

ANNUAL PEOPLE REPORT AND OTHER PEOPLE MATTERS

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

This report brings together a number of updates for Cabinet in relation to the Council's workforce. It provides updates on implementation of elements of the Council's People Strategy and provides key data on the Council's workforce for 2025.

The report also provides the latest Pay Policy Statement, Gender Pay Gap and Ethnicity Pay Gap calculations which will be considered by the Licensing & Corporate Business Committee and Full Council.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet

- i. Agree the People Plan for 2026-28
- ii. Note the Annual People Report for 2025
- iii. Note the Pay Policy Statement, Gender Pay Gap Report and Ethnicity Pay Gap as set out in the report to Licensing & Corporate Business Committee and Full Council.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The People Strategy was implemented in 2021 and has since been reviewed in 2025 to reflect the new Council Delivery Plan and the future effect of devolution and local government reorganisation. A two-year People Plan has been developed by adapting slightly the four themes of the current People Strategy, to strengthen our support to staff. A copy of the new People Plan can be found at **Appendix 2** of this document.
- 1.2 The annual people report includes workforce data at **Appendix 1** alongside some key updates for consideration by Cabinet.
- 1.3 Alongside the Annual People Report the Council needs to agree and publish a Pay Policy Statement and Gender Pay Gap Report on an annual basis. This year the Council has chosen to calculate and publish the Ethnicity Pay Gap although this is not a mandatory requirement. These reports are considered by the Licensing & Corporate Business Committee and are summarised in this report for noting by Cabinet.

2. ANNUAL PEOPLE REPORT

- 2.1 The Annual People Report at **Appendix 1** provides an update on the People Team activities, data of workforce composition and data trend analysis during 2024.
- 2.2 Key projects this year focused on supporting our organisational priorities of enhancing recruitment, strengthening engagement and building positive workplace culture.
- 2.3 Cabinet are invited to note the progress and key data for 2025.

3. PAY POLICY STATEMENT, GENDER PAY GAP AND ETHNICITY PAY GAP

- 3.1 The report to Licensing & Corporate Business Committee containing the Council's Pay Policy Statement, Gender Pay Gap report and Ethnicity Pay Gap report is enclosed at **Appendix 3**.
- 3.2 The Pay Policy Statement sets out the framework within which pay is determined in Rushmoor Borough Council and it provides an analysis comparing the remuneration of the Managing Director with other employees of the authority.
- 3.2 The comparisons included within the paper, look at the ratio between the Managing Director and the full-time equivalent salary for a permanent member of staff employed in the lowest grade within the structure. The ratio for 2026/2 is 1:5.74.
- 3.3 The Gender Pay Gap Report contains the Gender Pay Gap calculations for both mean and median values. The mean gender pay gap equates to 16.04% with the female average salary being lower than the male average salary. The gap has increased from 12.75% in the previous year. The median gender pay gap equates to 13.17% with the female median rate being lower than the male median rate. The gap has increased from 9.84% reported in the previous year.
- 3.4 The Ethnicity Pay Gap Report contains the Ethnicity Pay Gap calculations for both mean and median values. The mean ethnicity pay gap equates to 9.5% with the non-white average salary being lower than the white average salary which represents a decrease of 3.2%. The median ethnicity pay gap equates to 0.2% with the non-white median rate being lower than the white median rate which represents a decrease of 5.1% from the previous year's measurement.

4. RISKS

- 4.1 There are no risks associated with the consideration of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications associated with the consideration of this report. The Council People Management policies and procedures and provisions within the constitution provide framework for decision making associated with employees.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no additional financial implications associated with this report that are not within existing budgets.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equalities impact implications directly associated with this report. The papers attached with this report are considered against the three progress levels of the Diverse and Engaged Workforce module of the Equality Framework for Local Government.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Report Author: Belinda Tam, Corporate Manager - People
(Belinda.Tam@rushmoor.gov.uk)

Director: Karen Edwards, Executive Director
(karen.edwards@rushmoor.gov.uk)

APPENDICES

- 1 Annual People Report 2025
- 2 People Plan 2026-28
- 3 Pay Policy Statement, Gender Pay Gap Report and Ethnicity Pay Gap Report
- 4 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Tool Outcome

ANNUAL PEOPLE REPORT 2025

1 Introduction

1.1 This annual report seeks to provide a consolidated update on the Council's people related activities providing data and information relating to the Council's workforce. The People Strategy was implemented in 2021 and has since been reviewed in 2025 to reflect the new Council Delivery Plan and the future effect of devolution and local government reorganisation. A two-year People Plan (**Appendix 2**) has been developed by adapting slightly the four themes of the current People Strategy, to strengthen our support to staff as follows:

- A Positive Organisational Culture
- People developed to realise their potential and build their resilience through change
- Local Government is an employer of choice
- Engaged people who feel valued and supported

2 People Team

2.1 The Council's human resource functions are delivered through the People Team who provide a cross-council service which includes:

- Organisational design and development, including change management and transformations
- Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives and support
- Recruitment and selection including advice, guidance, job evaluations and induction processes and support
- Reward, remuneration and benefits
- Learning and Development, including some Member training
- Apprenticeships, work experience (linked to the Council's Young People Plan)
- Health and Wellbeing initiatives
- Employee relations advice and support
- Payroll and Pension calculations and processing
- Key performance indicator calculations including sickness absence, pay, ethnicity and disability data
- Policies and Procedures

The current establishment headcount of the People Team is 7 (6.36 FTE).

2.2 Key projects this year have focused on supporting our organisational priorities of enhancing recruitment, strengthening engagement, and building a positive workplace culture. We successfully procured and implemented a new Applicant

Tracking System to improve efficiency and candidate experience in recruitment. In addition, we delivered the first Staff Celebration event, recognising and appreciating contributions across the organisation. We also created more opportunities for staff to come together and share their views on key topics, fostering collaboration and ensuring that employee voices continue to shape our future direction.

3 Workforce profile

- 3.1 The Council records workforce data to better identify and understand any changes and trends to formulate improvement initiatives where appropriate. We also record disclosed employee sensitive data to monitor and understand any representation gaps from people with protected characteristics.

Headcount

- 3.2 The headcount/FTE for the council in the last three years is provided in the table below.

Year	Headcount	FTE
Jan – Dec 2023	246	220.65
Jan – Dec 2024	261	234.94
Jan – Dec 2025	247	223.02

A further breakdown of the headcount and FTE by service is provided below, as of 31st December 2025, with a comparison for the headcount and FTE data for the 31st December 2024. Where there is no headcount change but there is increase in FTE this is attributed to an increase in hours of the post holder.

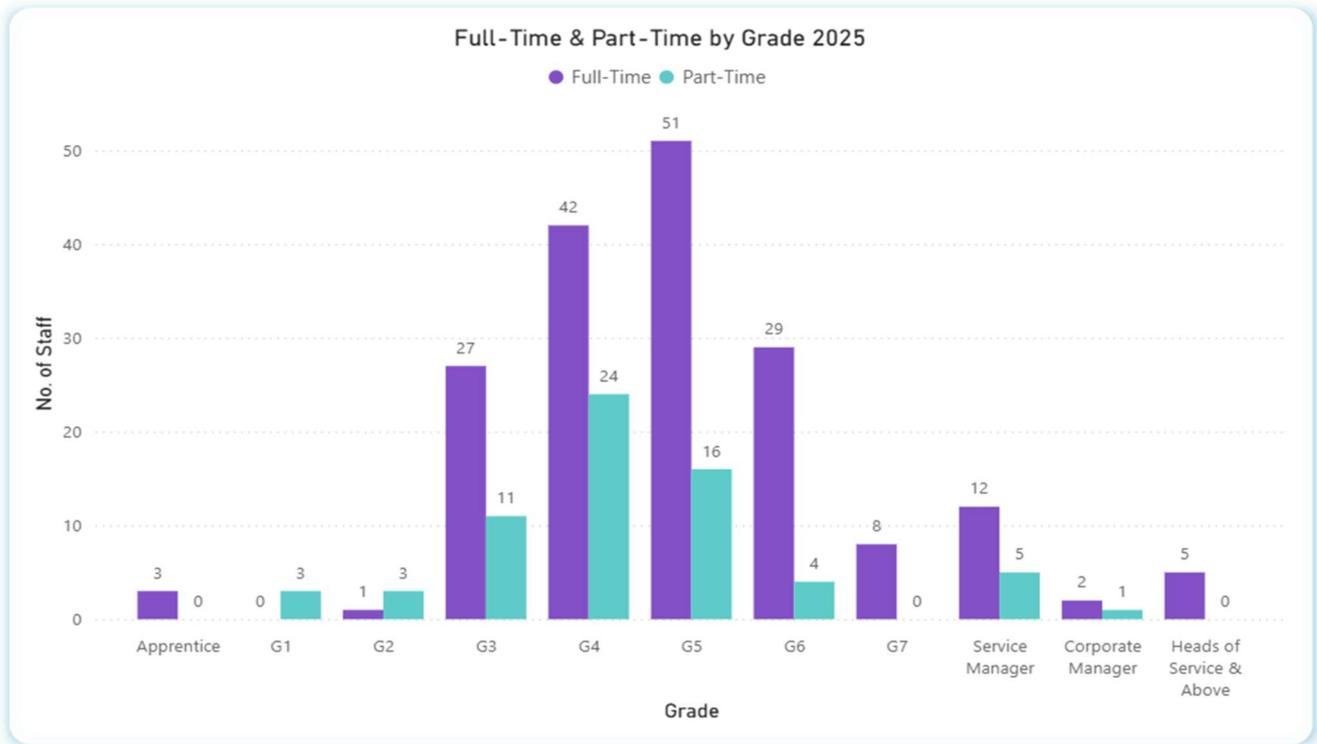
Service	Headcount 2024	Headcount 2025	FTE 2024	FTE 2025
Chief Executive Office (CEX)	5	3	5	3
Communications, Partnerships, Risk, Resilience and Procurement (RRP), Policy, Strategy & Transformation (PST)	30	26	27.69	24.15
Operational Services	83	82	71.85	71.43
Regen & Development	5	3	5	3
Customer Services & Facilities*	22	22	19.42	19.58
Information Technology	13	13	12.41	12.41
Finance	34	30	30.86	27.65
Democracy	7	7	5.76	5.76
Property & Growth	45	44	42.27	41.27
Legal Services	10	10	8.32	8.41
People Team	7	7	6.36	6.36
Total	261	247	234.94	223.02

****Please note that Customer Services & Facilities are included in Operational Services but have been recorded separately for year-on-year comparison purposes.***

Full time (FT) and part time (PT) grade breakdowns

3.3 The percentage of the Council's workforce contracted to work less than 37 hours a week has slightly reduced again this year from 27.59% to 27.12%. Of this year's percentage, females make up 92.53% compared to 91.67% in 2024. Further details of the grade breakdowns are provided in the graphs below and the highest percentage of part time workers during the years are still in a Grade 4 (G4) role.

Grade	Part-Time			Full-Time		
	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025
Apprentice	0	0	0	6	4	3
G1	2	3	3	0	0	0
G2	3	4	3	1	0	1
G3	15	13	11	27	28	27
G4	25	22	24	40	49	42
G5	16	19	16	45	48	51
G6	5	5	4	28	32	29
G7	1	0	0	4	5	8
Service Manager	3	4	5	13	13	12
Corporate Manager	1	2	1	3	2	2
Heads of Service & Above	0	0	0	8	8	5
Totals	71	72	67	175	189	180



Workforce Turnover (T/O)

3.4 The workforce turnover for the last three years is provided below presenting voluntary turnover and involuntary turnover separately:

Year	Voluntary T/O	Involuntary T/O
Jan – Dec 2023	12.71%	8.27%
Jan – Dec 2024	5.86%	0.39%
Jan – Dec 2025	12.73%	1.58%

