

**TO:- Standards and Resources Committee**

Councillor Diane Holmes , Councillor Philip Davis , Councillor Penny Allen , Councillor Barry Bond M.B.E. ,  
Councillor John Brindle , Councillor Gary Burnett , Councillor Mike Davies , Councillor Sue Duncan , Councillor  
Dr Paul Harrison M.B.E. , Councillor Dan Kinsey B.E.M , Councillor Robert Reade , Councillor Sue Szalapski

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Standards and Resources Committee will be held as detailed below for the purpose of transacting the business set out below.

Date: Thursday, 25 January 2024

Time: 14:30

Venue: Council Chamber, Community Hub, Wolverhampton Road, Codsall, South Staffordshire, WV8 1PX



D. Heywood  
Chief Executive

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**A G E N D A**

**Part I – Public Session**

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| <b>1</b> | <b>Minutes</b><br>To approve the minutes of the Standards and Resources Committee meeting of 23 November 2023. | <b>1 - 2</b>   |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Apologies</b><br><br>To receive any apologies for non-attendance.   |                |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Declarations of Interest</b><br><br>To receive any declarations of interest.                                |                |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Elections Act Update</b><br>Report of Corporate Support Team Manager  | <b>3 - 10</b>  |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Polling District Place Review</b><br>Report of the Performance and Customer Insight Officer                 | <b>11 - 24</b> |

<b>6</b>	<b>Progress on the Council's Workforce Development Strategy</b> Report of the Assistant Director - Organisation and People Development	<b>25 - 64</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Report on Work Programme/Complaints</b> Report of Monitoring Officer (Corporate Director of Governance)	<b>65 - 68</b>

#### **RECORDING**

**Please note that this meeting will be recorded.**

#### **PUBLIC ACCESS TO AGENDA AND REPORTS**

Spare paper copies of committee agenda and reports are no longer available. Therefore should any member of the public wish to view the agenda or report(s) for this meeting, please go to [www.sstaffs.gov.uk/council-democracy](http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/council-democracy).

Minutes of the meeting of the **Standards and Resources Committee** South Staffordshire Council held in the Council Chamber Community Hub, Wolverhampton Road, Codsall, South Staffordshire, WV8 1PX on Thursday, 23 November 2023 at 14:30

**Present:-**

Councillor John Brindle, Councillor Mike Davies, Councillor Philip Davis, Councillor Sue Duncan, Keith Elder, Lisa Emery, Councillor Dr Paul Harrison, Councillor Diane Holmes, Councillor Robert Reade, Councillor Sue Szalapski, Corinne Taylor

14      **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Standards and Resources Committee held on 14 September 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

15      **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors P Allen, B Bond MBE, G Burnett, D Kinsey BEM, M Roberts

16      **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

17      **CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

**RESOLVED:** Members noted the amendments to the revised Corporate Health and Safety Policy as attached as Appendix 1.

18      **ELECTIONS ACT UPDATE**

**RESOLVED:** Members noted the Elections Act 2023 Update.

19      **REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS 2023/24**

**RESOLVED:** Members noted the current proposed changes to the polling districts and places.

20      **CUSTOMER FEEDBACK POLICY**

**RESOLVED:** Members noted the updated Customer Feedback Policy.

21      **REPORT ON WORK PROGRAMME/COMPLAINTS**

**RESOLVED:** That the Standards and Resources Committee notes the update on Code of Conduct and Complaints Matters.

The Meeting ended at: 15:04

**CHAIRMAN**



**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL****STANDARDS AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 25 JANUARY 2024****ELECTIONS ACT 2022 UPDATE****REPORT OF CORPORATE SUPPORT TEAM MANAGER****PART A – SUMMARY REPORT****1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

1.1 To update the Committee on the Elections Act 2022.

**2. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

POLICY/COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Council Plan objectives?	
	Yes	Having a well-managed Electoral Services Team contributes to the objectives in the Council Plan.
	Has an Equality Impact Assessment (Equal) been completed?	
	No	Not applicable – information report only
	Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been completed?	
SCRUTINY POWERS APPLICABLE	No	Not applicable – report to Standards and Resources Committee.
KEY DECISION	No	
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	Not applicable.	
FINANCIAL IMPACT	No	
LEGAL ISSUES	No	
STRATEGIC RISK	No	
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES including climate impacts and health impacts if applicable	Not applicable.	

IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	Not applicable.
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## **PART B – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **3. INFORMATION**

3.1 The Elections Act 2022 makes a range of changes to electoral law and processes. The first tranche of those changes which included the introduction of Voter ID and new accessibility requirements were implemented for the elections in May 2023.

3.2 The second tranche of changes come into force in advance of the May 2024 polls. These provisions relate to:

- Absent Voting.
- Overseas electors.
- EU citizens' voting and candidacy rights.
- Postal vote handling and secrecy and commonly used names.

This paper provides an update on the changes to overseas electors and postal vote handling.

#### **Changes to overseas electors**

### **3.3 Extension of the overseas elector franchise**

From 16 January 2024, British citizens can register as overseas electors if they are currently living abroad, and:

- are currently, or were previously, registered to vote within the constituency, either as a domestic elector before they left the UK or, as an overseas elector since they left the UK. **This is known as the previously registered condition; or**
- were previously resident in the constituency (including those who left the UK before they were old enough to register to vote). **This is known as the previously resident condition.**

3.4 There is no longer a time limit as to when they were last registered or resident in the UK. A British citizen can register as an overseas elector regardless of when they left the UK, provided they satisfy either the previously registered or previously resident criteria.

3.5 Overseas electors can only vote at UK Parliamentary elections and UK-wide referendums.

### **3.6 Previously registered eligibility criteria**

- An applicant **must** use the previously registered condition if at any point they have been registered to vote in the UK.
- Examples of individuals who may be eligible to register under this condition include:

- a person who, before they left the UK, was registered to vote in a local or parliamentary register.
- a person who has previously been registered as an overseas elector and whose declaration has expired.
- a person last registered as basis of being a Declaration of Local Connection elector, a Merchant Seaman, an anonymous elector or as a service voter.

### 3.7 Previously resident eligibility criteria

To be eligible under the previously resident condition an applicant must have been previously **resident** in the constituency **but have never been registered to vote**. Examples of individuals who may be eligible to register under the previously resident condition include:

- a person who was too young to register when they left the UK;
- a person who was too young to register when they left the UK, and their parent or guardian was registered at their qualifying address;
- a person who was of no fixed abode when they left the UK and would have been eligible to make a Declaration of Local Connection (DLC) or who left the UK before 2001 (when DLC provisions were not in force).
- a person who chose not to register while living in the UK.

### 3.8 Identity verification

Any person who makes a new overseas elector application must provide personal identifiers (name, previous name (where relevant), NINo and DOB) which are then used to check their identity against DWP records.

### 3.9 If the applicant's identity cannot be verified using DWP records, their identifiers may also be matched against local data sources.

If we are unable to verify the applicant's identity using local data sources, we may choose to:

- use documentary evidence provided by the applicant at the time of application to verify their identity, We can only do this where elector cannot provide their NINo or DOB.
- request the applicant provides supporting documents verifying they are who they say they are under the exceptions process

If we remain unable to verify the applicant's identity after using the exceptions process, we may require them to provide an attestation, or, in some rare cases, more than one attestation, or an attestation and documentary evidence.

### 3.10 Address verification

As well as verifying the elector's identity, we are also required to verify the applicant qualifies under the condition provided in their application – either previously registered or previously resident.

For an applicant to qualify under the **previously registered condition** they must have been previously registered to vote and are required to provide the address at which they were last registered to vote in the UK. In most instances, this will involve checking previous registers where these are held, either digitally or in hard copy.

- 3.10.1 Where we no longer hold or have reasonable access to the register, we will take alternative steps to satisfy ourselves the applicant met the previously registered condition. These may include:
- Using the result of the automated match against DWP records
  - Checking other local held records
  - Using any documentary evidence provided by the applicant under the exceptions process at the time of application, or requesting such evidence where it hasn't already been provided
  - Using an attestation to confirm a connection, or in some cases more than one attestation or an attestation combined with documentary evidence.

3.10.2 Where an elector applies under the **previously resident condition** – we cannot check historic electoral registers. However, we must be satisfied the applicant was previously resident at the address. This can be achieved by similar means as the alternative verification mechanisms for previously registered condition outlined above.

### **3.11 Length of declaration**

If an elector successfully registers as an overseas elector, then their declaration is valid for up to three years. Each declaration will expire on the third 1st November after the date the declaration has been made unless the elector renews their declaration.

3.11.1 The renewal period can begin in the last six months of their existing entitlement. Renewal declarations made within the final 6 months renews their registration for another three years.

3.11.2 We will remind overseas electors of the need to make a renewal declaration by sending a notice from 1 July immediately before the third 1 November on which their registration will end and ends with that 1 November.

3.11.3 Existing overseas electors (i.e., those with an arrangement in place before 16 January 2024) and those renewing their declaration prior to 16 January 2024 – have done so under the current requirements (e.g., making applications based on being previously registered in the last 15 years and renewing every 12 months).

3.11.4 There is no requirement for all existing overseas electors to reapply immediately. Existing declarations will continue to expire in line with provisions in place when their last declaration was made (e.g., 12 months from date added to register with renewal sent 2-3 months before expiry). When they are next required to renew their declaration, they will move to a 3-year fixed point renewal.

