



**Item: 1**

**Human Resources Sub-committee: 26 May 2026.**

**Human Resources – Annual Overview.**

**Report by Director of Infrastructure and Organisational Development.**

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## **1. Overview**

- 1.1. This report presents an overview of Human Resources statistics and employee data for 2025/26, for members' information.
- 1.2. Although some elements of workforce data are reported to service committees as performance indicators on a six-monthly basis, in terms of the Scheme of Administration, the Human Resources Sub-committee should receive an Annual Overview report covering key areas of information on the workforce and transactional activity.
- 1.3. The relevant data and information is attached as Appendices 1 and 2 to this report, along with commentary and analysis.
- 1.4. There are a number of key transactional activities around workforce management and recruitment which are undertaken or co-ordinated by the Human Resources and Organisational Development service which are not generally brought to the attention of Elected Members as they are operational in nature. However, this report provides a useful overview of these, and associated trends compared to previous years.
- 1.5. Included in the statistics is data on the following areas:
  - Recruitment activity and associated processes.
  - Occupational Health.
  - Sickness Absence.
  - Job Evaluation.
  - Change in Establishment process.
  - Staffing numbers.
  - Manager Policy Briefings.
  - Customer Enquiries.
  - Formal employee processes.
  - Leaver information.
  - Occupation Health Summary of Medical and Health Information.

- 1.6. Due to the low numbers in some categories of formal employee processes, and the risk therefore of identifying individuals, this has been regarded as exempt information and is contained in Appendix 2.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Sub-committee:
  - i. Note the Human Resources Statistics and Employee Data for 2025/26, attached as Appendices 1 and 2 to this report.

## 3. Exempt and/or Confidential Information

- 3.1. Under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public should be excluded from the meeting in respect of any discussion relating to Appendix 2. Appendix 2 contains exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

### For Further Information please contact:

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### Implications of Report

1. **Financial** – There are no significant financial implications arising directly from this report.
2. **Legal** – There are no significant legal implications arising directly from this report.
3. **Corporate Governance** – The receipt of annual reports relating to staff numbers and statistics is a referred matter of the Human Resources Sub-committee.
4. **Human Resources** – The information in this report is used to help inform workforce priorities and actions and to monitor trends within the Council.
5. **Equalities** – An Equality Impact Assessment is not required for performance monitoring.
6. **Island Communities Impact** – An Island Communities Impact Assessment is not required for performance monitoring.
7. **Links to Council Plan** – The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:
  - Growing our economy.
  - Strengthening our Communities.
  - Developing our Infrastructure.

- Transforming our Council.
8. **Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan** – The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
- Cost of Living.
  - Sustainable Development.
  - Local Equality.
  - Improving Population Health.
9. **Environmental and Climate Risk** – Not applicable.
10. **Risk** – Not applicable.
11. **Procurement** – Not applicable.
12. **Health and Safety** – Not applicable.
13. **Property and Assets** – Not applicable.
14. **Information Technology** – Not applicable.
15. **Cost of Living** – Not applicable.

### **List of Background Papers**

Human Resources Sub-committee – 27 May 2025: Item 3 – Human Resources – Annual Overview

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Human Resources statistics 2025/26.

Appendix 2: Employee data 2025/26.

## Appendix 1

### Human Resources Statistics for 2025/26

Production of statistics now reflects the revised Council Service structure which was implemented during 2025/26. This makes direct comparison with previous years less straightforward.

Data for 2024/25 is included for reference and where it has been possible to produce historical data reflecting the new Council structure this has been included.

<b>1. Recruitment Activity</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>
Advertised Vacancies	890	<b>771</b>
Re-advertised Vacancies	225	<b>165</b>
Offers Made	790	<b>896</b>
Total job applicants	3519	<b>3699</b>

Recruitment activity levels whilst still high, are lower this year in terms of the number of vacancies advertised and number of posts requiring to be re-advertised, and offers of employment made has increased all of which are positive signs in relation to recruiting staff.