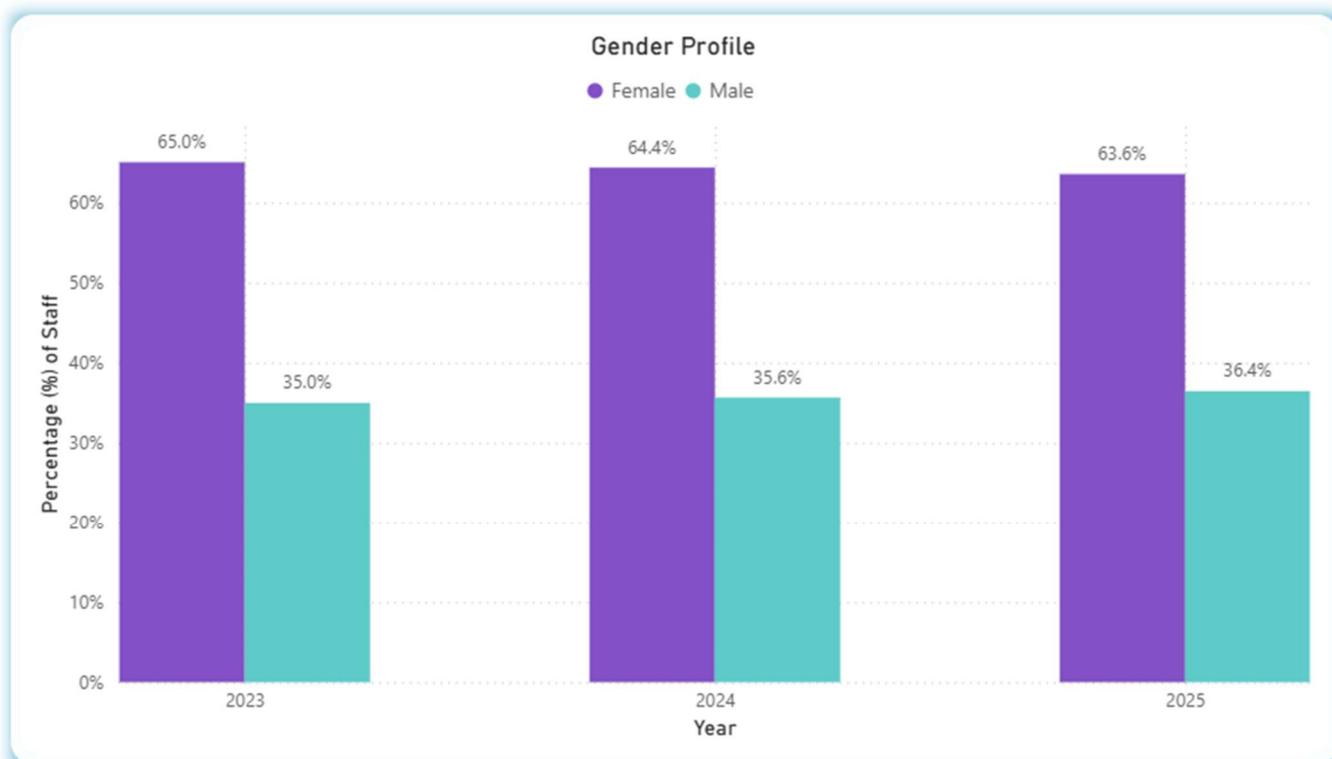
The voluntary turnover for 2025 remained broadly in line with 2023 but represented a significant increase compared to 2024. Seven employees retired during the year, compared with only two in the previous year.

The involuntary turnover for 2025 was mainly linked to the conclusions of grant-funded projects. While there was a slight increase compared to 2024. Levels remain considerably lower than in 2023, when changes in the provision of services and the Outcome Based Budgeting (OBB) savings requirements were actioned.

As the Council approaches Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), the potential impact on voluntary and involuntary turnover remains uncertain. It is not clear what effect this will have on voluntary turnover.

Gender profile

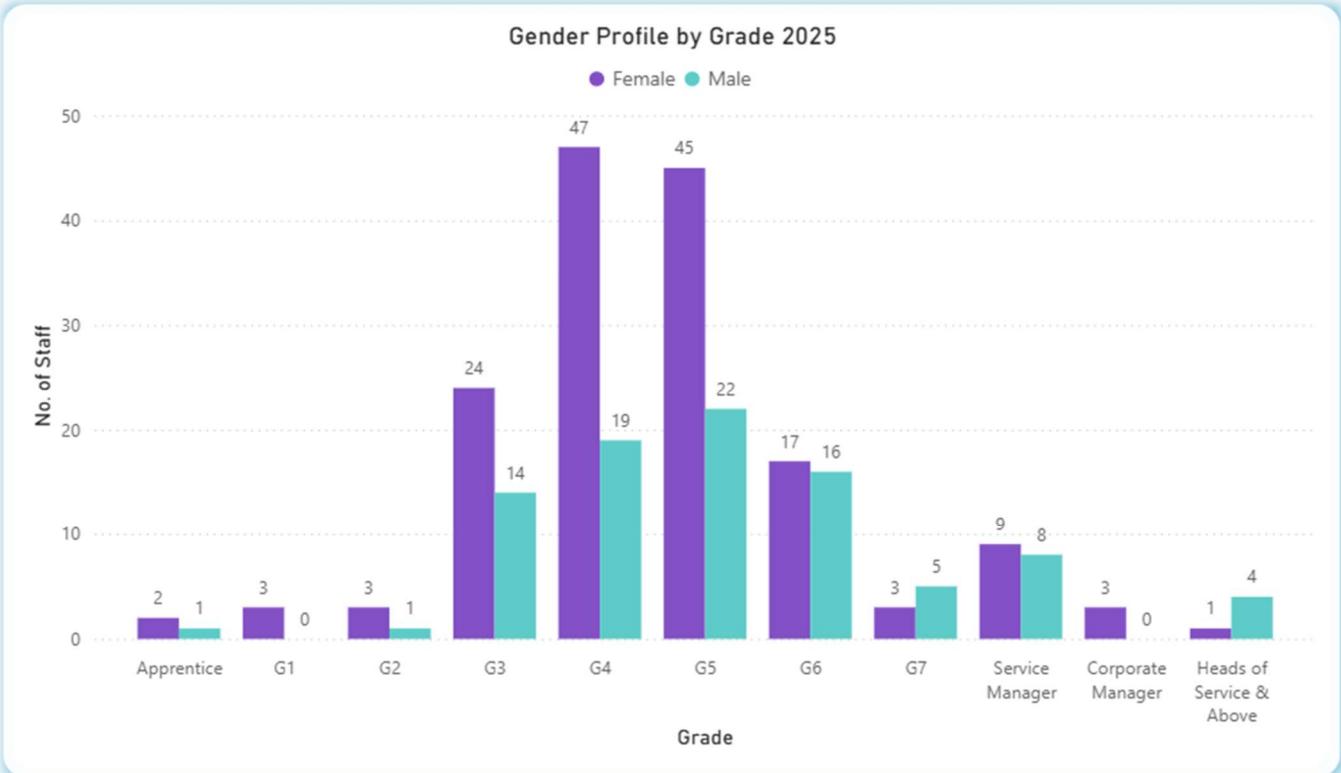
3.5 In line with previous years there has been a slight increase of the percentage of male employees in 2025 and a slight decrease in the number of female employees, although the percentage of female staff is still higher than males. These changes are illustrated in the graph's below:



Further gender breakdowns are provided by grade below:

Grade	Male		
	2023	2024	2025
Apprentice	3	1	1
G1	0	0	0
G2	0	0	1
G3	13	13	14
G4	17	23	19
G5	20	21	22
G6	17	19	16
G7	3	3	5
Service Manager	7	7	8
Corporate Manager	0	0	0
Heads of Service & Above	6	6	4
Totals	86	93	90

	Female		
	2023	2024	2025
	3	3	2
	2	3	3
	4	4	3
	29	28	24
	48	49	47
	41	45	45
	16	18	17
	2	2	3
	9	10	9
	4	4	3
	2	2	1
	160	168	157



Whilst the headcount for 2025 has decreased, the percentage of males employed in the workforce has very slightly increased from 2024 to 36.44% (90 males) with the percentage of females in the workforce decreasing from 2024 to 63.56% (157 females). Local authority sample comparator data shows a similar percentage of female staff: Woking BC as of March 2025 reported 61.07% of the workforce was female and 38.93% male.

The number of females employed in Service Manager and Corporate Manager grades continues to surpass the number of males. However, there are still more males in the Head of Service and above roles despite a higher percentage of females to males in the workforce.

The gender pay gap (which is calculated retrospectively) for Rushmoor as at 31st March 2025 ('snapshot date') equates to a **16.04%** difference (or 'gap') in pay rates, with the female average salary being lower than the male average salary. Both the mean and median pay gap have increased. Rushmoor's gender pay gap data for the past few years is detailed in the table below:

Year	Mean	Median
2023	12.69%	9.52%
2024	12.75%	9.84%
2025	16.04%	13.17%

According to the LGA¹ the local government **mean** gender pay gap for 2024/25 was 3% and the **median** was 1.6%. On average women were paid less than men in 201 authorities, for one authority the mean pay gap was zero and in 90 authorities' women were paid more than men. As the calculations are percentages and the number of senior employees relatively small, a change in gender of any senior role can have a significant impact on the gender pay gap calculation.

In line with the People Plan the Council will continue to promote secondments, cross council project working, encourage the personal development of employees, and those with the potential to progress into senior roles and continue to encourage flexible working, to facilitate positive shifts in the Council's gender pay gap.

Age Profile

3.6 The graph below highlights the age profile of the workforce at the Council. The age range of staff between 26 and 45 continues to be the highest (42.11%, 104 members of staff) and the next highest age group (28.74%, 71 members of staff) is the 55 and over age group.



The 25 and under age group (4.45%, 11 members of staff) has slightly decreased in 2025. We are keen to encourage more younger people to work at the Council and we will be working with the Community and Partnerships Team to deliver an in-house work experience programme as part of the Council's Young Peoples' Plan.

¹ [The gender pay gap in English local authorities 2024/25 | Local Government Association](#)

According to the Local Government Workforce Data (November 2025)² the age of most council staff is between 40 and 64. The Council has had recent success in recruiting younger people into roles.

With 28.7% of our workforce aged 55 and above, the upcoming transition to a new unitary authority may have significant implications for this demographic. Staff in this age group often have well-established careers and may view organisational change as an opportunity to consider their future options. Potential impacts include:

- **Interest in Redundancy or Early Retirement:** Some employees may see the reorganisation as a natural point to exit the workforce / industry.
- **Concerns About Role Security and Change:** Adjustments to structures, reporting lines, and job responsibilities may create uncertainty, influencing decisions to retire earlier than planned.
- **Movement to Other Authorities:** Experienced staff may seek stability by transferring to neighbouring councils not undergoing reorganisation, taking valuable skills and knowledge with them.

Proactive engagement, clear communication, and tailored support will be essential to manage expectations and retain critical knowledge during this transition.

Ethnicity Profile

3.7 The ethnic data for the workforce as at 31st December 2025, compared to the Rushmoor Population (2021 Census) data is detailed in the table below:

	Council workforce	Rushmoor Population (2021 Census)
White	83.8%	77.5%
Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME)	8.09%	22.5%
Not stated/Not Known/Prefer Not to Say	8.11%	N/A (<i>all questions need to be answered in the Census</i>)

The ethnicity pay gap is calculated by comparing the average pay of our White employees with that of our employees from the Black and Minority Ethnic groups (BAME).

² [Local government workforce data](#)

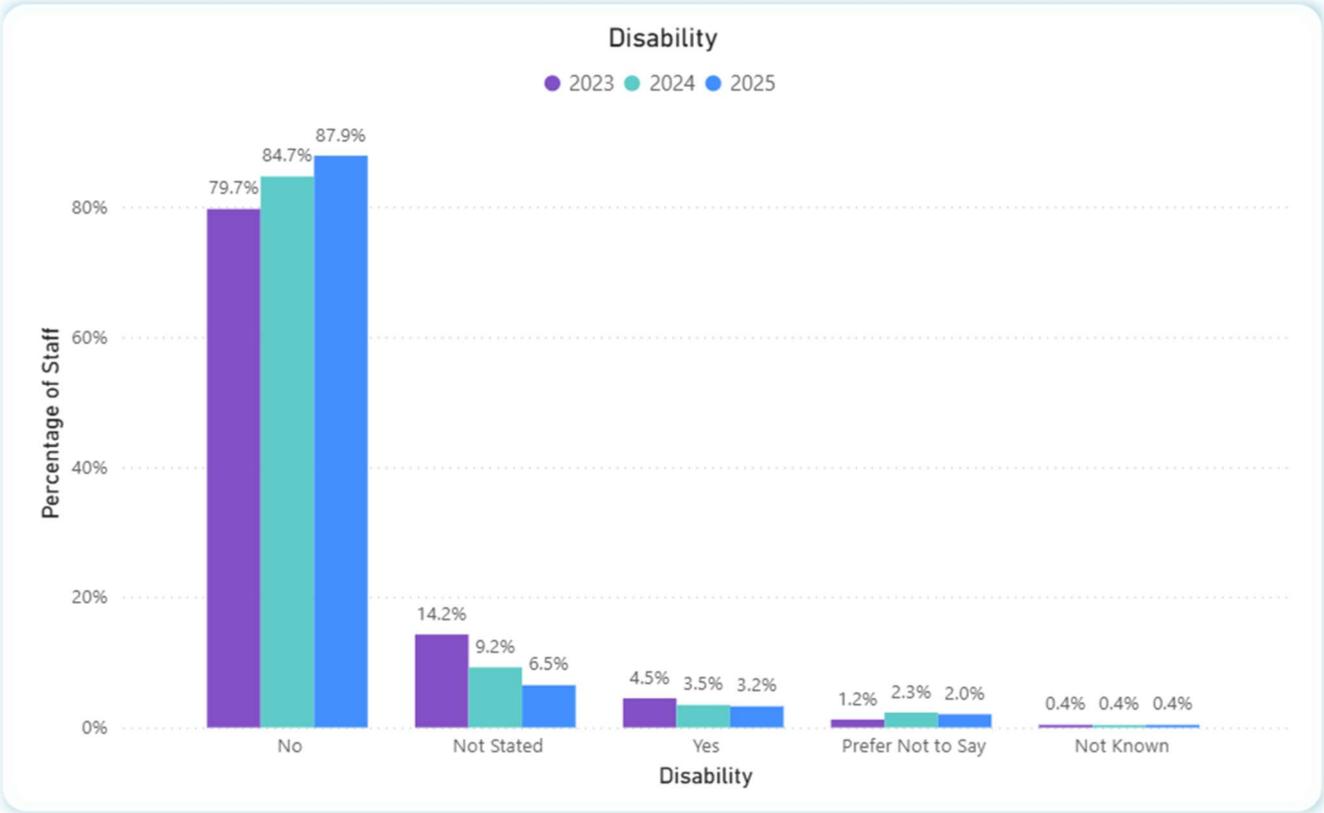
The yearly ethnicity pay gap data comparisons can be found below:

	Mean Pay Gap	Median Pay Gap
31 st March 2024	12.7%	5.3%
31 st March 2025 ³	9.5%	0.2%

For 2025 the average difference (or 'gap') in pay rates between White and BAME groups is **9.5%** in 2024/2025 this has **decreased** since last measured in 2023/2024 by **3.2%**. This can partly be explained by the percentage decrease of 3.8% of BAME staff in the lower quartile in 2024/2025. In addition to this, the percentage of BAME staff in the upper middle quartile has increased by 1.4%. Therefore 2 of the 4 quartiles have decreased and increased favourably for BAME staff. The number of BAME staff in the upper quartile has contrastingly decreased, but not significantly at all (only by 0.2%). We will continue to review our working practices including recruitment and development opportunities to encourage a more diverse and inclusive workforce from the local community and beyond.

