

North Yorkshire Council
Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee
June 2026

Workforce Annual Report

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Human Resources and Business Support)

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update the Corporate & Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee on NYC Workforce data since 1 April 2025.

2.0 BACKGROUND

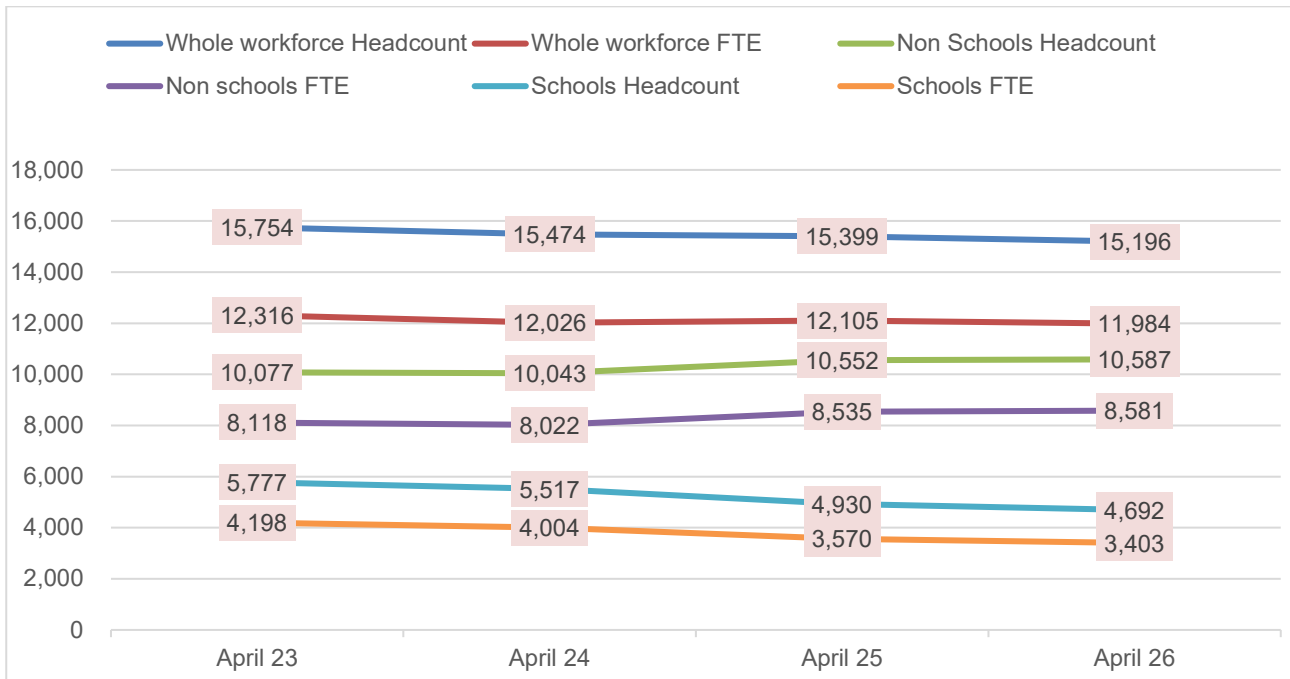
2.1 This third full year workforce report for North Yorkshire Council (NYC) provides an update to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Council’s changing workforce, presents a range of workforce data, and outlines progress on the last year.

3.0 DATASETS

Workforce Demographics

3.1 This section sets out the end of 2025/2026 data for NYC with changes on the previous year reported in the narrative.

Table 1. Headcount and FTE

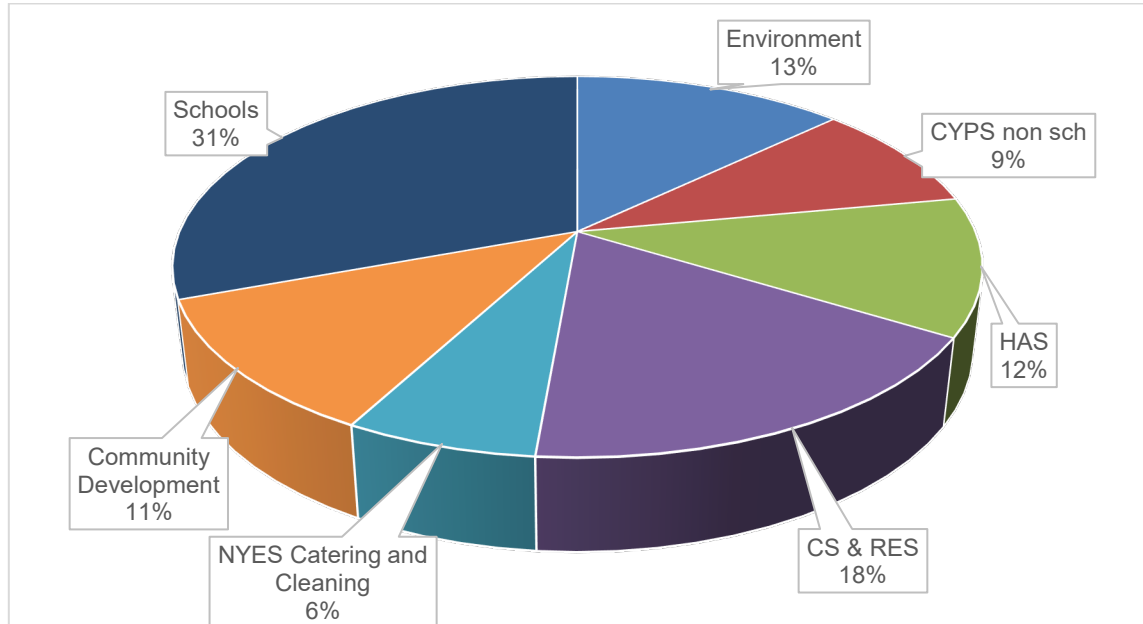


3.2 The whole workforce and schools’ headcount* and FTE continue to reduce due to the ongoing movement of LMS schools to academies. The non school’s corporate headcount

and FTE have increased slightly by around 50 since 2025 as vacancies held during restructures are filled

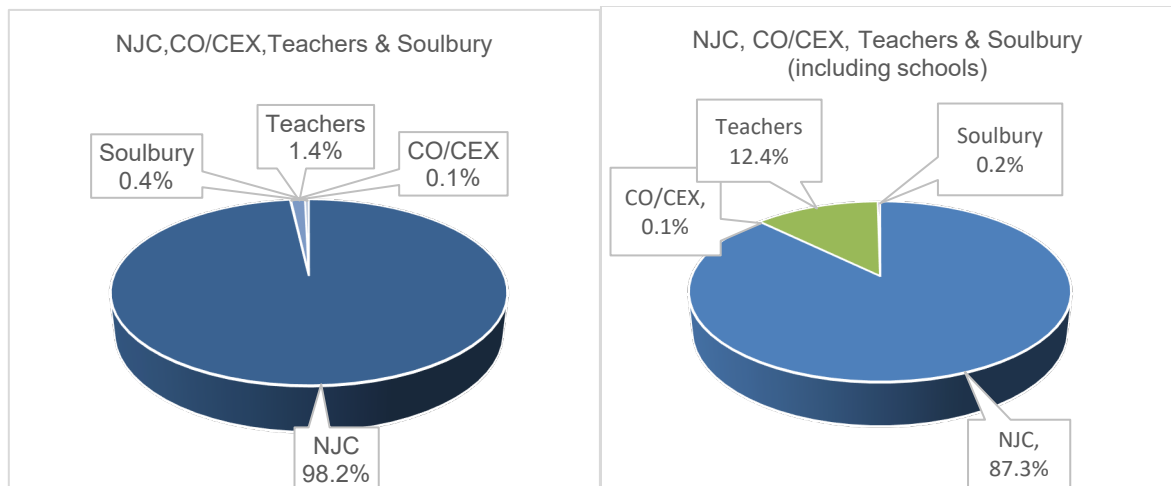
* Whole workforce is less than the sum of schools and non-schools as duplicates who work in both sectors are removed.

Table 2. Directorate headcount



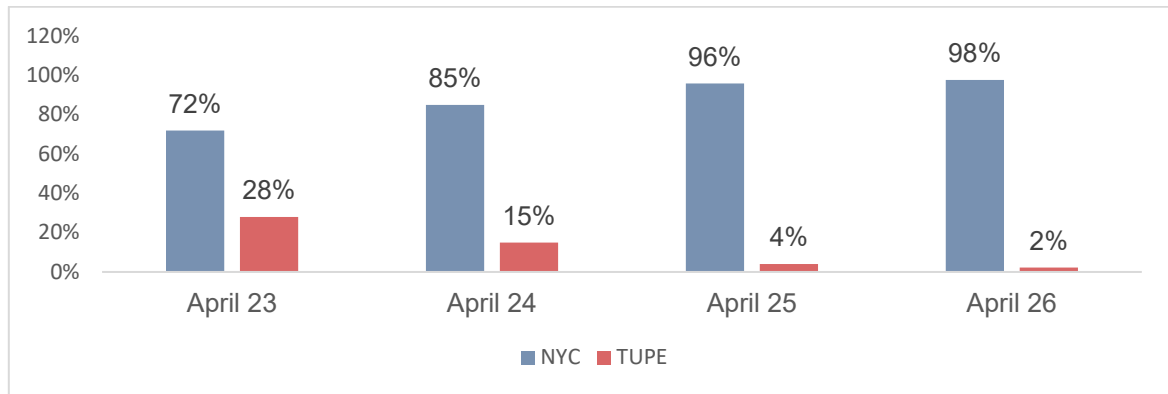
3.3 Schools remain the largest workforce sector although down from 32% to 31% on the previous year. No change in other Directorates except for a small increase from 17% to 18% in Central Services and Resources.