## **4.0 Changes to postal vote handling and secrecy**

These provisions will be in effect for polls taking place from 2 May 2024.

### **4.1 Prohibition on political campaigners handling postal votes**

- Political campaigners will be prohibited from handling postal votes, except where the postal vote is their own, that of a close family member (two people living

together as if they were a married couple, or civil partners are treated as if they were spouses or civil partners of each other), or someone they provide regular care for.

- They are not prohibited from handling postal votes if they do so in the course of their usual duties (for example, if they work for Royal Mail).
- A political campaigner is defined in legislation as:
  - a) a candidate at the election.
  - b) an election agent of a candidate at the election.
  - c) a sub-agent of an election agent at the election.
  - d) employed or engaged for the purposes of that person's activities as a candidate.
  - e) a member of a registered political party and carries on an activity designed to promote a particular outcome at the election (This includes displaying posters, distributing leaflets, posting promotional material on social media accounts and canvassing).
  - f) employed or engaged by a registered political party in connection with the party's political activities.
  - g) employed or engaged by a person within paragraphs (a) to (f) to carry on an activity designed to promote a particular outcome at the election.
  - h) employed or engaged by a person within paragraph (g) to carry on an activity designed to promote a particular outcome at the election.
- If found guilty of handling postal votes as a campaigner, a person could face a fine and/or imprisonment up to two years.

#### 4.2 Limits on handing in postal votes at polling stations

There will be a limit on the number of postal votes a person can hand in at a polling station – they will not be allowed to hand in **more than five postal ballot packs for other electors plus their own** (Where the elector has been appointed as a proxy postal for another elector – handing in the proxy postal would count towards one of the five for other electors).

If a person hands in more than five postal ballot packs for other electors, all the postal votes (other than their own) will be **rejected**.

If there is reason to suspect that a person has already handed in the maximum number of postal votes on any previous occasion at the election, any subsequent postal votes handed in will be **rejected**.

#### 4.3 Completion of postal vote documents form

- Anyone handing in postal votes will need to complete a '**return of postal voting documents**' form.
- The person handing in the postal vote(s) will need to complete the form with their name, address and the reason for handing in other people's postal votes (where appropriate).
- They will also need to complete a declaration that they are not handing in more than the permitted number, and that they are not a political campaigner.
- If the form is not completed with all the required information, or to the authorised officer's satisfaction, the postal vote(s) will be rejected.
- Rejected postal votes will not be included in the count.

- After the election, the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) will write to electors who have had their postal votes rejected, telling them why.

#### **4.4 Postal votes which are 'left behind'**

- Postal votes will not be accepted if they are simply left at a polling station.
- If a person hands in postal votes without completing the return of postal vote documents form, the 'left behind' postal votes must be rejected.
- After the election, the ERO will write to electors who have had their postal vote rejected because they were left behind.

#### **4.5 Handing in postal votes to the Returning Officer**

- Electors sometimes hand postal votes in directly to the Returning Officer in advance of the election, and on polling day itself.
- The same restrictions, limits, and requirement to complete a form which apply at polling stations, will also apply to postal votes handed to the Returning Officer or at council offices.
- We will accept postal votes handed in personally at the Council Offices, reception staff will be trained to ensure the return of postal voting documents are completed.
- Any postal votes which are left at any council building without the 'return of postal voting documents' form being completed will be **rejected**.
- We cannot accept any postal votes which are left in the council mailbox, or which are put in the internal mail system.
- Notices will be displayed on the council mailbox to inform electors that their completed packs must not be put in the mailbox and that they will be rejected.

#### **4.6 Secrecy requirements extended to postal and proxy votes**

- The secrecy requirements which apply at a polling station are being extended to postal and proxy votes.
- It will be an offence to try to find out how someone has voted when completing their postal vote, or to communicate how a postal or proxy voter has voted.
- Anyone found guilty of breaching the secrecy requirements could face a fine or imprisonment up to six months.

### **5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

#### **5.1 Further details of any impacts as necessary.**

Not applicable.

### **6. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Not applicable.

### **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Not applicable.

## **8. APPENDICES**

Not applicable.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 To note the contents of this report.

Report prepared by: R Harris, Corporate Support Team Manager



**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

**STANDARDS AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 25 JANUARY 2024**

**REVIEW OF PARLIMENTARY POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS 2023/24**

**REPORT OF THE PERFORMANCE AND CUSTOMER INSIGHT OFFICER**

**PART A – SUMMARY REPORT**

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 Every local authority is required to carry out a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations every five years. This is to ensure reasonable facilities are provided for voting and that polling places are accessible to all electors.
- 1.2 The last compulsory review of polling districts and polling places in the South Staffordshire Constituency commenced in October 2022 and was completed in January 2023.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Committee note the consultee responses and approve the final polling place scheme.

**3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

POLICY/COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Council Plan objectives?	
	Yes	The delivery of the democratic process underpins the operation of local government and thus the delivery of the Council Plan objectives.
	Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) been completed?	
	N/A	The purpose of the review is to ensure that all voters have reasonable facilities for voting. Assessments for each polling station will be undertaken in accordance with requirements.
SCRUTINY POWERS APPLICABLE	N/A – report to Standards and Resources Committee	
KEY DECISION	No	
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	January 2024	

FINANCIAL IMPACT	Yes	All Polling Stations have a booking fee; there is an establishment budget for the paying of these fees.
LEGAL ISSUES	None	The Council has undertaken the review in accordance with the principles in the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES		
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	All	

## **PART B – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- 4.1 Since the repeal of the Fixed Term Parliaments Act 2011, there is no longer any certainty as to when the next general election will be. The Boundary Commission for England has completed a review of parliamentary constituency boundaries and published its final recommendations.
- 4.2 As a result of this, it is important that the polling district and places review is carried so that the Council has agreed polling districts and polling places to be used for the next parliamentary election, which must take place before 28 January 2025, as well as the scheduled Police and Crime Commissioner elections which will be held in May 2024.
- 4.3 There is no change to polling district boundaries only to parliamentary boundaries. Furthermore, the names of the Constituency have been changed (Kingswinford and South Staffordshire Constituency and Stone, Great Wyrley and Penkridge Constituency).
- 4.4 A notice to launch the review was published on the 13 November 2023 and full details of the review were made available on the Council's website and notice boards. The review was also promoted on social media and through news round-ups. Information on the proposed scheme by the (Acting) Returning Officer Dave Heywood was also available on the website during the review.
- 4.5 There is only one change of polling station following the review. Kingswinford and South Staffordshire constituency, Polling District RAA, Perton East, move from Perton Pavillion and Scout Club, Gainsborough Drive, Perton to 'The Lakeside Hall' - Perton Civic Centre, Church Road. This change was recommended due to feedback of poor accessibility at night and in wet weather. Furthermore, due to the building being

unusable at the local election in May the Lakeside Hall was used, and no complaints were received in the change of venue. The Lakeside Hall is easier and safer to access and a more suitable venue for a polling station.

This change of venue will come into effect at the next election held in this area.

- 4.6 During the consultation period there was a comment/representation made. These can be found at Appendix 1 along with the Returning Officer's response to the representations made.

- 4.7 The final Polling Places and Polling Stations (change summary) are detailed at Appendix 2.

The final Polling Places and Polling Stations (full details) are detailed at Appendix 3.

- 4.8 Following the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner elections and General Election we will review the feedback provided to us from the Polling Station Inspectors, Presiding Officers, candidates and agents and electors to ensure that the Polling Stations remain suitable for electors.

#### **Publishing the conclusions of the review**

- 4.9 Following approval from the Standards and Resources Committee on January 25 2024, we will publish a notice of conclusion of the review on the Council's website, take any associated actions and provide a link to this report which shows all the correspondence we received as part of the review.

#### **5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

N/A

#### **6. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

#### **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1 – Consultation responses.

Appendix 2 – Final Polling Station scheme (Changes Summary).

Appendix 3 – Final Polling Station scheme (Full Details).

Report prepared by: Thomas Reynolds, Performance and Customer Insight Officer



**2023/24 Polling Place Review**

In total 1 responses were received to the consultation exercise and a summary of these can be found below:

Ward	Comments made	Is the Polling Station easy to find?	Is the Polling Station fully accessible to all members of the community?	Is the Polling Station suitable for voting?	Raised by	Returning Officer Response	Changes proposed as a result of comments made
Kinver & Enville	Polling station itself if fine, but the room used within the polling location is too small for two districts. Use larger room at the same location.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Cllr Dr Paul Harrison	Response noted.	None.



