

Update on HR Activity 2025/2026

Committee considering report:	Personnel and Standards Committee
Date of Committee:	6 th July 2026
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Vic Poole
Date Service Director agreed report: (for Corporate Board)	5 June 2026
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	18 June 2026 at Executive Briefing
Report Author:	Paula Goodwin, Service Lead - HR
Forward Plan Ref:	N/A

1 Purpose of the Report

This information report updates Personnel and Standards Committee, Corporate Board and Executive Briefing on HR activity for 2025/2026. It also includes annual workforce equality data as at 31st March 2026 and other supporting employment data, excluding schools' workforce data.

2 Recommendation(s)

This is an information report. Personnel and Standards Committee is asked to note the report and provide feedback on its contents.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	None as this is an information only report.
Human Resource:	This is an information only report so there are no direct implications from the outcome of the report.
Legal:	None
Risk Management:	None
Property:	None

Policy:	All information provided in the report take account of the relevant WBC policies and procedures.			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		This is an information only report.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		This is an information only report.
Environmental Impact:		X		None
Health Impact:		X		None
ICT Impact:		X		None
Digital Services Impact:		X		None
Council Strategy Priorities:		X		This update report provides information that supports the Council's Strategy and associated KPI's that relate to the workforce.
Core Business:		X		This update report provides information that supports the Council's Strategy and

				associated KPI's that relate to the workforce.
Data Impact:		X		None as all data is anonymised.
Consultation and Engagement:	Corporate Board Executive Briefing Service Director, Strategy & Governance Portfolio Holder with responsibility for HR			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 This information report provides Corporate Board, Executive Briefing and Personnel and Standards Committee with a year-end update on HR matters for 2025/2026.
- 4.2 The report includes employment and equalities data either as at 31st March 2026 or across the full 2025/2026 year. Each dataset states the relevant date or period. Appendix A provides detailed data on posts, starters, leavers and EDI, giving a broader picture of the Council's workforce.
- 4.3 The report updates on recruitment, training, employee experience and performance management, including casework and appraisals. Key points are:
- (a) Casework across WBC increased compared with 2024/2025. This includes disciplinary and capability matters, grievances, sickness absence, ill-health retirement and related adjustments, TUPE, restructures and redundancies.
 - (b) Voluntary turnover for corporate staff increased to 13.1%, up from 10.4%. Crude turnover for all leavers increased to 16.08%, up from 12.9%. However there was a higher peak of restructures and turnover as a result which would explain some of the increase.
 - (c) Sickness absence fell to 9.20 days per worker in 2025/26, down from 10.13 days in 2024/25. While sickness absence related case work remains high, this should be considered within the context of a more robust and proactive management approach to attendance being implemented across the Council. This includes increased management oversight, earlier intervention, improved monitoring arrangements and more consistent application of the Workplace Attendance Procedure.
 - (d) It should be noted that the Council's current sickness absence rate of 9.2 days remains below the CIPD public sector benchmark figure of 9.4 days, indicating that overall absence levels continue to compare favourably against wider public sector trends.

5 Employment Data

- 5.1 Appendix A details the employment data and equalities data relating to WBC.
- 5.2 See table below for headcount and post data for the last five years (this data excludes all temporary posts and agency and off contract workers).

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Headcount	1532	1511	1537	1552	1562
Post FTE	1667.93	1731.10	1767.83	1650.95	1673.64
Occupied FTE	1362.10	1357.90	1387.80	1412.92	1419.92
Vacant FTE	305.83	373.20	380.03	238.03	253.72
Individual Vacant Posts	-	-	-	233	257
Number of agency workers	-	-	169	114	122

From 2024/25 posts are recorded as number of vacant posts, which relates to the number of wholly vacant posts rather than part of a post being vacant. Part posts are included in the Vacant FTE. The table below shows the breakdown of the reasons posts are vacant as at the 31st March 2026.

Total vacancy figure breakdown as at 31 st March 2026	
No of vacant posts	257
Live adverts	104
In Onboarding/Starting after the 31 st March 2026	69
Vacant posts not accounted for (<i>Note: posts are either on hold, subject to organisational change processes, or are only recently vacant so awaiting instructions on recruitment</i>)	84

Note: Total number of agency workers	122
Agency workers excluding care homes	53

- 5.3 Crude turnover (all reasons for leaving) increased to 16.08% over the past 12 months, up from 12.9%. Vacant posts also increased from 233 to 257 as at 31st March 2026. A further breakdown of vacancy reasons is provided later in the report. Early 2025/2026 CIPD data suggests the average UK annual employee turnover rate is around 15%–19%.
- 5.4 The equalities data in Appendix A is drawn from the HR/payroll system (iTrent), using information provided by applicants and employees through recruitment and employee self-service. Employees are asked to record ethnicity and disability status under the Equality Act 2010, although some choose not to disclose this information. Age data is collected automatically for administrative purposes, including pension administration.
- 5.5 Other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, including sexual orientation and religion, have been added more recently as sufficient recruitment data has become available. However, a high proportion of records remain “unknown” because employees provide this information voluntarily.