Table 3. Terms and Conditions



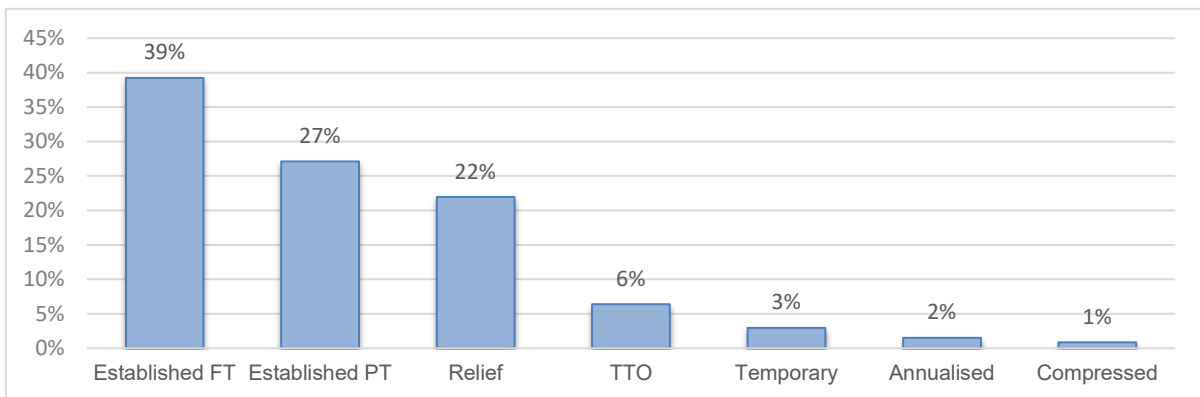
3.4 There has been very little change on the terms and conditions which apply to the workforce in the last year. 87.3% of the whole workforce remain covered by nationally negotiated NJC for Local Government (Green Book) terms and conditions or 98.2% when schools are excluded. The proportion on national teaching terms and conditions has reduced to make up 12.4% of the workforce. A tiny proportion are covered by national negotiating bodies for Chief Executives and Chief Officers (0.1%) and the specialist education professionals on Soulbury terms (0.2%).

Table 4. NYC v. TUPE terms and conditions



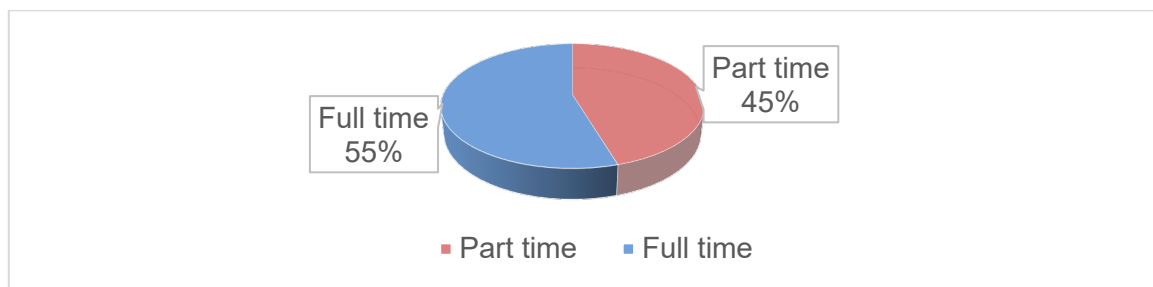
3.5 In April 2023 28% of the workforce were on different terms and conditions to those negotiated for the new North Yorkshire Council, largely those who were TUPE protected on their previous District and Borough contracts. This has reduced to just 2% or 201 employees, despite further TUPE transfers in during this time in Leisure and Waste. Having most employees on a single set of terms and conditions reduces equal pay risks and makes managing and paying employees more straightforward, reducing the administration costs of multiple employment terms. This change has been achieved by employees choosing to move to NYC contracts, through multiple service restructures and natural wastage/turnover.

Table 5. Contract type



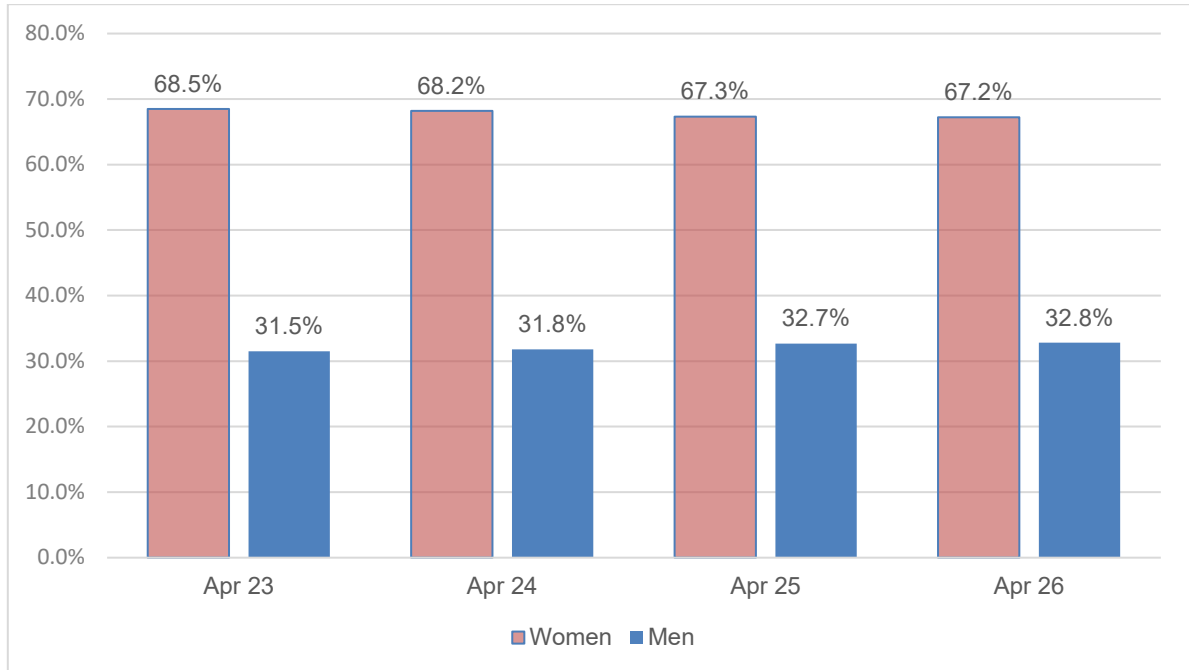
3.6 75% of the workforce remain on an established contract, either full time, part time, term time, compressed or annualised. The proportion on a full-time contract has increased by a further 1% this year to 39% while those on a term time only contract has reduced by a further 1%. The reliance on casual / relief workers has reduced by 1% but is still fairly high at 22%, although many of these have an established contract with NYC and pick up additional hours in a relief post.

Table 6. Full time / part time



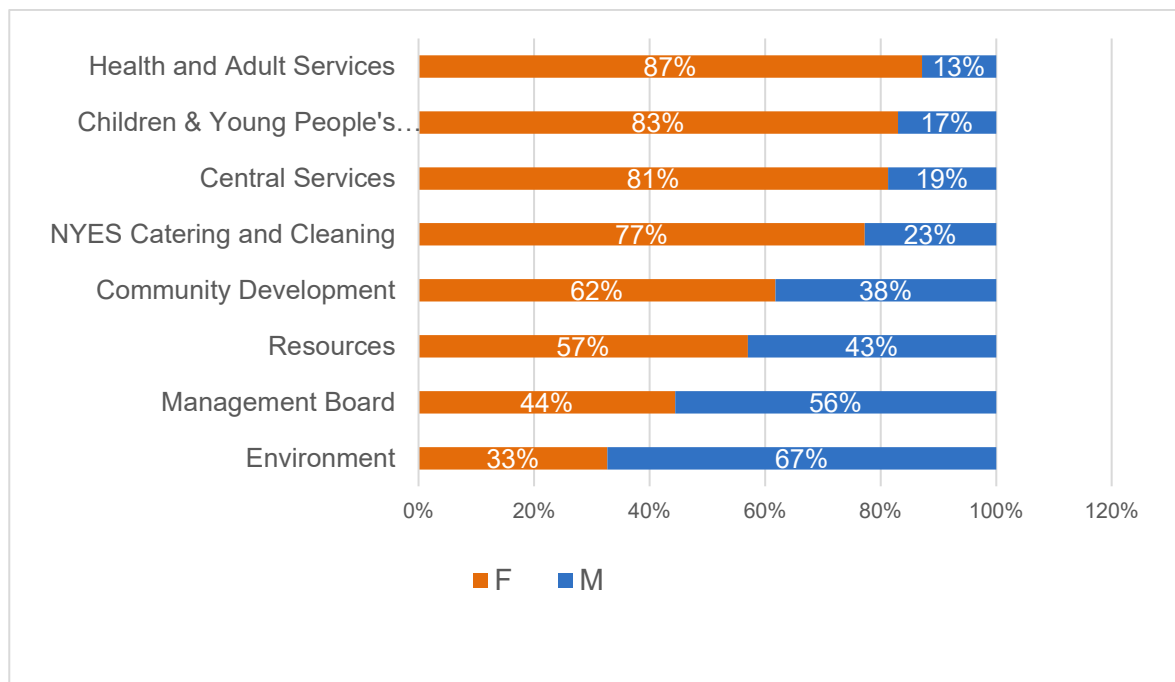
3.7 The proportion of the workforce on full-time contracts has increased by a further 1% in the last year. There has been a focus on offering contracts that accurately reflect the needs of the service, so more full-time hours in HAS, and the hours regularly worked, rather than relying on high levels of additional hours or casual working.

