

# HUMAN RESOURCES & COUNCIL TAX COMMITTEE

24 FEBRUARY 2025

## REPORT OF HEAD OF PEOPLE

### A.5 WORKFORCE UPDATE REPORT

#### PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

##### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To provide Members of the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee with an update on current staffing statistics.

##### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The analysis of workforce data provides Members with statistics relating to the staff employed within the Council and how this compares to the Tendring district and national averages. This is a standard report that is provided to the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee periodically.

At the time of writing, Tendring District Council has 521.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees. The FTE figure equates to 790 workers in total (including casual workers and learners). This is made up of 439 full-time and 351 part-time staff.

The 'Grow Our Own' initiative, aimed at enabling staff to obtain professional qualifications in areas with recruitment challenges, remains a priority. The organisation will maintain its sponsorship programme for qualifications and will leverage apprenticeships whenever feasible. Apprenticeships, up to and including Level 7 (postgraduate level), are increasingly accessible and can be financed through the organisation's Levy, levy sharing, or the government's co-investment scheme.

Despite these efforts, several technical and non-technical vacancies remain unfilled due to a shortage of suitable candidates. However, the Council is proactively addressing these challenges. Measures are being implemented to attract and retain talent, ensuring that the organisation continues to meet its objectives. The Council remains committed to fostering a supportive and progressive work environment, encouraging staff development and addressing market demands effectively.

The commitment of Tendring District Council employees 'to go the extra mile' continues despite the challenges identified above and should be noted.

This report indicates that the equality data has largely remained consistent with previous reports. In some areas, this consistency is positive, particularly regarding gender balance, the gender pay gap, and age distribution. However, it is disappointing to note that the number of employees reporting a disability or identifying as non-white British has not increased.

The HR team is actively encouraging staff to complete the 'sensitive data' section on the HR and Payroll system and will continue to support employees in feeling comfortable sharing their disability status. However, the low number of employees recorded as non-white British is believed to be influenced by other factors, including the demographic representation of the Tendring area.

Recognising these challenges, the Council acknowledges the need for proactive measures to attract non-white British candidates to Council roles. By implementing targeted recruitment strategies and fostering an inclusive work environment, the Council aims to enhance diversity and better reflect the community it serves.

At its last meeting, the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee endorsed the adoption of the People Strategy 2024 to 2029. A key focus of this strategy is updating and promoting the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy. As a priority, the HR team is collaborating with partner organisations to review and enhance the effectiveness of this policy, ensuring it aligns with the Council's commitment to fostering an inclusive and diverse workplace.

To further support the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy, the Council is introducing Inclusion and Diversity Champions. These champions will model inclusive behaviour throughout the Council, assisting the HR team, managers, and colleagues in fostering an inclusive culture. The Inclusion and Diversity Champions plan to hold their inaugural meeting in March, and regular updates on initiatives, ideas, and progress will be provided.

Finally, while these efforts are set within the context of Local Government Reorganisation, the authority remains committed to ensuring its staff are in the best possible position moving forward.

#### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**It is recommended to the Human Resources & Council Tax Committee that:**

**the contents of this report be noted.**

#### **REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)**

The analysis of workforce data provides Members with statistics relating to the staff employed within the Council and how this compares to the Tendring district and national averages. This is a standard report that is provided to the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee periodically.

#### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

There is no alternative option to consider, as this is an update report on the Council's staffing establishment.

## PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

### DELIVERING PRIORITIES

The proposals in this report align with the authority's Corporate Plan 2024/28 priorities of 'working with partners to improve quality of life,' including for the authority's employees, many of whom are Tendring residents, and 'raising aspirations and creating opportunities.'

### LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (including legislation & constitutional powers)

The Council must ensure compliance with Employment Legislation, the Equalities Act 2010, and the Working Time Directive.

The Council has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure their health and safety at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and other related legislation.

### FINANCE AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications.

### USE OF RESOURCES AND VALUE FOR MONEY

It is envisaged that this report does not require additional resources.

The following are submitted in respect of the indicated use of resources and value for money indicators:

<p>A) Financial sustainability: how the body plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;</p>	<p>The regular monitoring of the authority's workforce ensures that the authority is able to monitor its spend on staffing resources, ensuring sufficient resource to maintain adequate service delivery.</p>
<p>B) Governance: how the body ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks, including; and</p>	<p>Regular monitoring of the workforce and review of the authority's people practices and policies in line with recognised best practise, ensures compliance with Employment Legislation.</p>
<p>C) Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the body uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.</p>	<p>As a major employer in the district, the Council's ambition is to contribute to building a more prosperous local community by modelling good employment practice.</p> <p>Tendring District Council is also an 'Anchor' organisation – Anchors play a key role in shaping and developing the skills of the local workforce.</p>

### MILESTONES AND DELIVERY

- (a) Management Team 11 February 2025
- (b) Human Resources & Council Tax Committee 24 February 2025

### ASSOCIATED RISKS AND MITIGATION

Failure to monitor the authority's staffing levels and demographic, including vacancies, could impact upon the authority's ability to meet service demand.