<b>Poll Dist</b>	<b>District Ward</b>	<b>Current Parliamentary Constituency</b>	<b>Proposed Parliamentary Constituency</b>	<b>Existing Polling Place</b>	<b>Polling Station Changes &amp; Comments</b>
RAA	Perton East	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Perton Pavillion and Scout Club, Gainsborough Drive, Perton	Move to 'The Lakesde Hall - Perton Civic Centre, Church Road



Poll Dist	District Ward	Current Parliamentary Constituency	Proposed Parliamentary Constituency	Existing Polling Place	Polling Station Changes & Comments
AAB	Bilbrook	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Bilbrook Village Hall, Joeys Lane, Bilbrook	No Change
ABB	Bilbrook	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Holy Cross Church Hall, Bilbrook Road, Bilbrook	No Change
ACB	Bilbrook	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Holy Cross Church Hall, Bilbrook Road, Bilbrook	No Change
DAA	Codsall North	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Codsall Village Hall (Main Hall), Wolverhampton Road, Codsall	No Change
DBA	Codsall North	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Holy Cross Church Hall, Bilbrook Road, Bilbrook	No Change
DCA	Codsall North	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Trinity Methodist Church Hall (Church Lounge), Histons Hill	No Change
JAA	Himley & Swindon	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Himley Cricket Club, Stourbridge Road, Himley	No Change
JBA	Himley & Swindon	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Adventure Street, Baggeridge Craft Village, Brick Kiln Way	No Change
JCA	Himley & Swindon	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Swindon Community Centre, High Street, Swindon	No Change
JDA	Himley & Swindon	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	The Wardens Office, Hinksford Mobile Home Park, Hinksford Lane, Hinksford Park	No Change
LAA	Kinver & Enville	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Athletic Club, Hall Drive, Enville	No Change
LBA	Kinver & Enville	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Edward Marsh Centre, Legion Drive, Off High Street	No Change
LCA	Kinver & Enville	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Stourbridge Lawn Tennis And Squash Club, Sugar Loaf Lane, Stourbridge	No Change
LDA	Kinver & Enville	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Edward Marsh Centre, Legion Drive, Off High Street	No Change

LEA	Kinver & Enville	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Stourton Village Hall, Bridgnorth Road, Stourton	No Change
NAA	Pattingham, Trysull, Bobbington & Lower Penn	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Bobbington Village Hall, Six Ashes Road, Bobbington	No Change
NBA	Pattingham, Trysull, Bobbington & Lower Penn	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	The Victory Hall, Lower Penn, Greyhound Lane, Lower Penn	No Change
NCA	Pattingham, Trysull, Bobbington & Lower Penn	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	The Crown Room At Dartmouth Arms, Snowdon Road, Burnhill Green	No Change
NDA	Pattingham, Trysull, Bobbington & Lower Penn	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Pattingham Village Hall, Wolverhampton Road, Pattingham	No Change
NEA	Pattingham, Trysull, Bobbington & Lower Penn	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Trysull Village Hall, The Green, Trysull	No Change
NFA	Pattingham, Trysull, Bobbington & Lower Penn	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Trysull Village Hall, The Green, Trysull	No Change
RAA	Perton East	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Perton pavillion and Scout Club, Gainsborough Drive, Perton	Move to 'The Lakeside Hall - Perton Civic Centre, Church Road
SAA	Perton Lakeside	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	The Lakeside Hall - Perton Civic Centre, Church Road, Perton	No Change
SBA	Perton Lakeside	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Perton Library, Severn Drive	No Change
TAA	Perton Wrottesley	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	The Airman`s Lounge - Perton Civic Centre, Church Road, Perton	No Change
TBA	Perton Wrottesley	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Kingswood Trust, Holyhead Road, Kingswood	No Change

TCA	Perton Wrottesley	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	The Airman`s Lounge - Perton Civic Centre, Church Road, Perton	No Change
WAA	Wombourne North	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Wombourne Community Centre, Church Road, Wombourne	No Change
WBA	Wombourne North	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	St Bartholomew's Church Hall, Vicarage Road, Penn	No Change
WCA	Wombourne North	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Brook Room, Wombourne Civic Centre, Wombourne Civic Centre, Gravel Hill	No Change
XAA	Wombourne South	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Wodehouse Suite, Wombourne Civic Centre, Gravel Hill	No Change
XBA	Wombourne South	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Wodehouse Suite, Wombourne Civic Centre, Gravel Hill	No Change
XCA	Wombourne South	South Staffordshire	Kingswinford & South Staffordshire	Bede Hall, Wombourne Parish Offices, Giggetty Lane	No Change
BAB	Brewood, Coven & Blymhill	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Blymhill Village Hall, School Lane, Blymhill	No Change
BBB	Brewood, Coven & Blymhill	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	The Institute Rooms, Watling Street, Weston-Under-Lizard	No Change
BCB	Brewood, Coven & Blymhill	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Bishopswood Village Hall, Boscobel lane, Bishopswood	No Change
BDB	Brewood, Coven & Blymhill	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Jubilee Hall, Brewood, Bargate Street, Brewood	No Change
BEB	Brewood, Coven & Blymhill	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Coven Memorial Hall, Brewood Road, Coven	No Change
BFB	Brewood, Coven & Blymhill	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Mobile at Allotments Car Park, Ball Lane, Coven	No Change
CAB	Cheslyn Hay Village	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Hawkins Sports and Social Club, Coppice Lane, Cheslyn Hay	No Change
CBB	Cheslyn Hay Village	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Cheslyn Hay Village Hall, Pinfold Lane, Cheslyn Hay	No Change
CCB	Cheslyn Hay Village	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Salem Sunday School, High Street, Cheslyn Hay	No Change

CDB	Cheslyn Hay Village	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Salem Sunday School, High Street, Cheslyn Hay	No Change
CEB	Cheslyn Hay Village	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Salem Sunday School, High Street, Cheslyn Hay	No Change
EAA	Essington	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	The Pavilion, Essington, Broad Lane, Essington	No Change
EBA	Essington	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Essington Community Centre, Hobnock Road, Essington	No Change
ECA	Essington	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Wyrley Juniors FC Club House, Long Lane	No Change
EDA	Essington	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Essington Rugby Club, High Hill, Essington	No Change
EEA	Essington	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Westcroft Nursery, Adjacent To 240 Cannock Road, Westcroft	No Change
FAA	Featherstone, Shareshill & Saredon	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Featherstone Community Centre (Main Hall), Baneberry Drive, Featherstone	No Change
FBA	Featherstone, Shareshill & Saredon	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Featherstone Community Centre (Main Hall), Baneberry Drive, Featherstone	No Change
FCA	Featherstone, Shareshill & Saredon	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Featherstone Community Centre (Main Hall), Baneberry Drive, Featherstone	No Change
FDA	Featherstone, Shareshill & Saredon	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Wedges Mills Village Hall, Wolverhampton Road	No Change
FEA	Featherstone, Shareshill & Saredon	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Shareshill Village Hall, Elms Lane, Shareshill	No Change
GAA	Great Wyrley Landywood	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Harrisons Sports and Social Club, Wharwell Lane, Great Wyrley	No Change
GBA	Great Wyrley Landywood	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Great Wyrley Community Centre, Landywood Lane	No Change

GCA	Great Wyrley Landywood	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Senior Citizens Centre, Broadmeadow Lane, Great Wyrley	No Change
HAA	Great Wyrley Town	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Church Hall At St Thomas More Primary School, Huthill Lane, Great Wyrley	No Change
HBA	Great Wyrley Town	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Scout & Guide Centre, Walsall Road, Great Wyrley	No Change
HCA	Great Wyrley Town	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Great Wyrley Community Centre, Landywood Lane	No Change
KAA	Huntington & Hatherton	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Hatherton Parish Rooms, Four Crosses Lane, Four Crosses	No Change
KBA	Huntington & Hatherton	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Huntington Community Centre, Stafford Road, Huntington	No Change
KCA	Huntington & Hatherton	South Staffordshire	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Naden House-Communal Lounge, Stafford Road, Huntington	No Change
MAA	Lapley, Stretton & Wheaton Aston	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Stretton Lodge Day Nursery & Pre School, School Lane, Stretton	No Change
MBA	Lapley, Stretton & Wheaton Aston	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Stretton Lodge Day Nursery & Pre School, School Lane, Stretton	No Change
MCA	Lapley, Stretton & Wheaton Aston	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Wheaton Aston Village Hall, High Street, Wheaton Aston	No Change
OAA	Penkridge North & Acton Trussell	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Acton Trussell Community Centre, Acton Hill Road, Acton Trussell	No Change
OBA	Penkridge North & Acton Trussell	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	All Saints School, School Lane, Bednall	No Change
OCA	Penkridge North & Acton Trussell	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Hyde Lea Village Hall, Hyde Lea	No Change
ODA	Penkridge North & Acton Trussell	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Dunston Village Hall, School Lane, Dunston	No Change
OEA	Penkridge North & Acton Trussell	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Haling Dene Centre, Cannock Road, Penkridge	No Change
OFA	Penkridge North & Acton Trussell	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Peace Memorial Hall, Pinfold Lane, Penkridge	No Change

OGA	Penkridge North & Acton Trussell	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Peace Memorial Hall, Pinfold Lane, Penkridge	No Change
PAA	Penkridge South & Gailey	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	The Reading Room, Market Street, Penkridge	No Change
PBA	Penkridge South & Gailey	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Spread Eagle Hotel, Watling Street, Gailey	No Change
PCA	Penkridge South & Gailey	Stafford	Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	Princefield First School, Saxon Road, Penkridge	No Change

**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL****STANDARDS & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 25 JANUARY 2024****PROGRESS ON THE COUNCIL'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY****REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ORGANISATION & PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT****LEAD CABINET MEMBER – COUNCILLOR ROGER LEES, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL****PART A – SUMMARY REPORT****1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report and appendices are to supplement a presentation to Standards & Resources Committee on 25 January 2024 regarding an update on the Council's Workforce Development Strategy and our plans to future proof our workforce. This work incorporates our Employer of Choice plans, recruitment, retention & succession planning, equality & inclusion, wellbeing, and leadership & culture.
- 1.2 Appendix A sets out our progress against the workforce development strategy action plan '*Values based leadership, attracting, and retaining the best talent and continuing our ways of working journey.*' Appendix B is our data for publication and incorporates the Public Sector Equality Act and Gender Pay Gap (GPG) reporting requirements and will be published on the website.