Table 7. Men and women



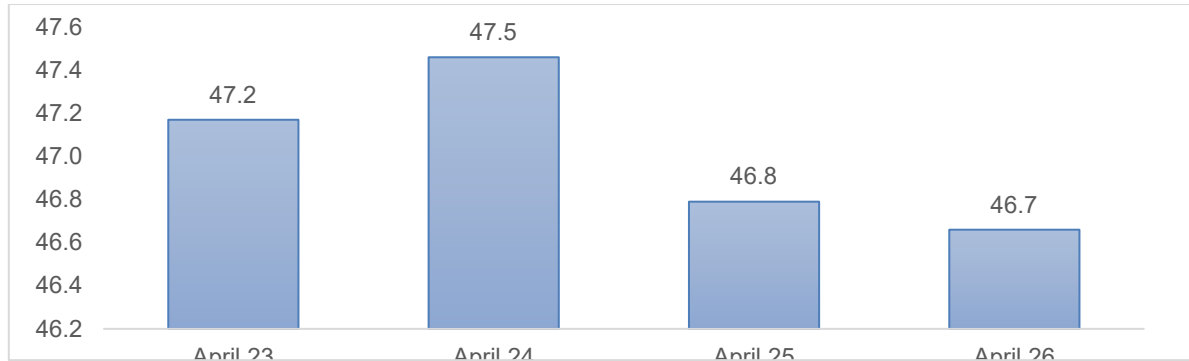
3.8 The very small increase in the proportion of men employed at the Council continued last year, although the ratio is still around 2 women to each man.

Table 8. Men and women by Directorate



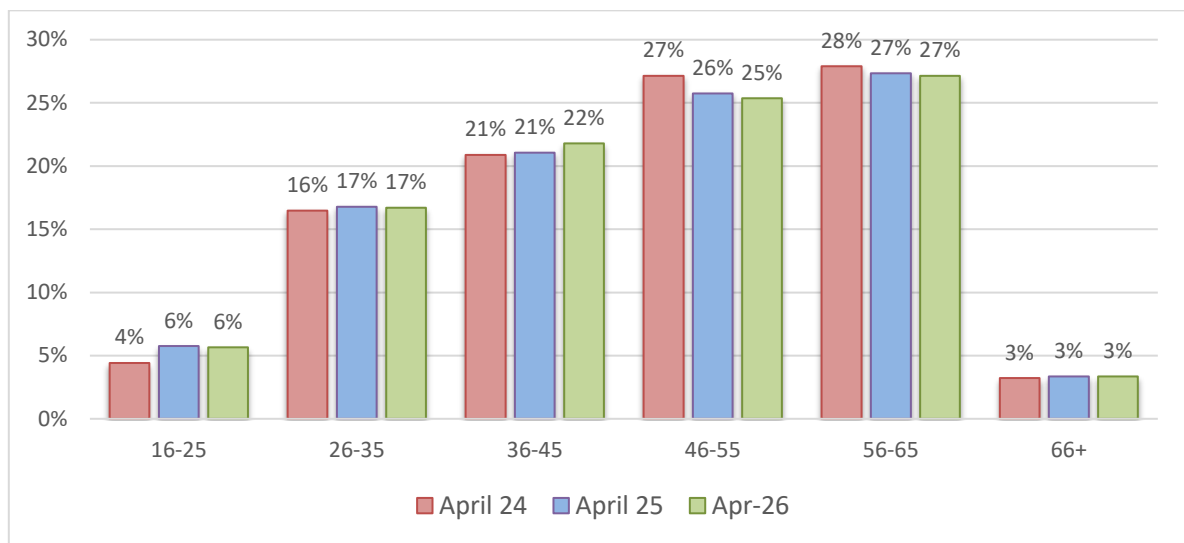
3.9 Looking at women and men by Directorate shows a small increase in the proportion of men employed in Community Development, but a doubling of the % of women employed at Management Board level from 22% to 44% on the previous year. Despite targeted attraction campaigns to tackle occupational segregation, progress can be slow in attracting more men into care and more women into traditional male areas such as Waste.

Table 9. Average age (years)



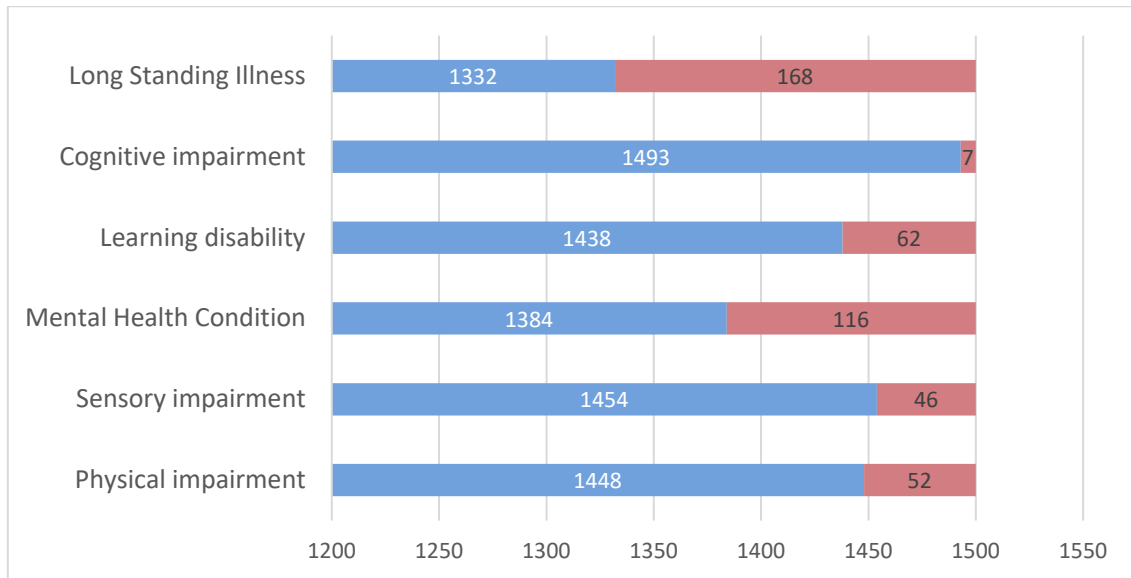
3.10 The average age of the workforce has reduced slightly again this year to 46.7 years. There is often concern in local government about the ageing workforce population and the challenge to attract young talent, so this trend is positive for the Council.

Table 10. Age distribution (%)



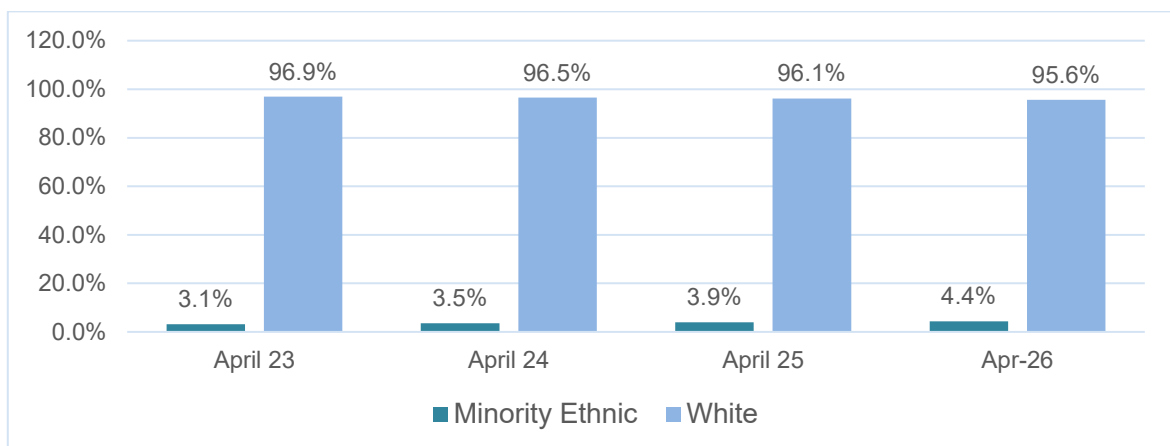
3.11 This more detailed age distribution table illustrates success in attracting new young talent, with 6% in 16-25 years maintained this year. These figures reflect the established contracted workforce but there is also a sizeable number of casual relief workers in this age bracket, particularly in the Community Directorate. There has also been a 1% increase in the 36-45 age bracket, but a further 1% reduction in those aged 46-55.

