it has made no difference.

2.25 The results from the survey indicate that the final hybrid working scheme is working well and has positively impacted on staff. Some additional areas that were reported in the survey are included in the graphs below:







2.26 Based on the positive feedback from the survey, it is proposed that this is the final hybrid working survey which will be carried out with hybrid staff. Accordingly, the hybrid working scheme will become business as usual from 2026 onwards, in terms of working arrangements for all staff who fall within this category.

Priority 6 – Equality & Inclusion

2.27 The key strategic objectives aligned to this priority are:

- Take forward our refreshed Equalities Strategy maintaining strong progress on advancing our agreed equalities outcomes.
- Continue to support and progress the work of the Equalities Board, and associated service Champions and their Service Equality Plans.

Corporate Actions – Progress & Highlights

2.28 Key highlights aligned to our corporate work under this priority include that:

- The Council has now fully refreshed its Equality Strategy which was approved by the Wellbeing & Tackling Poverty Committee in October 2025 and includes our ten newly approved equalities outcomes. The strategy now clearly outlines the strong thread that runs between our equality outcomes and our ambitions under the Programme of Work and The Plan for North Lanarkshire and details the many improvements we have made in our equalities outcomes over the last few years.
- Much of this has been achieved as a result of the clear governance and engagement approach now being taken with this work across the Council, including the establishment of our Equalities Board and Equality Outcomes Performance Management Framework, which has enabled a much stronger focus on driving improved outcomes. There has also been good support and ownership of this work across our services with all having established a clear equality plan through their equality champions, and many actions now reflected in recent service workforce plans.

Planned Service Actions - Highlights

2.29 Highlights of relevant planned service actions aligned to equality & inclusion are set out in the table below.

Service Directorate	Workforce Actions
Chief Executives	• Finance & Technology notes that approximately 2.5% of employees are from a Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background and sets out an intention to encourage under-represented groups to apply for posts when advertising externally. • Legal & Democratic note a significant diversity imbalance, with women comprising the vast majority of staff and occupying 81% of managerial roles, and most of the service being white. The service outlines that proactive steps are needed to address gender imbalance and strengthen diversity within the service. • Strategic Engagement will increase EQIA training uptake across teams. • Audit & Risk acknowledges the lack of ethnic diversity in its small team and signals the need for targeted action.
Enterprise & Communities	• Place reports progress in increasing the proportion of staff from minority ethnic backgrounds (from 2% in 2023 to 5% in 2025). • ACC report that their workforce profile is representative of their communities with a 2% BAME representation and a significantly younger workforce than seen elsewhere in the Council with an average age of 41. • Within FSS, 1.37% of the workforce are people from a black or minority ethnic group. This compared to just over 1% in April 2023. • Roads & Assets intend to highlight family friendly policies including smarter working and worklife balance opportunities to try to attract more female candidates and address their largely male workforce profile. • Asset & Procurement reports that females are typically underrepresented in asset and procurement professional roles at a national level; however the service has recruited several females across all areas. The service also reports that 3.2% of the workforce identify from BAME communities which is slightly higher than the North Lanarkshire demographic.
Adult Health & Social Care	• Adult Health & Social Care note that because of focused work on their equalities profile, their diversity now better reflects the demographics of the wider North Lanarkshire population. This includes that the proportion of individuals identifying as being from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds has shown a positive increase over recent years, rising from 0.57% in 2023 to 1.4% in 2025.

Education & Families	• Education & Families highlights the need to support the older social-work workforce, where the average retirement age has dropped to 55. • The service also notes a lack of males in E&F front line roles and are considering a targeted promotion and marketing of these roles, including within the MA programme. • Education & Families also plan to undertake an accurate assessment of BAME representation in the teaching workforce and take appropriate action and will be represented on the Scottish Government's newly established Diversity in the Teaching Profession and Education Workforce Group.

Workforce Dashboard

2.30 The council's revised workforce dashboard is included in appendix 2 and now provides elected members with a broader range of information regarding our workforce including information relating to our temporary workforce, recruitment, case management and absence. This will be revised and updated on an annual basis to support the One Workforce Plan.

3. Measures of success

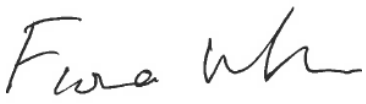
3.1 Progress against priorities and actions identified within the One Workforce Plan and associated rolling delivery plan.

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.

4. Supporting documentation

4.1 Appendix 1 – One Workforce Delivery Framework
4.2 Appendix 2 – Workforce Dashboard



Fiona Whittaker
Chief Officer (People Resources)

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?

All policy impacts have been taken forward with full input from People Resources and trade unions.

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 ☐

The report sets out a number of changes which may impact the Council's workforce arrangements over the next 12 months, and these will be fully managed in line with the plan and the councils managing workforce change policy.

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

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 ☐

One Workforce Delivery Plan

2024/25 Progress Update & 2025/26 Plan

1. One Workforce Strategic Priorities to 2028

Managing Workforce Transition

Deliver effective workforce transition to our future operating model.

Objectives

- Map how our services will evolve their delivery model.
- Maintain a strong focus on workforce planning.
- Deliver effective workforce change.
- Review our pay and grading model.
- Maintain effective workforce policies.

Pathways For Progression

Offer career progression opportunities within the council for employees and residents.

Objectives

- Identify opportunities for funded skills and qualification pathways.
- Improve recruitment processes & progress inclusive recruitment.
- Work with Routes to Work to provide employment to residents.
- Maintain a strong development offering for staff.

Next Generation Workforce

Continue to build our next generation workforce and tackle our aging workforce profile.

Objectives

- Maintain a healthy apprenticeship offering with linked pathways from school.
- Maintain a strong summer placement offering across services.
- Take forward a new graduate/intern scheme to develop a pipeline of future managers.

Vibrant & Flexible Workplace

Establish a vibrant mixed use, office and community-based workplace which meets the needs of all staff.

Objectives

- Continue to build a vibrant mixed use offering of office and community-based workplace environments for all staff.
- Invest in a digitally skilled workforce, who can work efficiently and flexibly within our community-based locations.

Employee Engagement & Wellbeing

Maintain strong engagement with our employees as we transform our services and operating model.

Objectives

- Implement a new staff survey which fully engages our staff at all levels, aligned to our Programme of Work, and our responsibilities as a fair work employer.
- Maintain a strong staff health & wellbeing support and benefits offering under our Workwell NL banner.

Equality & Inclusion

Build a future workforce which is diverse and better reflects the needs of our communities.

Objectives

- Take forward our refreshed Equalities Strategy maintaining strong progress on advancing our agreed equalities outcomes.
- Continue to support and progress the work of the Equalities Board, and associated service Champions and their Service Equality Plans.

2. Progress Update on Delivery Plan

Key: In progress, on track	Requires further action.	Complete	# New for 2025/26	
Managing Workforce Transition				
Action	**Description**	**Lead Officer**	**RAG**	**Comments**
1.1 Support the delivery of ongoing workforce and structure changes arising from service redesign and savings exercises.	Effective HR support for the delivery of workforce changes linked to agreed future savings and service realignments linked to our future operating model and One Service programme of work.	HR Business Partnership Manager		The progression of agreed budget workforce related changes linked to three-year savings are complete across all services, and in line with agreed workforce change policies. Agreed service reviews with workforce implications have also been fully progressed and were successfully concluded during 2025.
1.2 Continue with organisation and workforce mapping to identify transition plans for future workforce models and structures as these evolve over the next 3-5 years.	An ongoing process of mapping and improving our service models and structures, including digital transformation and where and how staff will work to deliver our services as we evolve to a hub-based community delivery model.	HR Business Partnership Manager/Operating Model delivery Manager		As part of our bi-yearly workforce planning cycle, a revised approach to service operating model planning was incorporated within an improved workforce planning process launched in March 2025. This included further enhancements around workforce capacity planning and service alignment to our future operating model.
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	Employment and Policy Manager		A Project Board has been established to lead the overall review, and phase one of the work is underway. This includes the completion of a refreshed EQIA analysis of the model by the Independent Technical Adviser which was completed in early September 2025. An update

	review of all grades, to be undertaken over several years.			paper on progress with this work and the final plan for phase one will be brought to Finance and Resources Committee in Cycle 1 of 2026.
1.4 # **New work for 2025/26**. Progress actions from our revised 25/26 Service Workforce Plans.	A robust ongoing process for workforce planning across all services to manage known workforce risks and build a resilient future workforce. Detailed actions must be in place to support plans with a focus on the progression of actions.	Talent & Leadership Development Manager/Business Partnership Manager		Updated biannual workforce plans for all services are now complete, and a summary analysis of the key challenges and themes is included within the One Workforce report. The progression key identified actions will be overseen throughout the year by the One Service Board.