Disability Profile

3.8 The disability profile at Rushmoor shows that there has been another decrease in the number of staff not stating whether they consider themselves disabled or

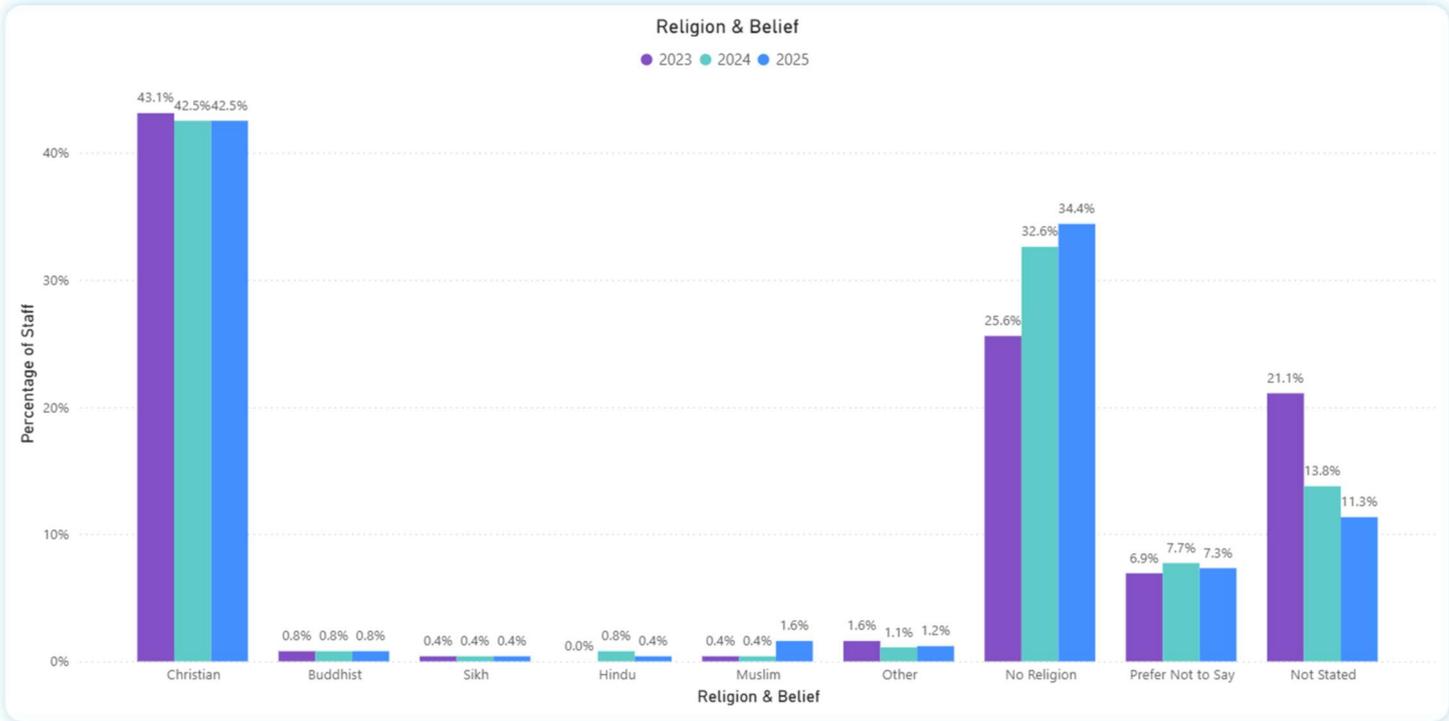


³ Note: that there were 16 employees not included in this report as they chose not to share their ethnicity.

not disabled. Some staff are still seemingly less reluctant to record disability compared to previous years and this is important because it enables us to understand how to best support staff with a disability in the workplace. The Council will continue to encourage staff to update their personal records and lower the 'prefer not to say' section in particular.

Religion and Belief Profile

3.9 The religion and belief profile in the graph below shows a slight decrease in the number of staff not updating the religion and belief section of their personal records. This could be due to the fact we are sending out quarterly reminder emails to those staff who have not filled in their equalities data on our MyHR system to encourage them to do so. The People Team are working with all employees to understand why individuals might be reluctant to report and will continue to urge all staff to update their personal records.



4 Sickness

4.1 The table below shows staff sickness absence data at the Council for the last three years:

	Days lost per FTE	Short term absence - days lost per FTE	Long term absence – days lost per FTE
2023	4.23	2.41	1.85
2024	4.54	3.2	1.28
2025	6.49	2.83	3.66

NB: Long term absence is absence that extends beyond 4 weeks

- 4.2 Short term absence at Rushmoor has decreased to 2.83 days lost per FTE in 2025 from 3.2 days lost per FTE in 2024. Long term absence has increased to 3.66 days lost per FTE from 1.28 days lost per FTE.
- 4.3 During 2025, the most common reasons for the number of episodes for sickness absence were coughs, colds and flu. The most common reason for the number of days lost were due to 'other known causes'.
- 4.4 The data shows an increase in long term sickness absence and a decrease in short term absence. The main reason for absence is 'other known causes' but anxiety, stress and depression makes up approximately a quarter of the number of days taken as sick absence in 2025. It is therefore essential that we continue our focus on supporting employee health and wellbeing.

5 Health and Wellbeing

- 5.1 The Council launched its biennial Health and Wellbeing Survey in September 2025. The core questions remained largely unchanged to allow for meaningful comparisons with previous results, while additional questions were included to reflect current priorities. One of these questions focused on how hybrid working is operating within teams. An action plan based on the findings is now being developed and will be shared with staff.
- 5.2 The People Team promote and lead on health and wellbeing events, designed to raise awareness of the importance of physical, financial, social and mental health. There were a number of health and wellbeing initiatives held during 2025 which are detailed below:
- Mental Health Awareness week
 - Pension Awareness week
 - Self-Care week
 - NHS Health Checks (in collaboration with Hampshire County Council)
 - Diabetes Awareness week
 - Neurodiversity Celebration week
 - Neurodiversity Café (in collaboration with South East Employers)
 - International Men's Day
 - International Women's Day
 - World Book Day
 - World Suicide Prevention Day
 - Time to Talk Day
 - Financial Wellbeing Day
 - Menopause Café (in collaboration with South East Employers)
 - International Day of Persons with Disabilities
 - Volunteering Week
 - In person and virtual 'Tea Breaks' offering time and space for colleagues to connect.
 - Wellbeing Walks linked to wider events where relevant, for example Men's Walk and Talk as part of International Men's Day.

- Other wellbeing activities including a Book Club, Uno club, social get togethers after work.

5.3 The Council provides an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) to support employees with health and wellbeing. Services include telephone and face to face counselling, access to a Health Portal, and a 24-hour help/advice line. In 2025, a procurement exercise was completed for the EAP, and Health Assured was awarded the contract following a robust assessment process. A relaunch is planned in January 2026, reminding staff of the full range of support available. Monthly newsletters from Health Assured are published on Viva Engage and the People Portal. The annualised EAP utilisation for the Council in 2025 was **7.1%**, based on counselling and advice calls. A total of **20** calls were logged, a slight increase from **18** in 2024. Mental health concerns remain the most common reason for contact, with anxiety accounting for **11** of the calls. It is important to continue to provide this service especially as the Council progresses through the LGR process and the effect it could have on staff and members.

6 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

- 6.1 Work continues to progress on embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) principles and best practice across the organisation. In collaboration with colleagues in the Policy, Strategy and Transformation Team, we are strengthening EDI frameworks and supporting the refinement of the Council's equality impact assessments. These assessments help ensure that potential impacts on protected characteristics within both the community and the workplace are identified and addressed effectively.
- 6.2 There is an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion page on our People Portal which provides useful information and resources including: our duties under the Equality Act, definition of EDI, and resources from previous learning undertaken.
- 6.3 We organised the delivery of EDI learning opportunities and initiatives including a Disability Awareness Session in collaboration with RAAG.

7 Pay Award

- 7.1 The Local Government Pay Award covering the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 was agreed by the Unions on 24th July 2025. Employees up to and including NJC scale pay point 43 received an increase of 3.2% on base salary. Employees on locally determined pay points above pay point 43 and below Chief Officers received a 3.2% increase on base salary. The increase for local authority Chief Executives was 3.2% on base salary and the increase for Chief Officers was also 3.2%. All the pay increases for employees, Chief officer and the Chief Executive were processed and paid in the August 2025 payroll.
- 7.2 Future pay negotiations by the National Employers will need to consider the potential national minimum wage increases and the effect this will have on the current NJC scale points. Whilst this will mainly affect the lower spinal pay points there will be a knock-on effect with higher scale points.