**2. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

POLICY/COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Council Plan objectives?	
	Yes	Improving recruitment, retention, wellbeing, culture, and inclusion, benefits the workforce and our communities.
	Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) been completed?	
	No	The report is not proposing a new policy or scheme.
	Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been completed?	
	No	No new proposals regarding the handling of personal data.
SCRUTINY POWERS	No	
KEY DECISION	No	
DECISION TIMELINE	NA	For information.
DELIVERY DATE	The strategy timeline is 2022-2025	
FINANCIAL IMPACT	No	
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, The Equality Act 2010 and (Amendment) Regulations 2023.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Organisational development plans mitigate reputational, recruitment, retention, and service delivery risks.	
IMPACT ON WARDS	No	

### **3. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The workforce development strategy was updated in 2022 and sets out how we intend to continue to recruit, retain and develop the skills of our staff, ensuring everyone has the right tools to support our communities over the next three years; whilst also enabling employees to develop their career.
- 3.2 The strategy recognised recruiting and retaining the right staff is one of the most significant workforce development challenges facing Local Government. The jobs market has been significantly influenced by the pandemic, changing technology, ways of working, shifts in age profiles and a shrinking labour pool for many professions. Within the context of a tight labour market (94% of Council's are experiencing difficulties) the recruitment trends<sup>1</sup> for 2023/24 are:
- Graduates -have a heightened interest in pressing social issues, equality, and career development opportunities.
  - Talent pools are emerging as a strategy – linkage with organisations who have candidate data bases, less external hiring, offering current vacancies or upskilling to existing staff as part of succession planning/retention.
  - Strong employer branding conveying the organisations vision, reputation and culture is highly effective in connecting with candidates.
  - Recruitment researchers report job seekers strongly value workforce wellbeing, and autonomy over where and when they work, and this is helping to recruit and retain talent.
  - HR automation, social media, and AI tools - but the key point is modern, engaging onboarding experiences for candidates.

#### **Employer of Choice – Recruitment, Retention and Succession Planning**

- 3.3 During 2022/23 Digital Services and Human Resources developed a new modern recruitment landing page for the website. The site promotes our organisational values, benefits package, and career opportunities. This has been informed by the above recruitment research, and strongly promotes our employer of choice brand. We also replaced a legacy recruitment system with a new online onboarding system whichs has modernised and speeded up recruitment processes.
- 3.4 Workforce trends data in Appendix B shows our recruitment reach has increased since 2022. 150 employees live in the district. Page 5 of Appendix B provides a break-

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<sup>1</sup> Sources LGA workforce survey England April 2023 – This data comes from multiple sources therefore dates will vary across the data set and includes some 2021/22 data, UK recruiter 2023, CIPD Labour market outlook Spring 2023, LinkedIn recruitment trends 2023, Edelman, Glassdoor, Harvard Business Review 2022.

down of employee location data by locality area. We will be using this data to target careers support, work with partners and review how and where we advertise jobs.

- 3.5 We have worked with Penna to access their candidate network to recruit senior posts. We are continuing to grow our apprentice scheme and have also enhanced our work experience and careers support for schools, to encourage local students to consider us as a future employer. We have also partnered with West Midlands Employers (WME) and participated in their 'careers in Local Government campaign.
- 3.6 Our retention strategy has included the commissioning of market pay reviews to ensure we have data and intelligence to inform recruitment and retention incentives where these are necessary.
- 3.7 Overall, the Council's pay, recruitment and retention appears to be competitive however we need to ensure the Council is positioned to respond to a rapidly changing market. It is therefore proposed that the market supplement policy is adapted to be a broader recruitment and retention policy which will be the subject of a separate report to Council.
- 3.8 Our retention strategy has actively encouraged internal candidate recruitment. The Council has offered a range of career development including qualifications, career grades, corporate projects, roles, development to support upskilling to help staff develop the confidence and experience to step into promoted roles.
- 3.9 ASPIRE our annual talent management programme is one such example of how we develop and retain our staff. This is a personal development programme which helps staff develop knowledge, skills, and confidence. Many colleagues have developed their career and gone on to promoted positions.

### **Outcomes, Employer of Choice – Recruitment, Retention and Succession Planning**

- Current strategies are on the whole effective for filling hard to recruit posts.
- Candidate acceptance rates 87% and 75% of vacancies filled first time.
- Retention rate on 31 March 2023 was 88%<sup>2</sup>, (4% improvement from 2022) and 50% of appointments were filled internally.
- During 2023 the Council supported 16 school student, 3 higher Education students in Planning Services and 1 long term placement in Legal Services.
- The Council is currently supporting 12 apprenticeships<sup>3</sup>. Over the last 2 years 5 have secured permanent employment.

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<sup>2</sup> Average turnover for UK workers is 35%. This splits down as 26.9% who move to a new employer and 8.2% who are not working one year later (year 2), which could be due to study, or retirement, for example. (CIPD PM article May 2023). Local Government workforce turnover 14%. (LGA labour turnover survey 2021/22).

<sup>3</sup> Won Digital Apprentice of the Year Award, another was a runner up. SSC achieved the upper middle quartile in the LGA's apprentice quality standard framework for apprentice programmes in Local Government.

- IESE Cert of Excellence for our Employer of Choice strategy during 2023.
- ASPIRE 2023 cohort won the Leadership Award at the WME regional LA Senior Management Challenge event in September 2023.
- The Council's employee engagement survey in September 2023 confirmed over '96% would recommend South Staffordshire Council as a place to work'.

## Equality & Inclusion

- 3.10 Appendix B is our data for publication and incorporates the Public Sector Equality Act and Gender Pay Gap (GPG) reporting requirements.

### Gender

- 3.11 Gender profile of the workforce, 60% female and 40% male. Many jobs offer part-time and flexible working. Gender distribution across management tiers is positive.

CLT	Assistant Directors	Team Managers	Assistant Team Managers
Female 60%	Female 50%	Female 57%	Female 37%
Male 40%	Male 50%	Male 43%	Male 63%

- 3.12 Gender pay gap (GPG) has improved compared to the previous year.

GPG Date	Mean GPG %	Median GPG %
31.03.22	6.53%	9.42%
31.03.23	4.87%	6.98%

### Ethnicity

- 3.13 Ethnicity categories are being revised to mirror census definitions. Page 11, appendix B estimates our ethnicity categories against the % of economically active in the recent census release and our workforce appears to be representative of our communities.
- 3.14 During 2022, the Council revised and strengthened its Equality Impact Assessment Guidance and equality training.

### Age

- 3.15 68% of the workforce were aged 36+. Almost 19% were aged 25 and under which is a modest improvement from the previous year.

### Disability

- 3.16 4.97% (16 employees) disclosed they had a disability. A slight increase from the previous year however disability disclosure is still thought to be underreported.

### New data capture areas

- 3.17 The Council is adding to its existing equality data publication. We have included data on workforce profile by religious belief and sexual orientation. We have updated our sexual identification categories. We also plan to capture data on carers. This data will be reportable from next year onwards.

### Future plans

- 3.18 The Equality Steering Group will be overseeing the direction of travel for Equalities for the next 12 months. This includes a review of the Council's objectives which will be part of the development of the Council Plan during January – March 2024. This will also inform the refresh of the Council's Everyone Counts document, Equality policies and a review of customer equality data. Member development will also include Equality training.

### **Outcomes, Equality & Inclusion**

- Gender pay gap 31 March 2023 - 4.87% mean. 6.98% median. Improved from 2022.
- Ethnicity – Increased the employment of employees from ethnic backgrounds to 22 compared with 14 (2022) and 16 (2021).
- Training - 280 employees attended equality training during 2022/23.
- ASPIRE our talent management programme considered protected characteristic as part of the application process.
- Developed an inclusion calendar to improve knowledge of and celebrate the range of diverse cultures and beliefs of our workforce and communities.
- The Council has 12<sup>4</sup> apprentices.
- Registered as a Disability Confident Employer and also developing partnerships and training to strengthen our support for neurodiverse employees.
- The Council's employee engagement survey in September 2023 achieved an average rating of 8.8 out of 10 for the question '*Do you agree the Council is an inclusive organisation*'.

### **Wellbeing**

- 3.19 The Council's absence target is to not exceed more than 6.95 full time equivalent (fte) average days per employee per year. Performance in 2022/23 was 7.20. The duration of long-term absences accounted for 4.91. These absences required diagnostics/treatment and in some instances NHS waiting times were a factor.

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<sup>4</sup> Includes new posts and existing employees studying an approved apprentice levy qualification.