Table 11. Declared disability



3.12 There has been a long-standing difficulty with gathering accurate information about the proportion of the workforce with a disability, and data is still incomplete, but a recent initiative to encourage employees to self-identify has produced more comprehensive and meaningful results. In April 2023 just 3.8% of the workforce identified as having a disability. In April 2026 326 employees described themselves as having a disability (up from 205 last year) which represents 8.9% of those for whom we hold this information. The % has reduced from last year but this is because we now hold up to date information for 3664 employees, a significant increase of around 1500 new declarations. However, there is still 67% of the workforce for whom we have no disability declaration, and this remains a priority to collect comprehensive accurate up to date information. This will become ever more urgent as the Council has a statutory responsibility to report on any disability (and ethnicity) pay gap. It may be that employees are mandated to report their equality information, with an option to declare 'prefer not to say'. In response to more detailed questions 168 employees described a long-standing health condition (up from 120 last year), 116 a mental health condition (up from 89), 62 a learning disability (up from 55), 52 a physical impairment (up from 47), and 46 a sensory impairment (up from 31).

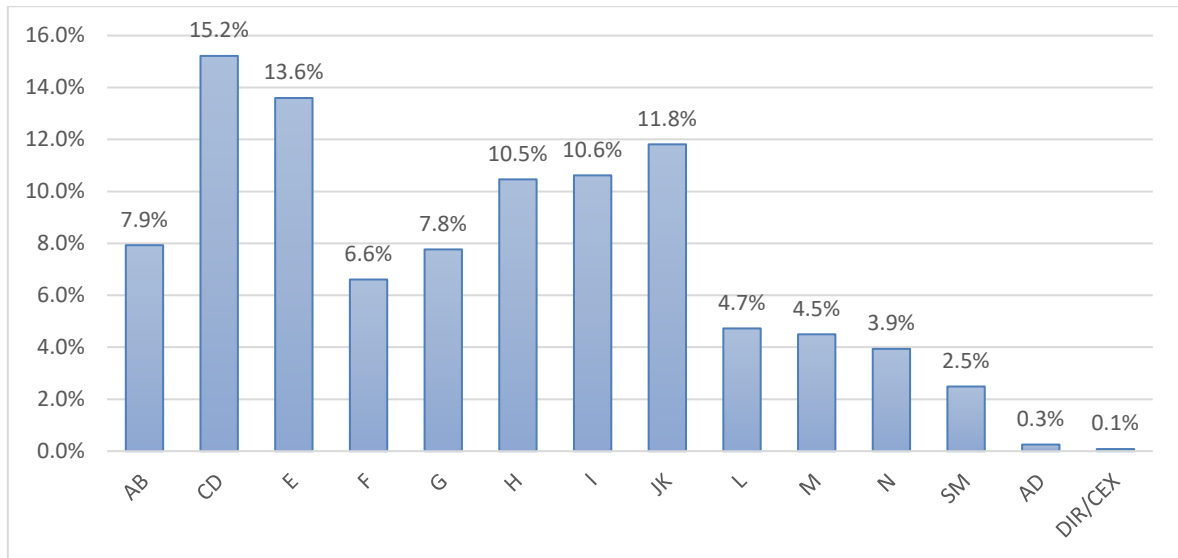
Table 12. Declared ethnicity



3.13 The minority ethnic proportion of the workforce has steadily increased to 4.4% as of April 2026, up 1.3% from 3.1% in April 2023. At the last 2021 census the minority ethnic population of North Yorkshire was 3.3% ensuring the minority ethnic workforce represents the community served.

Pay Grade Distribution

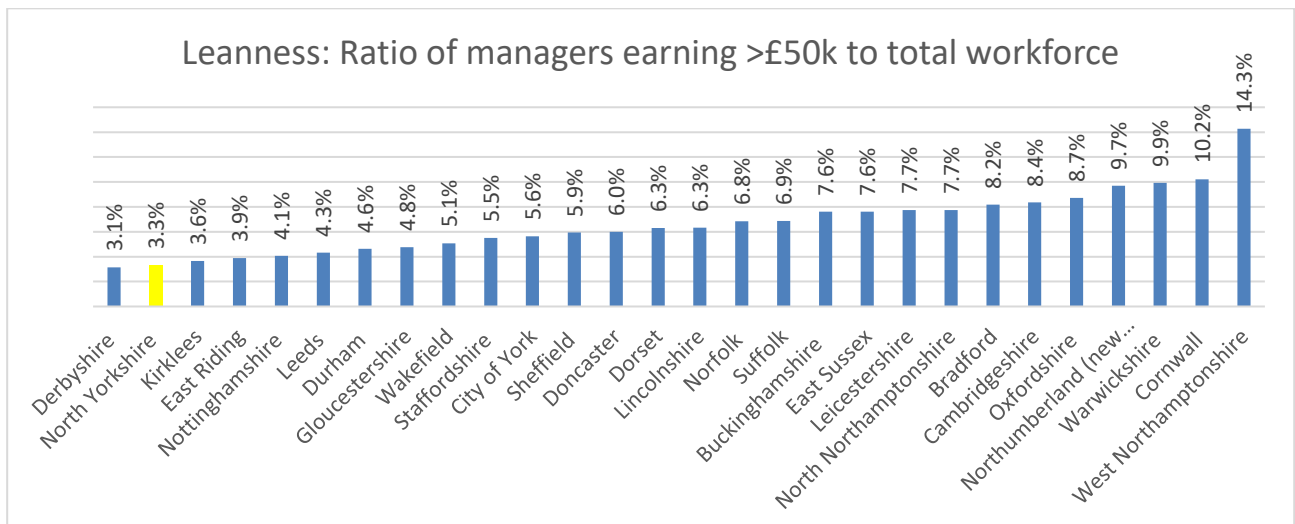
Table 13. Employees by NYC equivalent grade (%)



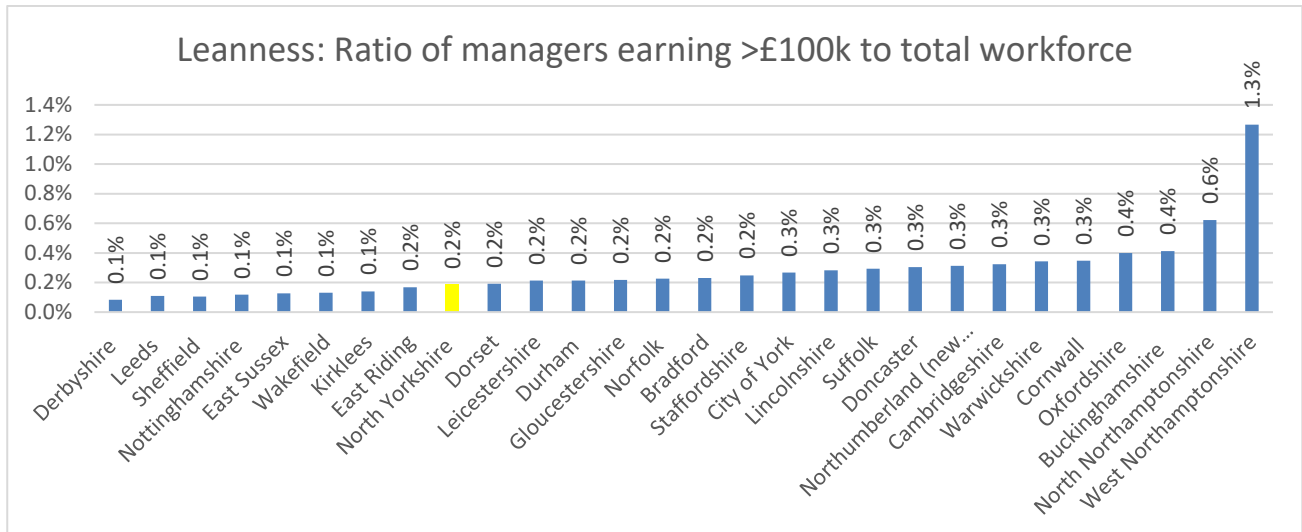
- 3.14 There has been a decrease in the proportion of the workforce employed in Grades AB to G, with an increase in Grades H (+1%) and I (+1.7%). The proportion at JK has reduced by 1.1%. There has been a small increase in % at Grade L but reduction in Grades M, N and SM. Roles are regularly reviewed to keep the job evaluation score accurate as services restructure, and career graded roles create career pathways for professional development and progression. The proportion of senior managers graded SM1 to Chief Executive is below 3% (2.9%) with a steady focus on avoiding grade creep within these senior roles.