Pathways for Progression

Actions	Description	Lead Officer	RAG Status	Comments
2.1 Maintain our leadership and learning and development offering for all staff within budget constraints.	Investment in developing the skills required for realising our future operating model within the funding available maintaining where possible our leadership and learning and development offering through Learn NL.	Talent & Leadership Development Manager		Leadership development is well established at middle and lower levels, with two successful programmes now fully embedded into our curriculum. A Transformational Leadership Programme for third and fourth tier officers was approved in October by CMT and is now in development, with the first cohort launching in January 2026.
2.2 Maintain and extend our Graduate Apprenticeship Scheme.	The Council's graduate apprenticeship scheme has been running successfully since 2018 with increasing numbers of staff in progress or having completed their qualification. The operation of the scheme will be critical going forward to help address	Talent & Leadership Development Manager		The UWS Urban Planning Work based learning degree fully launched in Feb 2025 with 3 staff now engaged through the programme. The now fully approved Social Work GA will be available from September 2025 with 6 staff on the first cohort. Work underway with UWS to develop a work-based learning degree for

	identified shortages in key professional and specialist areas including planning, social work and regulatory services.			Environment Health. We are also looking to establish a qualification pathway for a trainee Clerks of Works.
2.3 Complete a review of our higher duties policy arrangements	The Council's higher duties guidance 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.	Business Partnership Manager/ Employment & Policy Manager		A full review of our higher duties guidance has been completed, and was approved by Finance and Resources Committee in May 2025. This includes new guidance on salary placing to assist with the recruitment of difficult to fill posts. The guidance has been fully rolled out with additional support for managers.
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.	ESC Manager		We continue to progress our journey to become an inclusive recruiter and it is thought that this work will take a number of years to complete as we work through key services areas where this approach will be advantageous in attracting a wider field of potential candidates.
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. This includes more targeted and appropriate recruitment processes which reflect the nature of the jobs being advertised.	Business Partnership Manager/ESC Manager/Employment & Policy Manager		Work to implement an improved approach to recruitment across the Council has been further progressed with improvements in several areas including: • The completion of work to fully link iTrent recruitment to the MyJobScotland system to allow for automatic posting of jobs and remove double keying between two systems.

				• The development of three new application forms and candidate packs which better align to the types of post being advertised including a simplified form for entry level jobs. • An improved stand-alone recruitment policy, with supporting guidance and training for managers. • Improved shortlisting processes which better align to the newly revised application forms and accompanying processes. This work is expected to be completed in early 2026 with a paper brought to Finance and Resources for approval of the changes and the revised policy.
2.6 Maintain our engagement with Employability and Routes to Work to fill vacant and hard to fill roles at entry level.	The Council continues to work successfully with Routes to Work to offer job seeking residents the opportunity to gain work in entry level roles within the Council. In a number of areas this has resulted in permanent roles being offered with onward promotion prospects.	ESC Manager		North Lanarkshire Council continues to strengthen its partnership with Routes to Work and the Working for Families Team. We have taken forward 2 cohorts of ringfenced recruitment in 2025. with the appointment of - 8 Catering Assistants - 4 Cleaners - 1 Facility Assistant - 4 Support Assistants in the Employee Service Centre - 2 Streetscene Operatives - Interviews taking place throughout October in Land & Waste for more opportunities. Additionally previous candidates have seen progression in promoted posts.

Next Generation Council Workforce

Actions	Description	Lead Officer	RAG Status	Comments
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.	Talent & Leadership Development Manager/Business Partnership Manager		The Council's Modern Apprenticeship programme continues to grow with offerings for new pathways for young people. Following an extensive recruitment campaign, 56 MA's were recruited in 2025, filling our full contract with just the summer recruitment. New MA programmes include a shared MA programme with NHS Lanarkshire and Health and Social Care MAs within our Home Support Teams.
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. In 2025 we have grown this to just under 200 placements participating in a seven week placement in both the Council and our external partners	Talent & Leadership Development Manager/Business Partnership Manager/Brighter Futures Manager		Our Summer Placement Programme continued to grow in 2025 with 191 young people successfully placed in a variety of disciplines both within the Council and our external partners. Notably all 191 placements completed the programme. As part of our drive to continuously improve and develop the programme, this year we introduced an employability award to complement the experience gained by the young people. Of the 191 students on the programme, 177 completed the award. Work is now underway to prepare for 2026 with a request to extend the delivery team to develop the programme into a fully sustainable model for the future.

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 we will continue to work to identify relevant frameworks which can be linked to areas of known shortage.	Talent & Leadership Development Manager/Brighter Futures Manager		Work continues to explore how the Council could make use of existing foundation apprenticeships, and we will further explore how these can be adapted to join up with our summer placement scheme.
3.4 **# New work for 2025/26**. Develop a formal graduate intern programme for the Council to build a pipeline of future managers and leaders.	Succession planning issues for middle and senior manager roles have been highlighted across a high number of service workforce plans, and work is planned for early 2026 to investigate the feasibility of a graduate intern programme which would attract recently graduates or those in their final year to undertake a paid work placement with the Council.	Talent & Leadership Development Manager.		Work on this initiative is underway and will be further developed in early 2026.

Vibrant & Flexible Workplace

Actions	Description	Lead Officer	RAG Status	Comments
4.1 Implement the Council's final Hybrid Working Scheme.	Implement and monitor the full implementation of our final Hybrid Working Scheme which impacts around 1300 previously office-based staff.	Employment & Policy Manager Manager/Business Partnership Manager		Our revised scheme is now fully agreed and in place. A full Hybrid Working Survey has been completed and the results are included in the One Workforce update report.
4.2 Develop our community-based workplace settings, promoting and tracking staff usage of our	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.	Business Partnership Manager/Operating Model delivery Manager		Significant work continues to be undertaken to develop and improve our community based workplace spaces to better support our staff and align with our future operating model. A full outline of this is included

community hubs as these develop and expand.				within the Leadership & Operating Model progress update report which will be presented at Policy & Strategy in December 2025.

Employee Engagement & Wellbeing

Actions	Description	Lead Officer	RAG Status	Comments
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 needs 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 linked to the One Service programme of work and aligned to the Councils wider commitments under fair work.	Talent & Leadership Development Manager		The full pilot of the new survey has now been completed, and a summary of the outcomes is set out within the December One Workforce update to Policy & Strategy Committee. Following the success of the pilot, a plan will be developed in early 2026 to support the wider roll out of the survey across the Council.
5.2 Continue with our current programme of work designed to provide staff with support for mental health & wellbeing and reduce levels of mental health related absence.	Our levels of mental health related absence have materially reduced in recent years 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.	Occupational Safety & Wellbeing Manager/Employment & Policy Manager		Council Mental Health groups continue to meet and develop ideas and strategies which assist with staff mental health and wellbeing in their service. Additionally, the Policy & Employment team are undertaking direct work to support services who have high rates of mental health absence including some of our larger frontline services.
5.3 Maintain and extend where appropriate our successful range of staff benefits and supports	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.	Employee Service Centre Manager		Our Green Car scheme continues to prove popular and in addition we will be reviewing our overall provision of benefits under our Workwell NL banner during 2026. In addition,

through our Workwell NL offerings.				we have added specific questions within our new survey that ask staff about what benefits they would see as most advantageous within our offering. Responses have already signalled several areas for us to incorporate in our review of benefits next year.
5.4 Undertake a joint review of our current trade union consultation and collective agreement arrangements.	The scope of the review will include facility time, the constitution and operation of the JCC and other linked service based consultation arrangements. The work will be taken forward in partnership with Unison, GMB and Unite colleagues.	Employment & Policy Manager		Discussions have been fully progressed with full time branch officials and local representatives from Unison, Unite and GMB around the joint review of the council's recognition agreement including arrangements for consultation and collective bargaining. We expect to conclude this work in early 2026 and will bring a paper to Finance and Resources to fully agree the revised arrangements.

Equality & Inclusion

Actions	Description	Lead Officer	RAG Status	Comments
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.	Equalities Manager		A full review and refresh of our Equalities Outcomes is now complete and was approved by Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee in April 2025. A performance framework to support our new equalities outcomes has now been developed and shared with Programme of Work Boards to enable them to develop their revised equalities plans for 2026 and beyond.