5.6 Exit Data

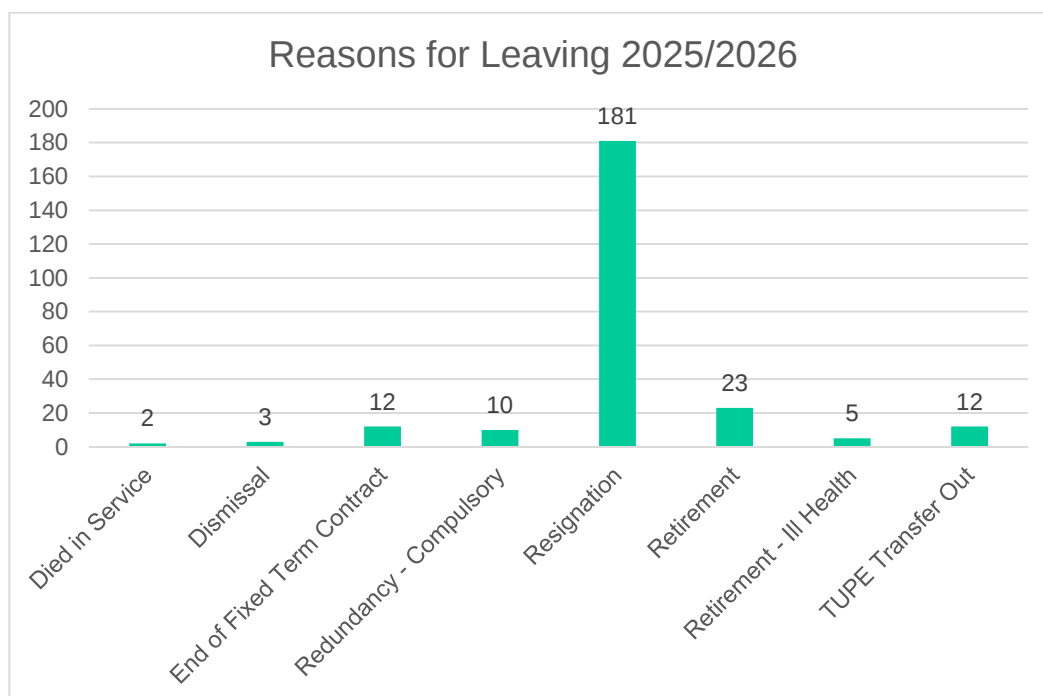
Over the last 12 months there were 181 resignations from employees who left the Council, internal movers are not included in this figure. There were 187 internal moves from staff who changed job roles. See 6.2 for more information. In effect 368 employees left or changed roles at the Council of which 181 left the Council completely and 187 remained at the Council but in different roles. All employees who resigned (left the Council) up to the end of May 2026 were asked to complete an exit questionnaire or take part in an exit interview with the HR Business Partnering Team. Currently, 15% of resigning leavers completed exit interviews/questionnaires. From 1st June 2026, the process has changed to improve data collection and better inform retention activity. 3 new online leaver questionnaires, tailored to reason for leaving, are now issued through iTrent Employee Self Service. This will provide data for all voluntary leavers, internal movers and those that leave the Council within 12 months of starting. This is early days to be able to provide any feedback on the data collected yet.

Understanding voluntary turnover is important in identifying and addressing trends in why staff leave. The revised process, together with reminders and access through Employee Self Service after leaving, is intended to increase completion rates to at least 50% and provide better data to support future retention work. It will also support the reasoning behind why staff choose to stay with the Council and change jobs internally.

In 2025/2026, 23% of voluntary resignations were from employees with less than one year's service. The data shows an almost even split across the four Directorates for leavers with under 12 months' service. Again the new leaver questionnaire for this specific set of employees will help inform the reasons for leaving and whether proactive actions are required to reduce such turnover.

- 5.7 The graph below shows the current stated reasons for leaving on the leaver form for

2025/2026 and is for all leavers.



- 5.8 We are currently reviewing our Probation Procedure following the implementation of the Employment Rights Act 2025 surrounding Unfair Dismissal that comes into force on 1 January 2027 but will be effective from 1 July 2026.