Some examples of high-volume roles in the different grades include Cleaners at Grade AB, Waste Loaders, Business Support, Drivers and Leisure Attendants at Grade CD and Care and Support Workers and Cooks at Grade E. Grades F to I have senior care and support roles, team leaders and technical roles such as Customer Service Advisors, Planning and Homeless Prevention Support Officers, and Swimming Teachers. JK grade includes Social Workers, Occupational Therapists and Planners. Grades L to N cover the senior professional grades Accountants, HR Business Partners, Lawyers and Engineers. Senior Managers and Assistant Director grades cover Heads of Service managers and above.

Table 14. NYC Leanness

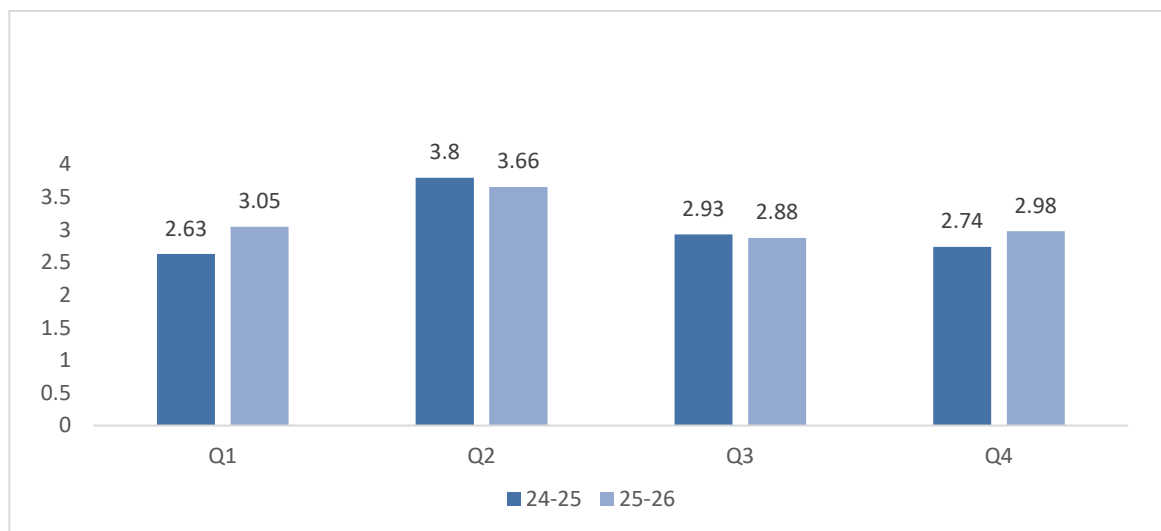


3.15 The tables above and below illustrate North Yorkshire Council remains one of the leanest councils amongst its comparators for number of employees earning £50k or more compared to total workforce at 3.3%, 2nd only to Derbyshire. North Yorkshire is also in the lowest 3rd in terms of leanness for comparators for numbers of senior managers earning over £100k as a proportion of the total workforce. This figure has increased in the last year due to the last NJC pay award which has seen many Assistant Director grades move just into the £100k+ bracket.



Turnover

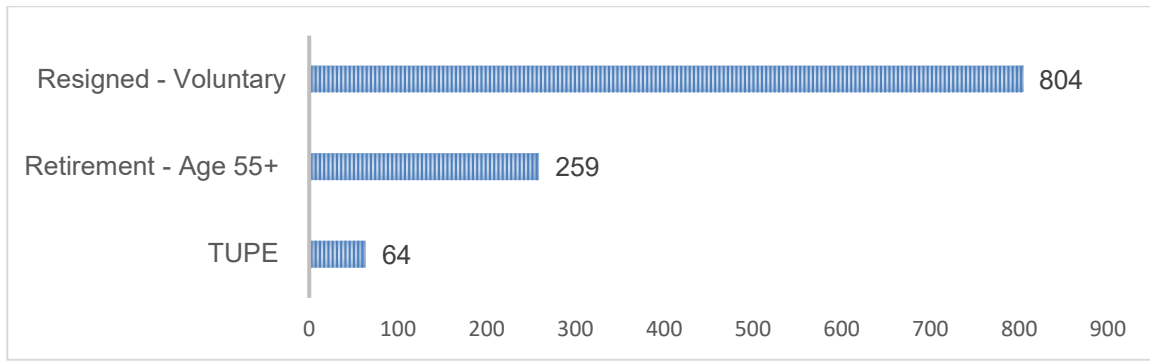
Table 15. Turnover



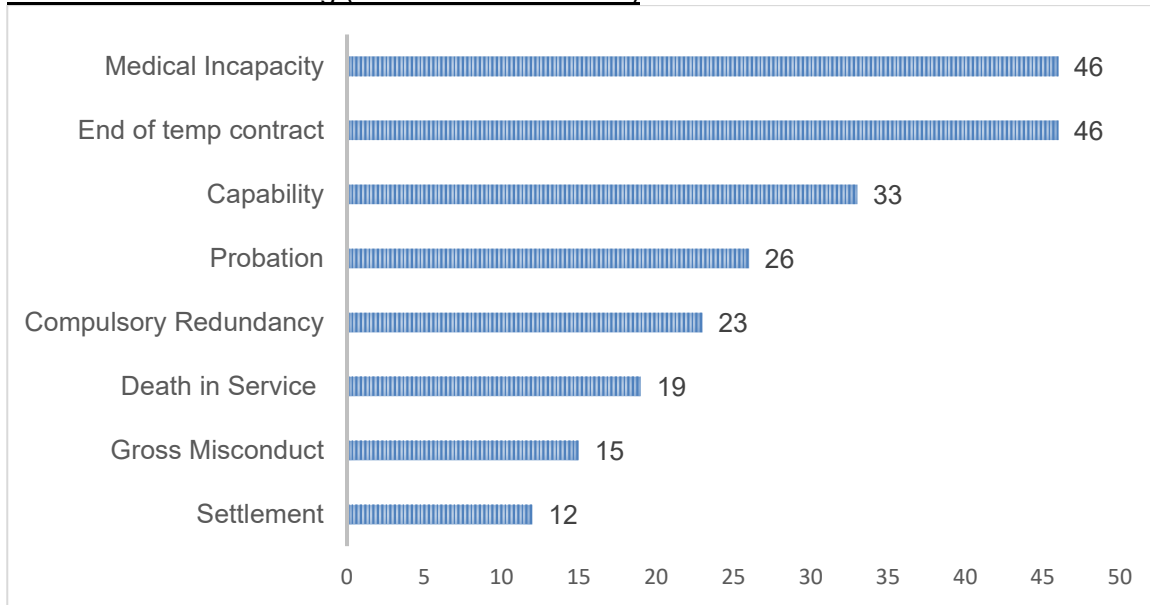
3.16 NYC turnover has increased slightly again in 25-26 up from 12.1% in 24-25 to 12.6%, but still below the latest 15.1% turnover for all English authorities and within the 'normal' 10-13% range to allow for new talent.

Table 16.

Top 3 reasons for leaving



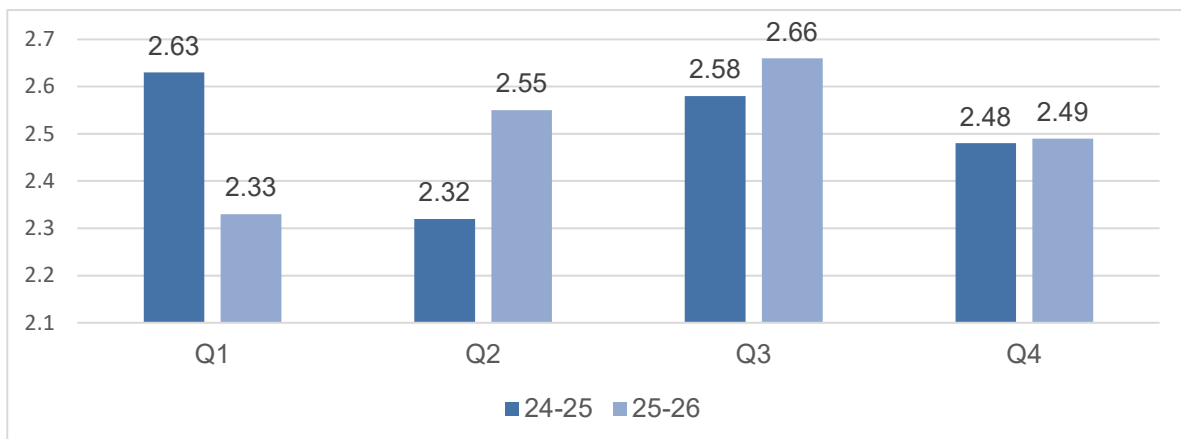
Other reasons for leaving (more than 10 leavers)



3.17 Voluntary resignations and retirement (over 55) remain the top 2 reasons for leaving with the number of retirements slightly up on the previous year and voluntary leavers slightly down. The 3rd most common reason for leavers in the last year was TUPE transfers out, compared to medical incapacity in the previous year. Leavers due to ending of temporary contracts, capability and probation increased significantly, while redundancies halved. Gross misconduct dismissals and settlement agreements reduced slightly compared to last year.