<b>OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT</b>	
The local union branch executive is consulted on all staff change management programmes and is regularly updated on the authority's staffing levels.	
<b>EQUALITIES</b>	
Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when the Council makes decisions it must have regard to the need to: <p>(a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act</p> <p>(b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not</p> <p>(c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.</p> The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a). <p>The Council is committed to being an inclusive employer and a 'Family Friendly Employer', in all of its people policies and practices.</p> <p>As a Disability Confident Leader, and an Anchor organisation, the Council will proactively identify and facilitate ways to recruit individuals who may experience barriers to employment. The Council will also take an active leadership role in encouraging and working with local communities and employers to do the same.</p>	
<b>SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	
Social Value is defined through the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and requires all public sector organisations (and their suppliers) to look beyond the financial cost of a contract and consider how the services they commission and procure might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of an area. <p>The Council seeks to lead by example as a major local employer. This includes following recognised best practice and ensuring full compliance with legislation.</p> <p>The Council is also an Anchor organisation. Anchor organisations are usually large organisations which are local to place and have the leverage to maximise social value through their role as workplace developers, employers and procurers, their core business (for example health and education) and the linkages they have to the place they operate.</p>	
<b>IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S AIM TO BE NET ZERO BY 2030</b>	
This report has no direct implication on the Council's aspiration to be net zero by 2030.	
<b>OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS</b>	
Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.	
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	Not applicable

<b>Health Inequalities</b>	Employment is known to be a significant factor supporting the health of individuals. The Council as a major employer in the area contributing to the wider determinants of health.
<b>Area or Ward affected</b>	Not applicable
<b>ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION</b>	
There are no background papers associated with this report.	

### **PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

#### **BACKGROUND**

In April 2024, the Payroll and Human Resources teams implemented a new integrated Payroll and HR software package called iTrent, supported by MHR. This system replaced the previous software solution provided by Iris FMP TeamSpirit. Among its various functions, the new database monitors the workforce, capturing data on all employees, including Career Track Learners and workers on casual contracts.

#### **Workforce Statistics**

The Council's workforce of 790 staff (*of which, 573 are fully contracted staff, 25 are Apprentices in full-time employment, and 192 staff are engaged on a casual basis*).

Of our workforce, 464 are female\* (59%) and 326 are male\* (41%).

\*The terms 'female' and 'male' throughout this report refers to how individuals have identified themselves.

Of the total workforce of 790, Tendring currently employs/engages 439 full-time staff. The gender balance of the full-time staff is: 210 males\* (48%), 229 females\* (52%), and 116 males\* (33%) and 235 females\* (67%) for the remaining 351 part-time staff.

It is encouraging to see from the statistics above that the Council has an equal gender balance. This demonstrates that the Council's employment practices support families and individual's work-life balance.

The Council has also been recognised for its supportive family friendly policies and practices by being accredited by the Essex County Council Charter Accreditation Scheme for Family Friendly Employers. The application process involved an assessment of the Council's policies and procedures and case studies to show how the policies work in practice.

Under legislation that came into effect in April 2017, UK employers with over 250 employees are required to publish their gender pay gap. The gender pay gap is a mathematical indicator of the gender balance within an organisation. It measures the difference between the average

earnings of all male and female employees, irrespective of their role or seniority.

The Council's gender pay gap figures for 2024/25 have been calculated in line with the regulations set out in the gender pay gap reporting legislation using a snapshot date of 31 March 2024.

We are pleased to report that, at the time of production, the figures demonstrated that our gender pay gap is in keeping with the UK average of 7.0% (ONS April 2024).

Tendring's figures for 2024/25 are as follows: -

The male\* mean\*\* hourly rate is 4.8% (£0.81) higher than the female\* mean hourly rate.

The female\* median\*\*\* hourly rate is 2.5% (£0.36) higher than the male\* median hourly rate.

*\*\*The mean or average is determined by adding all the data points in a population and then dividing the total by the number of points.*

*\*\*\*The median is determined by arranging all the observations in order, from smallest to largest value, and the median is the middle value.*

The analysis of our gender pay gap figures tells us the following: -

- The ratio of M to F at quartile level is in keeping with composition at an overall organisational level.
- There are currently more males at Chief Officer level which will impact the mean calculation, making the male hourly rate higher. The median calculation does not weight this factor as heavily, thus reflecting a more balanced hourly rate overall.
- Our data shows there is no material disparity at each pay level within the organisation, when viewed within the context of the UK average of 7.0%, down from 7.5% in 2023, ONS, Gender pay gap in the UK: 2024.

Under Gender Pay legislation, a one-off long service award, or any discretionary payment made for exceptional performance, or additional duties outside of an individual's normal salary, if they have a monetary value, are generally recognised as bonus payments, with the exception being Career Grade Progression.