- 3.20 The Council's short-term absence was extremely low at 2.29 fte days lost, a modest improvement on the previous year (2.35). Occurrences of some short-term absences are higher than the previous year (e.g., cold/virus) however the duration of short-term absences is lower which may be influenced by the Council's ways of working.
- 3.21 Some comparative absence data from the UK annual absence survey<sup>5</sup> conducted by CIPD and Simply Health confirms UK employees were absent for an average of 7.8 days. However, the research found that average absence levels were considerably higher in the public sector (10.6 days per employee).
- 3.22 Stress, musculoskeletal, mental health, minor illness, and covid were highlighted as key absence causes. Interestingly, Covid, Musculoskeletal and stress/anxiety related absences at the Council were lower than in 2022 which may relate to our employee welfare support (occupational health, counselling, and physiotherapy) and our strong wellbeing culture.
- 3.23 The Council provides a range of wellbeing support, training, a staff online wellbeing resource hub and regular communications on health and wellbeing.
- 3.24 In recognition of the cost-of-living crisis the Council launched Vivup a new employee benefits platform in November 2022 to support financial wellbeing. At no cost to the Council, this provides general wellbeing resources, signposting for financial wellbeing advice and a range of high street and online retail discounts for staff and Members. At the time of writing, there are 183 staff and 26 Members who have registered.
- 3.25 The Council are now looking to expand the employee benefits scheme with the introduction of salary sacrifice schemes. This is a scheme where employees can order goods and pay for these monthly through salary sacrifice. This means they can ease payments for large purchases and potentially achieve savings.

### **Outcomes, Wellbeing**

- Achieved the iESE Certificate of Excellence for our wellbeing strategy in 2022.
- During 2022/23 delivered wellbeing related training to 269<sup>6</sup> members of staff.
- Achieved Workplace Wellbeing Charter accreditation in September 2023
- Launched Vivup our employee benefits platform.
- The Council's employee engagement survey in September 2023 achieved an average rating of 8.2 out of 10 for the question '*The Council cares about my wellbeing and supports me in balancing my work and personal commitments*'.

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<sup>5</sup> The Health and Wellbeing at Work research analysed trends in sickness absence rates and employee health and wellbeing among 918 organisations, representing 6.5 million employees. It was conducted in March and April 2023. (Personnel Today Sept 2023).

<sup>6</sup> 1 April 2022 to date. Some staff may have attended more than 1 session.

## Leadership & Culture

- 3.26 During 2022 the Council invested in a leadership coaching programme with a focus on 'a high-performance culture' for the Corporate Leadership Team, Assistant Directors, Team Managers and Assistant Team Managers to continue to strengthen our inclusive culture and leadership. We will also be offering a new first line managers programme in 2024 and continue to offer a corporate induction course for new employees.
- 3.27 The Council has also invested in other high impact development options that correlate with our Evolution Programme plans including workshops to support staff with improving the use of data and analytics, community engagement and compassionate (values based) leadership.
- 3.28 Following a pilot, the Council has also modernised its managing attendance scheme which focuses on management by outputs and outcomes which fits with hybrid working and our values of trust and empowerment.
- 3.29 In September 2023 we launched our latest employee engagement survey. The survey responses provided incredibly positive feedback on leadership, culture, and wellbeing themes which are set out below:

## Outcomes, Leadership & Culture

<b>Employees were asked to rate the following questions out of 10. (0 = disagree. 10 = agree)</b> <b>Average rates were:</b> 1. <b>8.3</b> -I am treated fairly and feel valued. 2. <b>8.8</b> -I have a good relationship with my manager. 3. <b>8.8</b> -I am satisfied with the leadership & culture of the organisation.	<b>Words used to describe the Council's culture included:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Friendly &amp; positive</li><li>• Supportive &amp; caring</li><li>• Ambitious &amp; progressive</li><li>• Diverse &amp; inclusive</li><li>• Accommodating &amp; flexible</li></ul>
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## 4. ACTIONS PLANNED FOR 2023/24

- 4.1 We will continue to implement our workforce development strategy, including:
- Refreshing the Council's values
  - Supporting the organisations ambitions to attain a consistent high level on an organisational '*Maturity Model*'.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> A maturity model is structured stages of the evolution of an organisation as it goes through the various development stages and responds to the impact of changes in an organisations culture. In summary it is about creating the conditions (the concept), gaining buy in, and then releasing the potential. The closer you get to level 5 – the stronger the culture of consistency & continuous improvement.

- Adapt the market supplement policy to reflect the Council's wider recruitment and retention needs. Noting this will be a separate report to Council.
- Continue to work with partners to develop new talent pools.
- Continued enhancement of employee benefits offerings and salary sacrifice
- Implement our Equality plans - Appendix B, page 28.

## **5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT-ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- 5.1 Equality impact assessments will be carried out for any workstream actions that include any new or material policies, projects, or schemes.

## **6. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- 6.1 N/A.

## **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 Appendix B is our data for publication and incorporates the Public Sector Equality Act and Gender Pay Gap (GPG) reporting requirements and will be published on the website.

**Report prepared by: Wendy Bridgwater Assistant Director Organisation & People Development**



**South Staffordshire Council**

# Workforce Development Strategy 2022-2025

‘South Staffordshire: A great place to live and work.’



An update on our progress

**October 2023**

# 1. Values-based leadership

Leadership style based on trust. Managers will role model our values, working collaboratively in setting and communicating our vision, developing a culture of inclusion, performance, learning and wellbeing.



Our  
aspirations

Our progress

- ✓ Delivered a leadership & coaching programme to further strengthen our inclusive leadership style and enhance how we continue to role model our vision, values, and develop a high-performance culture.
- ✓ Implemented a new recruitment toolkit and inclusive recruitment workshop for managers to ensure we recruit leaders with the right skillset, mindset, and values.
- ✓ Reenergised our leadership arrangements for equality, to make sure we get better at identifying need and embedding equality in our service and business activities. Supported by a number of leadership and staff events on equality, diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- ✓ Measured employee engagement and wellbeing through employee surveys and external accreditation during 2022 and 2023.



## 2. Attracting and retaining the best talent

To attract and keep the best talent, providing us with a bright, skilled, motivated, and diverse workforce that shares our values.



Our  
aspirations

Our progress

- ✓ Conducted pay modelling and worked with our regional and national partners to prepare for the increases to the National Living Wage.
- ✓ Commissioned a senior pay review to ensure we remain competitive in recruiting and retaining senior leaders.
- ✓ Conducted pay benchmarking to support our market supplement policy to ensure we can recruit in a challenging market.
- ✓ Undertaken a wider market pay review across a range of posts to support workforce planning/ future proofing.
- ✓ Developed a range of pilots to support recruitment and retention.
- ✓ Developed a new dynamic recruitment web landing page to promote the Council as an Employer of Choice
- ✓ Implemented a new online recruitment and onboarding system that that has modernised the candidate experience and streamlined recruitment, so we can select candidates and fill posts more quickly.
- ✓ Developed a new corporate induction course.
- ✓ Enhanced our work experience scheme and promoted careers through job fairs, schools in collaboration with the Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire careers hub and local school engagement partnerships.
- ✓ Implemented a new employee benefits scheme (Vivup) that supports financial wellbeing for staff.
- ✓ Implemented a new volunteer scheme.

### 3. Continuing our ways of working journey

To ensure we have a workforce that is adaptable and resilient to change, enabling us to embrace opportunities at pace.



Our  
aspirations

Our progress

- ✓ Produced a new training programme for 2022/23 to support the Council's Evolution Programme
- ✓ Provided a range of training interventions relating to wellbeing and resilience.
- ✓ Continued to provide virtual webinars wherever possible to provide flexibility and efficiency.
- ✓ Piloted alternative ways of managing time and attendance for a hybrid workforce and developed a new approach and set of guidance to support our ways of working and Community Hub
- ✓ Refreshed ASPIRE, the Council's talent management programme to support succession planning.





**South Staffordshire Council**  
**Council of the Year 2022**

# Our Workforce Trends

## 31 March 2023

[www.sstaffs.gov.uk](http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk)





SUM

Total contractual hours

9022.14

FTE

243.8

Headcount, Full-Time Equivalent (FTE), and contracted hours

- FTE at 31 March 2023 was **243.8**
- Headcount at 31 March 2023 including casuals was **418**
- Total Contractual Hours **9022.14**
- Headcount at 31 March 2023 excluding casuals was **322<sup>1</sup>**
- In the previous year, the headcount (*including casuals*) was **394**, headcount (*excluding casuals*) was **323**, and FTE was **238.6**.

<sup>1</sup> Workforce data by service headcount may differ due to 12 employees working contractually across more than one service.

# Recruitment and retention



- There have been **43 new starters** and **37 leavers**<sup>2</sup>. In the previous year there were 46 new starters and 48 leavers.
- **27%** of our leavers retired and **13%** left due to cessation of temporary contracts.
- Our retention rate for 2022/23 as of 31 March 2023 was **88%**.
- Candidate acceptance rates of job offers was **87%** and **75%**<sup>3</sup> of vacancies were filled first time.
- **50%**<sup>4</sup> of successful appointments were recruited to internally.

## Actions taken/successes during 2022/23

- ✓ Developed and implemented a new on-line recruitment and onboarding system.
- ✓ Developed a new dynamic recruitment landing page in partnership with Digital Services.
- ✓ Introduced a package of new recruitment and retention incentive pilots.
- ✓ Delivered recruitment refresher and inclusive recruitment training for managers.
- ✓ Enhanced our work experience offer to schools.
- ✓ Promoted our employer of choice brand and South Staffordshire Council careers as part of our schools' partnerships.
- ✓ Introduced a new coaching programme for all our managers to continually improve our inclusive leadership approach.



