

**TO:- Standards and Resources Committee**

Councillor Barry Bond M.B.E. , Councillor Diane Holmes , Councillor Val Boote , Val Chapman , David Oldfield , Mary Roberts , Richard Taylor , Councillor Roger Tucker Councillor Penny Allen , Councillor Chris Benton , Councillor Joyce Bolton , Councillor Mike Boyle , Councillor Philip Davis , Councillor Lin Hingley , Councillor Ve Jackson , Councillor Dan Kinsey B.E.M , Councillor Kath Perry M.B.E. , Councillor John Raven , Councillor Robert Reade

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, 09 March 2023

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**

- |          |  |                |
|----------|--|----------------|
| <b>1</b> | Minutes<br>To approve the minutes of the Standards and Resources Committee meeting of 26 January 2023. | <b>3 - 4</b>   |
| <b>2</b> | Apologies<br><br>To receive any apologies for non-attendance.  |                |
| <b>3</b> | Declarations of Interest<br><br>To receive any declarations of interest.                               |                |
| <b>4</b> | Equality and Diversity Progress Report<br>Joint Report of Members of the Equalities Steering Group     | <b>5 - 10</b>  |
| <b>5</b> | Work Force Employment Trends<br>Report of the Assistant Director Organisation and People Development.  | <b>11 - 44</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, 26  
January 2023 at 14:30

**Present:-**

Councillor Penny Allen, Councillor Joyce Bolton, Councillor Barry Bond, Councillor Val Boote, Councillor Mike Boyle, Councillor Philip Davis, Councillor Lin Hingley, Councillor Diane Holmes, Councillor Ve Jackson, Councillor John Raven

18      **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Standards and Resource Committee meeting held on 26 January 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

19      **APOLOGIES**

Apologies received from Councillor K Perry MBE, and Councillor M Roberts.

20      **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

21      **REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS 2022/23**

**RESOLVED:** That the consultation responses be noted and the final Polling Place Scheme be agreed.

22      **ELECTIONS ACT 2022**

**RESOLVED:** That the provisions and associated impacts in respect of the Elections Act 2022 be noted.

23      **REPORT ON WORK PROGRAMME/COMPLAINTS**

**RESOLVED:** That the contents of the report be noted.

The Meeting ended at: 15:13

**CHAIRMAN**



**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

**STANDARDS & RESOURCES COMMITTEE 9 MARCH 2023**

**EQUALITY & DIVERSITY PROGRESS REPORT - JOINT REPORT OF MEMBERS<sup>1</sup> OF THE  
EQUALITY STEERING GROUP**

**LEAD CABINET MEMBER – COUNCILLOR ROGER LEES, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**PART A – SUMMARY REPORT**

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report sets out the Council’s progress on equalities during 2022/23 and confirms our priorities for 2023/24.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Note the progress of our 2022/23 work programme in Appendix A and our planned actions for 2023/24 as set out in para 4.5.

**3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

POLICY/COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to Council Plan objectives?	
	Yes	Delivering good outcomes for communities and employees.
	Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) completed?	
	No	The report is not proposing a new policy, scheme, or project.
SCRUTINY POWERS	No	
KEY DECISION	Yes	Existing budgetary provision.
DECISION ROUTE	N/A	Standards and Resources Committee 9 March 2023
TARGET DATE	Yes	As above
FINANCIAL IMPACT	Yes	Within existing resources
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	Compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 is a statutory requirement. The actions will enhance the Council’s position and make it easier to evidence consideration of the issues and therefore compliance
IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	The opportunity to strengthen our equality arrangements and improve outcomes for our communities and workforce.
IMPACT ON WARDS	NA	

<sup>1</sup> Corporate Director Communities and Wellbeing, Assistant Director Partnerships, Assistant Director Organisation & People Development and Assistant Director Welfare Services.

## 4. BACKGROUND

### Review of Equality and Diversity

- 4.1 The Council commissioned a review of Equalities and Diversity during 2020/2021 to inform our equalities work programme for 2022/23 using the Local Government Association (LGA) Equality Framework.
- 4.2 The framework<sup>2</sup> covers the following.

<b>Understanding and working with your communities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• collecting &amp; sharing information</li><li>• analysing-using data &amp; information</li><li>• effective community engagement</li><li>• fostering good community relations</li><li>• participation in public life</li></ul>	<b>Leadership, partnership, and organisational commitment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• political &amp; officer leadership</li><li>• priorities &amp; working in partnership</li><li>• using equality impact assessment</li><li>• performance monitoring &amp; scrutiny</li></ul>
<b>Responsive services and customer care</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• commissioning &amp; procuring services</li><li>• integration of equality objectives into planned service outcomes</li><li>• service design &amp; delivery</li></ul>	<b>Diverse and engaged workforce</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• workforce diversity &amp; inclusion</li><li>• inclusive strategies &amp; policies</li><li>• collecting, analysing, publishing data</li><li>• learning, development &amp; progression</li><li>• health &amp; wellbeing</li></ul>

*The framework has been slightly updated since the review referred to in para 4.1.*

- 4.3 Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) established a new Equality Steering Group to have strategic oversight of equalities and approved 5 areas of focus for our 2022/23 Equality and Diversity work programme. This included leadership, engagement, policy, training, and communication. Adrian McLean an external equality specialist was also commissioned to provide advice and training to assist us in taking forward this work.
- 4.4 The Steering Group have reviewed progress against the above work programme and produced a summary of our progress during 2022/23. (Appendix A).

### Next steps for 2023/24

- 4.5 Local authorities must publish information to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty. This information must include information relating to people who share a protected characteristic who are its employees or affected by its policies

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<sup>2</sup> Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) 2021 | Local Government Association

and practices. To ensure we continue to maintain good governance and compliance the following actions will be progressed.