6 Talent Attraction

Recruitment

- 6.1 We have had a total of 227 new starters in the period 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026. This compares to 214 new starters in 2024/25. These figures are based on new external applicants.
- 6.2 From 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026 187 positions were filled by internal staff moves, which is just over 40% of all roles filled.
- 6.3 We have seen an ongoing increase in traffic to the careers site with a total of 88,000 users in the period 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026, compared to 31,000 users the year prior.
- 6.4 Visibility of the site has improved; the numbers of users landing on our careers site from online search engines has more than doubled – now 62,000.
- 6.5 The number of abandoned applications improved hugely when we switched to accepting CVs from an average of 63% in April 2023 to an average of 23% last year, and a further reduction to 21% this year.

- 6.6 In the last year we have successfully recruited to a number of key senior posts including Executive Director – Resources, Service Director – Transformation, Customer & ICT, Service Director – Strategy & Governance, and Service Director - Education & SEND. The Council has utilised internal expertise and resources to recruit to all these posts, reducing reliance on external providers and the associated costs. External recruitment agencies have been required in the past to support the appointment of senior management roles, and it is acknowledged that this may be required in the future.
- 6.7 We have now completed a full year of applicant experience survey results, with 267 responses. Of respondents, 77% would consider applying to West Berkshire Council again, around 63% would recommend applying to others, and around 75% said the application process met or exceeded expectations.

Agency

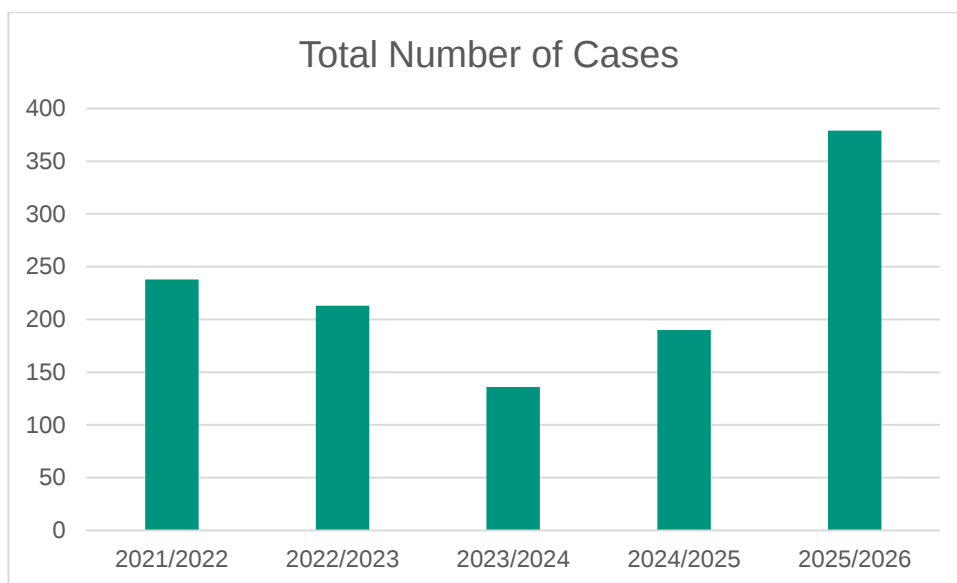
- 6.7 The total number of agency workers at the end of Q4 2025/26 was 122 compared to 114 in 2024/5 and 169 in 2023/24. Of the 122 agency workers, 53 were covering posts not in care homes. Although this is a slight increase from last year, it is snapshot data so can vary day by day.
- 6.8 Comensura agency spend year-on-year is down a further £2M in 2025/26 to £5.5M, compared to £7.5M in 2024/25 and £9.5M in 2023/24.
- 6.9 Total spend against the agency cost centre, including off contract arrangements for 2025/26 was £5.7M.
- 6.10 13 agency workers moved into permanent posts in 2025/26, saving a total of £134,394.00.
- 6.11 The average weekly spend for agency in the year 2025/26 was £100,286 compared to £111,140 in 2024/25.
- 6.12 The Council continues to benefit from use of the Comensura contract to supply permanent candidates for direct employment. This has provided eight successful appointments in hard to fill roles, removing the requirement for more costly temporary agency workers. The roles filled this year were in children's social work, educational psychology and highways engineering.