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.	Equalities Manager		A full refresh of our Equalities Strategy was undertaken in the second half of 2025 under the guidance of the Equalities Board. The refreshed strategy also includes equalities information for North Lanarkshire drawn from the 2022 census data and was approved by Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Committee on 10th October 2025. The Equalities Board will consider and drive the outcomes from the strategy both corporately and within services, with update provided through the Council's Wellbeing & Tackling Poverty Committee.
6.3 To ensure going forward that our HR policies and relevant and inclusive and that they support our equalities outcomes.	Our HR policies are critical to supporting our equalities plan and desired outcomes and will be kept under review to ensure that they are aligned. Where required new policies will be developed to support our delivery plan.	Equalities Manager/ Employment & Policy Manager		During 2025 we have launched two new equality & diversity policies which support the delivery of our equalities outcomes including our Sexual Harassment Policy, and our Disability Policy which were both approved by Finance and Resources Committee in May 2025.


Employee
Service Centre
Workforce Dashboard 2025
NORTH
LANARKSHIRE
COUNCIL

Workforce Dashboard

North Lanarkshire Council

Core Workforce in year ending 31st March 2025

Permanent

Workforce FTE

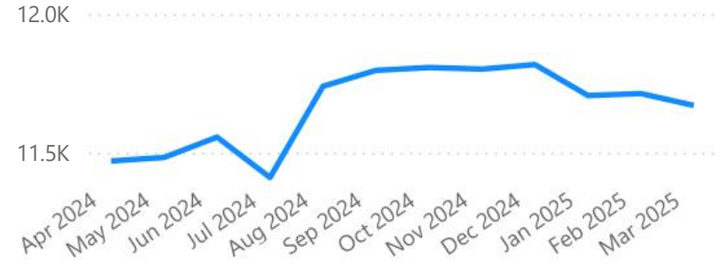
11.65K	+ 0.20K
	Change on Previous year

Pay bill

Based solely on Contractual Payments

£456.09M	+£39.78M

FTE 12-month trend



Temporary

Workforce FTE

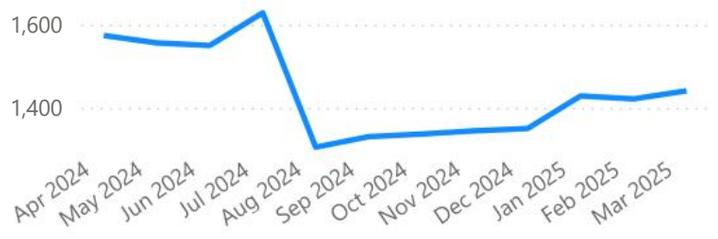
1.44K	-0.16K
	Change on Previous year

Pay bill

Based solely on Contractual Payments

£45.36M	-£8.94M

FTE 12-month trend



Supply

Workforce Headcount

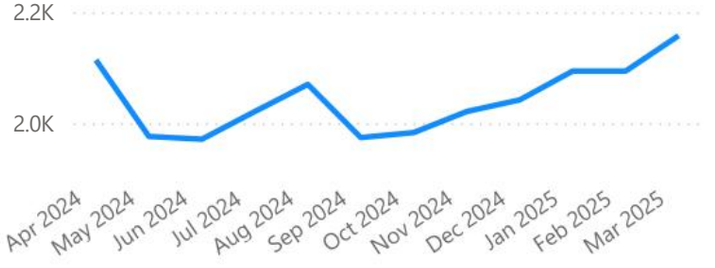
2.01K	+ 0.04K
	Change on Previous year

Pay bill

Based on Casual Elements paid

£10.35M	+£1.38M

FTE 12-month trend



Employee Service Centre

Workforce Dashboard

North Lanarkshire Council

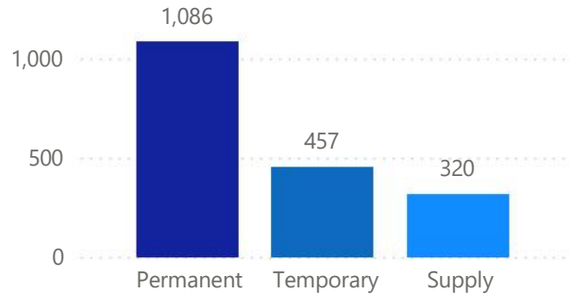
New Starts in year ending 31st March 2025

New Starts in last 12 months

1,816

All values on this page relate to non-Teaching roles

New Starts by Type



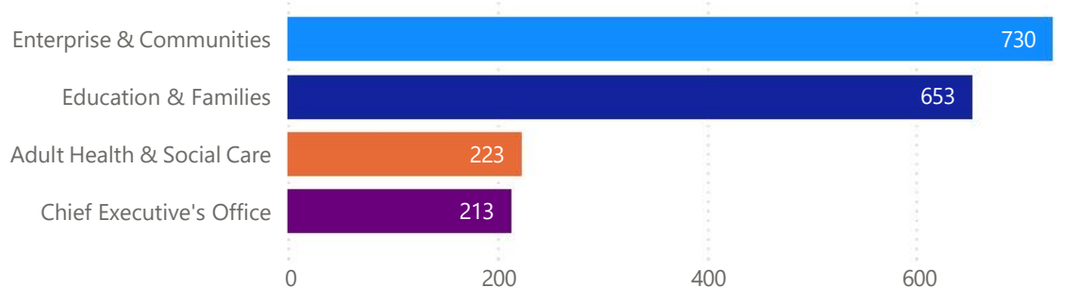
As some employees hold multiple contracts with more that one 'Type' bar chart total differs from count of People.

Top Ten Roles

Role	New Starts
Early Learning & Childcare	239
Clerical/Admin	117
Cleaner	106
Catering	94
Casual - Sports Coaches	87
ASNA	81
Casual - Leisure Venues	80
Home Support	73
Casual - Invigilator	58
Casual - Bar staff/Front of House	42

12-month trend

New Starts by Service



As some employees hold multiple contracts in more that one Service bar chart total differs from count of People.