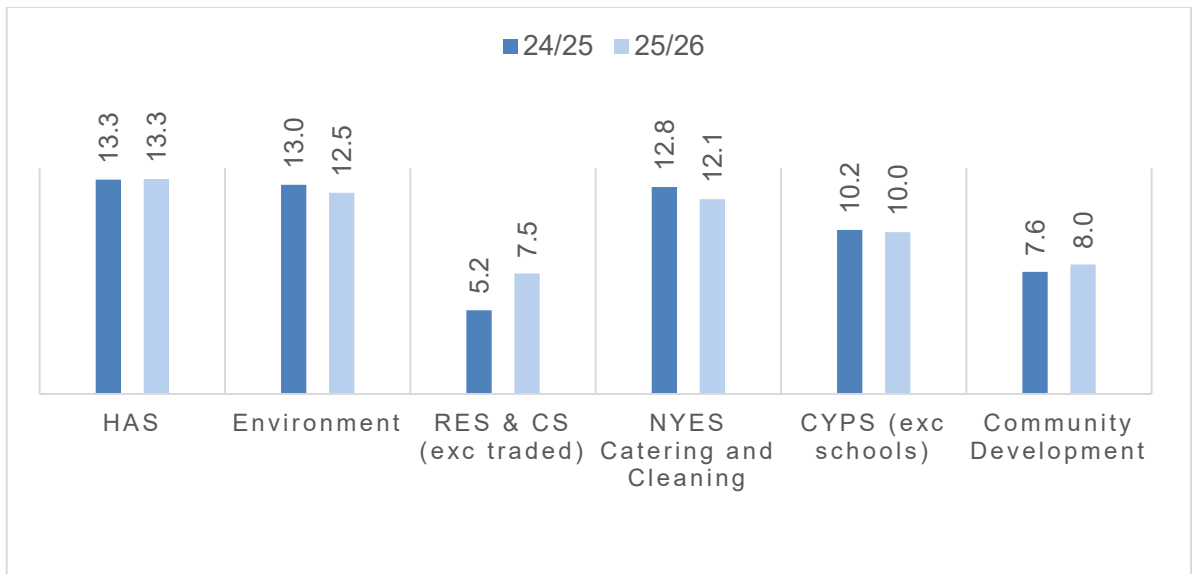
Absence Management

Table 17. NYC sick days per FTE



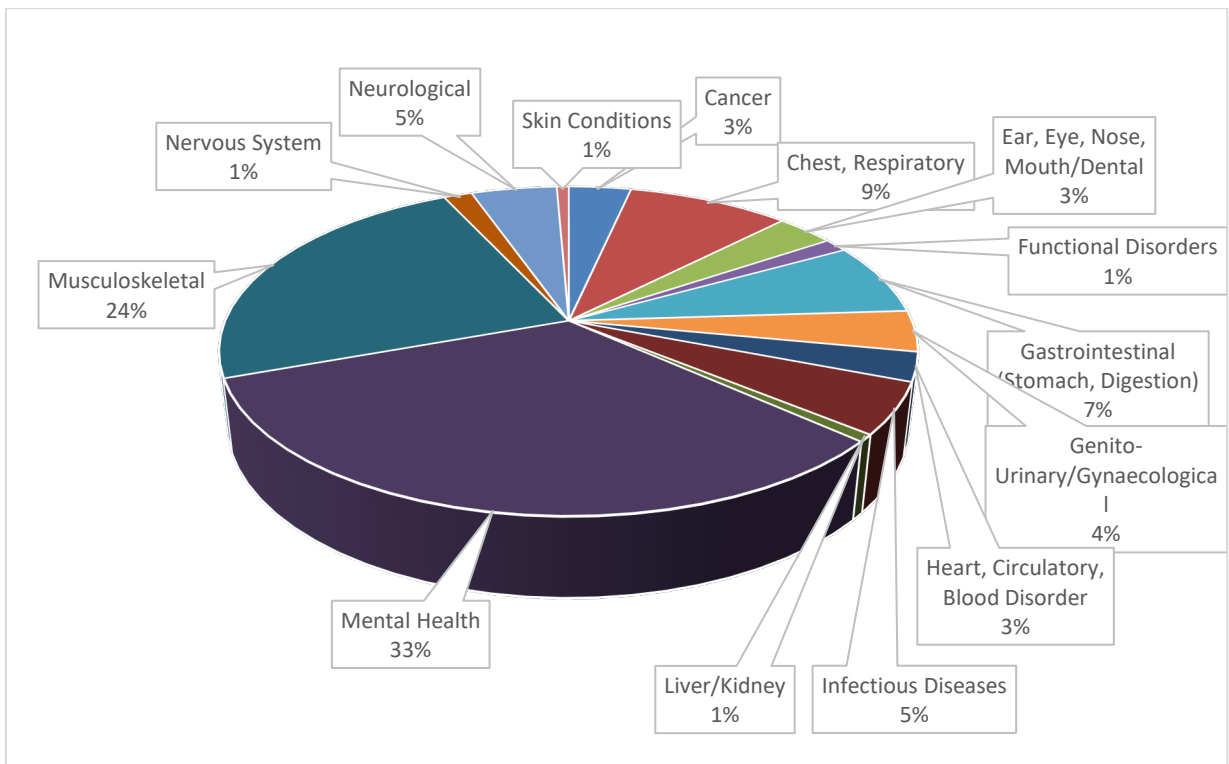
3.18 Days per FTE sickness absence increased very slightly from 10.01 to 10.03 in 2025-26, still down from the 12.5 days 2023-24.

Table 18. Sick days per FTE by Directorate 2024-2026



3.19 Sickness rates decreased slightly in Environment, traded services, and CYPS, remained static in HAS, and increased slightly in Community, due in part to better sickness absence recording. Sickness absence in Central Services and Resources increased in year but is still the lowest for all Directorates.

Table 19. Reasons for Sick Absence



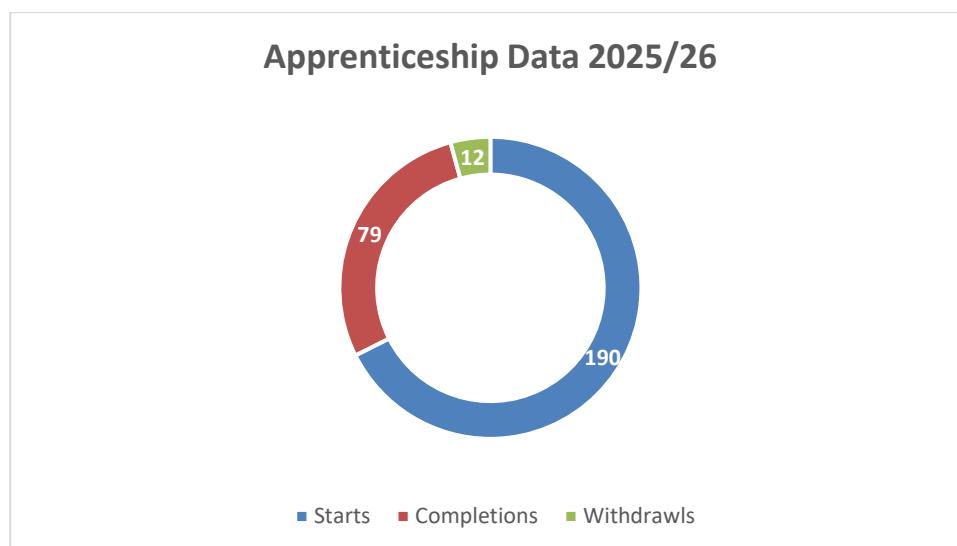
3.20 Mental health related absence remains the most common cause and at 33% of all absence is up from 30% in the previous year, and 28% the year before. The 2nd highest cause of

absence other musculo-skeletal is also up to 24% from 20% the previous year and 18% the year before. Chest and respiratory absence have also increased although infections have reduced.

3.21 Interventions which support a reduction in sickness absence include monthly calls to managers to proactively offer support with managing both long- and short-term absences once absence triggers have been met. Support is offered to managers around policy and procedure, signposting to support guidance and wellbeing resources. We have introduced Attendance HR Advisers who are dedicated to providing proactive support to managers where there are high levels of absence and hotspot areas. Support offered includes face to face drop-in clinics for managers, specialised training, single points of contact for areas where there are high numbers of attendance cases. These roles also support with the analysis of absence data to identify any trends or patterns we may wish to investigate further. There are face to face and online options for manager skills training and in areas with high absence levels tailored manager skills sessions to support them to actively manage any ongoing issues. The attendance management policy has been reviewed and streamlined to make it easier for managers to follow and implement. This was launched in November with council wide training being carried out on the new policy. Reduction in sickness absence continues to be a focussed area for 2026 / 2027.

Apprenticeships and Graduates

Table 20. Apprenticeships 2025-26



3.22 2025/26 has been a successful year for the Apprenticeship Programme with a record number of starts at 190. An increase of 26.5% from 2024/25 which saw 150 starts. This includes 25 starts on L7 apprenticeships before they were de-funded in Dec '25 for those over the age of 22, an increase from 10 starts in 2024/25. There are currently 367 apprentices on programme across the council.