- a) Review our corporate equality objectives. They should be reviewed at least 4 yearly. The last review was in 2020. CLT agreed the objectives will be refreshed to co-inside with the development of the new Council Plan in 2024.
- b) Update equality information on our website to reflect the latest census, locality, and workforce information. This has commenced and will be actioned throughout 2023 in line with the release of data.
- c) Strategic equality actions and/or metrics including community, customer and workforce themes will be identified for the IPM for 2023/24 by the Equality Steering Group.

4.6 The general equality duty requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations – when making decisions and setting policies. This requires an assessment and there should be adequate evidence to understand the potential effects of proposed decisions on different people covered by the duty.

4.7 Our Service Equality Group has therefore undertaken a review and updated our Equality Impact Assessment toolkit to support this duty. In addition, equality impact refresher training will be arranged during 2023.

**Report of Equality Steering Group: Corporate Director Communities & Wellbeing, Assistant Director Partnerships, Assistant Director Organisation & People Development and Assistant Director Welfare Services**

**Review of Equality and Diversity during 2022/23**

**Leadership and performance management**

- Commissioned expert equality consultancy to re-energise and shape our equality strategy, plans and training.
- New senior Equality Steering Group and Service Equality Groups established.
- Developed 'Community is the Best medicine' model to support community health.
- Equality is a feature of the new Member Development Strategy for 2023.
- Workforce Development Strategy 2022-2025 - key focus on inclusive leadership.
- Everyone Counts - summarises our top community and workforce equality issues.
- Developing and improving systems for collating and analysing the different data sets such as the recent inclusion of the Service Data Profiles to our Locality Profile data.
- Taking action to support socioeconomics and respond to the cost-of-living crisis. Our RPP plans also include consideration of minimising impacts or disadvantage for residents.

**Engagement**

- The Local Plan consultation has involved a variety of face to face, virtual events and an online portal to ensure a wide engagement with all groups in our communities as part of their consultation and engagement arrangements.
- The resident's survey is now online with the aim of reaching more people and underrepresented groups.
- Outreach work and public campaigning has been undertaken to increase levels of participation by protected groups, targeting elderly, young children, and disability most commonly.
- The 2022 'Be a Councillor Event' included targeted advertising and outreach work to encourage under-represented groups to attend the event and consider representing their communities as a councillor.
- Equality & Diversity profiling questions have been included in all surveys and public consultations where appropriate.
- Developed a range of projects in Locality 3 (which has the highest area of financial hardship) to make an impact on employment and skills.
- Developed a Community Asset list to support engagement in Locality 3.
- Extended ELT session on improving and using our Community and Workforce data to improve outcomes.
- A new inclusion calendar has been promoted to staff to improve knowledge of diverse cultures and support communication and engagement.
- Employee engagement surveys have taken place. Most recent one confirmed 93.5% of respondents would recommend the Council as an employer.
- Promoted the LGA's Debate not Hate campaign (Civility in Public Life).



## **Policy reviews**

- The Local Plan preparation and consultation has adopted an evidenced based process for their underpinning emerging policies to reflect need including but not limited to housing, health, education, employment, and skills.
- The Council's Equality Impact Assessment guidance and arrangements have been reviewed and strengthened, the outcome of which is referenced in the report.
- A new Volunteer Policy.
- Recruitment policy reviewed to ensure it reflects inclusive recruitment practices.

## **Training**

- Leadership coaching programme to support our inclusive culture.
- An equality refresher session for all managers and staff (summer 2022) - covered inclusive language and workforce and community data.
- A session on Data and Analytics to help us improve the link between data and outcomes.
- Community Engagement workshop has been commissioned for early 2023.
- Training on the updated EqIA toolkit is planned for 2023.

## **Communication including our website.**

- The Council's website has its accessibility assessed monthly and is consistently rated against an industry recognised standard which means it is accessible for a wide range of disabilities, including visual, auditory, physical, speech, cognitive, language, learning, and neurological disabilities. An accessibility statement has also been added to the Council's website (<https://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/contact-us/accessibility-statement.cfm>), to continually review and improve accessibility and navigation.
- All services have undertaken a complete review of their Website Content as part of our Customer Experience Improvement Programme.
- Shortly introducing 'Recite Me'<sup>3</sup> accessibility toolbar for our intranet and website.
- The equality information on the council's website has been refreshed as part of the above and will be reviewed throughout 2023 as relevant census, community and workforce data is released.

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<sup>3</sup> With Recite Me, a link is placed on a website, for example 'click for accessibility/read text.' Once this option has been selected Recite will automatically translate text to speech, enlarge words, and allow dictionary definitions. It also has functionality to translate over 100 different languages.



**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL****STANDARDS AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE 9 MARCH 2023****WORKFORCE EMPLOYMENT TRENDS****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 sets out the Council’s employment trends data which informs our actions in respect of workforce planning, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- 1.2 Appendix one is our data for publication and incorporates the Public Sector Equality Act and Gender Pay Gap (GPG) reporting requirements.
- 1.3 The data set relates to 31 March 2022.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 For information.

**3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

POLICY/COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to Council Plan objectives?	
	Yes	Improving equity, diversity and inclusion supports our communities and our workforce.
	Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) completed?	
	No	The report is not proposing a new policy or scheme.
SCRUTINY POWERS	No	
KEY DECISION	No	
DECISION ROUTE/ TIME	Yes	Standards and Resources Committee 9 March 2023
TARGET DELIVERY DATE	Yes	31 March 2023
FINANCIAL IMPACT	No	Existing budgetary provision.
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	The Equality Act 2010 has been considered.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	The data is used to support Resource Planning & Prioritisation (RPP), equity diversity, and inclusion.
IMPACT ON WARDS	NA	

## **PART B – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **4. INFORMATION**

#### **Workforce size**

4.1 On 31 March 2022 the Council employed 323<sup>1</sup> employees.

#### **Where our workforce lives**

4.2 53.51% of our workforce (including casual workers) are council residents and live in the district. The other locations where our employees live include Wolverhampton, Cannock Chase, Dudley, Shropshire, Walsall, Telford & Wrekin, and Stafford.