7 Performance Management – Casework

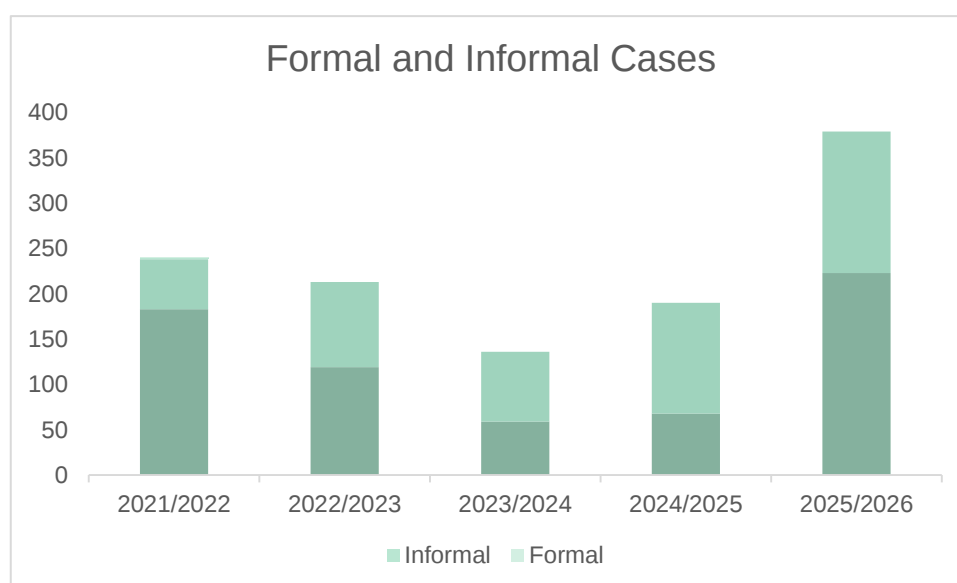
Context

- 7.1 The Council's HRBP team advises WBC managers on people management matters. For this report, casework includes:
- Disciplinary and capability
 - Grievances
 - Sickness absence, ill-health retirement, and related adjustments
 - TUPE, restructures, and redundancies.

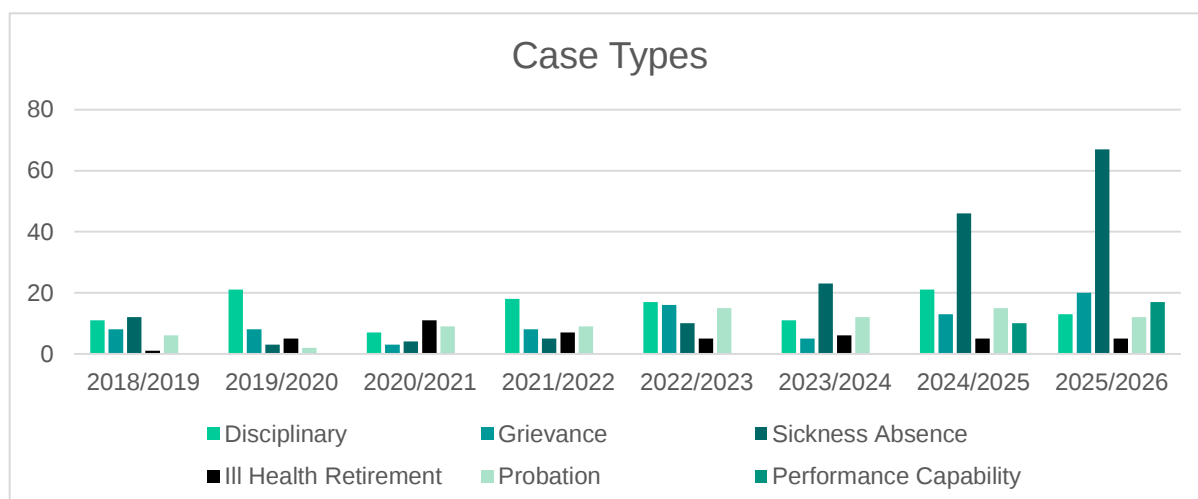
- 7.2 The previous HR update covered the first half of 2025/2026. This report provides the full-year position for 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.
- 7.3 The graph below shows the number of formal and informal cases within corporate (i.e. excluding schools) over five full years. Case numbers increased significantly in 2025/2026 compared with the previous year.



- 7.4 The next graph shows the split between informal and formal casework. Informal casework increased to 58% of all cases, up from 35% last year, while formal casework fell to 42%, down from 58%. Informal casework is usually the first stage and is managed by line managers with HR advice. If concerns remain unresolved, cases may move to a formal stage, although some procedures allow cases to begin formally depending on the circumstances.



- 7.5 The third graph shows trends in the main case types over the past five years. Formal sickness absence cases and formal grievances increased this year. While this may appear concerning, it is likely to reflect stronger case management following the introduction of the Performance Management Framework in summer 2024, together with improved manager guidance and training. A higher number of organisational change programmes during 2025/2026 may also have contributed. With further organisational change, including LGR, case numbers may continue to rise. Changes to employment legislation from 2026 onwards may also increase grievances and related complaints, although there is currently no evidence of that.



Sickness Absence

- 7.6 At the end of quarter 4 of 2025/26, the number of days lost through sickness absence for the whole Council is calculated as **9.20 days** (9% decrease to 2024/25). The table below shows the year end outturn absence figures for the previous 4 years.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Days lost per person	9.95	9.90	10.69	10.13	9.20

Absence by Directorates

- 7.7 The graph below shows the number of days lost per person by Directorate.