5.1% of males and 3.2% of females, within the organisation, received bonus payments (in line with the definition above) within the 2024/25 reporting period, the data shows the following:

#### **Mean bonus difference across gender**

The difference between the male and female mean bonus payment is £1.56.  
The female mean bonus payment is 0.36% higher than the male mean bonus payment.

### **Median bonus difference across gender**

The difference between the male and female median bonus payment is £125.  
The male median bonus payment is 33.3% higher than the female median bonus payment.

### **Age Profile**

As we are measuring a complete workforce, we can see a wider spectrum of ages across the organisation, with the employee age range being from 16 to 86. The highest proportion of staff falls within the 51 to 60 age brackets, with the next highest age range being 21 to 30 years. However, this is closely followed by the age range of 41 to 50 years. This indicates that the Council is retaining staff at all ages.

### **Disability Profile**

Of the 573 fully contracted staff (*excluding apprentices*), 9 have self-declared that they have a disability.

The Council is one of the only organisations in the Tendring district to be awarded \*Disability Confident Leader Status, (*awarded to the authority in 2017 and most recently in May 2021*). This requires an employer to be Disability Confident as recognised by their peers, the local community, and disabled people. As a 'Disability Confident Leader', Tendring has made a commitment to support other employers in the district to become 'Disability Confident'.

*\*Disability Confident encompasses a number of voluntary commitments to encourage employers to recruit, retain, and develop disabled staff, such as offering work experience opportunities and implementing a flexible recruitment process. This replaced the Two Ticks Disability accreditation, which the Council was awarded since 1998.*

The organisation is currently going through the periodic re-accreditation process, to retain Leader Status.

### **Ethnicity Profile**

Of those staff who have declared their ethnicity, 9 declared they were of an ethnic origin other than 'White British'. The 2021 Census statistics show that in Tendring 6.5% of residents declared themselves as being from a minority ethnic group.

### **Sickness Absence**

The reported absence figure for the Council in 2024/25 (*April 2024 – 07 February 2025*) was 3.65 days absence per employee, which shows the rate to be below the reported national level at 5.7 days, according to the National Office of Statistics.

*Following the implementation of the new HR and Payroll system (iTrent), the organisation temporarily operated two absence tracking systems to ensure an accurate overview of*

*sickness absence within the Council. The HR team has been auditing the accuracy of managers' sickness absence records on iTrent and is actively working with managers to ensure precise recording. The data presented above is based solely on iTrent and may therefore under-report actual figures as we complete this exercise.*

The list below indicates the top 15 reasons for absence during this sickness period. Viral being the most common reason for absence.

1. Viral, i.e. Cold, Flu
2. Stomach
3. Head i.e. Headache, Migraine
4. Other
5. Operation
6. Stress
7. Muscle
8. Back/ Spinal disorders
9. Chest
10. Depression/Anxiety
11. Gastroenteritis
12. Bereavement
13. Dental
14. Pregnancy
15. Bones ie Broken/ Fracture

Employees' general health and well-being continues to be supported through a fully funded Employee Assistance Programme (*which offers a holistic approach*), greater flexible working options, Corporate Gym Membership, flu vaccinations and access to an Occupational Health Specialist.

The authority is also committed to promoting the well-being of its employees. Including: working in partnership with a number of 3<sup>rd</sup> parties (*bulleted below*) to provide staff with a range of resources and training a number of Mental Health First Aiders, raising awareness amongst management and the general workforce.

- Health in Mind (*provides access to a wide range of talking therapy treatments for adults with common mental health problems in and around Colchester and Tendring*);
- Anglia Community Enterprise (ACE) (*NHS Community Health Services, such as health checks, My Weight Matters*);
- Able Futures (*funded by the Department for Work and Pensions, available to any employee with a mental health issue which may be affecting their work*);
- Regional Employers (*seeking best practice for managing absence*);
- Provide (*a 'Community Interest Company' with a focus on health*).

As the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee is aware, to ensure the Council protects



employees against harassment, risk assessments have been developed across the organisation, and subsequent measures have been implemented. This is a statutory requirement to safeguard employees.

**PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS TAKEN BY COUNCIL/CABINET/COMMITTEE ETC.**

Not applicable.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL**

ONS Ethnic group, England and Wales: Census 2021 –

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/bulletins/ethnicgroupenglandandwales/census2021>

**APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Staffing Data

**REPORT CONTACT OFFICER(S)**

*Include here the Name, Job Title and Email/Telephone details of the person(s) who wrote the report and who can answer questions on the content.*

<b>Name</b>	Jo Williams-Lota Lauren Cuthbert
<b>Job Title</b>	HR Manager HR Advisor
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**Number of Employees (including Career Track Learners)**

<b>Total workforce</b>	790	
<b>Female</b>	464	<b>59%</b>
<b>Male</b>	326	<b>41%</b>

<b>Full Time</b>	439	
<b>Female</b>	229	<b>52%</b>
<b>Male</b>	210	<b>48%</b>

<b>Part Time</b>	351	
<b>Female</b>	235	<b>67%</b>
<b>Male</b>	116	<b>33%</b>