#### **Employee retention**

4.3 Our retention rate on 31 March 2022 was 84%.

#### **Age**

4.4 Over 69% of the workforce were aged 36+. 18% were aged 25 and under which is almost a 4% improvement compared to the previous year. This improvement includes an increase in the employment of people between the ages of 16-18 by 9. The previous year it was 0.

4.5 During 2021, we increased the investment in our apprentice programme and created 5 additional apprentice posts leading to 8 apprentices studying an apprentice approved programme during 2022. At the time of writing, the Council has 12 apprentices.

4.6 20 colleagues aged 56 and over left the Council. In recognition of our age profile, we ran a preparing for retirement course to assist colleagues with retirement planning.

#### **Gender**

4.7 The gender profile of the workforce remained stable with 61.3% of the workforce being female and 38.7% male. We have many jobs which offer part-time and flexible working and more females than males continue to work part-time.

4.8 A summary of our last 3 years gender pay gap is below.

<b>GPG Date</b>	<b>Mean GPG %</b>	<b>Median GPG %</b>
31.03.20	5.2 %	6.6%
31.03.21	8.9%	0.89%
31.03.22	6.53%	9.42%

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<sup>1</sup> 323 is the headcount but the full time equivalent (fte) was 238.6. Headcount increases to 394 if it includes casual workers. In 2021 the headcount was 300, fte was 228. Headcount increases to 370 if it includes casual workers.

- 4.9 The mean gender pay gap on 31 March 2022 was 6.53%, a decrease compared to 2021. However, the median figure increased to 9.42%. A major factor was our casual work requirements reduced during 2020/21 due to the closure of the Leisure Centres during periods of the pandemic. Numbers increased in 2022 as we returned to business as usual and this has had an impact on contracts paid in the lowest two pay quartiles and in turn affected the GPG %, particularly the median figure. There was also a higher % of female leavers than males which impacted on the % of females and males, most significantly in the lower two pay quartiles.
- 4.10 Gender distribution across our management tiers includes 24 females and 25 males. There is a slightly higher distribution of females overall in the top 3 tiers.

CLT	Assistant Directors	Team Managers	Assistant Team Managers
Female 3	Female 3	Female 12	Female 6
Male 2	Male 3	Male 8	Male 12

## Ethnicity

- 4.11 Our ethnicity classification categories are set out in the table below with a 2021 and 2022 comparison. We will be reviewing our ethnic group descriptors to align with any national data sources e.g, the 2021 Census.

Ethnicity groups	No 2022	% 2022	No 2021	% 2021	Summary
Any other Asian background	1	0.31%	1	0.33%	-
Any other black background	0	0.00%	1	0.33%	<
Any other ethnic group	1	0.31%	2	0.67%	<
Any other white background	1	0.31%	0	0.00%	>
Bangladeshi	1	0.31%	1	0.33%	-
British	306	94.73%	280	93.35%	>
Caribbean	1	0.31%	0	00.0%	>
Indian	8	2.48%	10	3.33%	<
Irish	0	0.00%	1	0.33%	<
Not stated	1	0.31%	0.00%	0	>
Pakistani	2	0.62%	2	0.67%	-
White & Asian	0	0.00%	1	0.33%	<
White & Black Caribbean	1	0.31%	1	0.33%	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>	

## Disability

- 4.12 4.33% (14 employees) disclosed that they had a disability. This is an increase on the figure reported the previous year which was 3% (9 employees).

## **Workforce attendance**

- 4.13 The Council's annual absence target is to not exceed more than 6.95 fte average days per employee per year. The Council's performance against this target for 2021/22 was 6.22. This comprised of 2.35 short-term absence and 3.87 long-term absence.
- 4.14 Whilst short and long-term absences have increased compared to 2021. Factors such as lockdown and furlough are likely to have directly and indirectly reduced the reporting and incidents of sickness absenteeism during 2020/21. Appendix one page 21 shows that out of 14 health categories, 12 reported lower absences during 2020/21.
- 4.15 Prior to the pandemic our absence rate was 5.75. If you discount covid absences for 2021/22 our absence rate would be more in line with this.
- 4.16 The stress/anxiety/depression category is slightly higher than pre-pandemic levels. However, we regularly review cases, and it should be noted that bereavement and other personal issues can often be a factor.

## **How pandemic learning has informed our workforce development strategy.**

- 4.17 During 2020/21 the council took forward a range of people strategies and practices including employee engagement, hybrid working, new flexible working models and employee wellbeing to support our transformation, community hub and culture change plans.
- 4.18 This work has been mainstreamed as part of our working practices - and in 2022 the council was privileged to receive an iESE Achievement of Excellence certificate recognising our health and wellbeing strategy and workforce support. This has provided a strong foundation for our 2022 Workforce Development Strategy.

## **Employee engagement and culture**

- 4.19 Our September 2022 employee engagement survey confirmed that 93.5% of respondents would recommend us as a place to work with 81% scoring between 7-10 when asked if they felt valued and part of the council. Many of the comments valued the supportive culture and wellbeing support on offer. In terms of issues raised in the survey, pay and the cost-of-living crisis were referred to.

## **Our actions during 2021/22**

- 4.20 Appendix one provides details of specific actions we have taken in to improve equity diversity and inclusion.

## **Actions planned for 2022/23**

- 4.21 Appendix one details our planned actions for 2022/23 intended to help us recruit and retain a diverse workforce and continually improve our culture. These actions are captured under the following themes:

- Recruitment and retention
- Inclusive leadership strategies and culture
- Learning and development
- Wellbeing
- Capturing more intelligent data including why our employees leave to improve retention of talent from underrepresented groups.

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

- 5.1 There are no proposed new policies attached to this report necessitating an impact assessment. Equality impact assessments however will be carried out for any actions arising from the report/workstream that relate to any new or material policies, projects, or schemes.
- 5.2 A summary of our 2022 workforce employment trends will be published on the Council's website. (See appendix one).

## **6. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- 6.1 N/A.

## **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 N/A.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix one - Summary of workforce employment trends for 2022.