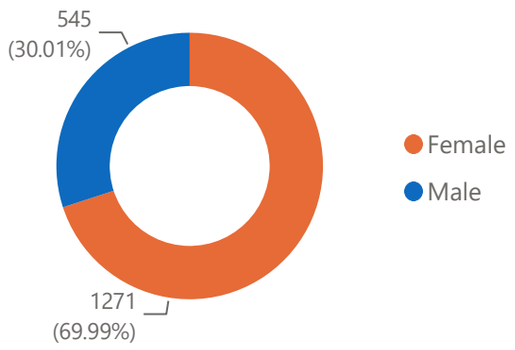
Employee Service Centre

Workforce Dashboard

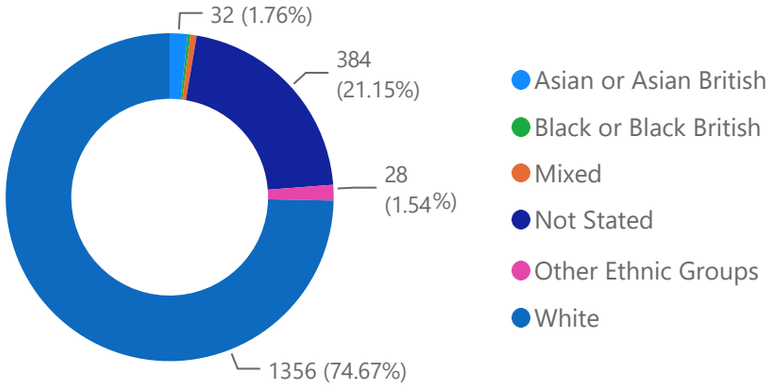
North Lanarkshire Council

New Starts in year ending 31st March 2025 - Profile

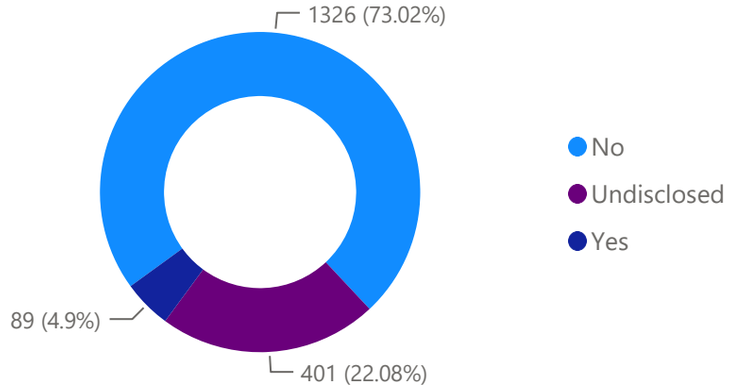
Sex



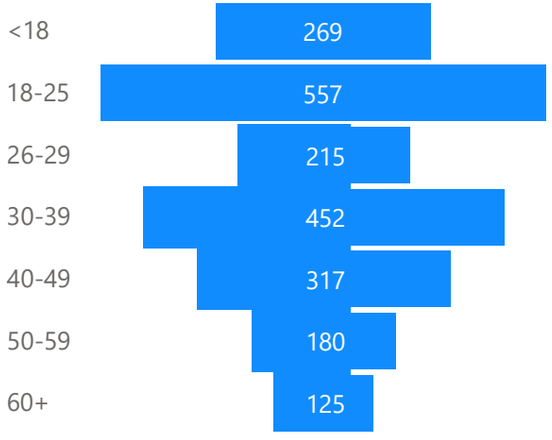
Ethnicity



Disability



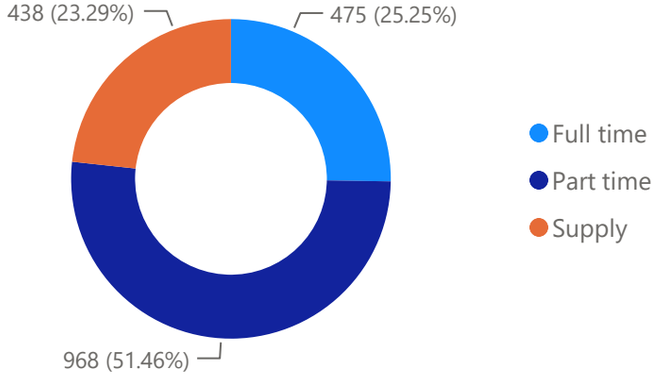
Age at Joining



Average age at joining

33.26

Part-time working



All values on this page relate to non-Teaching roles

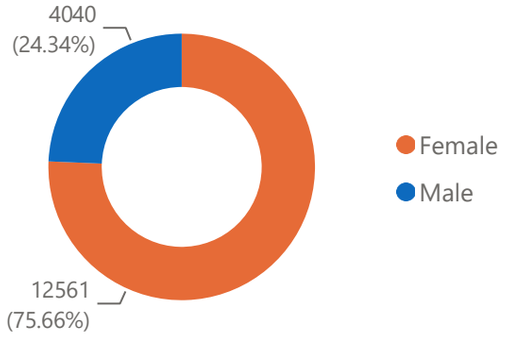
Employee Service Centre

Workforce Dashboard

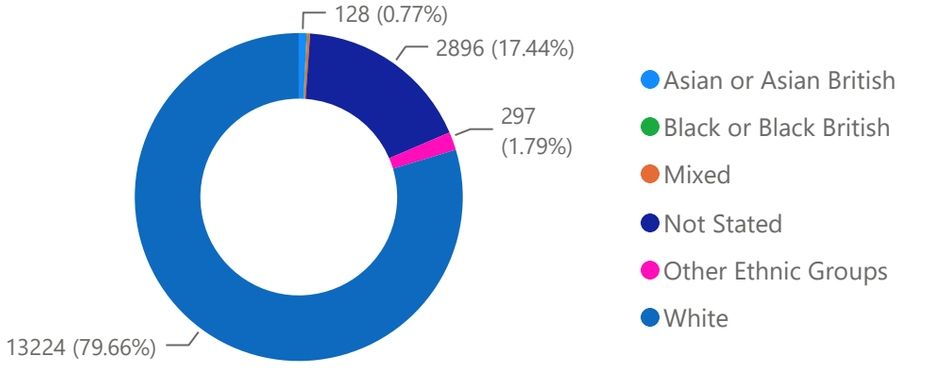
North Lanarkshire Council

Core Workforce at 31st March 2025 - Profile

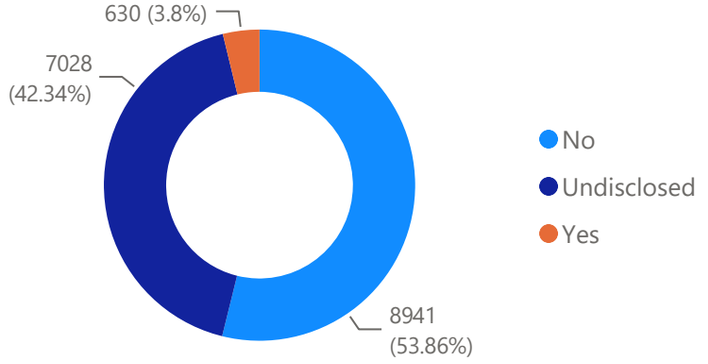
Sex



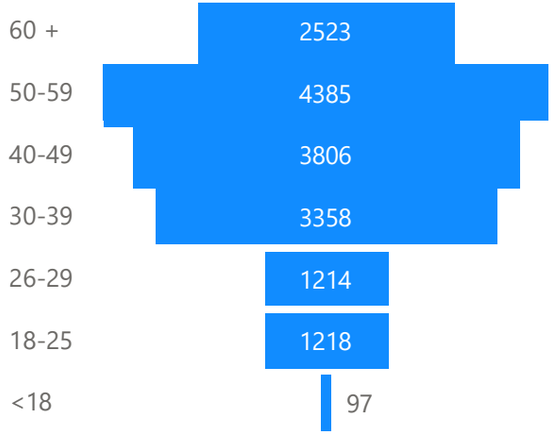
Ethnicity



Disability



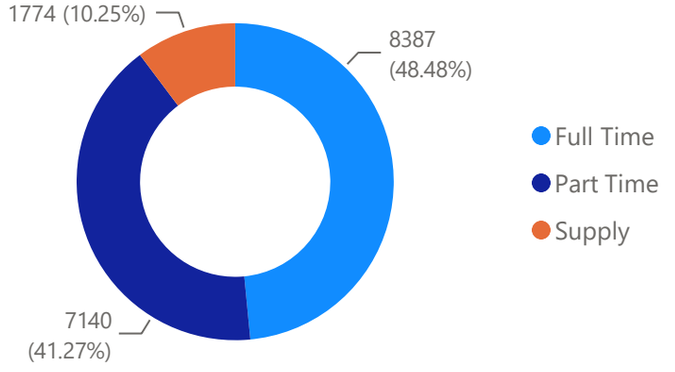
Age



Average Age at 31st March

45.01

Part-time working



All values on this page relate to Teaching and non-Teaching roles

Employee Service Centre

Workforce Dashboard

North Lanarkshire Council

Supply Workers in year ending 31st March 2025

Workforce FTE

249.81	17.95
	Change on Previous year

Pay bill

£10.35M	£1.40M
	Change on Previous year

FTE = total number of hours utilised during the year by Supply employees divided by 1825, the annual hours worked by a 35 hr per week contract

Trend during Year

Top Ten Roles

Role	FY Total Cost
Supply Teacher - Secondary	£2,527,477.57
Supply Teacher - Primary	£2,218,757.45
Casual - Leisure Venues	£1,656,282.09
Casual - Home Support	£1,419,923.61
Casual - Sports Coaches	£658,634.41
Supply Teacher - ASN	£325,141.70
Casual - Catering	£217,374.37
Supply - Social Worker	£174,558.83
Casual - Creative /Arts	£159,464.18
Casual - Bar staff/Front of House	£150,468.63

All values on this page are based on Casual/Supply Elements paid to 'Supply' employees