Recruitment is and will continue in the coming years to be a challenge and a priority particularly in care, early learning and childcare, and within professional and managerial posts.

Following implementation of the revised Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure, work to support Services with recruitment activity continues to be a significant focus for Human Resources, reviewing advert styles, documentation and information we share with applicants and how we share it to make applicants more informed about roles and employment with the Council and that the information can be simply and quickly accessed, as well as the process of recruitment continuing to be as quick and simple as it can be.

## 2. New Employees Recruited to the Council

Contract Type	Permanent	Relief	Temporary	Total
<b>Year</b>	<b>2025/26</b>			
Council Overall	<b>141</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>273</b>
Chief Executive Service	0	0	1	1
Education, Communities and Housing	61	54	16	131
Enterprise and Resources	16	17	2	35
Infrastructure and Organisational Development	18	6	1	25
Orkney Health and Care	46	34	1	81

Contract Type	Permanent	Relief	Temporary	Total
<b>Year</b>	<b>2024/25</b>			
Council Overall	<b>160</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>318</b>
Education, Leisure, and Housing	52	67	23	142
Enterprise and Strategic Regeneration	19	10	4	33
Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure	30	11	3	44
Orkney Health and Care	44	36	3	83
Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions	15	0	1	16

## 2.1. Current Employees moving jobs or taking up additional jobs.

<b>Contract Type</b>	<b>Permanent</b>	<b>Relief</b>	<b>Temporary</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Year</b>	<b>2025/26</b>			
Council Overall	<b>144</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>217</b>
Chief Executive Service	1	1	0	<b>2</b>
Education, Communities and Housing	66	10	26	<b>102</b>
Enterprise and Resources	15	3	4	<b>22</b>
Infrastructure and Organisational Development	11	1	1	<b>13</b>
Orkney Health and Care	51	21	6	<b>78</b>

<b>Contract Type</b>	<b>Permanent</b>	<b>Relief</b>	<b>Temporary</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Year</b>	<b>2024/25</b>			
Council Overall	<b>183</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>396</b>
Education, Leisure, and Housing	68	44	47	<b>159</b>
Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration	29	14	2	<b>45</b>
Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure	18	19	6	<b>42</b>
Orkney Health and Care	57	72	6	<b>135</b>
Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions	11	1	2	<b>14</b>

### 3. Vacancies (Permanent established posts vacancies only) at 31 March 2026

	<b>Vacant Posts (Number)</b>	<b>Establishment Posts</b>	<b>Vacant Posts (Number) %</b>	<b>Vacant Posts (FTE)</b>	<b>Establishment FTE</b>	<b>Vacant Posts (FTE) %</b>
Council Overall	389	2712	14.34%	235.10	1912.07	12.30%
Chief Executive Service	3	37	8.11%	3.00	35.50	8.45%
Education Communities and Housing	161	1432	11.24%	68.20	888.78	7.67%
Enterprise and Resources	29	316	9.18%	22.43	235.09	9.54%
Infrastructure and Organisational Development	26	274	9.49%	22.79	262.03	8.70%
Orkney Health and Care	170	653	26.03%	118.68	490.67	24.19%

<b>Year 2024/25</b>	<b>Vacant Posts (Number)</b>	<b>Establishment Posts</b>	<b>Vacant Posts (Number) %</b>	<b>Vacant Posts (FTE)</b>	<b>Establishment FTE</b>	<b>Vacant Posts (FTE) %</b>
Council Overall	363	2985	12.16%	221.39	2066.55	10.71%
Education, Leisure, and Housing	102	1365	6.34%	38.98	854.18	4.56%
Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration	20	315	9.26%	13.62	233.07	5.84%
Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure	38	410	24.81%	29.22	306.71	9.52%
Orkney Health and Care	168	677	16.05%	117.86	503.74	23.39%
Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions	35	218	12.16%	21.71	168.85	12.85%