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







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

# Our Workforce Trends

## 31 March 2022

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



# Foreword



South Staffordshire customers deserve the absolute best from our council, which is why I place such importance on ensuring our recruitment and retention is inclusive and attracts people that are talented and prepared to go the extra mile for our communities.

However, as we emerge from the pandemic, we are facing a very tough economic period. I also recognise our workforce face the same cost of living worries as our communities and a significant number of our employees are also our residents. As a council we will continue to take forward our plans to help us navigate and manage these challenges for both our communities and our workforce and at the same time ensure our people development plans remain strong.

Our workforce development strategy therefore has a strong focus on South Staffordshire Council being an Employer of Choice to ensure we recruit and retain talented people that want to make a difference to our residents. This includes providing good employment opportunities for local people and its pleasing to see the growth of our apprenticeship scheme and our plans for supporting schools and developing enhanced work experience opportunities to support upskilling and getting young people work ready.

Turning to our existing workforce, talent retention is key. We are enhancing our employee benefits to support financial wellbeing, and we will continue to invest in our training to support career development. Good engagement is also essential, and it was pleasing to see our most recent employee survey confirmed 93.5% would recommend us as a place to work and many employees described us as a flexible, fair, and supportive employer. Being inclusive, welcoming, and creating a sense of belonging is key to ensuring we continue to maintain and improve on our positive culture. Our organisational development plans include leadership coaching, inclusive recruitment training and using more intelligent data to improve our skills, relationships and reduce the chances of unconscious bias in our decision-making.

This annual report continues our practice of reviewing our workforce trends to support workforce planning and ensure we continually work towards a representative workforce as we know this means we can have a better understanding of our customer's needs. We look forward to taking forward our plans during 2023/24 to ensure our people development plans remain strong, equitable and relevant.

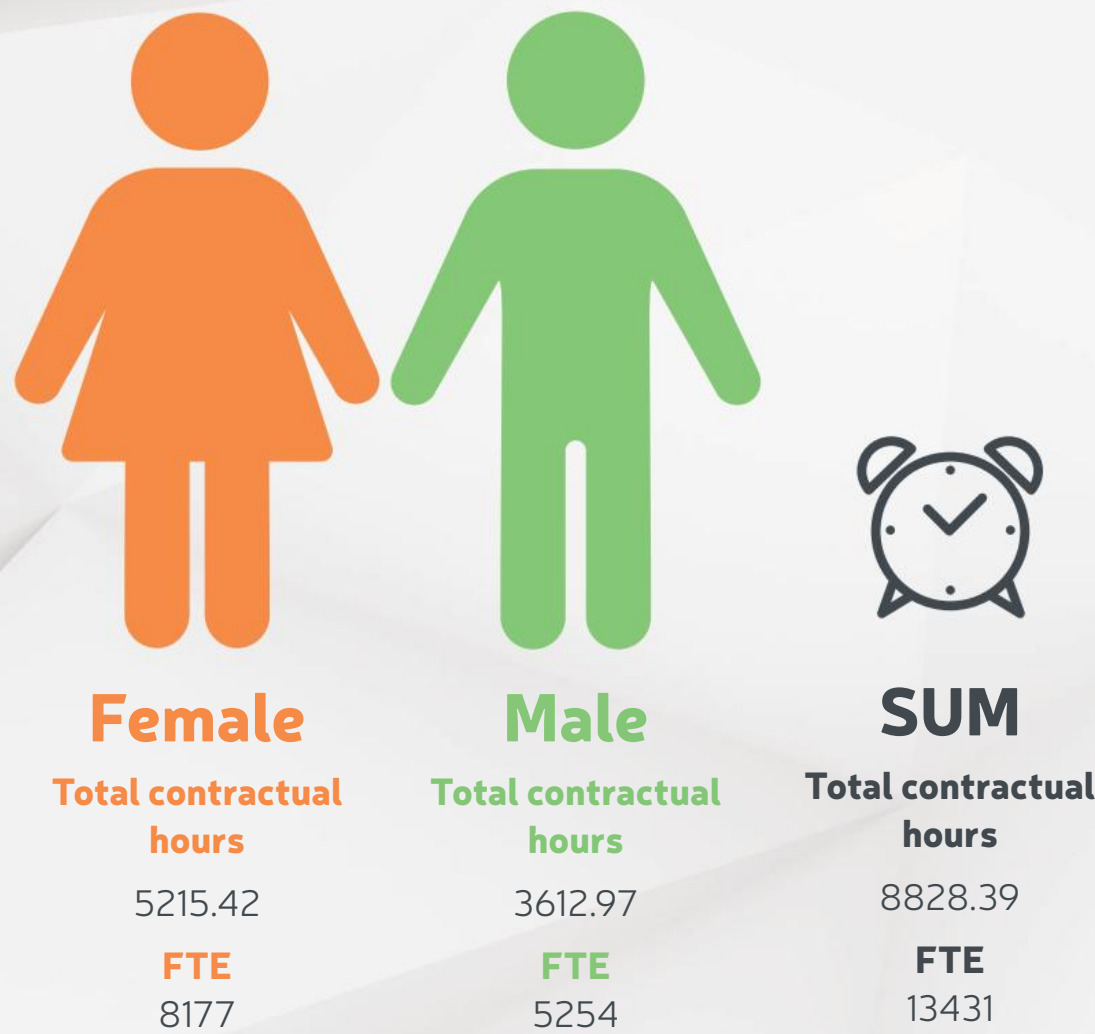
**Dave Heywood**

Chief Executive of South Staffordshire Council

# Human Resource data



## Gender breakdown of contracted hours



## Headcount and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)

- FTE at 31/03/2022 was **238.6**
- Headcount at 31/03/2022 including casual workers was **394**
- Headcount at 31/03/2022 excluding casual workers was **323<sup>1</sup>**
- In the previous year, the headcount (*including casual workers*) was **370**, headcount (*excluding casual workers*) was **300** and FTE was **228**.