Employee Service Centre

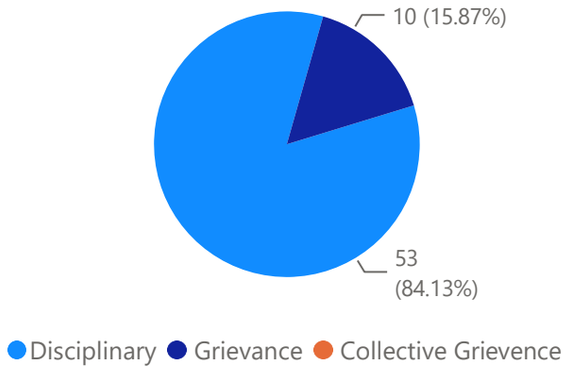
Workforce Dashboard

North Lanarkshire Council

Managing Workforce Transition – Case Management Quarter 1 2025

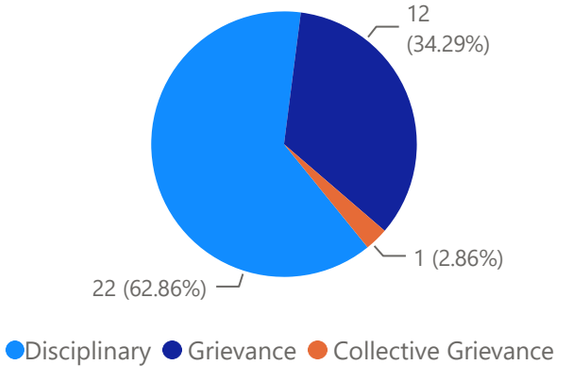
Open Cases

Cases at end of quarter

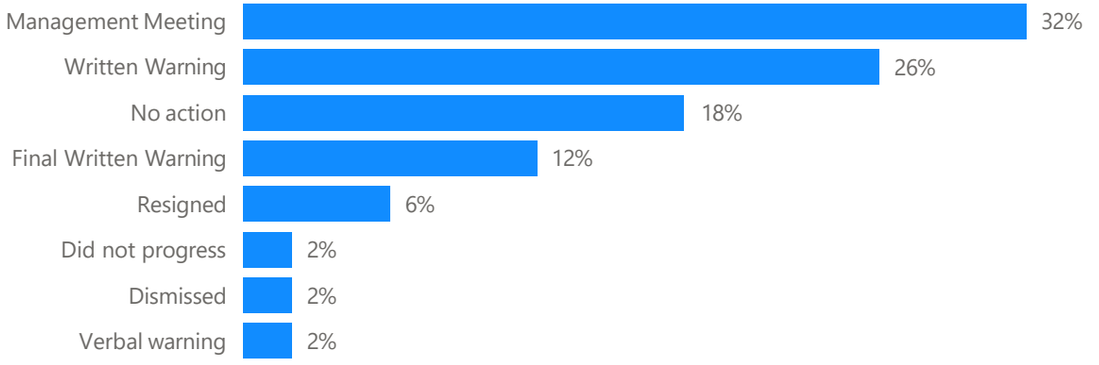


Resolved Cases

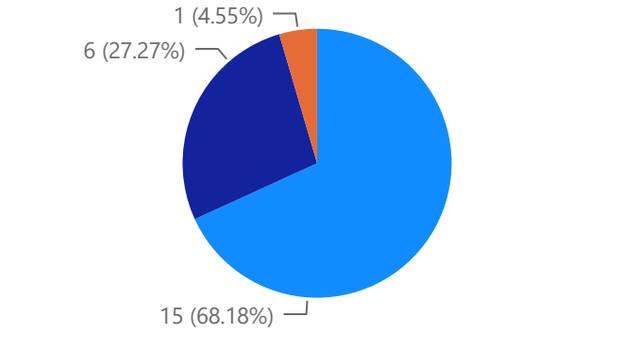
Cases at end of current quarter



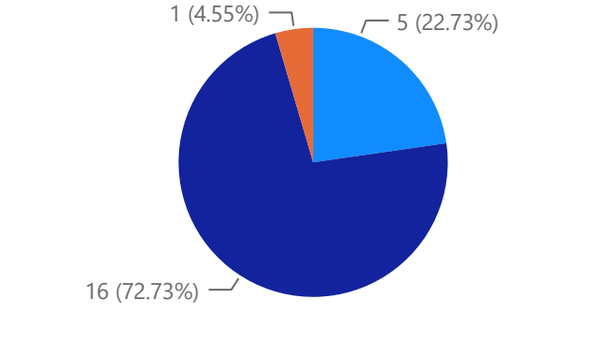
Outcomes in current quarter



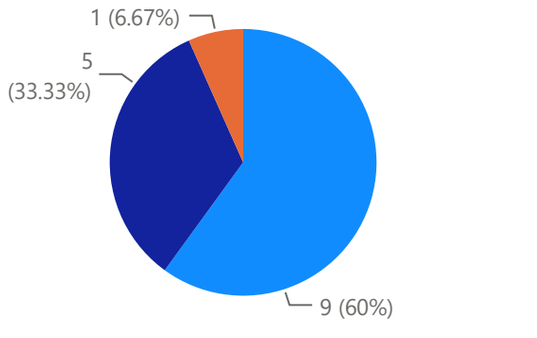
Temporary Measures



Time to Resolve - discipline



Time to Resolve - grievance



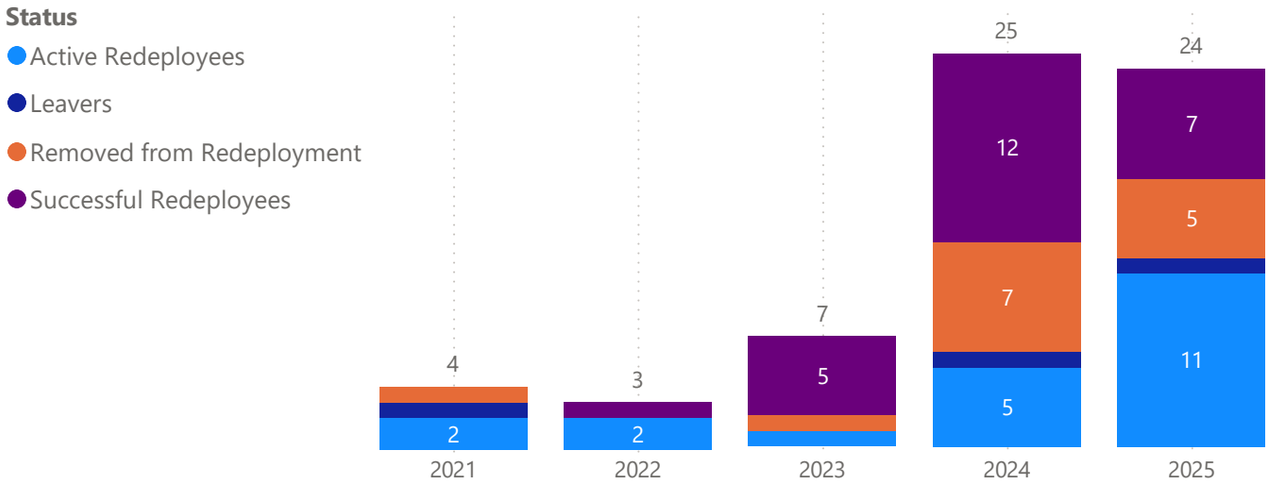
Employee Service Centre

Workforce Dashboard

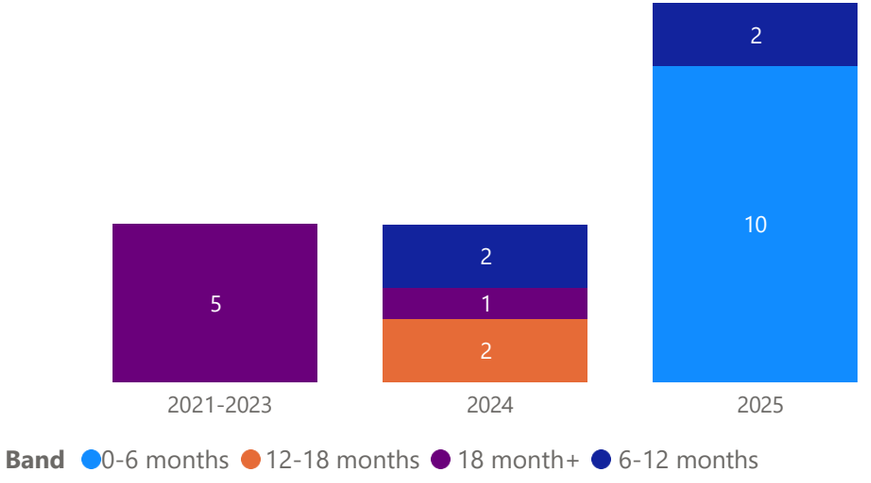
North Lanarkshire Council

Managing Workforce Transition – Redeployment

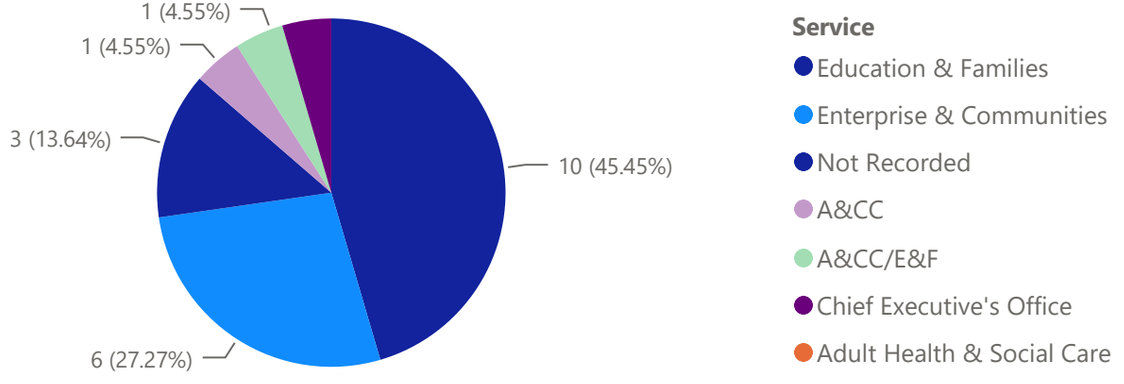
Redeployment 2021 - 2025



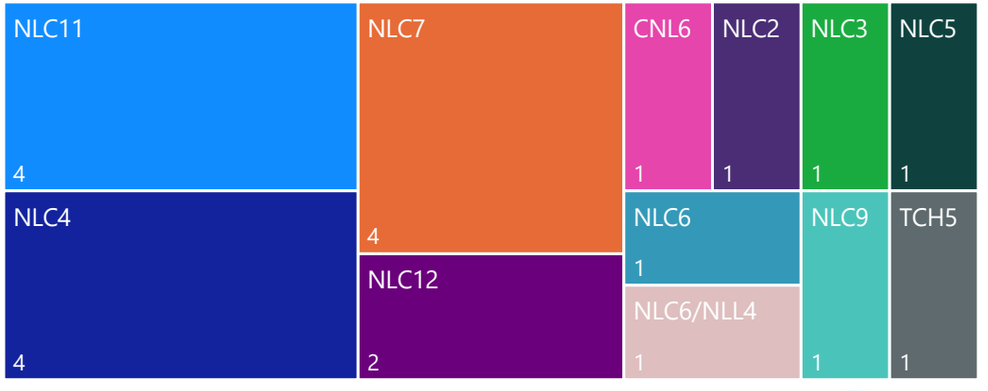
Length of Time in Redeployment (Active Cases)