- 7.8 Compared to 2024/25 the overall Council sickness absence days lost per worker has decreased by 9% however within the Resources Directorate it has significantly increased by 15% and in People ASC significantly decreased by 26%. Place Directorate has also decreased by 6%. The size of the employee population and the roles they carry out within each directorate is broadly identical as previous years. This does suggest, however, that pro-active management intervention may well have a positive effect on absence rates. For reference, the comparison is:

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Resources	6.0	6.5	6.2	7.5	8.6
People ASC	12.0	11.6	14.0	15.4	11.4
People Children Services	NA - Included in People ASC	NA - Included in People ASC	NA - Included in People ASC	8.5	8.6
Place	8.6	8.8	7.0	8.5	8.0

Short term vs long term absence

- 7.9 Long-term absence is defined as a continuing sickness absence of more than 28 consecutive calendar days. During 2025/26, long-term sickness absence was 52.3%

of all sickness absences (7,535.5 days lost); in 2024/25 it was 52.0% (8,204.5 days lost). This shows a significant decrease in the number of long-term days lost, whereas the proportion of long-term absence from all sickness absence remains the same.

- 7.10 During 2025/26, short-term sickness absence was 47.7% of all sickness absences (6,862.0 days lost); in 2024/25 it was 48.0% (7,561.5 days lost). This shows a significant decrease in the number of short-term days lost, whereas the proportion of short-term absence from all sickness absence remains the same.

Absence Reasons

- 7.11 The most common reason for long-term absence in 2025/26 was “*Mental health conditions – includes stress, depression, anxiety*” (35.7% of all long-term absence). The most common reason for short-term absence was “*Minor illnesses – includes coughs/colds and flu; sickness/nausea and diarrhoea*” (39.8% of all short-term absence).
- 7.12 The top three overall reasons for sickness absence in 2025/26 were:
- Mental health conditions – 25.4% (24/25 comparison 33.4%)
 - Minor illnesses – 21.5% (24/25 comparison 15.0%)
 - Musculoskeletal problems – 15.9% (24/25 comparison 14.4%)
- 7.13 Overall, absence related to “*Mental health conditions – includes stress, depression, anxiety*” fell by 31%, from 5,269.5 days in 2024/25 to 3,652.5 days in 2025/26. Despite this reduction, it remains the main cause of long-term absence, accounting for 35.7% of long-term absence and 25.4% of all sickness absence, compared with 33.4% in 2024/25.

Benchmarking

- 7.14 The CIPD Health and Wellbeing At Work Survey published in September 2025 states the following:
- The report reveals another record high for absence levels of 9.4 days per employee in 2025 which is up from 7.8 days in 2023. These levels reflect broader social trends, including an ageing workforce and a rise in long-term health conditions.*
- 7.15 WBC offers a wide variety of wellbeing support for employees including Mental Health First Aiders, an Employee Assistance Programme that includes confidential counselling, access to an Occupational Health Service, dedicated information and signposting on the Council’s intranet, education and training sessions for all staff such as Reasonable Adjustments guidance. There are also monthly communications for managers which slides and information to be shared and discussed with teams across the Council based on monthly themes and calendars of events.

8 Workforce Development

Employee Experience

- 8.1 The Employee Experience function within the Workforce Development Team continues to support a positive, inclusive and supportive working environment across the Council. The team leads on employee engagement, wellbeing and equity, directly supporting the Council's aim to be an employer of choice where staff feel valued, heard and supported.
- 8.2 During 2025/26, activity focused on strengthening engagement, wellbeing and inclusion, and developing confident, inclusive leadership. This included completing the first full cycle of the Employee Engagement Forum (EEF), with representatives gathering and reporting employee feedback. New representatives were recruited and inducted for 2026/27 to maintain continuity and two-way communication.
- 8.3 A psychological safety survey was delivered across the organisation, with findings shared with the Senior Leadership Team. This informed SLT-led listening sessions that reinforced leadership visibility and responsiveness. Leadership capability was also strengthened through *Lead with Confidence* sessions for people managers, supporting consistent and inclusive management in line with the Council's Behaviour Framework.
- 8.4 The team continued to support established employee networks and, in response to feedback, launched a Men's Health Network, expanding opportunities for peer support through virtual channels. Work on reasonable adjustments also progressed through updated procedures and guidance, supported by targeted learning for managers.
- 8.5 Employee voice and recognition were further embedded through support for the Council's first Annual Employee Conference, delivered as part of the Senior Leadership Team's commitment to better communication. Feedback from the event was shared with senior leaders. A peer-to-peer recognition process and manager guidance were also introduced to encourage a positive culture that values contribution and reinforces organisational values.
- 8.6 Taken together, these activities support workforce engagement, wellbeing and inclusion, and help position West Berkshire Council as a supportive, values-led employer. This work contributes to attracting, retaining and developing a committed, high-performing workforce.