<sup>1</sup> Workforce data by service headcount may differ due to 9 employees working contractually across more than 1 service.



# Where do our employees live?



## Where do our workforce live?

This illustration sets out the percentage of our employees by location. The data set is representative of our entire workforce, including casual staff.

Shropshire	4.5%
Stafford	3.06%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	0.36%
Telford and Wrekin	3.24%
Wyre Forest	0.54%
Cannock Chase	5.77%
Lichfield	0.54%
Walsall	3.42%
Birmingham	0.36%
Sandwell	0%
City of Wolverhampton	18.36%
Dudley	4.68%
Bromsgrove	0.36%
Solihull	0.18%


South  
Staffordshire  
53.51%

## Workforce



**53.51%**  
of our  
workforce  
live in the  
district



A collage of diverse people smiling, arranged in a circular pattern around the central text. The individuals include a woman with blonde hair and a blue checkered shirt, a man with dark curly hair and glasses, a woman with dark skin and a blue headscarf, a woman with dark hair and a green turtleneck, an older man with a white beard, a woman with glasses and a grey top, and a woman with blonde hair and a dark top. The background is a mix of these people's faces and clothing, creating a vibrant and inclusive visual.

# **People joining and leaving our organisation**

# Starters and leavers by age bands, disability and ethnicity



## Age bands

	Starters	Leavers
16-18	9	0
19-25	7	11
26-35	10	6
36-45	10	5
46-55	6	6
56 Plus	4	20
SUM	46	48

## Gender

	Starters	Leavers
Female	27	32
Male	19	16
SUM	46	48

## Disability

	Starters	Leavers
Not disclosed	3	2
Disabled	1	0
Not disabled	42	46
SUM	46	48

- There have been **46 new starters** and **48 leavers** (figure excludes transfer from casual work to a contract).
- There are more female new starters (27) than men (19) which is in line with our overall organisation gender ratio
- We have significantly improved the employment of younger colleagues. This year we employed 16 people aged 25 and under. Last year it was 4 and out of that 4 we did not employ anyone under the age of 19.
- There is a marginal net improvement relating to our disability category by 1 employee compared to last year
- We had 48 leavers in total. Our future plans include seeking more intelligent data about why our employees leave to improve the retention of talent from under represented groups.

**Overall our retention rate was 84% as at 31 March 2022**

## Ethnicity

	Starters	Leavers
Any other Asian background	0	0
Any other Black Background	0	1
Any other ethnic group	0	1
Any other White background	1	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
British	41	40
Caribbean	1	0
Indian	1	3
Irish	0	1
Not Stated	1	0
Pakistani	0	0
White and Asian	1	2
White and Black Caribbean	0	0
SUM	46	48



A photograph of three people in an office environment. On the left, a man with glasses and a grey blazer sits at a desk with his hands clasped. In the center, a woman with blonde hair, wearing a white blazer, leans over a laptop, pointing at the screen with a smile. On the right, an older man with a white beard and a dark suit 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 profile



**69%**  
of the council's  
workforce is  
aged 36 or over



**18%**  
of the workforce are 25  
and under which is almost  
a 4% improvement on last  
year

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

### Actions taken/successes

✓  
We delivered  
a preparing for  
retirement course  
during 2021/22

✓  
The Council's ASPIRE  
talent management  
programme included 37%  
of delegates between the  
ages of 19 and 35

✓  
In March 2021, we  
invested £102,000 expanding  
our apprentice and graduate  
programme. This led to, in 2022,  
both the creation of new apprentice  
employment opportunities as well as  
using the Apprentice Levy to fund  
qualifications to support the career  
development and upskilling of  
existing employees

✓  
South Staffordshire  
Councils public sector  
target\* for 2021/2022 was  
7.43% which was achieved. We  
currently have 12 employees  
studying for a qualification  
through the apprentice  
levy

Ages	%
16-18	6.19%
19-25	12.07%
26-35	12.38%
36-45	22.29%
46-55	19.5%
56 Plus	27.55%
SUM	100.00%

*\*The Apprenticeship Levy was introduced by the government on 6 April 2017. Its aim was to address the shortage of skilled workers in the UK, by increasing the number of apprenticeship opportunities offered by employers. It applied to any public sector employer with at least 250 employees. The target required public sector employers to employ an average of 2.3% of their organisation's headcount as new apprentice starts each year. The public sector apprenticeships target ended on 31 March 2022. From this date there will no longer be a target however South Staffordshire Council will continue to support graduate and apprenticeship opportunities as part of our recruitment and succession plans.*



A diverse group of young adults, including men and women of various ethnicities and gender expressions, 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. A semi-transparent white rectangular box with a thin orange border is centered over the group, containing the text "Our people gender diversity".

# **Our people** **gender diversity**



## Gender statistics



There are  
**198 (61.3%)**  
female employees and  
**125 (38.7%)**  
male employees

The number of  
female part-time  
employees continues  
to be significantly  
higher than male  
part-time  
employees

Gender  
breakdown is  
almost identical  
to 2020/2021



There are  
**82 (50.62%)**  
full-time female  
employees and  
**116 (72.05%)**  
part-time female  
employees

There are  
**80 (49.38%)**  
full-time male  
employees and  
**45 (27.95%)**  
part-time male  
employees



# Gender pay gap



**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)

**31 March 2020**

**5.20%** (mean)  
**6.60%** (median)

**410 contracts**  
(60% female & 40% male)

## Gender profile by pay quartiles

Pay quartiles	2022		2021	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Proportion of women and men in the <b>upper quartile</b> (paid above the 75th percentile point)	<b>51%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>53%</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>69%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>28%</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>62%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>49%</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>72%</b>	<b>28%</b>

## Gender by management tier



### Corporate Leadership Team



**3**  
female employees  
**2**  
male employees

### Assistant Directors



**3**  
female employees  
**3**  
male employees

### Team Managers



**12**  
female employees  
**8**  
male employees

### Assistant Team Managers



**6**  
female employees  
**12**  
male employees



# Gender pay gap (GPG)

## What do the results mean?



The GPG 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). GPG is a measure of the difference of average hourly earnings between men and women.