#### 4. Occupational Health

<b>2024/25</b>	
Pre-employment Questionnaire	389
Pre-employment Assessment	48
Management Referrals	124
Review Appointments	68
Ill Health Retirement Appointments	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>642</b>

<b>2025/26</b>	<b>Total</b>
Occupational Health Adviser Appointments	34
Occupational Health Adviser Complex	3
Occupational Health Physician Appointments	166
Occupational Health Physician Complex	14
Occupational Health Senior Physician Consultation	10
Request to amend report	7
Clinical Review	23
Certificate Rework	10
Report Rework	9
GP/Specialist Report	22
Ill-Health Retirement	10
Physiotherapy	1
Pre-Employment Checking - Health Questionnaire	679
Pre-Employment Checking - Firefighter and Airfield Workers	6
Pre-Employment Checking - Lone Workers	8
Pre-Employment Checking - Night workers	12
Pre-Employment Checking - Employees Working at Heights	1
Pre-Employment Checking - Employees Working in Confined spaces	1
Pre-Employment Checking – Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS)	1
Cancelled Appointments	24
Did Not Attend Appointments	92

The Council is now well into the new Occupational Health provider contract, which commenced in August 2025.

This has seen a fundamental shift in how we access Occupational Health advice and support with online referrals and reporting, and a dramatic reduction in timescales for accessing appointments from weeks to days. HR have reviewed and implemented new pre-employment health assessment processes linked to the health surveillance requirements for particular posts to ensure that Services are getting more directly relevant health assessments before we employ people.

We are now working on the roll out of secure manager access to the Occupational Health system so that managers can directly make referrals and will receive advice and guidance directly from Occupational Health rather than via Human Resources to make the process of managing and supporting employee health and wellbeing simpler and easier.

We now get more detailed statistics and data from the new Occupational Health provider, which has enabled us this year to identify a concern over employees failing to attend scheduled appointments largely in pre-employment checking and to make changes to process to address this and reduce associated costs for missed appointments.

## 5.Sickness Absence (Reasons for Sickness and FTE Days Lost)

2025/26	Chief Executive Service	Education Communities and Housing	Enterprise and Resources	Infrastructure and Organisational Dev	Orkney Health and Care	Council Total	Council Total % 25/26
Minor Illness/Conditions	51.3	3050.21	323.76	703.97	1210.88	<b>5340.12</b>	<b>25.60%</b>
Injuries/Accidents	10.5	270.39	0	16.5	77.42	<b>374.81</b>	<b>1.80%</b>
Injuries/Accidents - work related	0	207.68	0	21	60	<b>288.68</b>	<b>1.38%</b>
Recurring Medical Conditions	0	269.44	28.38	192	56.7	<b>546.52</b>	<b>2.62%</b>
Acute Medical Condition	0	1133.01	312.19	278	597.54	<b>2320.74</b>	<b>11.13%</b>
Hospitalisation for Treatment	29	841.49	161.11	208.95	371.02	<b>1611.57</b>	<b>7.73%</b>
Musculoskeletal Injuries	0	1371.69	344.94	527.5	1282.56	<b>3526.69</b>	<b>16.91%</b>
Stress	0	481.93	58.43	49	657.71	<b>1247.07</b>	<b>5.98%</b>
Stress - work related	0	673.09	158.27	14	351.04	<b>1196.4</b>	<b>5.74%</b>
Mental Ill Health	0	765.21	171.73	284	1430.63	<b>2651.57</b>	<b>12.71%</b>
Maternity/Pregnancy related	4	119.29	0	0	98.58	<b>221.87</b>	<b>1.06%</b>
Phased Return to Work	0	179.42	31.98	42	64.82	<b>318.22</b>	<b>1.53%</b>
Other	12	225.56	16	7	767.23	<b>1027.79</b>	<b>4.93%</b>
COVID-19	7	65.46	7	0	21	<b>100.46</b>	<b>0.48%</b>
Menopause or Andropause	0	8.4	72	0	4	<b>84.4</b>	<b>0.40%</b>
No Reason Given	0	0	0	0	2.53	<b>2.53</b>	<b>0.01%</b>
<b>Total FTE Days lost</b>	<b>113.8</b>	<b>9662.27</b>	<b>1685.79</b>	<b>2343.92</b>	<b>7053.66</b>	<b>20859.44</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>% of Council</b>	<b>0.55%</b>	<b>46.32%</b>	<b>8.08%</b>	<b>11.24%</b>	<b>33.82%</b>		