8 Reward and Recognition

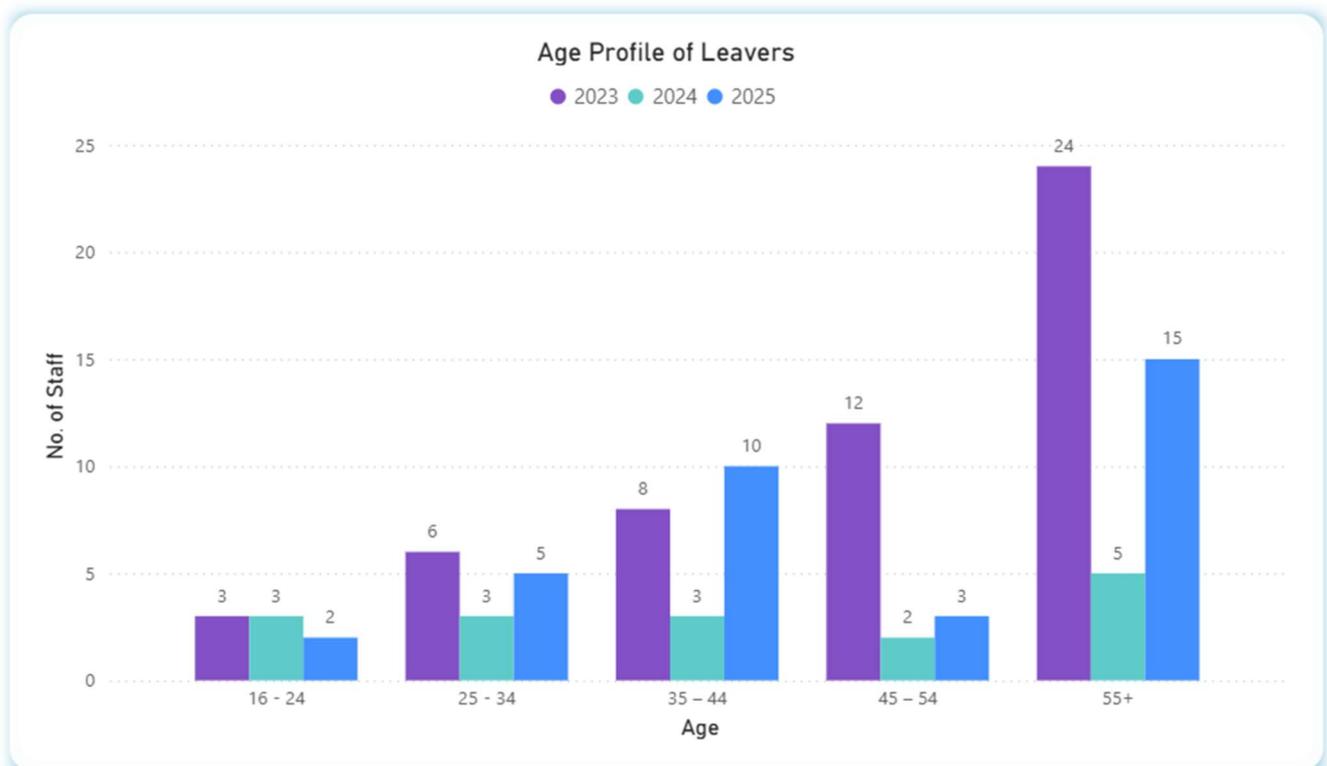
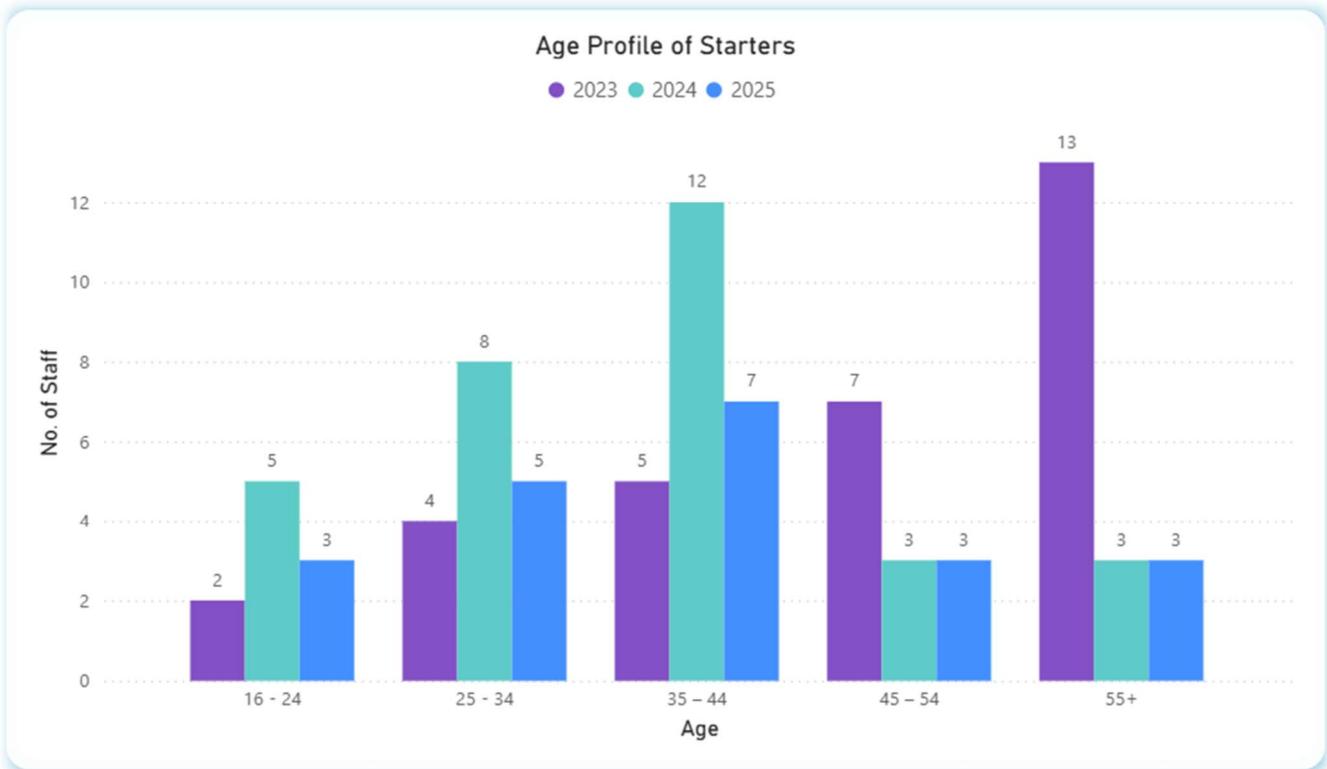
- 8.1 The Corporate Peer Review 2024 highlighted the need to celebrate staff successes and recognise achievements more widely. A key highlight of the year was the Staff Celebration Evening in November, where we hosted an awards night featuring five staff-nominated categories: Working Together, Innovation and Improvement, Role Model, Valuing Everyone, and Overall Excellence. We also honoured colleagues with 20 years or more of service. The event was attended by over 100 members of staff and provided an opportunity to recognise contributions, strengthen engagement, and build a sense of pride across the organisation.
- 8.2 We have also seen a number of teams share stories of success, celebrate achievements and say thank you to colleagues via Microsoft Engage, Staff Live, as part of 'Super Trooper' section of the Rushmoor Round Up newsletter.

9 Recruitment and Selection

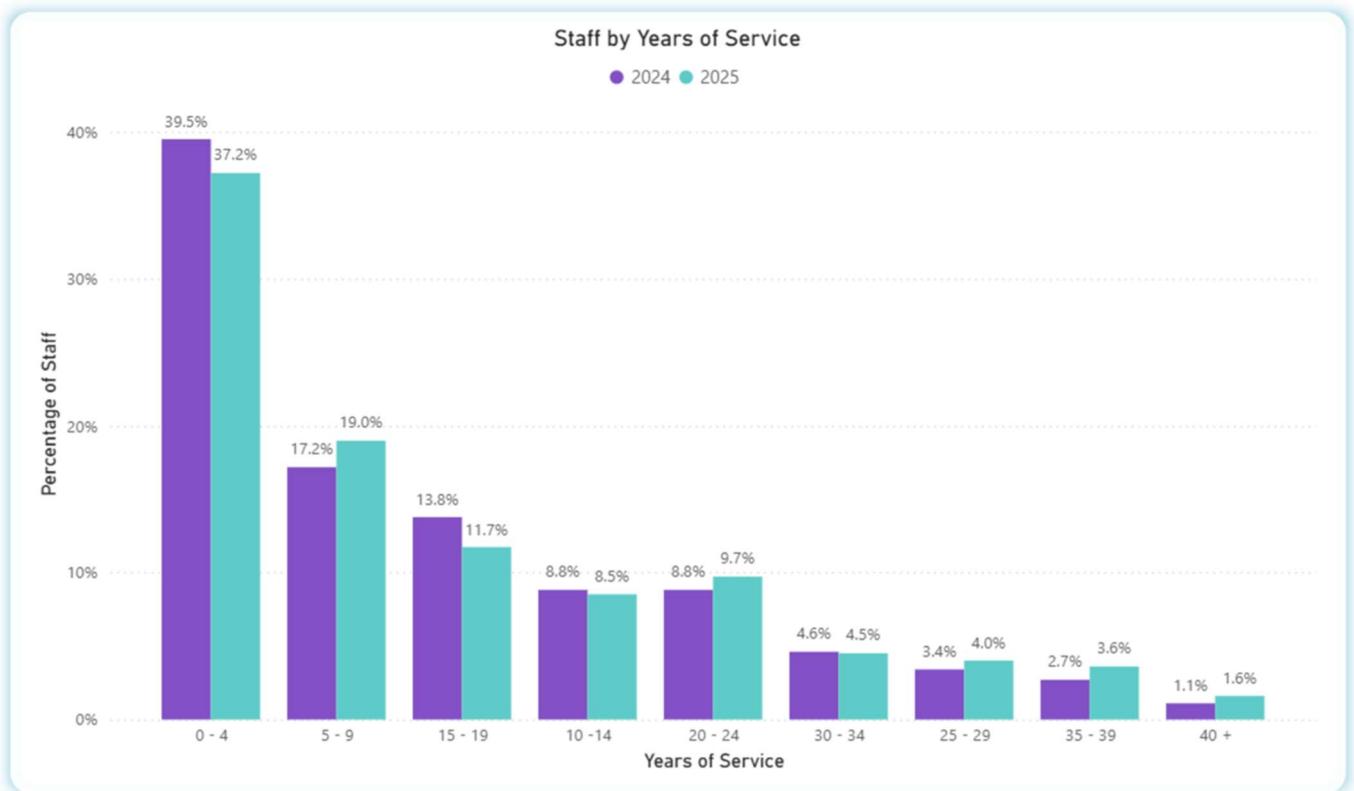
- 9.1 Recruitment increased slightly in 2025 compared to 2024 (30 vacancies in 2024, and 38 in 2025) there were still challenges around some roles. Technician vacancies at the Princes Hall proved hard to fill. The organisation has taken steps to recruit legal professionals to replace contractors in Legal Services.
- 9.2 Rushmoor changed the Applicant Tracking Software (ATS) supplier in June 2025 from Jobs Go Public to Tribepad. Rushmoor jobs are still advertised on the Jobs Go Public portal, as there is a synergy between the two suppliers. The Tribepad system has more functionality and should cut down on manual processing.
- 9.3 Between 1st January 2025 and 31st December 2025 there were 38 vacancies advertised on Jobs Go Public and subsequently TribePad (after changing ATS suppliers in June 2025). A total of 745 applications were received.
- 34 of these vacancies have appointed a candidate to the role
 - Three posts were readvertised and successfully appointed to (Building Control Surveyor – Principal, Senior Technician at Princes Hall and Junior Paralegal.

- Four posts were filled internally after advertising externally – Private Sector Housing Officer, Sales and Events Manager (Princes Hall), Venue Technician (Princes Hall), Facilities Officer.

9.4 The age profile of starters and leavers for the last three years is detailed in the graph below:



For 2025 the highest number of new starters were in the 35-44 age bracket which is the same as the year before. The number of leavers for 2025 is higher in all age groups except for the those in the 16-24 age bracket.



9.5 The graph above compares the number of staff by years of service for years 2024 and 2025. There are slight fluctuations for each age group.

10 Apprentices and the Apprenticeship Levy

10.1 Since the introduction of the apprenticeship levy in April 2017, the Council has been able to utilise 76% of available funding for the provision of apprenticeship training. Under current UK rules, all employers with an annual payroll bill of more than £3m must pay into an apprenticeship levy pot to fund apprenticeship training. The Council pays 0.5% of our payroll bill every month into this pot, and if we don't fully utilise the funds within a specified time the money is returned to central government and we lose it. The money can only be used towards apprenticeship qualifications for apprentices and existing staff for upskilling.

10.2 The Council remains committed to promoting and developing apprenticeship opportunities, recognising their vital role in nurturing talent and building skills in the workforce.

10.3 The Council has two tiers for salary for new apprentice roles. Those studying towards an entry level qualification, up to Level 3 have a starting salary of £15,414 (£7.98 per hour) and those studying towards a Level 4 or above have a starting salary of £23,388 (£12.12 per hour). Both tiers are higher than the National Minimum wage (£7.55 per hour from April 2025) for apprentices to support with recruitment and retention on this area.

10.4 The levy allows us to invest in employee growth and development by offering specific training programs aligned to roles, an opportunity for employees to upskill and gain a professional qualification or add to existing credentials. In the reporting period 2025, the apprenticeship levy has been used to fund the following apprenticeships:

Apprentice Contracts			
Apprenticeship	Service	Start	End
Regulatory compliance Level 4	Operations	Apr 2024	Oct 2025
Business Administrator Level 3	Operations	May 2024	Dec 2025
Customer Services Specialist Level 3	Operations	Sep 2025	Sep 2027
Apprentice Upskilling for existing staff			
Installation electrician / maintenance electrician Level 3	Operations	Jan 2021	Jan 2026
Associate Project Manager Level 4	Information Technology	Jun 2025	Aug 2026
Facilities Manager Level 4	Customer Services & Facilities	Jun 2025	Dec 2026
Associate Project Manager Level 4	Property & Growth	Jun 2025	Jan 2027
Senior Leader Level 7	Communications, Partnerships, Risk, Resilience and Procurement (RRP), Policy, Strategy & Transformation (PST)	Oct 2024	Jan 2027
Systems Thinking Practitioner Level 7	Customer Services & Facilities	May 2025	Mar 2027
Professional Accounting Level 4	Finance	Sep 2025	Mar 2027
HR Support Level 3	People Team	Sep 2025	Mar 2027
Surveying Technician Level 3	Property & Growth	Nov 2025	Jul 2027
Chartered Town Planner Level 7	Property & Growth	Sep 2022	Mar 2029
Chartered Town Planner Level 7	Property & Growth	Oct 2025	Apr 2029

10.5 From April 2026, the current Apprenticeship Levy will transition to the Growth & Skills Levy, introducing significant changes to how training is delivered and how long levy funds remain available. An in-depth analysis on these reforms and their implications for our apprenticeship programme has begun. The People Team will continue to track updates from the Department for Education (DfE), CIPD, Skills England, and official funding guidance to ensure we remain fully aligned with evolving requirements.

11 Learning and Development

11.1 Corporate and individual learning and development needs are identified during the Performance and Development Review process (May/June to August/September).

11.2 Learning needs identified during this process contribute to the development of the Corporate Learning and Development programme which supports delivery of the Council Plan and People Strategy.

11.3 Service and role specific learning and development needs are also identified through the Performance and Development Review process. These are prioritised and organised by each service area.

11.4 The corporate training learning and development budget stands at £13K. To complement this budget, the council pull on internal/external resources and collaborate with networks to deliver the Corporate Learning and Development activities for 2025/26.

11.5 Corporate Learning and Development opportunities and events delivered during 2025 included:

- Learning at work week
- Armed Forces Covenant Training
- Rushmoor Voices (cohesion workshop)
- Squiggly Career (Lunch and Learn)
- Building your CV and Confidence (Lunch and Learn)
- Impacts of Climate Change on Health
- Taking Charge of Change
- Change Reactions
- Agency and Resilience
- Change capability building programme
- Samaritans looking after each other training
- Staff Showcase
- Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) sessions
- SLT and Service Manager forums
- Prevention of Sexual Harassment training for managers, employees and members
- Disability Awareness for employees and members
- Insights into LGR

11.6 A highlight of this year's learning and development calendar was Learning at Work Week which was held in September to celebrate growth and collaboration across the organisation. The week featured a diverse range of activities including a Staff Showcase, the promotion of online learning opportunities and a thought-provoking introduction to Change.