Apprenticeship used for the first time include:

- AI and Data Specialist L7
- Health and Care Intelligence Specialist L7
- Learning and Skills Mentor L4
- Project Controls Professional L6
- Safeguarding Support Officer L3
- Specialist Teaching Assistant L5
- Urban Driver L2
- Learning and Development Consultant Business Partner L5

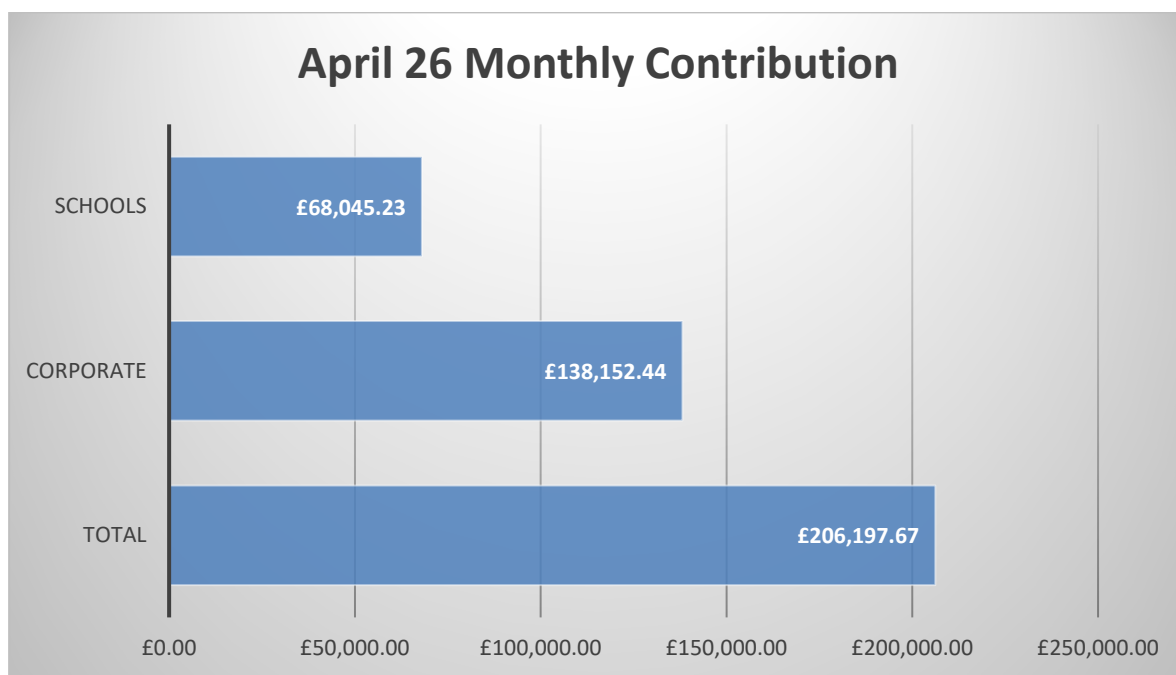
3.23 Apprentices and managers have also accessed extra support through a number of information webinars run by Learning and Development (L&D) which include input from current and previous apprentices. National apprenticeship week took place in February and the council focussed on myths and facts surrounding apprenticeships as well as holding an information webinar for all. Apprentices who have completed their apprenticeship are also regularly celebrated on the council viva engage pages.

NYC also saw a number of successes at the North Yorkshire Apprenticeship Awards with:

- **North Yorkshire Apprenticeship Awards 2025:** Winner - Training Provider / Programme of the Year; Finalist - Large Employer of the Year
- **National Apprenticeship & Skills Awards 2025,** Regional Finalist - (Yorkshire and Humber region) Large Apprenticeship Employer of the Year
- **North Yorkshire Apprenticeship Awards 2025:** Lily Mercer - Named Advanced Apprentice of the Year and Special Recognition Certificate in Health & Public Service Awards
- **National Apprenticeship & Skills Awards 2025:** Lily Mercer - (Yorkshire and Humber region) Regional finalist in Advanced Apprentice of the Year.

3.24 Apprenticeship Levy transfer requests from external organisations seeking funding for apprenticeships, also saw a large increase from 26 in 2024/5 to 68 in 2025/26. The council are currently supporting 118 apprentices at external organisations through a levy transfer.

Table 21. Monthly contributions



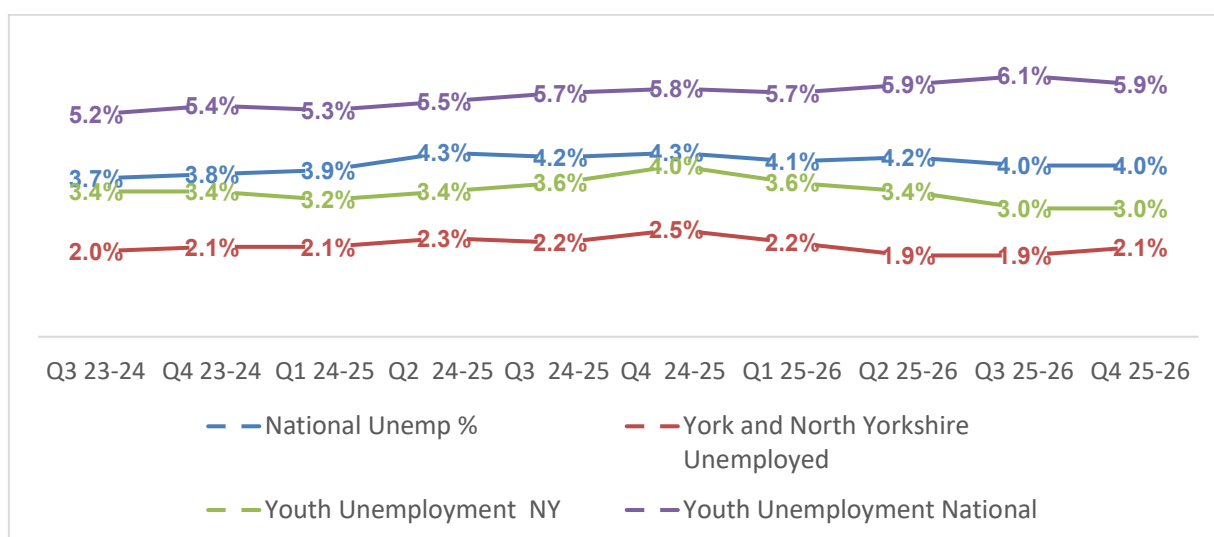
3.25 The monthly contribution, including the 10% Government top-up is just over £200,000 with approx. one third coming from schools. This will gradually decrease over time due to schools academisation. The current funding system for Apprenticeships, started in May 2017, has always been for all apprenticeships, at all levels for anyone over the age of 16 to complete any level of apprenticeship. However recently announced further apprenticeship reform is attempting to re-balance the funding from higher level apprenticeships to lower-level apprenticeships aimed specifically at young people at the start of their working lives and DWP have announced a number of funding updates to be implemented over the next few months. These updates follow on from the de-funding of Level 7 apprenticeships for those over 22 years of age in Dec '25. These restrictions on use of levy now include:

- De-funding of 16 identified apprenticeships standards (11 of which were used by the council)
- Age restriction on newly approved apprenticeships
- Reduction in time available to use levy funds from 24 months to 12 months
- Introduction of Apprenticeship Units
- Foundation Apprenticeships
- Changes to Transfer rules

3.26 The Apprenticeship Levy has now been renamed the Growth and Skills Levy to support the implementation of the funding changes and L&D are currently working through the detail of all the changes and the implications for NYC. Overall, the changes will mean that there will be less to spend the levy on and less time to spend it which will result in more funds expiring back to Government each month. NYC currently have 26 graduates on programme at the council (an increase of 7 from 24-25).

Recruitment and Labour Market

Table 22. Unemployment rates



* % of individuals claiming out of work benefits

3.27 North Yorkshire unemployment rates and youth unemployment remain lower than the national average. NY overall unemployment rate increased by 0.2% to 2.1% in the last quarter while NY youth unemployment has remained unchanged at 3% for the last 2 quarters.