Existing Redeployment by Service



Existing Redeployment by Grade



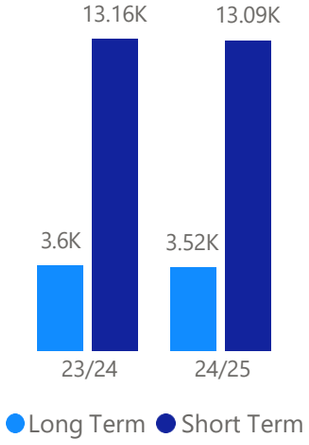
Employee Service Centre

Workforce Dashboard

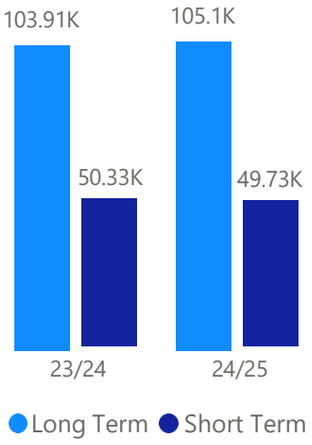
North Lanarkshire Council

Employee Engagement & Wellbeing – Absence Rates

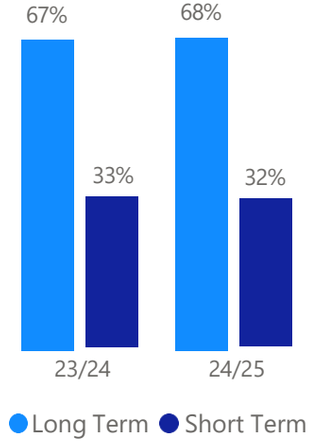
No of Absences



FTE Days Lost

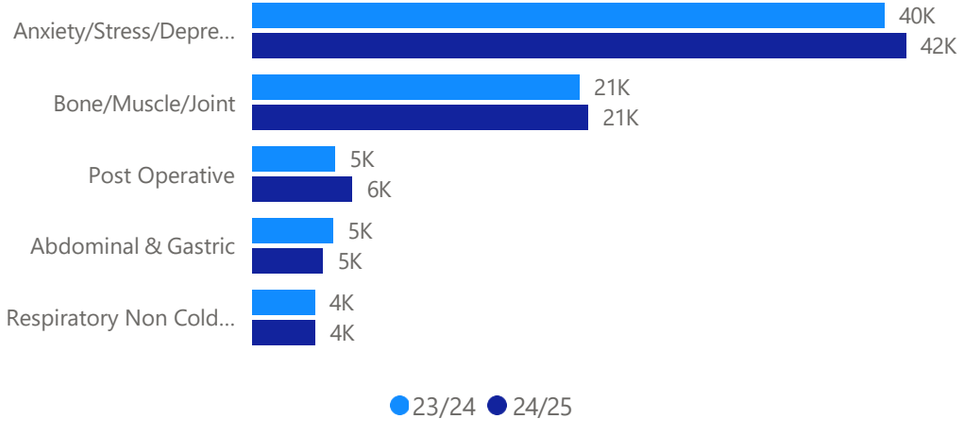


FTE Days Lost %

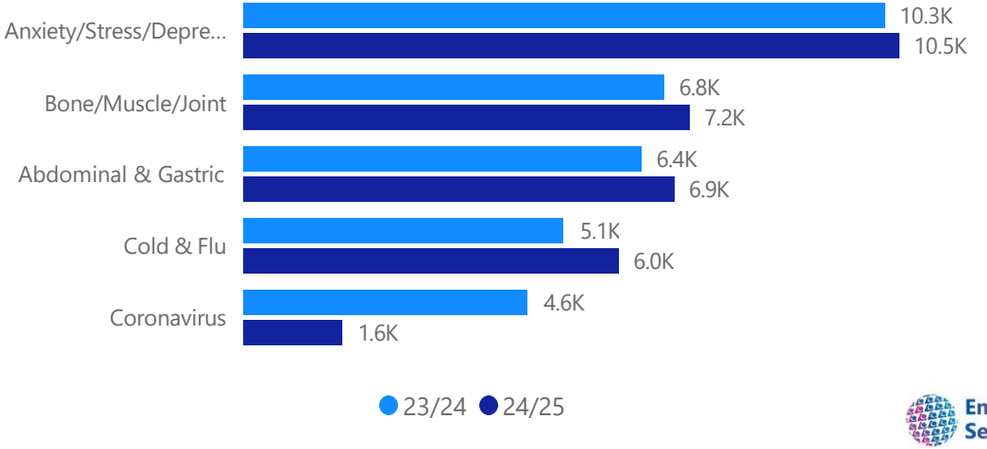


Total FTE Days Lost

Top 5 Reasons - Long term



Top 5 Reasons - Short term



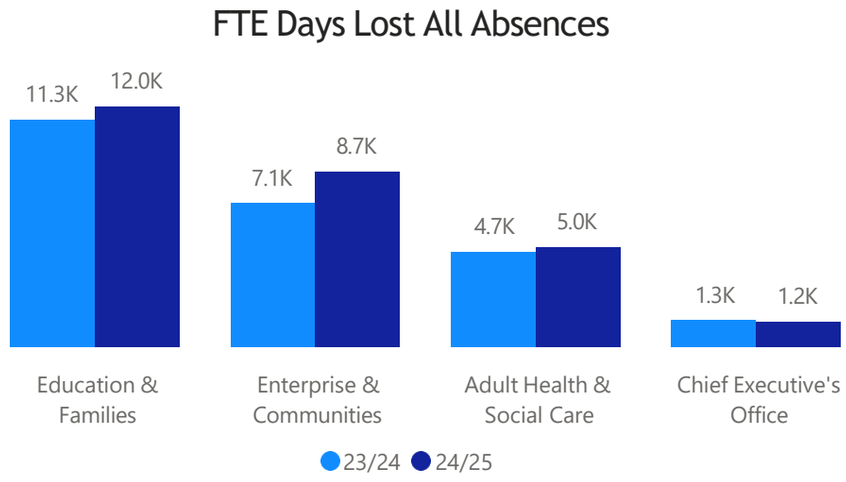
Employee Service Centre

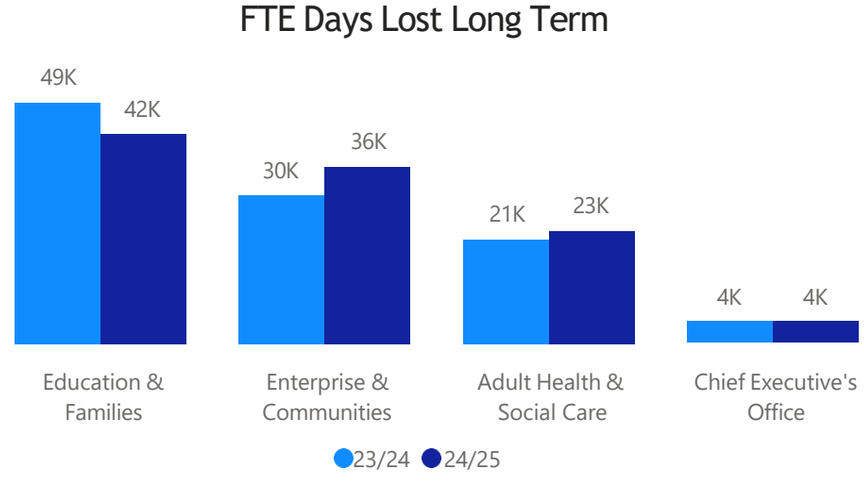
Workforce Dashboard

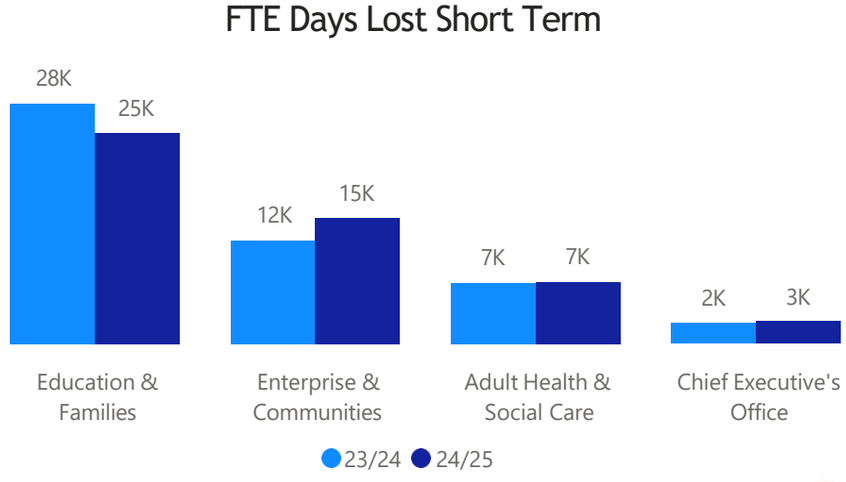
North Lanarkshire Council

Employee Engagement & Wellbeing – Absence Rates and Trends by Service

Service/Group	FTE Days Lost Per E'ee - 23/24	FTE Days Lost Per E'ee - 24/25	Target
Council	11.84	11.86	10.99
Single Status - All	12.92	13.28	12.49
Adult Health & Social Care	15.76	16.65	
Chief Executives	7.47	7.57	
Education & Families (Single Status)	13.13	12.76	
Education & Families (Teaching)	8.86	8.16	7.08
Enterprise & Communities	12.84	13.51	