Overall this year the Council's level of sickness absence days lost has declined slightly. Whilst this is a positive direction, levels of sickness absence continue to be above our PI (performance indicator) targets, which is a general trend across the public sector over recent years since the pandemic ended.

The top two reasons for absence remain Minor Illness/Condition and mental ill health (including stress and work related stress).

A revised Managing Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure is presently being consulted on with the Trade Unions and will be brought forward for approval in the autumn. The review keeps the focus on supportive, consistent management of absence and refines approaches and improved guidance and support for managers in how to effectively manage absence to aim to continue to reduce levels of sickness absence.

2024/25	Education Leisure and Housing	Enterprise and Strategic Resources	Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure	Orkney Health and Care	Strategy Performance and Business Solutions	Council Total	Council Total % 25/26
Minor Illness/Conditions	3138.18	690.77	1099.16	1954.33	266.54	<b>7148.98</b>	<b>32.71%</b>
Injuries/Accidents	177.8	23.14	34.68	82.41	1.35	<b>319.38</b>	<b>1.46%</b>
Injuries/Accidents - work related	0	0	27.39	61.81	0	<b>89.2</b>	<b>0.41%</b>
Recurring Medical Conditions	174.55	51	70.3	109	165.49	<b>570.34</b>	<b>2.61%</b>
Acute Medical Condition	394.4	292.66	378.68	820.68	143.36	<b>2029.78</b>	<b>9.29%</b>
Hospitalisation for Treatment	570.07	197.54	299.11	348.92	143.08	<b>1558.72</b>	<b>7.13%</b>
Musculoskeletal Injuries	358.13	253.78	766.08	863.67	24.25	<b>2265.91</b>	<b>10.37%</b>
Stress	576.64	130.31	218.58	1171.09	127.06	<b>2223.68</b>	<b>10.18%</b>
Stress - work related	558.67	196.19	9	517.62	199.71	<b>1481.19</b>	<b>6.78%</b>
Mental Ill Health	315.27	78	171.25	590.36	54	<b>1208.88</b>	<b>5.53%</b>
Maternity/Pregnancy related	140.59	0	0	67.07	24.4	<b>232.06</b>	<b>1.06%</b>
Phased Return to Work	161.03	26	61.43	33.2	116.4	<b>398.06</b>	<b>1.82%</b>
Other	353.42	129.6	225.84	928.26	134.04	<b>1771.16</b>	<b>8.10%</b>
COVID-19	74.35	3.57	68.39	57.74	9.51	<b>213.56</b>	<b>0.98%</b>
Menopause or Andropause	17.59	25	0	0.24	0	<b>42.83</b>	<b>0.20%</b>
No Reason Given	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
<b>Total FTE Days lost</b>	<b>7310.69</b>	<b>2097.56</b>	<b>3428.88</b>	<b>7606.4</b>	<b>1410.18</b>	<b>21853.71</b>	<b>98.63%</b>
<b>% of Council</b>	<b>33.46%</b>	<b>9.59%</b>	<b>15.69%</b>	<b>34.81%</b>	<b>6.45%</b>		

## 6. Job Evaluations Reviews and Appeals 2025/26

2025/26	Job Reviews	Job Evaluations	Appeals	Total	% of Council
<b>Council Overall</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>49</b>	
Chief Executive Service	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Education Communities and Housing	19	5	0	24	48.98%
Enterprise and Resources	6	5	0	11	22.45%
Infrastructure and Organisational Development	7	5	0	12	24.49%
Orkney Health and Care	0	2	0	2	4.08%

**Job Review** - a new or changed job profile which was submitted for re-evaluation but was finalised following review without formal evaluation process being carried out.