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

Our workforce is predominantly female (61%) and women out-number men in all pay quartiles.

The mean GPG has decreased to 6.53% and the median GPG has increased to 9.42%. In the previous reporting year, our casual work requirements were reduced due to closure of the leisure centres during the pandemic.

This would have had a significant impact on contracts paid in the lowest two quartiles which is likely to be a significant factor in the mean and median variance between 31.03.20 and 31.03.22.

There has been a slight reduction in the % of females in the lowest quartile and an increase % of females in the lower middle quartile and the upper middle quartile compared to the previous year. It is likely as pay has increased some of the females have moved up a quartile.

The gender representation of CLT on the snapshot date 31 March 2022 was 60% female, 40% male.

Gender distribution across our management tiers includes 24 females and 25 males.

## Actions taken/successes

- ✓ As part of the council's reward strategy additional responsibilities and honorariums are provided to support career development. 58% of recipients during 2021/22 were female.
- ✓ The council has a talent management programme called ASPIRE. During our 2021/22 cohort, 37% were female.
- ✓ We have a range of flexible working arrangements to support colleagues with their family/personal and work responsibilities.
- ✓ Our return rate for 2021/22 for female colleagues on maternity leave was 100%
- ✓ We have a diverse recruitment strategy to ensure our approach to talent management is representative and inclusive.

A diverse group of smiling people of various ethnicities and ages. In the center, a man with a beard and brown hair smiles. To his left, a Black man with a beard and a woman with blonde hair smile. To his right, a woman with dark curly hair and a woman with long black hair smile. The background is a light-colored wall.

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



# Ethnicity statistics



We launched our **Everyone Counts** document setting out our top workforce and community priorities.

A new **inclusion calendar** has been promoted to staff to improve knowledge of and celebrate different cultures to support communication and engagement.

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

### Actions taken/successes

- ✓ Equality refresher sessions for employees during 2022 covering equity, inclusive language, intersectionality, and unconscious bias.
- ✓ The council's new recruitment system includes capability to report on recruitment success rates by protected characteristic and includes an anonymised recruitment functionality.
- ✓ We have reviewed our recruitment policy to ensure it reflects our commitment to inclusive recruitment practices.
- ✓ Hybrid working is actively used in recruitment advertising to attract a wider and more diverse recruitment pool.
- ✓ Our ASPIRE talent management programme, honararia scheme and training opportunities have included colleagues from all groups.

	Count	%
Any other Asian background	1	0.31%
Any other Black Background	0	0.00%
Any other ethnic group	1	0.31%
Any other White background	1	0.31%
Bangladeshi	1	0.31%
British	306	94.73%
Caribbean	1	0.31%
Indian	8	2.48%
Irish	0	0.00%
Not Stated	1	0.31%
Pakistani	2	0.62%
White and Asian	0	0.00%
White and Black Caribbean	1	0.31%
<b>Total</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<sup>2</sup>We recognise individual people can have diverse cultural backgrounds and the categories are self-selected by individuals.





# **Our people** **disability diversity**



# Disability statistics



## 14 employees

have declared themselves as disabled; an increase from last year which was 9

The number of employees who have disclosed a disability is likely to still be under reported

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

### Actions taken/successes

- ✓ Our ASPIRE talent management programme, honoraria scheme and training opportunities have included colleagues from all groups.
- ✓ We have promoted the importance of colleagues updating their information.
- ✓ Health and wellbeing strategy and online wellbeing resource hub introduced during 2021/22.
- ✓ Identified and trained wellbeing champions to support our workforce.
- ✓ Offered a range of selfcare webinars.
- ✓ Delivered Mental Health First Aid training for managers and wellbeing champions.
- ✓ Regular employee wellbeing surveys conducted. Consistently indicate high satisfaction ratings from employees about flexibility and support at work. December 2021, 87% satisfaction rate.
- ✓ Wellbeing surveys include NHS Every Mind Matters metrics and in December 2021 specific metrics to measure our health and wellbeing strategy.
- ✓ Received an IESE certificate of excellence for our workforce support.

**Not disclosed**  
11 employees  
3.41%

**Disabled**  
14 employees  
4.33%

**Not disabled**  
298 employees  
92.26%

A woman with curly hair is shown in profile, looking up towards the sun. The background is a blurred park scene with green trees and a bright sun creating a lens flare effect. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white box.

# Our people

**Absence, health, and wellbeing**



# Absence data summary



Between 01.04.21 and 31.03.22



Comparison: between 01.04.20 and 31.03.21



Both short- and long-term absence are higher than the previous year, but we have exceeded our absence target of 6.95.

# Absence statistics



## Short-term absence

130

occasions of  
short-term absence  
(92 employees)

24

of those 92 employees  
had **more than 1**  
short-term absence

## Long-term absence

16

occasions of  
long-term absence  
(16 employees)

## Absence by reason

### Top 5 absence reasons by number of occasions of absence were:

1. COVID-19
2. Cough/Cold/Flu/Virus
3. Gastrointestinal
4. Stress/Anxiety/Depression
5. Eyes/Throat/Mouth

### Top 5 absence reasons by number of FTE days lost were:

1. COVID-19
2. Stress/Anxiety/Depression
3. Cough/Cold/Flu/Viral
4. Gastrointestinal and  
Musculoskeletal

# Absence statistics



## Number of occasions of absence vs number of employees absent

Absence Category	2021/22		2020/2021	
	Occasions of absence	Number of employees	Occasions of absence	Number of employees
Gastrointestinal	19	15	9	8
Cough/Cold/Flu/Viral	26	22	13	11
Musculoskeletal	20	15	8	7
Stress/Anxiety/Depression	16	15	10	8
No Self-Certification	6	3	3	3
Eyes/Throat/Mouth	14	13	5	4
Pregnancy related	4	1	1	1
Headache/Migraine	7	7	9	9
Respiratory	3	3	1	1
Genitourinary/Gynaecological	10	6	2	2
Heart/Cardiovascular	2	2	0	0
Life Threatening Illness	0	0	1	1
COVID-19	38	35	33	29
Other	1	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>84</b>

- In some instances, occasions of absence are higher than the number of employees absent. This occurs where an individual has had more than one absence in the same category.
- 2021/22 shows an increase in absence compared to 2020/21. However, it is likely that lockdown and furlough (Leisure Centres) directly and indirectly reduced the incidents and reporting of short-term absence. Apart from covid cases, 2021/22 short-term absence categories are more in line with pre-pandemic levels.