<sup>2</sup> These figures do not include transfers between casual and contracted staff.

<sup>3</sup> Data based on part year between November 2022 to March 2023 in line with the roll out of the online recruitment and onboarding system.

<sup>4</sup> As above.

## Recruitment and retention – work experience placements



It was very enjoyable as it was made engaging and everybody was extremely friendly and welcoming. I also found it useful as it gave me an idea about a working office environment. Additionally, I am thankful for the help given about skills involving interviews and employability.

**Charlie**

I felt that the working environment was very positive and supportive, I enjoyed being in it and I would consider it as an actual job. My colleagues were all very supportive people and always wanted to know if I was enjoying something and what I wanted to do, they are happy to help if I needed.

**Alfie**

Overall, my week of work experience has given me a much wider insight into the council and the services they provide the local communities. If the chance comes again, I will definitely be coming back for work experience again.

**Gracie**



Charlie, Lewis and Dylan



Liam, Ruben and Jack

# Where do our employees live?

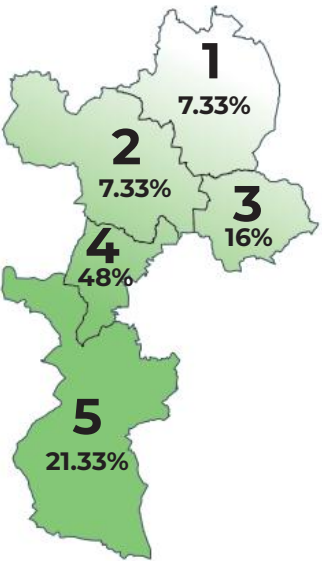


## Where do our workforce live?

This illustration shows the location of where our employees live. The data is of our entire workforce, excluding casual staff. **150** employees (46.58%) live in South Staffordshire and **172** (53.42%) live outside the District. **322** employees in total.

### LOCALITY

Out of the **150** employees who live in South Staffordshire, this illustration shows the percentage living in each locality within the District.



South Staffordshire	150
Barnet London Borough	1
Birmingham	2
Bromsgrove	2
Cannock Chase	16
Dudley	19
SW Gloucestershire	1
NW Leicestershire	1
Lichfield	3
Newcastle-under-Lyme	2
Shropshire	18
Stafford	14
Staffordshire Moorlands	1
Sandwell	1
Solihull	1
Stoke-on-Trent	1
Telford and Wrekin	15
Walsall	11
Wales	3
Wolverhampton	58
Wyre Forest	2

**46.58%**  
of our workforce live  
in the district

A photograph of three people in a professional office environment. On the left, a man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a grey blazer over a blue shirt, sits at a desk with his hands clasped. In the center, a woman with blonde, wavy hair, wearing a light-colored blazer, leans over a laptop, smiling. On the right, an older man with a white beard, wearing a dark suit and tie, sits at the desk, looking at the laptop. The background is a bright, modern office with large windows and indoor plants. A semi-transparent white box with a thin black border is centered over the image, containing the text "Our people" in a large, dark blue serif font, and "age diversity" in a smaller, bold, black sans-serif font below it.

# Our people

## age diversity

## Age data



**68%**  
of the council's  
workforce is  
aged 36 or over



Almost **19%**  
of the workforce are 25  
and under which is a  
marginal improvement on  
last year

### Increasing representation of younger colleagues across all services continues to be a workforce priority

#### Actions taken/successes during 2022/23

✓  
The Council's ASPIRE  
talent management  
programme -  
**33%** of delegates were  
**under 35**.

✓  
The Council currently  
supports **12<sup>5</sup>** apprentices  
5/12 apprentices have secured  
a permanent job with the  
Council.

✓  
Our 2 digital services  
apprentices were  
shortlisted for IT & Digital  
Apprentice of the Year Award  
2023 by Wolverhampton  
College with one apprentice  
winning and the other was  
runner up.

✓  
The LGA have developed  
an Apprentice Maturity  
Model Assessment which  
is a quality standard for Local  
Government - **SSDC has achieved  
the 'Upper Middle Quartile'  
which covers 50% to 75%  
of the best performing  
councils.**

#### Ages %

Ages	%
16-18	7.76%
19-25	11.18%
26-35	13.04%
36-45	23.29%
46-55	18.95%
56 Plus	25.78%
SUM	100.00%

<sup>5</sup> These include apprentice posts and employees studying a levy approved qualification.



# Our people

## disability diversity

# Disability statistics



## 16 employees

have declared themselves as disabled; an increase from last year which was 14

The number of employees who have disclosed a disability continues to be under reported

## Ensuring our workforce is representative of our communities across all our services continues to be a workforce priority

### Actions taken/successes during 2022/23

- ✓ We have promoted the importance of colleagues updating their information to assist us in supporting employees with disabilities.
- ✓ Registered as a Disability Confident employer - Committed.
- ✓ Established new partnerships to support the needs of neurodiverse employees.
- ✓ ASPIRE talent management programme. Our application criteria included supporting a wide range of colleagues and consideration of protected characteristics.



### Starters and Leavers by disability

	Starters	Leavers
Disabled	1	3
Not disabled	40	31
Not specified	2	3
Total	43	37

### Disability Workforce Profile

<b>Disabled</b> 16 employees 4.97%	<b>Not disabled</b> 297 employees 92.24%
<b>Not specified</b> 6 employees 1.86%	<b>Prefer not to say</b> 3 employees 0.93%

A diverse group of smiling people of various ethnicities, including a Black man, a white woman, a man with a beard, a woman with curly hair, and an Asian woman, all smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a light-colored wall.

# **Our people** **ethnicity diversity**

# Ethnicity data



- Over **92%** of the workforce has declared themselves as British.
- We have **22** employees across 13 service teams who have declared they are from ethnic minority backgrounds<sup>6</sup> (16 during 2021/22).
- The table below provides a comparison of our workforce profile with the make-up of our communities.

## South Staffordshire Census 2021 - Economic Activity

	% of Econ Active	% workforce @ 31/03/23
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	92.3%	92.24%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Indian	2.4%	3.11%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Pakistani	0.3%	0.62%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Other Asian	0.3%	0.31%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Bangladeshi	0.1%	0.31%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	0.4%	0.93%
White: Other White	1.1%	0.31%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Caribbean	0.5%	0.62%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	0.7%	0.62%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: African	0.3%	0.31%
<b>Total</b>		<b>99.38%</b> <sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> 0.62% of the workforce have not specified their ethnicity.

## Ensuring our workforce is representative of our communities across all our services continues to be a workforce priority

### Actions taken/successes during 2022/23

- ✓ The Council has arranged a number of equality and diversity related courses throughout the year. 280 employees have attended this training.<sup>7</sup>
- ✓ Delivered inclusive recruitment and unconscious bias training.
- ✓ Updated and enhanced our Equality Impact Assessment scheme and guidance.
- ✓ Colleagues from ethnic minority backgrounds have been included in our honoraria scheme.
- ✓ Developed a 2023/24 inclusion calendar to improve knowledge of and celebrate different cultures.
- ✓ Our application criteria for ASPIRE, our talent management programme, included supporting a wide range of colleagues and consideration of protected characteristics.

<sup>6</sup> We recognise individual people can have diverse cultural backgrounds and the categories are self-selected by individuals. For clarification the narrative has used the term ethnic minority backgrounds, and, in this instance, this describes to the best of our knowledge non-white ethnic groups.

<sup>7</sup> In some cases employees will have attended more than one course.

### Starters and Leavers by ethnicity

	Starters	Leavers
African	1	0
Any other Asian background	0	0
Any other White background	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
British	32	31
Caribbean	1	0
Indian	4	2
Not Stated	1	3
Pakistani	1	1
White and Asian	2	0
White and Black Caribbean	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>37</b>

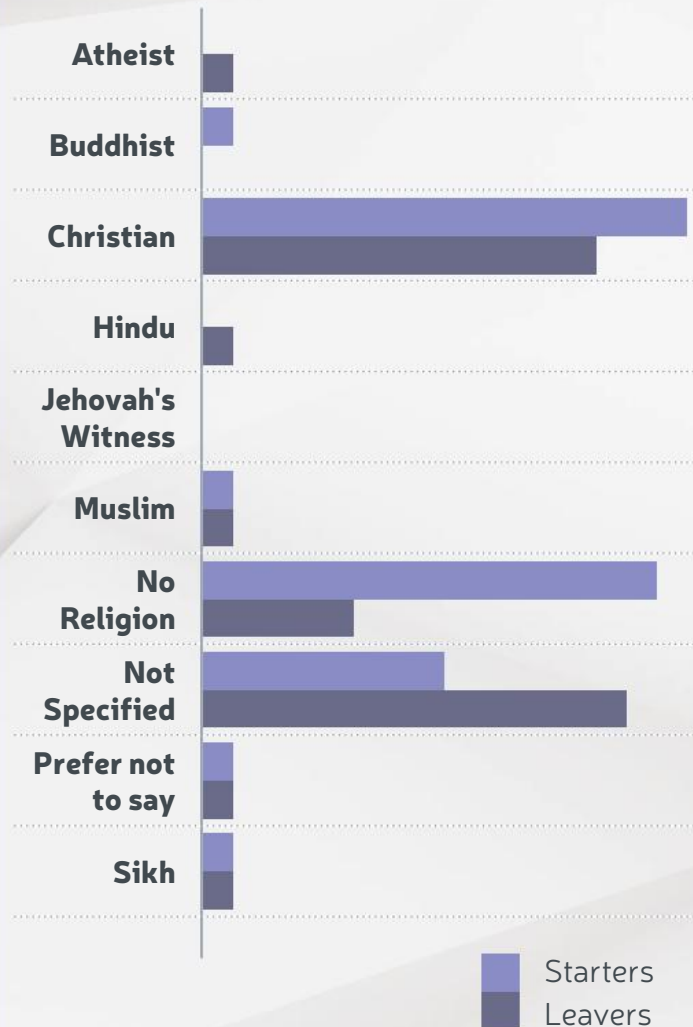
A photograph of three women of different ethnicities and ages, all smiling and looking towards the camera. They are wearing professional business attire. The woman on the left is a white woman with blonde hair. The woman in the center is a woman of South Asian descent wearing a black hijab and a black blazer over a light blue striped shirt. The woman on the right is a Black woman with dark curly hair, wearing a dark blue blazer over a light blue collared shirt. A semi-transparent white rectangular box with a thin black border is centered over the image, containing the text.