**Job Evaluation** - a new or changed job profile which was submitted for re-evaluation, which required formal evaluation process being carried out.

**Appeals** - Formal job evaluation appeal was carried out in respect of an evaluation.

2024/25	Number	% of Council
<b>Council Overall</b>	<b>51</b>	
Education Leisure and Housing	4	7.84%
Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration	9	17.65%
Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure	25	49.02%
Orkney Health and Care	11	21.57%
Strategy Performance and Business Solutions	2	3.92%

Job evaluation continues to be a key aspect of the work of Human Resources, ensuring that the Council's pay structure provides a legal defence for equal pay claims is its fundamental purpose.

Any time a job role changes or a new role is created it must be reviewed and evaluated to determine the grade and salary from the Council pay structure.

Nationally a revised version of the job evaluation scheme is being implemented in 2026 and the Council is implementing a revised Job Evaluation Policy and Procedure.

## 7. Establishment Changes

<b>2025/26</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>% of Council</b>
<b>Council Overall</b>	425	100.00%
Chief Executive Service	0	N/A
Education Communities and Housing	251	59.06%
Enterprise and Resources	56	13.18%
Infrastructure and Organisational Development	57	13.41%
Orkney Health and Care	61	14.35%

<b>2024/25</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>% of Council</b>
<b>Council Overall</b>	459	100.00%
Education Leisure and Housing	231	50.33%
Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration	48	10.46%
Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure	68	14.81%
Orkney Health and Care	86	18.74%
Strategy Performance and Business Solutions	26	5.66%

Change in Establishment is the governance process for ensuring that the Council staffing establishment is maintained as accurate and is able to be maintained within budget. Human Resources is working with the Improvement Support Team to develop a system based approach to change in establishment to replace the current paper system, which will streamline and improve the speed of the process as well as enabling managers to see where their changes are at any point in time. This system is expected to be rolled out later in 2026.

## 8. Staffing Numbers and Headcount

Council	Council Total		Permanent		Temporary		Relief	
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
	<b>01/04/2025</b>	2772	1706.6474	2031	1559.9027	192	146.7447	549
<b>01/04/2026</b>	2736	1693.3546	2033	1541.8534	176	151.5012	527	N/A
<b>Change</b>	-36	-13.2928	2	-18.0493	-16	4.7565	-22	N/A

Overall the number of employees in both headcount and Full Time Equivalent (FTE) have decreased slightly from April 2025, a decrease of 36 in head count and a decrease of 13.29 in FTE.

### Chief Executive's Service

Chief Executive's Service	Service Total		Permanent		Temporary		Relief	
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
	<b>01/04/2025</b>	37	34.1000	34	32.1000	2	2.0000	1
<b>01/04/2026</b>	36	0.0000	34		1		1	N/A
<b>Change</b>	-1	-34.1000	0	-32.1000	-1	-2.0000	0	N/A

### Education, Communities and Housing

Education, Communities and Housing	Service Total		Permanent		Temporary		Relief	
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
	<b>01/04/2025</b>	1599	984.4683	1089	882.0868	169	102.3815	341
<b>01/04/2026</b>	1526	981.5134	1087	869.3539	131	112.1595	308	N/A
<b>Change</b>	-73	-2.9550	-2	-12.7330	-38	9.7780	-33	N/A