## Absence by Age statistics



Ages	Absence count	Total days lost	Long-term days lost	Short-term days lost	Top causes of absence
16-18	2.00	2.41	0.00	2.41	Cough/Cold/Flu
19-25	47.00	186.14	133.95	52.19	Gastrointestinal and Cough/Cold/Flu
26-35	20.00	57.74	0.00	57.74	Musculoskeletal
36-45	28.00	261.31	117.00	144.31	Covid-19
46-55	16.00	216.67	125.14	91.53	Stress/Anxiety/Depression
56 Plus	53.00	754.92	547.20	207.72	Covid-19
SUM	166.00	1479.18	923.29	555.89	

- As with previous years, those aged 56 and over had the highest number of total days absence
- Absence rates for those aged 19-25 have increased





**Our learning and how it has  
improved our ways of working**



# How pandemic learning has informed our people strategy



2020-2022 has enabled us to test out virtual working concepts and ensure the organisation has the right workforce strategies in place to support council priorities and working practices going forward. The council is its people not its premises and the location for carrying out a work activity should be driven by customer and business need. However, the organisation has also learnt the importance of adapting people management policies and working arrangements to maximise improved ways of working.

Developing our Ways of Working guide to help us navigate our new modern hybrid working comprising of collaboration in our new Community Hub alongside virtual and agile working

Deploying new technology to support the Council's digital and transformation plans

Changing our flexible working scheme to support 7-day working to maximise customer service and flexibility for our workforce

Introducing wellbeing and engagement metrics

**Strong health and safety practices** – we have temporarily discounted covid related absence for our absence triggers

New digital online employee wellbeing resource hub providing wellbeing information, resources

**Wellbeing Wednesday** - weekly wellbeing communication information to promote positive physical and mental wellbeing

Customised webinars and on a range of wellbeing themes

Piloting a 'trust based' time and attendance option which has a better fit with hybrid working

Certificate of excellence award for our people and wellbeing achievements by iESE in 2022

Improved induction programme to improve the experience for new starters including a workplace buddy



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 she is holding. 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 2022 executive summary



What 3 words would best describe the council as an employer?

**Flexible, Supportive and Fair**

Would you recommend South Staffordshire Council as a place to work?

**93.5% said yes**

On a scale of 0-10, do you feel valued and part of the council?

**81% scored 7-10**

***“One of the best councils I have worked for, keep doing what you are doing!”***

***“The council has worked hard to develop and maintain a friendly, caring yet focused culture. It is important to recognise what we have and to continue to work to maintain/improve”***

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


***Flexibility, hybrid working, flexitime, positive relationships, great colleagues, friendly supportive culture, good employee benefits, great wellbeing support, good training opportunities, interesting work***

## Issues and challenges from the survey that we will consider as part of our workforce support

- Pay and the cost-of-living crisis
- Workload
- Continuing to improve communication and collaboration for hybrid workers

***“Love being a part of South Staffs Council and supporting local residents”***



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. A semi-transparent white box with a thin red border is centered over the hands, containing the text.

**Our actions for 2022/23 to help us recruit  
and retain a diverse workforce  
and continually improve our culture.**

# Actions for 2022/23



## Actions for 2022/23 to help us recruit and retain a diverse workforce and continually improve our culture

### Recruitment and retention

- Introduce anonymised recruitment
- New recruitment incentive pilots including targeted support for work experience and people receiving out of work benefits
- Career support to promote jobs and apprentices for local young people
- New enhanced work experience scheme to support upskilling and getting young people work ready
- Use of the apprentice levy to support career development for existing employees
- Launch a sixth cohort of ASPIRE our talent management programme ensuring delegate representation is inclusive

### Inclusive leadership, strategies, and culture

- Update our community and workforce data to inform our equality objectives and actions
- Continue with the roll out of our management coaching programme to support our inclusive leadership culture
- Implement a new trust-based time and attendance scheme
- Consideration of minimising impacts of the cost-of-living crisis where we can

### Learning and development

- Inclusive recruitment and unconscious bias training
- Training on conducting equality impact assessments
- New data and analytics course to improve the collation and analysis of more intelligent data
- Community Engagement training

### Wellbeing

- Taking forward our new employee benefits scheme to support financial wellbeing.
- Provide information and support on the menopause
- Apply for Wellbeing Charter Assessment
- Explore the social model of disability
- Introduce guidance/resources for conducting wellbeing conversations

### Collecting and analysing data

- Capture more intelligent data on why our employees leave to improve retention of talent from underrepresented groups
- Report on recruitment and selection success rates by protected characteristic to identify any barriers
- Update our ethnic group and LGBTQ+ data categories to ensure we are in line with data descriptors from national sources and best practice
- Encourage take-up of updating personal information particularly disability to inform our workforce support
- Introduce 'carer dependant' as a new data capture category to inform our working practices and support
- Obtain pay data and employee salary sacrifice scheme preferences to assist with pay reviews and financial wellbeing
- Gather data/intelligence from school leavers regarding further education/employment and career plans to inform our support
- Review the segmentation of data of future wellbeing surveys to provide greater understanding of wellbeing in service teams

**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

**STANDARDS AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2022**

**CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE**

**REPORT OF TEAM MANAGER ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROTECTION AND  
LICENSING**

**PART A – SUMMARY REPORT**

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 To note the work being undertaken on Corporate Health and Safety during the past year, and to agree future work priorities and delivery proposals.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Committee discuss and note the progress made on meeting our obligations with regard to Corporate Health and Safety during the last year, and to support future work priorities and delivery.