11.7 In total 141 (57%) members of staff attended at least one corporate funded learning and development opportunity in 2025 (not including on demand digital learning opportunities).

11.8 In addition to these corporate learning and development activities, the council has an eLearning platform, SkillGate, which was successfully launched in August 2023. After a refreshed communications plan led by the People Team including automated reminders sent from the system on a weekly basis, a line manager dashboard detailing compliance in direct teams, the People Team also target individuals with bi-monthly reminders reiterating the need for and importance of completion. The Council saw an initial increase in compliance rates. While there was a slight dip at the beginning of the year, compliance is now rising again, with the last quarter at 94%, against a target of 95%. Further targeted communications will reinforce that completing these modules is essential to keeping our people, our customers, and our data safe.



11.9 To further strengthen organisational resilience against cyber threats, we introduced a new approach to cyber security learning. Starting in December, staff began receiving bite-sized modules aligned with seasonal risks and organisational priorities. These short, practical sessions (2–5 minutes) complement mandatory training and support compliance with data protection standards. The first module launched on 1 December and achieved an impressive 83% completion rate within the completion window, demonstrating strong engagement. Moving forward, monthly modules will be delivered via Microsoft Learning and supported by targeted communications, ensuring cyber awareness remains a consistent focus across the organisation.

- 11.10 Alongside mandatory training, staff also have access to a wide selection of self-development courses on a range of topics, published through internal communication channels. The Council have partnered with a local company, SeedL to provide a learning platform for local businesses delivering live webinar style training. This learning platform is open for all staff to access and acts as an important boost to the variety and quantity of learning on offer.
- 11.11 The People Team will continue to deliver training through a blended approach, offering both face-to-face and remote options to meet the diverse needs of our workforce. In the year ahead, our challenge will be to expand the range of delivery methods available, working in collaboration with subject matter experts across the Council to ensure learning remains relevant, accessible, and impactful. Increasing engagement levels and delivering outcomes aligned to the Council's evolving priorities will remain a key focus. As we prepare for the implications of Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation, our Learning and Development strategy will need to adapt to support staff through organisational change. This will include developing programmes that build resilience, foster collaboration across multiple authorities, and equip colleagues with the skills required for new structures and ways of working. Leadership development will be a priority, ensuring managers are confident in guiding their teams through uncertainty and transition.

12 Induction

- 12.1 All new starters complete mandatory eLearning modules as part of the induction activities when they join the council. New starters are also invited to attend the corporate induction sessions including a Tour of the Borough, Meet the Senior Leaders and other informal introductions to Health and Safety, Finance, Safeguarding, Communications, Democracy and the People Team. All new starters are added to the relevant Viva Engage communities.
- 12.2 A member of the People Team will check in with each new starter at three months and six months to see how they are settling in and provide advice and guidance as appropriate. This is an important opportunity valued by new employees which checks how our new starters are settling in and enable us to pick up on any issues quickly. Managers will also meet regularly with their new starters providing an induction programme and also checking to see how they are doing and what support and information they need to help perform in their work and to settle into the organisation.

13 Communication and Employee Engagement

- 13.1 Over the last year, more focus was placed on how the Council communicate and engage staff in the organisation, through multiple channels that offer choice and accessibility, with clear, frequent, and timely messaging on key issues. Providing staff an opportunity to voice diversity of opinion and have a say in the decisions that affect their work.
- 13.2 Key communication strategies and engagement activities the People Team led on and/or contributed towards during 2025 include:

- 'Engage 24/7' an anonymised survey open throughout the year for staff to share their experiences of working at Rushmoor which provides a temperature check on how staff are feeling.
- Staff Connect sessions, open spaces for staff to explore and discuss organisational topics.
- Bi-annual Health and Wellbeing Survey.
- Contribution at Staff Live sessions.
- Rushmoor Round Up! A monthly staff newsletter in collaboration with the Communications Team.
- Staff Celebration Event including Long Service Awards for staff who have worked at Rushmoor for 20 years or more and an Awards section celebration employees who were nominated across a range of categories.
- Continued publishing of the SeedL learning platform as a way to access a variety of development topics.
- 'Equal Opportunities' focus on review and updating records held to better understand the composition of the workforce.
- Development of the People Portal, updates and new pages added.
- Engagement and postings with relevant articles and information on Viva Engage.

14 Implications of Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

- 14.1 This year saw the introduction of Staff Connect, a new approach designed to create safe, open spaces for staff to explore and discuss significant topics such as the budget, Devolution, and Local Government Reorganisation. Through informal workshops combining short presentations from members of the Senior Management Team with small group discussions facilitated by colleagues. This format encouraged meaningful dialogue, allowing staff to share thoughts, raise questions, and express concerns in an environment where every voice matters. While we acknowledged that not all answers would be available immediately, Staff Connect has helped build understanding, strengthen trust, and ensure that staff perspectives are heard and valued. Feedback from participants highlighted the importance of these conversations in making complex issues more accessible and fostering a sense of inclusion during times of change.
- 14.2 With the Government announcement expected by end of March 2026 and the implementation of the new council scheduled for April 2028, the coming years will be a period of significant transition. While the timeline allows for careful planning, early work has begun, and we are starting to understand the resource implications required. Supporting staff through this process will be critical to maintaining engagement, confidence, and wellbeing. Our focus will be on clear, consistent communication to ensure colleagues understand what LGR means for them and the organisation. We will provide regular updates through multiple channels, complemented by opportunities for dialogue such as Staff Connect sessions, Insights sessions, and Staff Live briefings. These will create safe spaces for staff to ask questions, share concerns, and contribute ideas. Alongside communication, we will continue to prioritise change readiness and resilience, offering targeted learning and development to help staff adapt to new ways of working. Wellbeing support will remain central, with resources and guidance available to help manage uncertainty. Finally, we will work closely with managers to equip them with the tools and confidence to lead their teams through change, ensuring they can provide clarity and reassurance at every stage. By taking a proactive, inclusive approach, we aim to make the transition as smooth as possible and position our workforce for success in the new unitary authority.

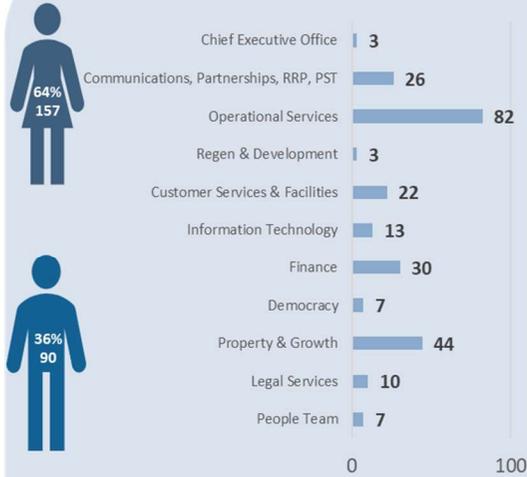
15 Conclusion

- 15.1 This year has seen the implementation of a new recruitment and selection system, further EDI initiatives, a Staff Awards event and change management initiatives and support. We anticipate that there will be much work for the People Team to undertake as we head into the LGR People related workstreams which will include data gathering and analysis, payroll system discussion, policy and procedure analysis, workstream initiatives etc as well as supporting Rushmoor staff and councillors with the People Plan actions and business as usual activities.

Summary of Workforce Data

Workforce Data 2025 (1 of 2)

Headcount of 247 on 31st December 2025



Year	Headcount	FTE
Jan – Dec 2023	246	220.65
Jan – Dec 2024	261	234.94
Jan – Dec 2025	247	223.02

The percentage staff contracted to work less than 37 hours a week has slightly reduced this year from 27.59% to **27.12%**. Females make up **92.53%**

Induction

Events offered to new starters include - Tour of the Borough, Meet the Senior Leaders, Health and Safety, Finance, Democracy, People Team, Safeguarding and Communications. A member of the People Team will check in with each new starter at three months and six months to provide advice and guidance as appropriate.

21 starters



35 leavers

Year	Voluntary T/O	Involuntary T/O
Jan – Dec 2023	12.71%	8.27%
Jan – Dec 2024	5.86%	0.39%
Jan – Dec 2025	12.73%	1.58%

Voluntary turnover: Similar to 2023, higher than 2024. 7 retirements in 2025 vs. 2 in 2024.

Involuntary turnover: Slight increase from 2024, mainly due to grant-funded projects ending, remains lower than 2023.

The potential impact of LGR on voluntary and involuntary turnover remains uncertain.

Gender Pay Gap as at 31st March 2025 16.04% ↑
12.75% in 2024



Ethnicity Pay Gap as at 31st March 2025 9.5% ↓
12.7% in 2024

Pay Award - The Local Government Pay Award covering the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 was agreed by the Unions on 24th July 2025. All the pay increases for employees, Chief officer and the Chief Executive were processed and paid in the August 2025 payroll.

Sickness

- **1,473 days lost due to sickness**, increased from the **1,051 in 2024**
- Average of **6.49%** days per FTE ↑ from 4.54% in 2024
- Short term absence has decreased to **2.83** days lost per FTE in 2025 from 3.2 days lost per FTE in 2024.
- Long term absence has increased to **3.66** days lost per FTE from 1.28 days lost per FTE.
- **44%** of sickness was short term, and **56%** long term
- Cold, cough, flu were the most common reason for number of sickness episodes
- The main reason for absence is 'other known causes'
- 'Anxiety, stress and depression' also making up approximately a quarter of the number of days taken as sick.

Diversity Profile

Ethnicity	Council Workforce	Rushmoor Population (2021 Census)
White	83.8%	77.5%
BAME	8.09%	22.5%
Not stated	8.11%	N/A

Age Profile

Under 25	4.45%
26 – 45 years	42.11%
46 – 54 years	24.7%
55+	28.74%

Disability Profile

No	87.9%
Not Stated	6.5%
Yes	3.2%
Prefer Not To Say	2.0%
Not Known	0.4%

Positive shift in staff updating their personal records in this area. People are still seemingly less reluctant to record disability compared to previous years.

Religion and Belief

Christian	42.5%	Buddhist	0.8%	Sikh	0.4%
Hindu	0.4%	Muslim	1.6%	Other	1.2%
No Religion	34.4%	Prefer Not To Say	7.3%	Not Stated	11.3%

The religion and belief profile in the graph below shows a positive increase in the number of council staff updating the religion and belief section of their personal records.

Workforce Data 2025 (2 of 2)

Apprenticeship Levy

2025

14 Members of staff undertaking an apprenticeship

- 3 Apprentice Positions
- 11 upskilling qualifications

April 2017 – December 2025

- Spent **76%** of available funds
- Avoided any funds expiring
- Supported **42** individuals to date to gain professional qualifications

Compliance Training

The Council saw an initial increase in compliance rates when a new **eLearning** platform was introduced in Aug 2023. While there was a slight dip at the beginning of this year, compliance is now rising again, with the last quarter at 94%, against a target of 95%.



Corporate L&D highlights

Learning at Work Week	Armed Forces Covenant Training	Rushmoor Voices
Staff Showcase	Taking Charge of Change (7)	Lunch and Learn sessions (3)
Suicide Awareness (2)	Impacts of Climate on Health	Equality Impact Assessment sessions (3)
Disability Awareness (in collaboration with RAGG) (3)	SLT and Service Manager Workshops (7)	Prevention of Sexual Harassment training (3)

141 (57%) of staff accessing a corporate L&D initiative, not including LAWW, digital learning, drop in awareness events (open to all & attendance not captured) or Continued Personal Development linked to professions. Ongoing development of the People Portal to build resources that can be accessed anytime, anywhere.

Communication & Engagement highlights

Engage 24/7 Survey	Staff Live Updates (7)	Staff Connect Sessions (3)
Staff Celebration event incl. Long Service Awards	Induction 3- & 6-month check-ins	Continued publication of L&D opportunities
Rushmoor Roundup! (5)	Employee Support Team	LGR Insights session (2)

Health & Wellbeing

Continued to promote the Employee Assistance Programme and Employee Support Team. **EAP Utilisation: 7.1%** (20 calls, mostly mental health-related)

Biennial H&W survey rolled out in September – Action plan based on findings in development.

H&W event highlights

Mental Health Awareness week	Financial Wellbeing day	Volunteering week
Wellbeing Walks linked to wider events	Book Club, Uno Club and Social get togethers	NHS Health Checks (in collaboration with HCC)

Key Projects and Highlights

Staff Celebration Event - Hosted an awards night featuring five staff-nominated categories: Working Together, Innovation and Improvement, Role Model, Valuing Everyone, and Overall Excellence. We also honoured colleagues with 20 years or more of service. The event was attended by over 100 members of staff and provided an opportunity to recognise contributions, strengthen engagement, and build a sense of pride across the organisation.

Procurement and development of a new Applicant Tracking Software (ATS) - Successfully procured and implemented a new Applicant Tracking System to improve efficiency and candidate experience in recruitment.

Change Programme - Procured and delivered a comprehensive change management programme designed to equip staff with the tools and confidence to navigate organisational change. The programme focused on what drives out reaction to change and building resilience to help individuals thrive in uncertainty. Alongside this, targeted support for managers has started, empowering them with the skills to lead their teams through change with empathy, clarity, and strategic focus.