# **Our people** **religious belief**

# Religious belief



## Starters and Leavers by religious belief



## Actions taken/successes during 2022/23

- ✓ We recognise that over **36%** of the workforce have not declared their religious beliefs and have encouraged colleagues to update their information, communicating the importance of data capture which helps inform the diversity of our workforce and meet their needs.
- ✓ Developed an inclusion calendar to improve knowledge of and celebrate diverse cultures and beliefs.

## Religious belief workforce profile

	%
Atheist	2.17%
Buddhist	0.31%
Christian	34.16%
Hindu	0.62%
Jehovah's Witness	0.31%
Muslim	0.93%
No Religion	22.36%
Not Specified	36.66%
Prefer not to say	1.55%
Sikh	0.93%
<b>SUM</b>	<b>100%</b>

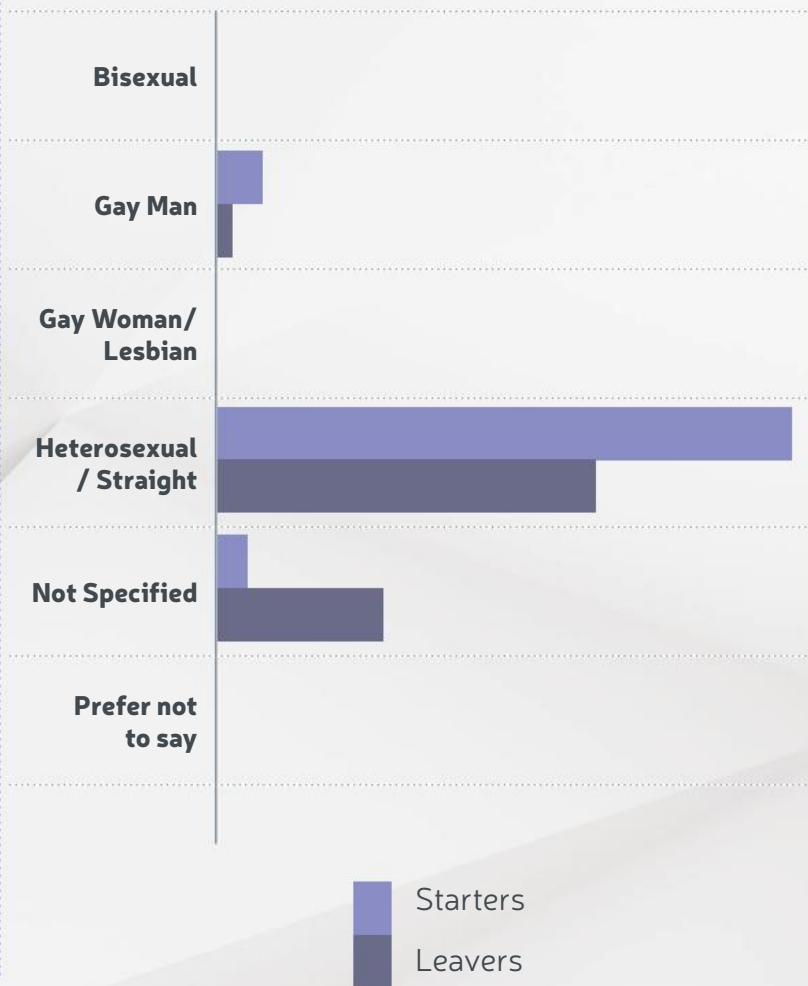


# **Our people** **sexual orientation**

# Sexual orientation



## Starters and Leavers by sexual orientation



## Actions taken/successes during 2022/23

- ✓ We recognise that over 30% of the workforce have not declared their sexual orientation and have encouraged colleagues to update their information, communicating the importance of data capture to inform how diverse our organisation is and inform support.
- ✓ We promoted and celebrated National Inclusion Week.
- ✓ We have updated our sexual identification categories to include female, male, gender fluid, non-binary, transgender and other. The data is currently non-reportable and will form part of our actions for 2023/24.

## Sexual orientation workforce profile

	%
Bisexual	0.31%
Gay Man	0.62%
Gay Woman/Lesbian	0.31%
Heterosexual/Straight	66.46%
Not specified	30.44%
Prefer not to say	1.86%
SUM	100%

A diverse group of young people, including men and women of various ethnicities and genders, are smiling and laughing together. The group is composed of approximately ten individuals, with some in the foreground and others slightly behind. They are all looking towards the camera with joyful expressions. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with stone steps.

# Our people

## gender diversity

# Gender statistics



## Gender breakdown of headcount, FTE, and basis



There are  
**194 (60.25%)**  
female employees and  
**128 (39.75%)**  
male employees

The number of  
female part-time  
employees is  
significantly higher  
than male part-time  
employees

Gender  
breakdown is  
similar to  
previous years

There are  
**86**  
full-time male  
employees and  
**42**  
part-time male  
employees



There are  
**87**  
full-time female  
employees and  
**105**  
part-time female  
employees  
**2**  
Job share female  
employees

## Starters and Leavers by gender

	Starters	Leavers
Female	28	25
Male	15	12
SUM	43	37

# Gender pay gap



**31 March 2023**

**4.87%** (mean)  
**6.98%** (median)

**437\* contracts**  
(60% female & 40% male)

**31 March 2022**

**6.53%** (mean)  
**9.42%** (median)

**431\* contracts**  
(61% female & 39% male)

**31 March 2021**

**8.90%** (mean)  
**0.89 %** (median)

**340\* contracts**  
(61% female & 39% male)

\* NB this is based on all contracts paid including multiple jobholders and casual relief workers.

## Gender profile by pay quartiles

Pay quartiles	2023		2022	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Proportion of women and men in the <b>upper quartile</b> (paid above the 75th percentile point)	<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>49%</b>
Proportion of women and men in the <b>upper middle quartile</b> (paid above the median and at or below the 75th percentile point)	<b>66%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>31%</b>
Proportion of women and men in the <b>lower middle quartile</b> (paid above the 25th percentile point and at or below the median)	<b>60%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>38%</b>
Proportion of women and men in the <b>lower quartile</b> (paid below the 25th percentile point)	<b>64%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>36%</b>

# Gender pay representation by seniority



## Corporate Leadership Team



**60%**  
female employees  
**40%**  
male employees

## Assistant Directors



**50%**  
female employees  
**50%**  
male employees

## Team Managers



**57%**  
female employees  
**43%**  
male employees

## Assistant Team Managers



**37%**  
female employees  
**63%**  
male employees

# Gender pay gap (GPG)

## What do the results mean?



The gender pay gap is different to equal pay. Equal pay relates to ensuring employers pay men and women the same pay for the same job (or work of equal value). The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference of average hourly earnings between men and women.

There can be a number of factors that influence a gender pay gap. A common one is large job groups in a workforce being dominated by one particular gender. Societal and external causes can also play a part e.g., education opportunities, career advice, occupation choices, and caring responsibilities.

In common with local authorities as a whole, our organisation is predominantly female (60%). The representation of men in the upper quartile, upper middle quartile and lower middle quartile have increased, however overall women continue to out-number men in 3 out of the 4 pay quartiles. The upper quartile is made up of 50% male and 50% female.

The mean GPG has decreased to 4.87% and the median GPG has decreased to 6.98%. The data is based on a similar number of contracts to the previous year. There are a number of reasons why the GPG % has decreased. There are marginal changes to our pay quartiles, the 2022 pay award, which resulted in a higher % increase in our lower pay quartiles (which has a higher % of women than men). There were also a marginally greater proportion of females in receipt of allowances on 31 March 2023.

The gender representation of CLT and ELT on 31 March 2023 remains unchanged from the previous year. There have been small differences in the other management tiers.

The Council does not have to report the next Gender Pay Gap until 2024, however from the small number of Councils that have reported so far, we are in the middle of the data set.