**3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

POLICY/COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Council Plan objectives?	
	YES	Prosperous Communities
	Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) been completed?	
	NO	Not required as no changes being proposed.
SCRUTINY POWERS APPLICABLE	NO	Report to Standards and Resources Committee
KEY DECISION	NO	
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	FURTHER 12 MONTHS	
FINANCIAL IMPACT	YES	Fulfilling the Council's obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 is met from existing budgets. Reducing financial burden and risk of insurance claims.

LEGAL ISSUES	YES	The Council has common law and statutory duty relating to the health and safety of its employees, contractors and members of the public under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and its related regulations and approved codes of practice.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	YES	<p>Risk of non-compliance with Health and safety legislation detailed in corporate risk register.</p> <p>Opportunity to have positive impact on employees health and wellbeing</p>
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	NONE	

## **PART B – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **4. INFORMATION**

#### **4.1 Background Information**

Health and safety is about preventing people from being harmed by work or becoming ill through work. As an authority we have both a legal and moral duty towards our own employees, contractors and members of the public.

Currently Corporate Health and Safety is co-ordinated by the Team Manager Environmental Health Protection and Licensing, with support from within the team.

We have an established Health and Safety Steering Group which meets on a six weekly basis. This is chaired by the Team Manager, Environmental Health Protection and Licensing, and is attended by various representatives, including from Community Services, Enterprise, Elected Members, and representatives of ELT / CLT. This group works very well in bringing any issues or concerns forward, and is also an excellent forum for discussing risks, emerging issues, and performance managing the Health and Safety Improvement Plan. Attendance at this group from the various representatives has been good, and is considered to be critical. The group has continued to meet virtually over the last year, and are now hoping to meet in person again.

A Health and Safety area is maintained on the Core where all documents, policies and risk assessments are available, including minutes of the steering group meetings. Risk assessments are reviewed on an annual basis.

## 4.2 Focus of the last year

### First aid provision

We have a team of trained first aiders / fire marshals operating in a joint role, with a rota in place for Codsall Community Hub to provide cover every day. The team have been trained in evac chair use. This is to enable them to safely and comfortably transport any persons who are unable to use the stairs in the event of an evacuation, particularly in the event of a fire when the lifts would not be accessible. The new build now provides for safe refuges on landing areas with call points to summon assistance in this instance.

Leisure duty officers, and Bagderidge rangers are also first aid trained. Street scene staff have also received emergency first aid training, and an additional session is being provided for the tree gang imminently.

First aid supplies are also checked and replenished as required.

### Fire marshal training

Fire evacuation refresher training has been delivered for lead fire marshals. Again, a rota is in place to cover weekdays in the Community Hub.

### Lockdown policy

A working group have devised a lockdown procedure to be implemented in case of an incident in the community hub and is intended to include council staff and tenants. The procedure is based on the dynamic lockdown principles which can be adapted according to the situation, built around guidance and advice issued by the Protect UK (formerly the National Counter Terrorism Security Office). It is in the process of final approval at which point it will be implemented through appropriate briefings/training.

A security barrier has been installed in the reception area to secure areas of the Hub that are not open to the public on all days, for example on Saturday and Sunday.

The Health and Safety Team have supported Customer Services in implementing risk assessments, particularly for the welcome desk function, and also in supporting contentious public meetings.

### Trees

A survey of all trees we are responsible for across the district is ongoing, and safety work on the highest risk trees is prioritised.



### Construction projects

Across our estates several construction projects are on going which are managed by the Enterprise Team. An external verification and monitoring company has recently given the site a Wombourne a very complimentary audit report.

### Audiometry and Hand Arm Vibration Assessments

These assessments are carried out for a limited number of our staff who are exposed to noise or hand arm vibration through work. These are usually from using power tools. The appropriate assessments have been undertaken, and any adjustments have been implemented, and exposure is closely monitored. We are also reviewing equipment on purchase and generally replacing petrol machinery with battery operated to reduce noise and vibration at source.

### Events

The team provided significant support for the events hosted by South Staffordshire last summer, including the Queens Baton Relay, the Community Hub Opening, and the time trails. This included attending County and regional safety Advisory Groups, and also preparing event management plans and risk assessments.

### Training for Elected Members

In partnership with Human Resources and LGA a session was delivered for elected members on personal safety, including online safety.

### Risk assessments, Policies and Adjustments

We continue to undertake and review risk assessments as required. Maternity risk assessments are also completed and reviewed at appropriate timings.

The team have this year supported with a number of adjustment assessments for staff with disabilities and implemented reasonable adjustments, for example sight and hearing difficulties. Occupational health risk assessments have also been undertaken, for example in the case of asthma.

Policies continue to be reviewed.

## **4.2 Accident update**

There have not been any significant reportable accidents, however there was an incident in December during the particularly cold spell where a member of the public went on to ice at one of our open waters. The member of public was safety rescued, and we were compliant, however unfortunately the dog who ran on to the ice and entered the water sadly passed away. This incident, along with drownings at other sites outside of South Staffordshire has led us to review our provision of lifesaving equipment, and the possibility of these being secured until required.



#### **4.3 Resourcing**

Due to the structure of the Environmental Health Protection & Licensing team changing, we are currently recruiting to a permanent part time role for a Health and Safety officers. Until the post is recruited to we are reallocating staffing resource time to cover the function.

#### **4.4 Going forward**

The team will continue to support construction projects, including the Wombourne development, and leisure centre refurbishments.

Policies will also be reviewed including the overarching Health and Safety Policy.

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

None identified.

### **6. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

An update on the management of corporate health and safety is provided annually.

### **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

Report prepared by: Jenny Rhodes, Team Manager Environmental Health Protection and Licensing