Table 23. Recruitment activity



	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Full year
Adverts	921	828	689	791	3229
Applications	4,827	6,868	4,504	6,108	22,307
New starters	688	728	661	675	2,752
Applications / advert	5.2	8.3	6.5	9	7.3
Attraction	1,250,791	945,414	1,608,166	2,079,669	5,884,040
Advertising spend	£19,135**	£21,185**	£22,408**	£36,283**	£99,011
Cost per hire	£28	£29	£34	£54*	£36
Days to hire	30	33	28	31	30
Agency spend	£1,332,981	£1,122,682	£1,531,395	£1,442,703	£5,429,761
Agency FTE	37	43	40	34	38

Care leavers starters	8	8	9	10	
Supported Internships	2	0	2	2	
Volunteers	4,288	4,218	4,178		12,684
Volunteer hours	48,478	53,707	48,278		150,463
Work experience	15	22	8	13	58
Redeployee	2	9	3	11	25

3.28 Activity has been higher in 2025-26 than 2024-25 with adverts up 10% and both attraction and applications increased by 38%. New starters were up 3% and applications per advert increased from 5.5 to 8. Advertising spend and cost per hire have doubled this year with some challenging senior posts to fill. Days to hire has increased slightly from 28 to 30 days on average. Agency spend has fallen by £1,382,928 or 20%. Care leaver starters have increased. Supported internships and work experience have been consistent across the year and the need for redeployee support has reduced on last year. The labour market remains challenging across all sectors/job types and the most challenging professions are:

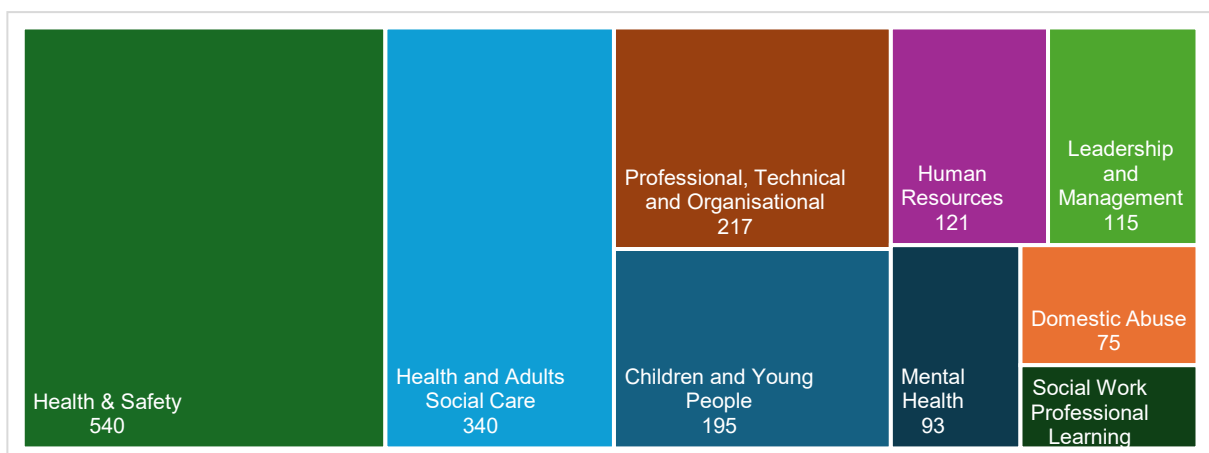
Table 24. Hard to fill posts

Job Type	Key Points	Movement
Care Workers:	<p>The rural nature of the region means many services and service users are located in areas not accessible by public transport, increasing the need for drivers within the workforce. Providers are also reporting a growing demand for female care workers, often driven by service user preference. At the same time, there has been a noticeable increase in international applicants seeking visa switches, yet only a small number of providers are able or willing to offer sponsorship and full-time work. This reluctance has been heightened by uncertainty surrounding the settlement consultation. Together, these challenges contribute to sustained recruitment pressures and a high demand for skilled, reliable adult care and support workers across the sector.</p> <p>The Make Care Matter Hub and the delivery team for the YHIR fund across North Yorkshire and York remain proactive, working daily with both candidates and providers to offer recruitment support, sponsorship guidance, and advice on maintaining compliance with sponsorship requirements. Alongside this, the team continues to collaborate closely with external partners such as Skills for Care, the DWP, and the Independent Care Group to strengthen workforce development and ensure consistent, sector wide support.</p> <p>Given the restrictions on immigration policy, the workforce is now forecast to shrink creating resilience issues and capacity challenges in the future.</p>	<p>Improved</p> 
Social Workers:	<p>Children and Young People's Social Worker vacancies remain low in Q4 25/26; however, due to rising cases, the number of agency social workers has increased from 3 to 6.</p> <p>A total of 6 social workers were recruited in Q4, as well as a Team Manager for the Hambleton FAST team; this was a re-advertised role from Q3. There are currently 11</p>	<p>Equal</p> 

	Social Worker vacant FTEs across the County to recruit to with an ongoing need to assess future pipeline and to secure resilient staffing levels; 5 trainee social workers are expected to move into these vacancies once they have received their qualification. The coastal region remains typically the most challenging region to recruit to.	
Educational Psychologists:	There are currently 2 vacancies for main grade Educational Psychologists with 1 main grade EP being appointed in the Scarborough Area. A Senior Specialist EP has recently been appointed to cover the areas of Selby and Harrogate. Additionally, 2 Trainee Educational Psychologists have successfully accepted positions in the Selby and Scarborough areas. Agency spend remains high in this area; this is due to demand for assessments, which cannot currently be met with staffing numbers. The aim is that the recruitment more EP's/Assistant EPs will start to improve this position, however attraction remains difficult; owing at least in part to agency workers being paid higher rates.	Equal 
Building Control:	Building Control remains a challenging but much improved profession to recruit to in Q4. Owing to the introductions of stricter regulations; requiring professionals to be assessed/registered has led to talent leaving the sector and the restriction of new talent pipelines. In Q4 1 further Building Control Surveyor was appointed. After a successful period of new staff onboarding the service plan to advertise in Q1 of 2026. Attraction methods include recruitment incentive payments and market supplements together with relocation support. Prioritising fast track development of Building Control professionals and recruiting to entry level roles (that receive high volumes of interest) remains a priority to meet the demand. Vacancies have reduced from 14 to 5, providing a strong platform to recruit and develop trainees. The next campaign will include Building Control Surveyor, Senior Building Control Surveyor, Building Control Manager and Technical Lead (This new role has failed to attract interest in previous attempts).	Improved 

Learning & Development

Table 25. Delivered learning events 25-



3.29 The Learning and Development service (L&D) continue to support all directorates with a prolonged period of increased delivery activity now evidenced across most portfolios. Total Percentage Increase in Delivery Activity 24/25 to 25/26: 16%

Portfolio	% Engagement Increase in 2025-26
Children and Young People	16%
Domestic Abuse	18%
Health and Adults	-6%
Health and Safey	24%
Human Resources	10%
Leadership and Management	18%
Mental Health	41%
Professional, Technical and Organisational	27%
Social Work Professional Learning	4%

3.30 Focussed development work continues with several service areas (Housing, Property, Active North Yorkshire etc.) to ensure learning and development initiatives are aligned to NYC’s People Strategy ambitions of attracting, retaining and engaging its employees as well as promoting staff mobility and career development.

3.31 The NYC Leadership Academy continues to provide access to leadership and management development solutions from those aspiring to a management role, through to those the senior leaders of the organisation. 2025 saw the successful introduction of NYC’s “Leading into 2030” masterclasses with the programme spanning 11 topics in total:

- Communication
- Customer excellence
- Difficult conversations
- How data and AI influence our future
- Leading at scale
- Measuring performance
- Networking
- Partnership working
- Political awareness
- Sparking innovation and leading through complexity
- Stronger teams

3.32 Over the course of 33 sessions there were 1775 attendees from NYC’s middle and senior management population with evaluation data citing a 26% increase in confidence because of attendance.

3.33 Following the programmes successes, leading into 2030 masterclasses will continue in to 2026 focussing on the following areas of priority:

- Political Awareness
- Recruitment and Onboarding
- Personal Effectiveness
- Finance and Commercial Acumen
- Change Management

3.34 Work continues with the NYC Oliver McGowan mandatory training trailblazer project with internal and commercial delivery increasing significantly. Over the course of the last year, L&D have employed 10 Experts with Lived Experience to enable the co- production and co-delivery of training, essential to the subject matter. To further evidence NYC’s Oliver McGowan project as a leader in the field both locally and nationally, the team have been shortlisted as finalists at this year’s Management Journal Awards for “Innovation in Building Diversity and Inclusion”.

3.35 The development and maintenance of training matrices across all service areas continues to ensure clarity of all training needs by role. Over the course of the next financial year there are aspirations to standardise and publish all training matrices, further promoting a learning culture and the organisations commitment to developing its employees.

Table 26. Gender pay gap

	2024	2025
Mean gender pay gap	1.98%	0.34%
Median gender pay gap	0%	0%

3.36 This is the second year for reporting the gender pay gap of North Yorkshire Council, reflecting the pay month March 2025, and the good figures from the previous year have further improved.. There is no median pay gap, The mid pay point for both women and men is the same at £15.84/hour, up from £15.17 per hour the previous year. The mean or average gender pay gap has reduced from 1.98% or 34p/hour the previous year to just 0.34% this year, with men’s mean pay at £17.68/hour and women’s mean pay at £17.62/hour, just 6p/hour less.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 2026-27 has been another busy and challenging year for NYC with most services now having been through restructure and further TUPE movement in and out. Against a range of performance indices NYC is performing well and maintaining stability and continuity during a period of ongoing change. Sickness absence and turnover rates are stable. The workforce profile reflects the ethnicity of the population served and the gender pay gap has reduced further. Training delivery activity has increased by 16% and recruitment attraction and applications have increased by 38%. Agency spend has reduced by around 20%. All but 2% of the workforce is on the same standard terms and conditions, and senior management leanness (3.3%) is the 2nd lowest amongst comparable councils locally and nationally. Challenges remain in the recruitment of Children’s Social Workers and Educational Psychologists and tackling mental health and Musculo-skeletal sickness absence.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Members are asked to note and comment on the report.

Trudy Forster
Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

3 June 2026

Report Author – Emily Wren, Principal HR Advisor
Presenter of Report – Trudy Forster, Assistant Chief Executive

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.