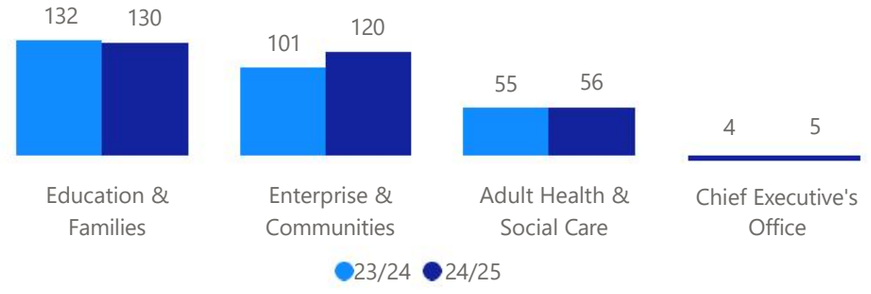
Employee Service Centre

Workforce Dashboard

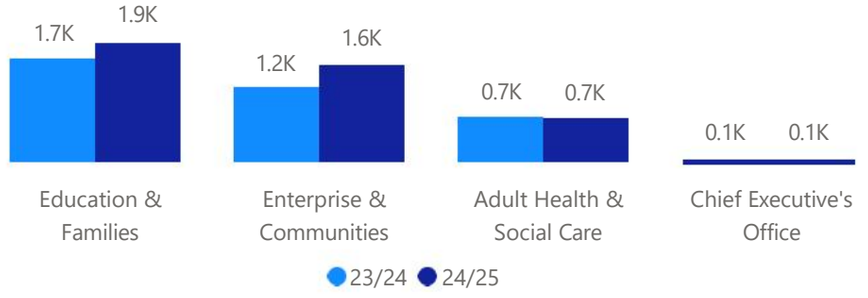
North Lanarkshire Council

Employee Engagement & Wellbeing – Ongoing Longterm Absences at 31st March

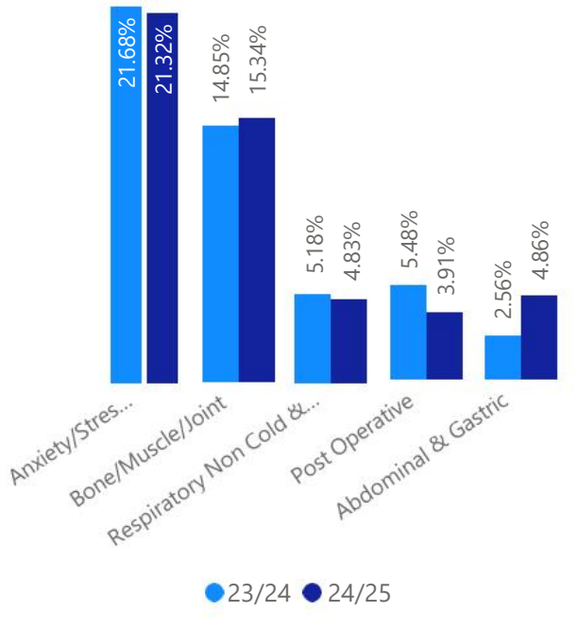
No of Employees Sick >3 Months



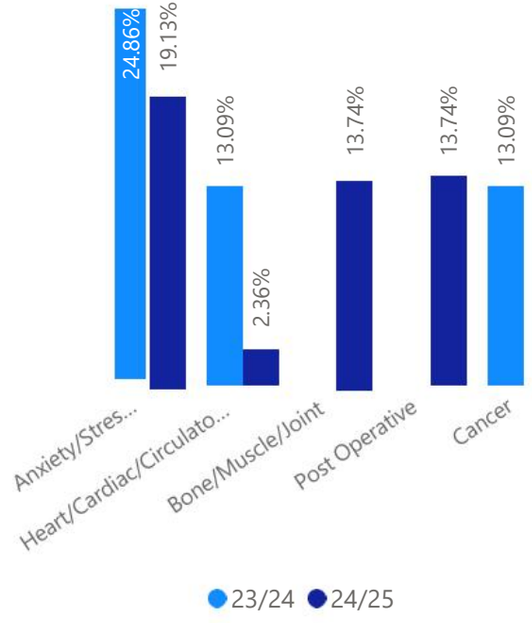
FTE Days Lost Sick >3 Months



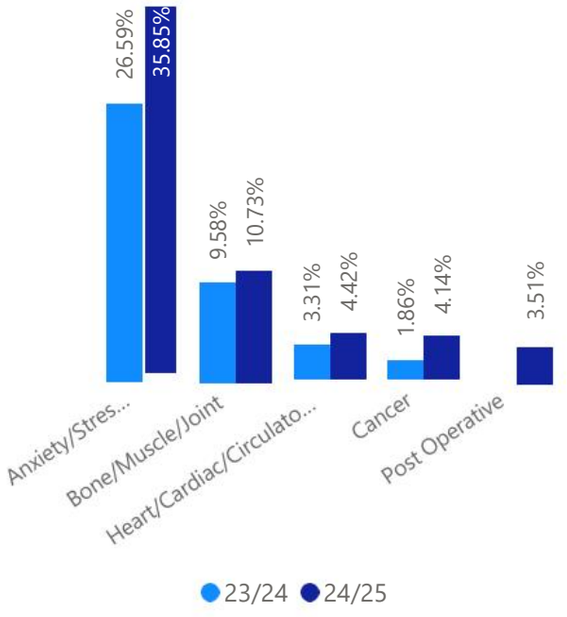
AH&SC Top 5 >3 Month



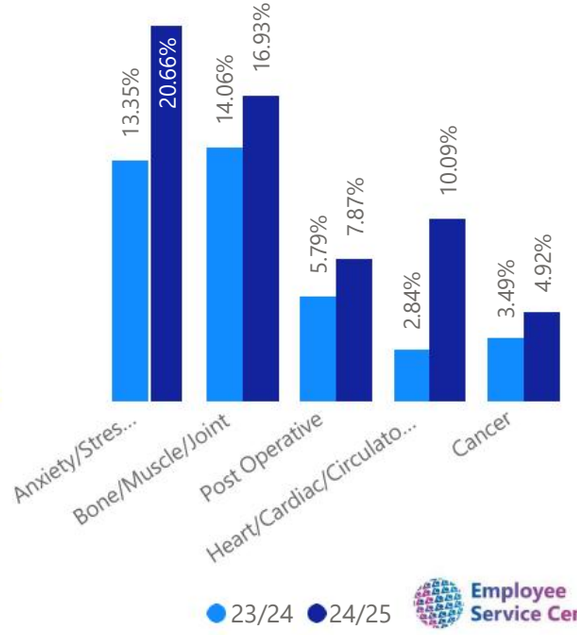
Chief Exec's Top 5 >3 Months



Ed & Fam Top 5 >3 Months



Ent & Comm Top 5 >3 Months



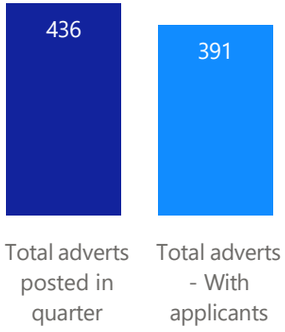
Employee Service Centre

Workforce Dashboard

North Lanarkshire Council

Pathways for Progression – Recruitment Process Quarter 1 2025

Number by Adverts



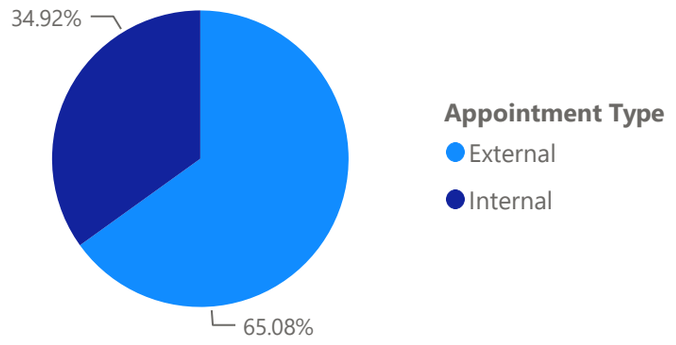
Average Days - Interview to Appointment

45.73

Average Days - Offer Accepted to Appointed

24.72

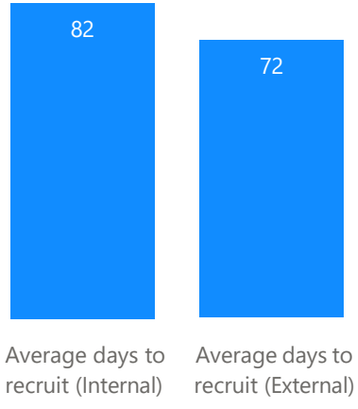
Appointment Type (%)



Offers	Days
Average Days Interview to Progress to Offer	11.03
Average Days Progress to Offer to Awaiting Offer Information	1.46
Average Days Awaiting Offer Information to Offer	2.92
Average Days Progress to offer to Offer Accepted	11.43
Average Days Offer Accepted to Appointed	24.72