Staff Connect - Jointly developed and delivered a new approach designed to create safe, open spaces for staff to explore and discuss significant topics such as the budget, Devolution, and Local Government Reorganisation.

People Plan 2026-2028

A Positive Organisational Culture

A positive culture is the foundation of a successful organisation, especially during times of change. As we move toward becoming a unitary council, maintaining morale and trust will be crucial. Change can create uncertainty, so we must ensure our people feel valued, informed, and supported.

Therefore, these are the things we’re working on:

- People who understand the direction of the organisation and are committed to ensuring a positive legacy
- People who understand how their role and their team affect and contribute to the organisation’s purpose and objectives
- Recognising that change affects people differently, and a commitment to supporting wellbeing, resilience, and adaptability throughout the transition
- Agile and clear systems and structures that encourage everyone to take responsibility for their individual and team contribution, and for making change happen
- Working practices that encourage collaboration, trust and openness
- Honest communication, where people listen without judgement and are open to new thinking
- A high-trust culture where people and teams have clear accountability and authority to act

OUTCOME 1	Actions
Workforce feels informed, supported, and equipped to navigate change particularly in relation to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with Staff Connect sessions to provide updates, Q&A, build insights and promoting transparency. • Regular updates via Rushmoor Round up! newsletters and Staff Live briefings from a range of staff explaining progress and next steps. • Facilitate peer connections with external colleagues who have experienced similar change. Helping teams understand potential impacts and prepare for different outcomes.

OUTCOME 2	Actions
People model and experience our values and behaviours, embedding them into everyday activities including recruitment, induction, development, performance management, rewards, and communication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued focus on our core values and initiatives to embed these into our everyday ways of working and initiatives
OUTCOME 3	Actions
Services are delivered to the high standards expected by residents, members, and partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear service plans with objectives which are reflected in staff performance and development plans, including initiatives that will support the positive legacy of the borough council.
OUTCOME 4	Actions
Staff feel that Rushmoor Borough Council ends well and has provided the foundations for a smooth transition to the new unitary council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take time to understand existing cultures across teams or authorities, including values, behaviours, leadership styles, and pain points. Involve staff from all organisations and all levels in developing a shared purpose and set of values for the new organisation.

People developed to realise their potential and build their resilience through change

Our people are our greatest asset, and supporting their growth is essential to delivering excellent services and thriving through transformation. Change can be challenging, but it also creates opportunities for learning, innovation, and personal development. By equipping individuals and teams with the skills, confidence, and resilience they need, we ensure they can adapt, lead, and succeed in a changing environment.

Therefore, these are the things we're working on:

- Developing leaders at every level, who lead with impact and purpose and model the values and behaviours framework
- Helping people navigate change by building resilience, adaptability, and confidence, ensuring they feel supported and prepared for what's ahead
- Developing diverse, inclusive and accessible L&D opportunities that offer value for money, deliver outcomes and offer everyone the opportunity to be their best at every stage of their career
- Encouraging people to shake off mistakes and setbacks and view them as opportunities to learn and improve

OUTCOME 5	Actions
Staff feel supported and confident to adapt to changes arising from LGR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch Your Skills, Your Future to help staff identify transferable skills and explore career pathways. • Workforce gain clarity on their skills, strengths, and potential career pathways within a unitary council structure or beyond.
OUTCOME 6	Actions
Senior Leaders role-model resilience and teams are being guided effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run Change & Resilience sessions for staff focused on sense-making, change agency, and resilience • Ongoing Managers' Forum facilitation
OUTCOME 7	Actions
Mandatory and foundation training is completed, and staff meet the minimum requirements for safe and effective service delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing review of compliance and engagement with eLearning Platform • Introduce micro-learning and bite-sized modules related to Digital Skills

Local Government is an employer of choice

The move to a unitary council is a pivotal moment for our organisation and our people. We have a role during the change to unitary councils to ensure that we retain and encourage talent into the industry.

Therefore, these are the things we're working on:

- Understand what people value from work, and what matters most to them
- Work collaboratively with other authorities to ensure visibility, recognition, and opportunities for staff

OUTCOME 8	Actions
Staff and councillors are supported through structural changes and remain committed to the future of local government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work collaboratively with other authorities to ensure our people are visible, their contributions are recognised, and they have opportunities to secure roles that match their strengths and aspirations.• Dedicated space on the People Portal - Centralised resources, FAQs, and updates on known changes• Continue with clear change narrative - Create a consistent message explaining why changes are happening, expected benefits, and timelines.• LGR - people related activities for the transfer of staff to the new co-created unitary council.• Ensure the Performance and Development reviews reflect on progress and achievements, include SMART objectives, align to individual contributions with the Council's priorities and explore development and learning needs to support growth
OUTCOME 9	Actions
Resources are maintained, enabling successful delivery of the Council's Delivery Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support with the delivery of clear, honest, and timely communication about the reorganisation process• Develop contingency workforce plans, such as interim cover or flexible staffing solutions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where recruitment is needed due to structural changes, ensure all internal recruitment or ringfencing processes are fair, clearly explained • Track workforce data - including vacancies, turnover rates, candidate interest, and exit interview trends to highlight any pressure points early and adjust retention and recruitment strategies promptly.
OUTCOME 10	Actions
Work experience opportunities are sustained in support of the Young People's Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To co-develop and implement the Council's central work experience programme

Engaged people who feel valued and supported

The level of change we are about to experience will be unprecedented for many of our workforce. While this can feel daunting, we know from the experience of others that engagement and support are critical to navigating transformation successfully. People need to feel valued, involved, and appreciated, especially when the future feels uncertain. By prioritising wellbeing, recognition, and inclusion, we will create an environment where everyone feels connected and confident through change.

Therefore, these are the things we're working on:

- Encouraging and supporting people to achieve good mental and physical health and to feel they can be themselves at work
- Recognising the positive impact that comes from involving people in the decisions that affect them
- Celebrating success, however large or small, and finding ways to say thank you

OUTCOME 11	Actions
Staff feel supported and resilient through change, with wellbeing actively promoted and feedback acted upon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will strengthen morale by implementing actions from the Health and Wellbeing Survey• Continuing to develop and promote the Employee Support Team• Ensure that staff voices shape the support and resources available.
OUTCOME 12	Actions
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion objectives are advanced through initiatives that welcome, include, and empower staff to perform at their best, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to engage with diverse groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning opportunities in place for staff to increase their awareness of diverse groups and differing perspectives leading to better inclusivity
OUTCOME 13	Actions

Successes, large and small, are recognised and celebrated, creating a culture of appreciation where people feel valued for their contributions.

- Build on values recognition scheme and celebrate staff who exemplify our values
- Continue 'Super Trooper' segment as part of Rushmoor Round Up Newsletter
- Build on feedback from the Staff Awards event to enhance recognition initiatives, including exploring a further Staff Awards event and other ways to celebrate achievements across the organisation bringing Rushmoor staff together.

PAY POLICY STATEMENT, GENDER PAY GAP AND ETHNICITY PAY GAP REPORT

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

SUMMARY:

Under the Localism Act 2011, the Council is required to consider and approve a pay policy statement for the financial year. The statement requires a recommendation to Council for the statement covering 2026/27.

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, the council are also required to publish gender pay gap calculations annually based on a data as at 31 March 2025. This information is for noting by the Committee.

In addition, the Council is reporting on its ethnicity pay gap for noting by the Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) The Council be recommended to agree the Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 as set out in **Appendix A**.
- (2) The Gender Pay Gap calculations for 31st March 2025 to be noted.
- (3) The Ethnicity Pay Gap calculations for 31st March 2025 be noted.

1. BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Under the Localism Act 2011, the Council is required to consider and approve a pay policy statement for the financial year. The Council's pay policy statement for 2026/27 is set out in **Appendix A**.
- 1.2 The Act requires that taxpayers can access information about how public money is spent on their behalf. It translates this into a requirement for improved transparency over both senior council officer pay and that of the lowest paid employees. To support this, the Act requires publication of an annual pay policy statement.
- 1.3 The Act sets out specific information that must be included in the Pay Policy Statement as follows:

- the pay framework, level and elements of remuneration for Chief Officers
 - the pay framework and remuneration of the 'lowest paid' employees
 - the relationship between the remuneration of the Chief Officer and other officers
 - other policies relating to specific aspects and elements of remuneration such as pay increases, other allowances or payments, pension and termination payments.
- 1.4 Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, the council are also required to publish gender pay gap calculations annually. The Council's Gender Pay Gap Report is set out in **Appendix B**.
- 1.5 Currently there is no legal requirement for organisations to calculate and publish an annual ethnicity pay gap report. However, the Council has decided to voluntarily publish an annual Ethnicity Pay Gap Report which is set out in **Appendix C**.

2. THE PAY POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 The Pay Policy Statement contains two main components. It sets out the framework within which pay is determined in Rushmoor Borough Council and it provides an analysis comparing the remuneration of the Managing Director with other employees of the authority.
- 2.2 The comparisons included within the paper look at the ratio between the Managing Director and the full-time equivalent salary for a permanent member of staff employed in the lowest grade within the structure. The ratio for 2026/27 is 1:5.07.
- 2.3 The second ratio included within the analysis, looks at the relationship between the median remuneration of all staff compared to the Managing Director. The ratio for 2026/27 is 1:2.96.
- 2.4 The recommendation of the Hutton Report (2010) is that public sector organisations should comply with a maximum multiple of 1:20. Rushmoor is well within this multiple.
- 2.5 The Pay Policy Statement is forward looking and based on pay as anticipated for the following financial year.

3. THE GENDER PAY GAP

- 3.1 The Equality Act requires the publication of the Council's Gender Pay Gap (mean and median values), Gender Bonus Gap (mean and median values), proportion of men and women receiving bonuses, proportion of men and woman in each quartile of the organisations pay structure. The council does not pay Bonus payments and therefore there is nothing to report in those categories.

- 3.2 The Gender Pay gap is reported retrospectively as at the 31st March in any year.
- 3.3 The mean gender pay gap equates to 16.04% with the female average salary being lower than the male average salary. The gap has increased from 12.75% in the previous year.
- 3.4 The median gender pay gap equates to 13.17% with the female median rate being lower than the male median rate. The gap has increased from 9.84% reported in the previous year.
- 3.5 To address the gender pay gap, the new People Plan for 2026-2028 includes further initiatives to encourage and support the personal development of employees, such as upskilling and mentoring opportunities as well as secondments, cross council project working and flexible working.

4. THE ETHNICITY PAY GAP

- 4.1 Whilst it is currently not mandatory to provide a yearly ethnicity pay gap report we have decided this year to voluntarily provide a report to demonstrate our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in the Council and, as we have a gap, set a baseline for improvement. The Ethnicity Pay gap will be reported retrospectively as at the 31st March in any year.
- 4.2 The ethnicity pay gap is calculated by comparing the average pay of our White employees with that of our employees from the Black and Minority Ethnic groups (BAME).
- 4.3 The mean ethnicity pay gap equates to 9.5% with the non-white average salary being lower than the white average salary which represents a decrease of 3.2% from last years measurement.
- 4.4 The median ethnicity pay gap equates to 0.2% with the non-white median rate being lower than the white median rate which represents a decrease of 5.1% from last year's measurement.
- 4.5 Whilst both the mean and medium ethnicity pay gaps have decreased we will continue to review the ways we work to encourage a more diverse and inclusive workforce. In particular, we will continue to review our recruitment, secondment and development processes and opportunities to address our commitment to be a more inclusive organisation.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Report Author:

Principal People Business Partner, Estelle Rigby (estelle.rigby@rushmoor.gov.uk)
Corporate Manager – People, Belinda Tam (belinda.tam@rushmoor.gov.uk)

Executive Director:

Karen Edwards (karen.edwards@rushmoor.gov.uk)

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Pay Policy Statement 2026/27

Appendix B: Gender Pay Gap Report 2025

Appendix C: Ethnicity Pay Gap Report 2025

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Communities and Local Government Openness and Accountability in Local Pay: Guidance under Section 40 of the Localism Act

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5956/2091042.pdf

Communities and Local Government Openness and Accountability in Local Pay: Guidance under Section 40 of the Localism Act Supplementary Guidance

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85886/Final_Supplementary_Pay_Accountability_Guidance_20_Feb.pdf

Rushmoor Borough Council
Pay Policy Statement for the Financial Year 2026-2027

1. Purpose and Definitions

- 1.1 The purpose of this pay policy statement is to set out Rushmoor Borough Council's (RBC's) policies relating to the pay of its workforce for the financial year 2026 - 27, in particular:
- a) the remuneration of its Chief Officers
 - b) the remuneration of its "lowest paid employees"
 - c) the relationship between
 - the remuneration of its Chief Officers
 - the remuneration of its employees who are not Chief Officers

Definitions

- 1.2 For the purpose of this pay policy statement, the following definitions will apply: -

"Chief Officer" refers to the following roles within RBC:

- Interim Managing Director as Head of Paid Service
- Executive Directors
- Executive Heads of Service
- Heads of Service

The **"lowest paid employees"** refers to permanent or fixed-term staff employed at Grade 1 of the pay scale. Grade 1 is the lowest grade.