Early Careers

8.7 Work Experience:

Early Careers have continued to actively support local schools and students through work experience, T-Level placements, and paid internships.

With placements taking place in Lambourn Library, HR and the Public Protection Partnership to name a few.

Additionally, our CEO Joseph Holmes and Executive Director Sarah Clarke welcomed a total of 48 students from St Bart's and Trinity School across two work experience shadow days in the Council Chamber. These sessions provided interactive activities on topics such as Devolution and emergency planning and gave students the opportunity to engage with council members, including the Leader of the Council.

We also partnered with the **DWP and local Job Centre** to host a careers fair in the Council Chamber, where local businesses showcased employment opportunities to residents. This event was supported by MP Lee Dillon.

8.8 Apprenticeships:

The Council continues to support apprenticeships through use of the levy for both schools and corporate employees. However apprenticeship reforms for 2026 mean a change to the way apprenticeships can be funded and types of apprenticeships standards. The focus is on creating a more flexible, employer-led system with increased funding for young people and a shift toward shorter, high-tech training modules. Key changes include replacing the levy with a "Growth and Skills Levy," reducing funds expiry to 12 months, and introducing new, shorter training courses in AI and digital skills.

Key Changes to Apprenticeship Funding and Structure (2026)

- **Growth and Skills Levy (April 2026):** The Apprenticeship Levy becomes the Growth and Skills Levy, enabling funding for shorter, modular, and "apprenticeship units" rather than only full, long-term programs.
- **Levy Expiry & Top-up:** Levy funds will expire after 12 months instead of 24. The 10% government top-up to monthly levy funds will end on August 1, 2026.
- **Non-Levy Paying SMEs (August 2026):** Training for 16-24-year-olds will be fully funded by the government, removing the previous 5% co-investment cost for these employers.
- **Reduced Government Co-investment:** If an employer's digital account runs out, they must pay 25% of training costs (previously 5%), with the government paying 75%.
- **Level 7 Funding Restrictions (January 2026):** Government funding for Level 7 (Master's level) apprenticeships will be restricted to those under 21, or under 25 for care leavers/EHCP holders.
- **New "Foundation" Apprenticeships (April 2026):** Introduction of new entry-level foundation apprenticeships for 16–21 year olds in hospitality, retail, engineering, and manufacturing.
- **Shorter Assessments (2025/2026):** The end-point assessment (EPA) system is being overhauled for a more flexible model allowing assessments to happen throughout the program, not just at the end.

Minimum Wage Increase (1 April 2026)

- **Apprentice Rate:** The apprentice minimum hourly rate will rise to £8.00.
- **Ages 18-20:** New rate of £10.85.
- **Ages 21+:** New rate of £12.71.

Key Dates for 2026

- **January 1, 2026:** Level 7 funding restrictions take effect.

- **April 1, 2026:** New flexible courses, AI Level 4, and new wage rates come into effect.
- **August 1, 2026:** Full, new funding rules apply to levy funds, including 12-month expiry, 25% co-investment, and SME funding for under 25s.

Defunding of 16 apprenticeship standards from September 26 onwards, to include Team Leading Level 3, Operations Manager Level 5 and Coaching Level 5 which are some of our most utilised apprenticeships for WBC. See table below for full list of defunded apprenticeship qualifications from September 2026.

This is a change for all employers and apprenticeship providers that is taking a little time to get into place but will ensure that better use of the levy is seen and can support the government's ambition to provide more opportunities for younger people in the future.

APPRENTICESHIPS IDENTIFIED FOR DEFUNDING

Standard	Level	Funding band	Starts 24-25	Starts 25-26 Q1	Number of providers
Team leader	3	£5,000	12,670	3,680	450
Operations manager	5	£9,000	12,530	4,060	398
Coaching professional	5	£5,000	3,580	1,080	102
Chartered manager	6	£22,000	2,930	1,460	67
Lead practitioner in adult care	4	£7,000	2,240	700	119
Improvement practitioner	4	£6,000	950	280	48
Security first line manager	3	£5,000	410	90	9
Facilities management supervisor	3	£5,000	390	120	21
Learning and skills mentor	4	£5,000	380	80	54
Cleaning hygiene operative	2	£5,000	200	60	10
Learning and skills assessor	3	£5,000	130	60	29
Custody and detention professional	3	£4,500	110	30	4
Professional security operative	2	£6,000	80	30	4
Improvement leader	6	£15,000	70	30	13
Public sector compliance investigator and officer	3	£4,000	70	40	1
Outdoor learning specialist	5	£13,000	40	20	5

Source: DWP, Skills England

FEWEEK

There are currently 9 dedicated apprentice posts in place at the Council and 109 employees undertaking apprentice funded qualifications. We have supported local businesses through **levy transfers**, enabling their staff to develop in roles such as:

- Specialist Teaching Assistant
- Multi Channel Marketing
- Early Years Lead Practitioner

We continue to see WBC schools making excellent use of the apprenticeship levy to train early years educators, teaching assistants and teachers.