## Actions taken/successes during 2022/23

- ✓ As part of the Council's workforce strategy additional responsibilities and honorariums are provided to support career development, 64% of recipients (in the last 12 months) were female.
- ✓ The Council has a range of flexible working arrangements to support colleagues with their family/personal and work responsibilities.
- ✓ The Council's return rate for 2022/23 for female colleagues on maternity leave was 100%.
- ✓ The Council has a diverse recruitment strategy to ensure that we attract talent and have a good representation of gender across our senior roles.
- ✓ Our application criteria for ASPIRE, our talent management programme, included consideration of protected characteristics and 56% of applicants were female.

A woman with curly hair is shown in profile, looking upwards towards the sun. The background is a blurred forest with sunlight filtering through the trees, creating a bokeh effect. The text "Our people" and "wellbeing" is overlaid on a semi-transparent white box in the center of the image.

# Our people

**wellbeing**

# Absence data and trends 2022/23



Absence summary: between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023



Comparison to last year's statistics (1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022)



We have slightly exceeded our absence target of **6.95** for 2022/2023. This is due to an increase in the duration of long-term absences. These cases have been complex and required diagnostic and or treatment from specialists. The NHS waiting times have impacted on our ability to resolve some of these absences in a timely manner. Notwithstanding this **7.20** is still a strong attendance performance and our short-term absence continues to be extremely low.

# Top reasons for absence 2022 /23



## Top reasons for absence (by occasions)

**Cough/Cold/Flu/Viral**

**COVID-19 related**

**Gastrointestinal**

**Eyes/Throat/Mouth**

**Musculoskeletal injury or condition**

## Comparison with 2021/22

- There has been an increase in the number of occasions of coughs/colds/flu and viruses but a reduction in the duration of these short term absences.
- Covid absences have reduced slightly.
- There has been a reduction in stress/anxiety related absences
- There has been a reduction in musculoskeletal injuries or conditions. Short-term days lost has reduced in comparison to the previous year due to employees returning to work sooner following a short-term absence.

# Our people - wellbeing



## Actions taken/successes during 2022/23

- ✓ We have commenced our plans to gain the workplace health accreditation charter.
- ✓ 280 employees have attended a number of equality and diversity related courses throughout the year.<sup>9</sup>
- ✓ Commitment to deliver menopause policy/toolkit.
- ✓ We have updated our stress management policy including guidance to support wellbeing conversations at work.
- ✓ We launched Vivup our new employee benefits scheme to support financial wellbeing.



<sup>9</sup> In some cases employees will have attended more than one course.

A photograph of three diverse employees in a modern office setting. A woman with long, wavy brown hair is sitting on the left, smiling broadly while holding a pen and a notepad. A man with a beard and short dark hair is sitting in the center, also smiling and looking towards the woman. A woman with short dark hair and large hoop earrings is sitting on the right, looking down at a tablet or notebook. They are all gathered around a wooden table with various papers and documents on it. The background is a bright, out-of-focus office space with large windows.

# **Our employee engagement and culture**

# Employee survey 2023/24 executive summary



*Just over 96% recommend South Staffordshire Council as a place to work.*

**8.3** ★  
average rating

I am treated fairly and feel valued.



**8.7** ★  
average rating

I am satisfied with the leadership and culture of the organisation.



**8.5** ★  
average rating

South Staffordshire Council is a well-run organisation.



**8.8** ★  
average rating

The Council is an inclusive organisation.



**8.6** ★  
average rating

I feel proud to work for South Staffordshire Council.



Words used to  
describe the Council's  
culture?

**Ambitious • Progressive**

**Friendly • Positive**

**Caring • Supportive**

**Inclusive • Flexible**

## What do you like best about working for South Staffordshire Council?

"Great flexi scheme and working arrangements offering hybrid working."


"Supportive environment that values individuals and their contributions."

"Flexibility (hours), good pension contribution, career opportunities."

"Good wellbeing support, modern office space and facilities."

"Positive, inclusive culture. Senior management genuinely care about their staff."

"Good wellbeing support, modern office space and facilities."

A photograph of a diverse group of people, including a man with a beard and a woman with dark hair, smiling in the background. In the foreground, several hands of different skin tones are stacked on top of each other in a circle, symbolizing unity, teamwork, and diversity.

**Our actions for 2023/24 to help us recruit  
and retain a diverse workforce  
and continually improve our culture**

# Actions for 2023/24



## Actions for 2023/24 to help us recruit and retain a diverse workforce and continually improve our culture

### Recruitment and retention

- Hold exit interview conversations with leavers to better understand the reasons why people leave our employment.
- Introduce anonymised recruitment.
- Assess our performance against the Armed Forces Recruitment Covenant.
- Carry out pay benchmarking to support our employer of choice workstream.
- Revise our work experience offering to reflect the new skills framework that was launched in Staffordshire schools during 2022/23.
- Support the Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire careers hub and associated school engagement group partnerships in relation to career support in schools and the Council's employer of choice brand.
- Recruit to further apprenticeship posts as new or existing vacancies occur.

### Collecting and analysing data

- Align our workforce data categories with census and best practice equality data, specifically ethnicity and map against local population data to identify how representative we are as an employer.
- Change our disability category to a more inclusive definition to encourage better reporting.
- Encourage colleagues to update information on sexual identification and our new 'carer dependant' categories to inform our working practices and support.
- Report on equality attendance training.

### Wellbeing

- Assess our progress against the Disability Confident employer standard.
- Promote awareness of neurodiversity support and guidance.
- A Menopause Policy/Guidance toolkit is currently being developed and is scheduled to be launched during December 2023.
- Provide training to managers to support the refresh of the Council's stress management policy.
- Continue to roll out Vivup the employee benefits scheme which will include salary sacrifice schemes to support employee wellbeing.
- Conduct a wellbeing and engagement survey during 2023/24.



### Learning and development

- Provide neurodiversity training for managers.
- Continue to roll out inclusive recruitment and unconscious bias training.
- Provide refresher training on the updated stress management policy including conducting stress risk assessments.
- Provide further refresher training on Equality Impact Assessments.

### Inclusive leadership

- Roll out the managers coaching programme to Assistant Team Managers.
- Support the organisational development and people agenda for developing the organisational maturity model.
- Respond to any issues raised in our employee engagement surveys and where appropriate develop/report on wellbeing metrics.
- Continue to implement our workforce development strategy and recommendations from the Peer Review 2022.

**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL****STANDARDS AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 25 JANUARY 2024****REPORT ON WORK PROGRAMME/COMPLAINTS****REPORT OF MONITORING OFFICER (CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE)****PART A – SUMMARY REPORT****1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

To inform and update Members in respect of Code of Conduct and Complaint matters.

**2. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

POLICY/COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Council Plan objectives?	
	Yes	The work of the Committee underpins the work of the Council and delivery of the Council Plan objectives
	Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) been completed?	
	No	Not required.
SCRUTINY POWERS APPLICABLE	No	
KEY DECISION	No	
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	Standards and Resources Committee 25 January 2024	
FINANCIAL IMPACT	No	None
LEGAL ISSUES	No	None
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	None	
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	

**PART B – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION****3.1 *Code of Conduct/Disclosable Pecuniary Interest Forms***

- 3.2 There are currently no active Code of Conduct complaints. The two previously reported complaints, relating to Parish Council members, were dismissed at the initial assessment stage.

#### ***Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)***

- 3.5 There have been no new decisions from the Local Government Ombudsman since the last meeting. One case is currently being investigated by the LGO and this will be reported to the Committee when concluded.

#### ***Formal Complaints***

- 3.6 In terms of complaints that have gone to stage 2 of the Council's own complaints procedure (which is the step before an Ombudsman complaint) we have had 0 complaints upheld in the municipal year 2023/24 to date.

#### ***Data Protection***

- 3.7 There have been no significant data breaches that require reporting to the Information Commissioner's Office or to the data subjects.

#### ***Work programme***

- 3.8 The work programme for 2023/24 is set out below:

##### ***8 June 2023***

- Setting of work programme - COMPLETED

##### ***14 September 2023***

- Review of Conduct/Complaints/Work Programme – COMPLETED
- Annual report of the Local Government Ombudsman – COMPLETED
- Elections report post May 2023 elections – COMPLETED
- Data Protection report – COMPLETED

##### ***23 November 2023***

- Review of Conduct/Complaints/Work Programme – COMPLETED
- Elections Act 2022 update – COMPLETED
- Health and Safety Policy Update – COMPLETED
- Polling District Place Review pre-consultation report – COMPLETED
- Customer Feedback Policy - COMPLETED

##### ***25 January 2024***

- Review of Conduct/Complaints/Work Programme – ON AGENDA
- Elections Act 2022 Update – ON AGENDA
- Polling District Place Review post-consultation report – ON AGENDA
- Workforce Development Strategy Update (incorporating Employment Trends) – ON AGENDA

**28 March 2024**

- Annual Corporate Health and Safety Update
- Review of Conduct/Complaints/Work Programme
- Employment trends – TAKEN TO JANUARY 2024 MEETING

If Members have any items they wish to add to the work programme they should let the Monitoring Officer know. A report updating on progress against this programme will come to each meeting of the Committee and identifying any potential additional items or changes to the programme.

**5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

None

**6. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

None

**7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**8. RECOMMENDATION**

- 8.1** That the Standards and Resources Committee notes the contents of the update on Code of Conduct and Complaint Matters.

Report prepared by: Lorraine Fowkes – Corporate Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)