An **"employee who is not a Chief Officer"** refers to all permanent or fixed-term staff who are not within the "Chief Officer" group above, including the "lowest paid permanent employees" i.e., staff on Grade 1.

2. Remuneration of the "lowest paid employees" and "all other employees who are not Chief Officers"

Pay framework

- 2.1 Pay for the "lowest paid employees" and "all other employees who are not Chief Officers" is determined by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services and in line with the council's Pay and Reward Policy.
- 2.2 Not included in the definitions referred to above, there is a small and fluctuating number of 'casual' staff, some of whom receive lower salaries in accordance with minimum wage legislation.

- 2.3 The employment of casual staff recognises the need to have a small team of trained and available workers who can be deployed at short notice to assist with seasonal and emergency requirements. This approach enables the organisation to have an efficient and economic response to workload demands but without the need to incur unnecessary costs or to rely upon employment agencies. The use of casual contracts is regularly reviewed and staff engaged in this way are encouraged to apply for permanent roles when they become available.
- 2.4 The only other group employed by the Council who are excluded from the pay comparison data are apprentices. The apprentices are employed for a designated period during which time they are provided with on and off job training alongside the opportunity to gain valuable experience within a working environment. For this reason, the salary comparison would not be relevant.
- 2.5 The Pay and Reward Policy was last updated in 2023. The policy is in line with national guidance, with the grade for each role being determined by a consistent job evaluation process.
- 2.6 The Council's grading structure is based on the NJC terms and conditions using the national spinal column points with the addition of a number of spinal column points at the top of the scale. There are 9 Employee and Manager grades (1 – 7, Service Manager and Corporate Manager) and 4 Chief Officer grades (Head of Service, Executive Head of Service, Executive Director and Managing Director) in the pay framework, grade 1 being the lowest and Managing Director being the highest. Each employee is allocated a grade based on the job evaluation of their role.
- 2.7 Each grade has a number of incremental steps and employees can progress along the salary range to the maximum of their grade, subject to assessment of their performance.
- 2.8 Pay awards for those staff up to and including Corporate Manager are determined directly from the negotiations held between the Local Government Employers and the recognised Trades Unions under the NJC agreement. Pay Awards at Chief Officer level are determined by the negotiations held between Local Government Employers and recognised Trade Unions under the JNC for Chief Officers and similarly the pay awards for the Managing Director is negotiated nationally with ALACE (Association of Local Authority Chief Executives).
- 2.9 The NJC negotiated pay award for 2025/26 was 3.2% for all grades including Chief Officers and Chief Executive.
- 2.10 The analysis used for this report draws upon the pay rates expected as at 1st April 2026.

2.11 The remuneration of the “lowest paid employees” includes the following elements:

- Salary
- Any allowance or other contractual payments in connection with their role

Salary

2.12 Each “lowest paid permanent employee” is paid within the salary range for Grade 1. Details of the Council’s grades and salary ranges are available on the website. The normal starting salary for new employees will be at the entry point for the grade. However, at the appointing managers discretion, based on their assessment of skills and experience employees may commence at a higher-grade point.

Other payments and allowances

2.13 Any allowance or other payments will only be made to staff in connection with their role or the patterns of hours they work and must be in accordance with the Pay and Reward Policy. In a small number of roles where significant recruitment difficulties are experienced, a market supplement is paid. Market supplements are reviewed every three years to ensure they are still required. Further details of such allowances and payments are available on request.

Progression within the salary scale

2.14 The Council has a performance management and development review scheme in place. This embraces a number of elements including a joint review of performance, sharing organisational/team goals and agreeing future plans. Progression through the incremental scale appropriate to the grade is dependent upon performance being assessed as satisfactory by the staff member’s line manager.

2.15 In exceptional cases where staff members have consistently delivered exceptional performance, more than one incremental point may be awarded, with the approval of the relevant Chief Officer.

Pension

2.16 All Rushmoor Borough Council staff are eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme. There is automatic enrolment procedure in place to encourage membership of the scheme.

Severance Payments

2.17 Any severance payments will be in line with the Council’s adopted policies on Organisational Change and MARS (Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme). Further details are available on request.

3. Remuneration of Chief Officers

Pay framework

- 3.1 “Chief Officers” refers to the Managing Director, Executive Director, Executive Head of Service and Heads of Service.
- 3.2 As set out above this group of “Chief Officers” are paid on locally determined pay scales outside of the NJC agreement. These pay scales were created by extending the NJC spinal column points, in the financial year 2025/26 the pay award for all Chief Officers was agreed at an increase of 3.2% on the base salary.

Progression within the salary scale

- 3.3 Progression through the incremental scale appropriate to the grade is dependent upon performance being judged as satisfactory or higher at the end of the review year.

Pension

- 3.4 All employees are eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme, but the value of these benefits has been excluded from the figures used for pay comparison purposes.

Severance Payments

- 3.5 Any severance payments will be in line with the Council’s policy for Organisational Change or MARS scheme and further details are available on request.
- 3.6 Salaries of all the Council’s Chief Officers are published on the council’s website in line with statutory requirements. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (Statutory Instrument 2015/234) 2 3 (A&A regs) require local authorities to publish the following information about staff whose annual remuneration is at least £50,000:
 - the number of employees whose remuneration in that year was at least £50,000 in brackets of £5,000
 - details of remuneration and job title of certain senior employees whose salary is at least £50,000, and
 - employees whose salaries are £150,000 or more must be identified by name.

4. Other allowances or payments

- 4.1 Any allowance or other payments will only be made to staff in connection with their role or the patterns of hours they work and must be in accordance with the Council’s Pay and Reward policy.
- 4.2 The Managing Director is appointed by the Council to act as the Returning Officer at the election of councillors for the Borough and as acting Returning Officer at Parliamentary

Elections. The additional fees associated with these functions will be paid in accordance with those set nationally or locally through the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Elections Fees Working Party.

- 4.3 Within the fees structure for elections, provision is made for payments to staff for specific duties. These payments are also made in accordance with nationally set rates or locally through the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Election Fees Working Party. Details are available on request. Further details of such allowances and payments are available on request.

5. The relationship between remuneration of highest and lowest paid employees of the Council.

- 5.1 There are a number of different ways of presenting this information to provide a rounded picture of pay comparisons within the organisation. The lowest, median and highest FTE salaries as at 1st April 2025 are as follows:

Lowest: £24,413

Median £41,771

Highest £123,840

- 5.2 By taking the salary of those permanently appointed employees paid on the lowest grade of the council's pay structure and comparing this with the Managing Director a pay ratio of **1:5.07** emerges. This is a slight reduction on the previous year's ratio which was 1:5.9
- 5.3 The Hutton Report (2010) that looked at the relationship between pay levels in the public sector recommended that organisations should comply with a maximum pay multiple of **1:20**. Rushmoor is well below that ratio.
- 5.4 An alternative approach is to compare the Managing Director's salary against the median salary. This equates to a ratio of **1:2.96** which is a slight reduction on the previous year's ratio which was 1:3.5.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 There has been no significant movement over the last 12 months. These results indicate that there is no cause for concern regarding the ratio between the pay rates for staff and the Managing Director.

BELINDA TAM
CORPORATE MANAGER - PEOPLE

APPENDIX B

Rushmoor Borough Council Gender Pay Gap Report 2025

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, requires employers with 250 or more employees to publish statutory gender pay gap calculations annually. This includes the following:
- Gender pay gap (mean and median values)
 - Gender bonus gap (mean and median values)
 - Proportion of men and women receiving bonuses
 - Proportion of men and women in each quartile of the organisation's pay structure.
- 1.2 The Council is required to publish this data on its website and the governments dedicated page for Gender Pay Gap reporting - <https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk>. The report must be published by 30th March 2026.
- 1.3 The legislation requires the organisation to choose a 'snapshot' date and base the Gender Pay Report on all relevant employees employed at that date. Rushmoor Borough Council's Gender Pay Gap is based on analysis of data as at 31st March in a year. This year's calculations are based on data as at 31st March 2025.
- 1.4 Using a common calculation formula, organisations can determine whether there is a difference in pay for its male employees when considered against its female employees. The calculation takes account of all allowances paid to staff as recommended under the regulations, but excludes all overtime pay, whether at flat or enhanced rates.
- 1.5 This exercise provides organisations with an opportunity to consider whether they have a gap in the average pay rates for male and female employees and allows the organisation to consider how that has occurred and to put in place actions to address this. The difference between the pay rates for male and female employees is referred to as the 'Gender Pay Gap'.

2. RUSHMOOR DATA

- 2.1 Based on the data snapshot date of 31st March 2025, there were 256 permanent employees and 36 casual employees included in the data. Therefore, the total number of 292 employees has been used for the data source for this year's calculation.

2.2 The gender breakdown of Rushmoor's workforce is 191 female employees (65%) and 101 male employees (35%).

2.3 Average Pay Calculations

The average female hourly rate is £20.04 per hour. The average male hourly rate is £23.87 per hour. This means that on average male employees within Rushmoor Borough Council earn £3.83 per hour more than female employees. The calculation method that is used to calculate Gender Pay Gap is as follows:

$$\frac{(\text{£highest rate}) - (\text{£lowest rate})}{\text{£highest rate}} \times 100 = \text{Gender Pay Gap \%}$$

For Rushmoor Borough Council the following applies:

$$\frac{\text{£23.87 (male average)} - \text{£20.04 (female average)}}{\text{£23.87}} \times 100 = 16.04 \%$$

16.04 % difference between male salaries and female salaries

This equates to a 16.04 % difference (or 'gap') in pay rates, with the female average salary being lower than the male average salary.

Comparison with 2024 data:

In 2024, the average female hourly rate was £19.51 per hour and the average male hourly rate was £22.36 per hour.

This equated to a percentage difference of 12.75%, with the average female salary being lower than the male average salary.

The difference / gap has increased from the previous year.

2.4 Median Pay Calculations

- The female median hourly rate is £19.65 per hour.
- The male median hourly rate is also £22.63 per hour.
- Using the above method, the difference in median wages is:

$$\frac{\text{£22.63} - \text{£19.65}}{\text{£22.63}} \times 100 = 13.17 \%$$

Comparison with 2024 data

In 2024, the median female hourly rate was £19.34 per hour and the median male hourly rate was £21.45. This year we see an increase in both of these figures. The gap has increased from 9.84% to 13.17%

2.5 **Distribution of male and female employees within Rushmoor Borough Council across 4 quartiles.**

	Total Count	Female Actual	Male Actual	Female %	Male %
Quartile 1 – Lower	73	57	16	78% <i>(71%)</i>	22% <i>(29%)</i>
Quartile 2 - Mid Lower	73	50	23	69% <i>(69%)</i>	31% <i>(31%)</i>
Quartile 3 - Mid Upper	73	46	27	63% <i>(68%)</i>	37% <i>(32%)</i>
Quartile – Upper	73	38	35	52% <i>(50%)</i>	48% <i>(50%)</i>
Total Workforce	292	191	101	65% <i>(65%)</i>	35% <i>(35%)</i>

(figures shown in italics are the % figures for 2024 to enable easier comparison).

The table above shows a significant change in the distribution of male and female employees within the Lower Quartile with a 6% increase in the number of females, whilst there has been a 7% decrease in the number of males in this category. In the Mid Upper Quartile there has been a 5% decrease in the number of female employees and a 5% increase in the number of male employees.

Bonus Pay

- 2.6 Rushmoor Borough Council does not have payments such as performance related pay, one off incentive payments for recruitment and retention or monetary payments for long service awards, therefore within the guidelines for Gender Pay Gap reporting there are no payments within the “bonus” categorisation.
- 2.7 No bonuses were paid in Rushmoor Borough Council during this period, so there is no pay gap to report in relation to bonus payments.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 At Rushmoor Borough Council the average difference (or ‘gap’) in pay rates between male and female salaries has increased from 12.75% to 16.04%. As last year both the median female hourly rate and the median male hourly rate has increased and the median gap has increased from 9.84% to 13.17%.
- 3.2 To address the gender pay gap, the new People Plan for 2026 -2028 includes further initiatives to encourage and support the personal development of employees, such as upskilling and mentoring opportunities as well as secondments, cross council project working and flexible working. We are committed to facilitate positive shifts in the Council’s gender pay gap.

BELINDA TAM, CORPORATE MANAGER – PEOPLE

APPENDIX C

Rushmoor Borough Council Ethnicity Pay Gap Report 2025

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Whilst there is currently no legal requirement for ethnicity pay gap reporting we have decided to voluntarily provide a report to demonstrate our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in the Council and measures to address to close the gap as appropriately.
- 1.2 The Ethnicity Pay Gap data includes the following:
- Ethnicity pay gap (mean and median values)
 - Ethnicity group proportion in each quartile of the organisation's pay structure

2. RUSHMOOR DATA

- 2.1 Based on the data snapshot date of 31st March 2025, a total number of 240 employees have been included in this data source (which includes permanent and fixed-term employees). This equates to 93% of the organisation. This is an increase of 9 employees from last year's report which included the data of 231 employees which equated to 91% of the organisation at the time.
- 2.2 Please note that 16 employees were not included in this year's report as they chose not to share their ethnicity. This is a drop of 4 from last year's report as 20 employees chose not to share their ethnicity.
- 2.3 **Mean Ethnicity Pay Gap**

To calculate the mean pay gap, we add together all the hourly pay rates that people from Black, Asian, mixed race or other ethnic (BAME) groups received. We divide the total by the number of people from these groups in our workforce. We then repeat this calculation for white people. The difference between these figures is the mean ethnicity pay gap.