9 Appraisals

- 9.1 The current WBC performance management procedure requires employees to have an annual appraisal, ideally between May and June, subject to some exceptions. Appraisals and performance development plans help align Council and service objectives while supporting staff development. Progress against objectives should also be reviewed during regular 1:1s throughout the year.
- 9.2 Managers can currently record the date of completed annual appraisals in iTrent.
- 9.3 At the time of writing the report, the Council is within the current appraisal window following conclusion of the previous appraisal cycle ie March to June each year. As a result, finalised appraisal completion figures are not yet available for reporting purposes.
- 9.4 It is also recognised that, while appraisal conversations may be taking place, there are gaps in managers updating iTrent with dates of completion which impacts on the data being reported.
- 9.5 Targeted management communications and actions are therefore being implemented to reinforce expectations around both the completion of appraisals and the timely recording of outcomes within iTrent. An updated position and revised completion figure will be provided as part of the next report.

10 Training

- 10.1 The Corporate Training Programme includes both mandatory and non-mandatory training. Some mandatory training contributes to corporate KPIs reported centrally. Training is delivered through a blended approach, including e-learning, virtual sessions (Zoom or Teams), face-to-face training and drop-in sessions, depending on the subject.
- 10.2 Corporate training is commissioned annually and managed by HR with the relevant budget. Each Directorate also holds a development budget for personal learning, and a dedicated resource supports Social Care training because of its larger mandatory and non-mandatory requirements. This section covers corporate training only, not qualifications or training arranged locally by departments. Employees are expected to have a Personal Development Plan so learning needs can be identified and discussed with their line manager.

- 10.3 The figures below show the number of courses run, these consist of mandatory and non mandatory courses, and completed through the HR Team over the last five years:

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Number of employees who completed at least one course.	1097	1475	1517	1466	1508
Percentage of employees completing any course (<i>inclusive of all training including mandatory</i>) (e-learning or classroom)	89.00	97.61	98.69	94.2	95.4
Total courses completed	7722	9517	8926	11437	10249

- 10.4 The table above shows courses recorded on iTrent, but it does not capture all training and development activity at WBC. Departments also hold budgets for specialist training, such as CPD for lawyers, which are managed by Executive Directors and approved locally.
- 10.5 The *Lead with Confidence* sessions for people managers continue to be well received, with more than 130 attendees so far. Feedback has been very positive. Workshops have covered workplace attendance and wellbeing, recognition, and reasonable adjustments, with more subjects and sessions planned for next year.
- 10.6 Following the success of last year's Learning at Work Week, another week will run from 18th to 22nd May, with the theme "Many ways to learn". Last year's theme was "Get Connected", and around 325 employees attended sessions, including an AI webinar from ICT and a coaching workshop from the Coaching Hub.
- 10.7 In 2026, training is likely to focus on managing change and helping staff respond effectively to ongoing organisational change. Leadership and management development will also continue to expand.

11 Conclusion

- 11.1 The report shows a number of positive developments in people management, including more internal moves, reduced agency spend, more agency workers moving into permanent roles, and continued use of the Comensura contract to recruit permanent staff. Sickness absence has fallen, and increased use of informal performance management may reflect better manager support, education and training. Key areas of ongoing focus remain sickness absence, improved exit data to support retention, implementation of apprenticeship reforms as guidance becomes available, and further leadership and management development in 2026/2027. At the time of writing, it is not yet known whether LGR will affect future employment matters. This report does not

address that in detail, but the HR function will continue to support any future large-scale organisational change and the Council's people KPIs.

12 Appendices

Appendix A Employment and Equalities Data

Background Papers:

Not applicable

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☐ No: ☒

- The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval ☐
- Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council ☐
- Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position ☐
- Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months ☐
- Item is Urgent Key Decision ☐
- Report is to note only ☒

Wards affected: not applicable

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Document Control

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Version:		Date Modified:	
Author:			
Owning Service			

Change History

HR Update – Corporate Board Report

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1			
2			

Appendix A

WBC Employment Data and Equalities Data as at 31st March 2026

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Headcount	1532	1511	1537	1552	1562
Post FTE	1667.93	1731.10	1767.83	1650.95	1673.64
Occupied FTE	1362.10	1357.90	1387.80	1412.92	1419.92
Vacant FTE	305.83	373.20	380.03	238.03	253.72
Individual Vacant Posts	N/A	N/A	N/A	233	257