Progress to offer to offer accepted	Days
External candidates - average days from progress to offer to offer accepted	10.53
Internal candidates - average days from progress to offer to offer accepted	15.94

Start to End Process



All values on this page relate Recruitment in the period April to June 2025

Employee Service Centre

Workforce Dashboard

North Lanarkshire Council

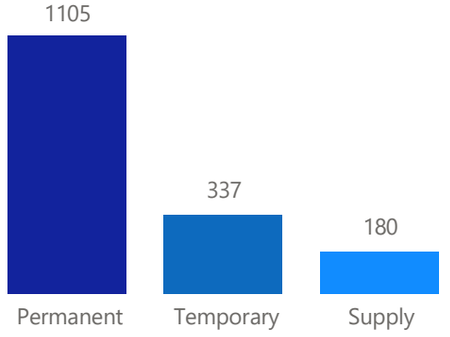
Pathways for Progression – Leavers in year ending 31st March

Leavers in last 12 months

1,593

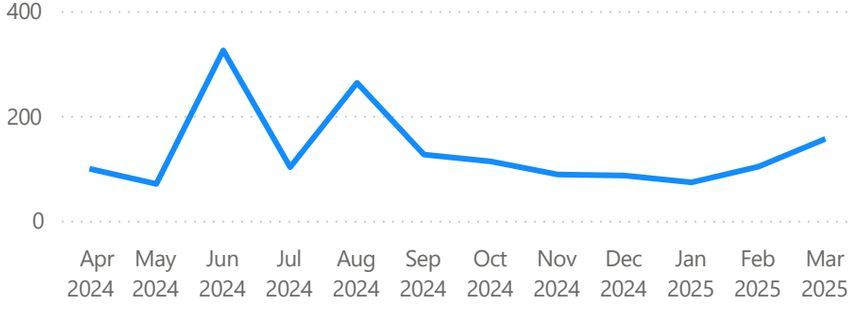
Average age at leaving

44.94

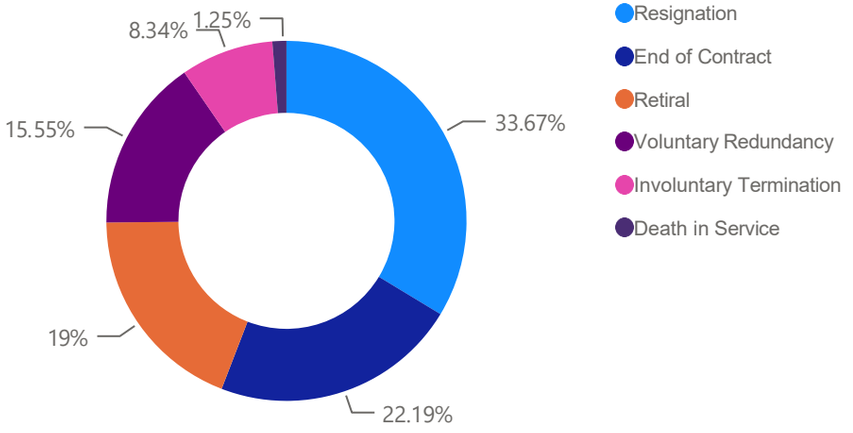


As some employees hold multiple contracts with more that one 'Type' bar chart total differs from count of People.

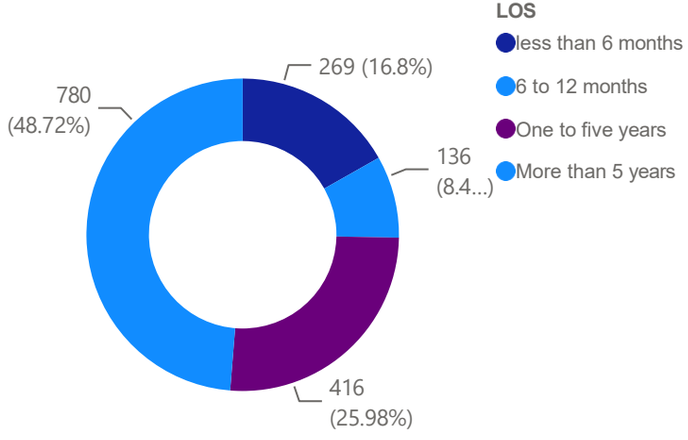
12-month trend



Leavers by Reason



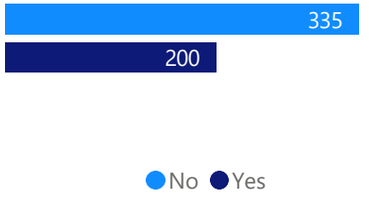
Service Length at Leaving



Top 10 roles

Role	Leavers
Early Learning & Childcare	276
Home Support	119
Clerical/Admin	107
ASNA	93
Cleaner	71
Catering	60
Casual - Leisure Venues	58
Casual - Sports Coaches	48
Casual - Invigilator	38
Casual - Bar staff/Front of House	6

Exit Interview Complete (Resignation Only)



All values on this page relate to non-Teaching roles

Employee Service Centre