Mean Hourly Rate	White	Black, Asian, mixed race, other	Pay Gap
31 st March 2025	£23.00	£20.82	9.5%
31 st March 2024	£22.31	£19.48	12.7%

2.4 Median Ethnicity Pay Gap

To calculate the median pay gap, we first rank all our people by their hourly pay. We identify what the person in the middle of the pay range for employees from Black, Asian, mixed race or other ethnic groups received. Then we compare it with what the person in the middle of our white population pay range received. The difference between these figures is the median ethnicity pay gap.

Median Hourly Rate	White	Black, Asian, mixed race, other (BAME)	Pay Gap
31 st March 2025	£21.36	£21.32	0.2%
31 st March 2024	£20.43	£19.34	5.3%

2.5 Pay Quartiles

Each pay quartile represents a quarter or 25% of our total workforce ranked by pay:

31 st March 2025	Number		%	
	White	Black, Asian, mixed race, other (BAME)	White	Black, Asian, mixed race, other
Upper quartile	58	2	96.7% <i>(96.5%)</i>	3.3% <i>(3.5%)</i>
Upper – middle quartile	53	7	88.3% <i>(89.7%)</i>	11.7% <i>(10.3%)</i>
Lower – middle quartile	57	4	93.3% <i>(94.8%)</i>	6.7% <i>(5.2%)</i>
Lower quartile	56	5	91.7% <i>(87.9%)</i>	8.3% <i>(12.1%)</i>
Total Workforce	222	18	92.5% <i>(92.2%)</i>	7.5% <i>(7.8%)</i>

(figures shown in brackets / italics are the % figures for 2024 to enable easier comparison)

3 CONCLUSION

3.1 At Rushmoor Borough Council the average difference (or 'gap') in pay rates between White and BAME groups is **9.5%** on 31st March 2025. This has decreased since this was last measured on 31st March 2024 by **3.2%**. This can be attributed to the percentage decrease of BAME staff in the lower quartile by 3.8% on 31st March 2025. In addition to this, the percentage of BAME staff in the upper middle quartile has increased by 1.4%. Therefore 2 of the 4 quartiles have decreased and increased favourably for BAME staff. The number of BAME staff in the upper quartile has contrastingly decreased, but not significantly (only by 0.2%). The median pay gap between White

and BAME groups was **0.2%** on 31st March 2025. This has **decreased** since this was last measured on 31st March 2024 by **5.1%**.

- 3.2 Whilst both the mean and medium ethnicity pay gaps have decreased we will continue to review the ways we work to encourage a more diverse and inclusive workforce. In particular, we will continue to review our recruitment, secondment and development processes and opportunities to address our commitment to be a more inclusive organisation.

BELINDA TAM
CORPORATE MANAGER - PEOPLE

Equality Impact Assessment: Screening Tool

The **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Tool** should be completed for any new proposal, plan or project. It helps staff check if their proposal will positively, neutrally, or negatively affect residents, staff, or service users. If the impact is positive or neutral, a full EIA isn't needed.

A **full EIA** is required if the screening shows a negative impact on specific groups. We also advise that a full EIA should be completed when a [key decision](#) is being made. Key decisions are executive actions likely to:

- Significantly affect Council tax, budget balances, or contingencies.
- Have a major impact on communities across two or more Borough wards.
- Expenditure or savings over £100,000 qualify as significant, with a £250,000 threshold for property transactions.

Furthermore, for staff, we generally consider the impact on more than 25 people as significant, which would require a full EIA. If you're unsure, you can seek guidance from the Policy Team.

***After screening, if you identify the need for a full Equality Impact Assessment, you can use your existing answers as a foundation for the full assessment.**

Name of Project	Annual People Report 2025 including People Plan 2026-28
Reference number (if applicable)	N/A
Service Area	People Team
Date screening completed	20/01/2026
Screening author name	Belinda Tam
Policy Team sign off	Martin Iyawe
Authorising Director/Head of Service name	Karen Edwards

1. Please provide a summary of the proposal

Aims / objectives of this proposal

The Annual People Report 2025 provides important context, highlighting workforce trends, EDI considerations, wellbeing outcomes, and organisational pressures. Key insights include increased long-term sickness rates, shifts in the age and gender profile, progress in EDI data completion, and preparations for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). A refreshed two year People Plan has been developed, building on and strengthening the four existing themes so the organisation is better positioned to support, develop and retain staff. The objectives are to create a positive organisational culture, develop people

to reach their potential, ensure the Council remains an employer of choice, and strengthen employee engagement, wellbeing and support.

Savings

While the primary purpose is not financial, the refreshed People Plan is expected to support indirect efficiencies. By improving organisational culture, retention, capability and resilience through change, the Council may reduce recruitment costs, lower turnover, and improve productivity over time. Any savings are therefore anticipated to be non-cashable and linked to improved workforce stability and performance.

Benefits / change expected

The updated People Plan will deliver:

- A clearer, more modern framework that aligns workforce priorities with the new Council Delivery Plan.
- Stronger support for staff wellbeing, learning and development, and change resilience.
- Improved staff engagement and a more inclusive, positive workplace culture.
- Enhanced organisational capability to respond to forthcoming changes linked to devolution and local government reorganisation.
- Greater ability to attract, retain and grow talented people across the Council.

Key groups of people or areas involved

The proposal primarily affects the Council's workforce, including all employees across services and levels. It may also impact residents and communities indirectly through improved service delivery supported by a more skilled, resilient and engaged workforce. Key internal stakeholders include staff, managers, People/OD teams, trade unions, and service leads involved in implementing workforce-related improvements.

2. Who will the proposal impact? Please indicate Yes or No

Group of people	Impacted?
Residents	No
Businesses	No
Visitors to Rushmoor	No
Voluntary or community groups	No
Council staff	Yes
Trade unions	No
Other public sector Organisations	No

Others	Please specify: N/A
--------	---------------------

3. What impact will this change have on staff? Please complete where relevant:

Which services, teams will be affected?

The updated People Strategy and People Plan will impact all Council services and teams, as it sets out the overarching approach to workforce culture, development, wellbeing, and engagement.

How many staff members?

The proposal impacts the entire Council workforce. This includes all permanent, temporary, and fixed-term employees, approx. 250 members of staff

What will the impact be?

The impact will be organisational rather than structural. Expected changes include:

- Strengthened learning, development and career pathways, enabling staff to build skills and resilience.
- Enhanced expectations around leadership, behaviours, and organisational culture, supporting a more positive, inclusive environment.
- Refined workforce planning and talent management approaches, ensuring services are better prepared for future change.
- Possible adjustments to ways of working, including improved digital capability, hybrid working support, and more consistent people management practices.
- No direct changes to staffing levels or relocations, although services may experience change as part of wider transformation programmes.

4. What consultation or engagement will you be leading (with residents, staff, or other stakeholders) as part of this project?

Consulted key stakeholders including SLT and Portfolio Holder before presenting to Cabinet.

No personal or sensitive data is collected as part of this update.

Workforce engagement insights have been drawn from multiple channels referenced in the Annual People Report, including: Staff Connect sessions, Engage 24/7, the Staff Celebration Event, Health and Wellbeing Survey, and Service Manager/SLT forums. These channels provide qualitative feedback contributing to the design of the updated People Plan, ensuring it reflects wellbeing, LGR concerns, training needs, organisational culture, and communication preferences.

5. What impact will this change have on people with protected characteristics and/or from disadvantaged groups?

Direct and indirect impacts

When completing this table, please consider both **direct and indirect impacts**, see helpful guidance.

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a **protected characteristic**. This includes:

- **Actual possession** of a protected characteristic.
- **Perceived possession** of a protected characteristic (discrimination by perception).
- **Association** with someone who has a protected characteristic (discrimination by association).

A valid comparison must show that someone without the protected characteristic would have been treated better in similar circumstances. It can still be direct discrimination even if the person treating you unfairly shares the same characteristic.

Note: Age discrimination may be lawful if it can be objectively justified. For other protected characteristics, direct discrimination is unlawful regardless of intent or justification.

Indirect discrimination happens when a **policy, rule, or practice** applies to everyone but puts people with a protected characteristic at a **particular disadvantage**. It occurs when:

- A policy is applied equally to all.
- It disadvantages a group sharing a protected characteristic.
- You are personally disadvantaged by it.
- The organisation cannot justify the policy as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

If the policy can be objectively justified, it is not considered indirect discrimination.

For example: Closing public toilets may be an example of indirect discrimination, as it affects everyone but disproportionately disadvantages women, due to toilet frequency, alternative options and safety/hygiene factors.

Likely impact

For the groups identified earlier, tick the likely impact (both direct and indirect) on people with protected characteristics (e.g., age, disability, race, etc.):

- **Neutral:** No impact.
- **Positive:** Benefits people with protected characteristics.
- **Negative:** Harms people with protected characteristics.
- **Not Sure:** It's unclear how this affects people with protected characteristics, or more information is needed.

Rate the negative impact as **low, medium, or high**. Also, consider whether the proposal may be seen as controversial or negative by some groups. See the guidance for help.

Protected characteristic - Age

(for example, young people under 25, older people over 65)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Yes		Choose an item.		The Annual People Report identifies both younger and older workers as potentially experiencing change differently. The Plan's focus on resilience, future skills, LGR support and career pathways creates positive impacts across age groups. Targeted support for younger workers (work experience programme, apprenticeships) and older workers (retention, wellbeing) ensures opportunities for all.

Protected characteristic – Disability

(include people with physical disabilities, people with learning disabilities, blind and partially sighted people, Deaf or hard of hearing people, neurodiverse people. This also includes carers.)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Yes		Choose an item.		Positive due to commitments to wellbeing, inclusive culture, and better support mechanisms. Greater focus on training for managers should improve reasonable adjustment processes and confidence in supporting disabled employees.

Protected characteristic - Gender reassignment and identity

(Include people who identify across the trans* umbrella, not only those who have undergone gender reassignment surgery. This is inclusive of girls and or/women, men and/or boys, non-binary and genderfluid people and people who are transitioning) *Trans is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth.

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
	Yes	Choose an item.		Reinforced expectations around respectful behaviours and leadership competencies may reduce risk of discrimination.

Protected characteristic - Marriage and Civil Partnership

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
	Yes	Choose an item.		The updated plan does not introduce any changes that would directly impact this group.

Protected characteristic – Pregnancy and Maternity

(Include people who are pregnant in or returning to the workplace after pregnancy. Could also include working parents.)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Yes		Choose an item.		Strengthened wellbeing, support and people management practices are likely to benefit staff during pregnancy, maternity, adoption, and return-to-work phases.

Protected characteristic – Race or ethnicity

(include on the basis of colour, nationality, citizenship, ethnic or national origins)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Yes		Choose an item.		Although the ethnicity pay gap has narrowed (from 12.7% to 9.5%), representation remains below the local community. Commitments within the People Plan to inclusive culture, data improvement, fair recruitment and development support continued progress.

Protected characteristic – Religion or belief

(include no faith)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
	Yes	Choose an item.		No negative impacts identified.

Protected characteristic - Sex

(Under the Equality Act 2010 and following the 2025 Supreme Court ruling on 15 April 2025, a person's legal sex is defined as their biological sex as recorded at birth. Trans individuals are still protected from discrimination under the characteristic of gender reassignment.)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
	Yes	Choose an item.		Workforce development, wellbeing support, and improved management capability may positively support both men and women.

Protected characteristic - Sexual Orientation

(Include people from across the LGBTQ+ umbrella, for example, people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual or asexual.)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
	Yes	Choose an item.		Focus on inclusive culture and behavioural expectations supports LGBTQ+ employees

Protected characteristic - Other

(e.g. people on low incomes, people living in poverty, looked after children, people with care experience, people who are homeless, people with mental health problems, people who are prison leavers, people affected by menopause, people affected by menstruation and/or period poverty)

Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Not Sure	Description of the impact (if applicable) <i>Consider both direct and indirect impacts when completing this table</i>
Yes		Choose an item.		The emphasis on culture, development, wellbeing, leadership, and engagement is designed to support a fair and inclusive working environment for all staff.

6. Screening Decision

Outcome	Yes or No
Neutral or Positive – no full EIA needed*.	Yes
Negative – Low Impact – full EIA at the service director’s discretion*.	No
Negative – Medium or High Impact – must complete a full EIA.	No
Is a full EIA required? Service decision:	No
Is a full EIA required? [Policy Team] sign off recommendation:	No
Flag for DPIA (will include engagement that collects personal data). [Policy Team]:	No
Flag for ethics (high risk / will involve engagement with vulnerable residents):	No

Once you've completed the screening tool and determined that the proposal is likely to have a positive or neutral impact on people with protected characteristics, the following can be included in the 'Equality Impact Assessment' part of the report. ***An equality impact check found that this proposal would have a positive or neutral impact on people with protected characteristics. Therefore, a full assessment is not required.***

Please send this completed EIA Screening Tool to Policy@rushmoor.gov.uk

for quality checking by the policy team. **If required, please continue to the full assessment below.**