Starters and Leavers – 5 years (1st April 2021 to 31st March 2026)

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Number of starters in year	210	247	219	214	227
Number of leavers in year	220	242	190	201	248
Turnover (%)	14.30%	15.9%	12.47%	12.9%	16.08%
Voluntary turnover (%)	13.00%	14.86%	11.09%	10.4%	13.13%
Average length of service of leavers	7y	5y 9m	7y 7m	8y	6y 6m
Average length of service of employees employed at year end	8y 9m	8y 10m	8y 9m	8y	8y 5m
Stability index (% employees at year end with 12 or more months' service)	89.43%	86.3%	89.13%	86.79%	86.72%

Percentage % of Starters by Age Range – 5 years (2021 to 2026)

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Under 25	20.95	9.72	11.42	4.88	6.62
25-34	22.86	25.10	33.33	27.42	25.15
35-44	23.33	25.91	25.11	26.90	30.35
45-54	21.90	21.05	20.09	25.26	22.44
55-64	9.52	17.00	8.22	15.09	13.67
65+	1.43	1.21	1.83	0.45	1.77

Percentage (%) of all leavers during the last 5 years by age range

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Under 25	9.09	5.79	5.26	3.98	3.61
25-34	12.73	23.97	16.32	17.91	22.49
35-44	19.55	21.07	21.58	22.39	15.26
45-54	22.73	19.83	24.21	15.92	18.07
55-64	21.36	19.83	17.37	21.39	24.90
65+	14.55	9.50	14.74	18.41	15.66

Equalities Data as at 31st March 2026

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Female	77.48	77.30	77.41	75.82	75.99
Male	22.52	22.70	22.59	24.18	24.01
Disability	3.79	4.24	4.58	2.89	4.16
Ethnic Minority	7.77	8.27	9.36	11.45	13.06
Under 25	4.18	3.04	2.69	2.25	1.79
25-34	14.69	15.09	16.76	16.98	16.07
35-44	22.32	21.84	21.94	21.67	23.05
45-54	29.57	29.78	27.90	28.49	28.49
55-64	24.02	24.69	25.02	25.53	25.22
65+	5.22	5.56	5.70	5.08	5.38
Bisexual	1.57	1.59	1.64	0.84	1.34
Gay/Lesbian	0.85	0.86	1.18	0.84	0.77
Heterosexual	61.16	62.74	63.52	27.52	42.64
Other	0.91	0.93	1.11	0.39	0.45
Prefer not to say	5.94	6.29	7.01	1.67	2.88
Prefer to self-describe	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.00	0.00
*Unknown	29.50	27.53	25.47	68.81	51.92
Agnostic	2.09	2.32	2.42	1.54	2.30
Atheist	5.42	5.82	6.09	3.86	4.48
Buddhist	0.13	0.26	0.20	0.19	0.19
Christian	32.11	32.76	32.74	14.66	20.29
Hindu	0.26	0.86	0.98	0.51	0.70

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Jewish	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Muslim	0.52	0.33	0.39	0.51	0.64
Sikh	0.39	0.33	0.33	0.13	0.19
None	23.04	23.23	24.10	9.07	16.33
Other religion/belief	1.31	1.52	1.64	0.64	0.70
Prefer not to say	5.81	5.82	6.29	1.67	3.39
*Unknown	28.85	26.74	24.82	67.20	50.77

*High percentages of unknown EDI information affect the figures in all categories. HR are encouraging staff to complete their EDI data in iTrent. Communications have been sent and this is ongoing.

Census Data 2021 for West Berkshire - Equality

	Headcount of population	% of total population
Disabled under the Equality Act	23671	15%
Not disabled under the Equality Act	137777	85%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	5991	4%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	2030	1%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	3856	2%
White	148384	92%
Other ethnic group	1186	1%

Applicant Equalities Data as at 31st March 2026

	Applicants	Shortlisted	Recruited
Female	3441	665	250
Male	1805	306	88
Unspecified	312	39	5
Disability	296	83	24
Ethnic Minority	1752	273	55
Under 25	514	74	16
25-34	1708	302	88
35-44	1260	276	90
45-54	1015	267	82
55-64	584	171	54
65+	53	17	7
Unspecified	424	44	6
Bisexual	136	35	9
Gay/Lesbian	121	27	3
Heterosexual	4651	953	287
Other	13	3	0
Prefer not to say	244	66	19
Blanks	393	67	25
Agnostic	117	32	14
Atheist	174	44	17
Buddhist	32	5	1
Christian	1953	411	113
Hindu	271	32	4

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Jewish	8	1	0
Muslim	303	38	9
Sikh	38	7	1
No religion	1869	433	136
Any other religion	46	13	3
Prefer not to say	276	60	23
Blanks	466	73	21