### Enterprise and Resources

	Service Total		Permanent		Temporary		Relief	
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
<b>01/04/2025</b>	351	253.0233	232	225.5770	58	27.4463	61	N/A
<b>01/04/2026</b>	341	216.6739	252	199.8570	27	16.8169	62	N/A
<b>Change</b>	-10	-36.3494	20	-25.7200	-31	-10.6294	1	N/A

### Infrastructure and Organisational Development

	Service Total		Permanent		Temporary		Relief	
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
<b>01/04/2025</b>	254	232.2604	236	226.2604	6	6.0000	12	N/A
<b>01/04/2026</b>	265	238.6451	249	235.6451	3	3.0000	13	N/A
<b>Change</b>	11	6.3847	13	9.3847	-3	-3.0000	1	N/A

### Orkney Health and Care

	Service Total		Permanent		Temporary		Relief	
	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE
<b>01/04/2025</b>	658	327.8851	421	309.8511	18	18.0340	219	N/A
<b>01/04/2026</b>	666	335.1970	423	316.6723	18	18.5247	225	N/A
<b>Change</b>	8	7.3119	2	6.8212	0	0.4907	6	N/A

## 9. Manager HR Policy Briefings

### 2025/26

Recruitment and Selection	6	Briefings	71	Managers
Disciplinary	4	Briefings	19	Managers
Grievance	3	Briefings	7	Managers
Dignity at Work	2	Briefings	8	Managers
Sickness Absence	3	Briefings	14	Managers
Capability	3	Briefings	31	Managers

### HR Policy Briefings 24/25

Recruitment and Selection	4	Briefings	20	Managers
Disciplinary	4	Briefings	13	Managers
Grievance	4	Briefings	10	Managers
Dignity at Work	3	Briefings	17	Managers
Sickness Absence	4	Briefings	14	Managers
Capability	4	Briefings	26	Managers

Human Resources produce and deliver briefing sessions on Council HR Policies and Procedures to help and support people managers to understand and effectively use these policies. These sessions are delivered across the year both face to face and online, to enable as many managers as possible to be able to attend.

In addition to delivery of manager briefing sessions, work has been carried out to start developing e-learning HR Policy input starting with the recruitment advertising process.

## 10. Customer Enquiries

Human Resources has a high level of customer enquiries, whether it is in person, on the phone, via email and increasingly higher level of enquiries coming via MS Teams messaging, chat and video calls. We have also developed AskHR, an AI enabled chatbot, which is deployed via the Council website, so it is accessible to all managers and employees to be able to assist them in getting quick responses to employment and HR related enquiries.

These enquires range from responding to managers and employees and supporting applicants for employment. Whilst it is not possible to provide data to support every aspect of this the following telephone and email data provides some interesting information on the level of customer enquiries.

2025/26

Telephone Enquiries						
Incoming	1521	calls		60	hours 39	minutes
Outgoing	554	calls		47	hours 28	minutes
<b>Total telephone</b>	<b>2075</b>			<b>108</b>	<b>Hours</b>	

email enquiries			
225597	Incoming emails		
240614	Outgoing emails		
466211	Total email activity		

askHR useage		<a href="https://www.orkney.gov.uk/staff/askhr/">https://www.orkney.gov.uk/staff/askhr/</a>				
Number of queries	1056					

### Microsoft Teams use

Over 2025/26 a considerable increase in the volume of enquiries coming via Microsoft Teams messaging and video calls rather than telephone and email. We have been able to quantify data for the last 6 months of 2025/26 and will extend this to full year in 2027's report.

6 months ending 28/04/26	Number	Time in Hours
Teams Messages	22423	N/A
Teams Calls	927	460
Teams Meetings	407	452

2024/25

### Telephone Enquiries

5,464 incoming, calls totalling 204 hours 35 minutes were received across HR Operations.

980 outgoing calls, totalling 45 hours 7 minutes were made across HR Operations.

**Total of 6,444 calls, totalling 249 hours 44 minutes dealt with.**

### Email Enquiries

195,389 incoming email enquiries were received and responded to across HR operations.