

HUMAN RESOURCES AND COUNCIL TAX COMMITTEE

30th JULY 2026

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE

A.1 WORKFORCE UPDATE REPORT

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee with an update on current workforce statistics, including key trends in staffing levels, recruitment, retention, and diversity. This update supports the Committee's ongoing oversight of workforce matters, and reflects the Council's commitment to transparency and continuous improvement in its employment practices.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides Members with an overview of the Council's workforce profile, drawing on current data and comparing it with both local and national benchmarks. It forms part of the standard reporting cycle to the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee.

As at the 31st May 2026, the reporting date used for this data collation, Tendring District Council employed 783 individuals, including casual workers and apprentices, equating to 501.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) roles. This comprised 427 full-time and 149 part-time staff, alongside 18 apprentices and 189 casual workers. The number of casual staff reflects the seasonal appointments including Seafront Staff, Leisure Attendants and Theatre Staff.

Recruitment and retention remain stable, with no significant impact currently being seen from the forthcoming Local Government Reorganisation. The Council continues to attract strong levels of interest in vacancies, and recruitment and turnover trends are being closely monitored to ensure that any emerging workforce risks or changes in workforce trends can be identified and addressed at an early stage.

Despite ongoing national recruitment challenges, as highlighted by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development's (CIPD) Labour Market Outlook, which reported that 34% of public sector employers experienced hard-to-fill vacancies, the Council has continued to recruit successfully to a number of roles that have historically been difficult to fill. Recent appointments have been secured across key professional and operational areas, including accountancy, project management and leisure management, demonstrating the Council's ability to attract and retain skilled employees in a competitive labour market.

The Council's workforce spans a broad age range, from 16 to 81. Whilst retention levels remain strong across the organisation, effective workforce planning remains important to ensure that skills, knowledge and experience are retained, succession risks are managed, and service resilience is maintained over the longer term.

There has been no change in the reported workforce diversity figures since the last reporting period. Currently, 1.3% of contracted staff identify as being from an ethnic minority background, compared to 3.8% within the wider Tendring population. Similarly, 13 employees have declared

a disability, which is slightly higher than previously reported, although these figures may be under-represented due to the voluntary nature of disclosure.

The Council maintains a broadly balanced gender profile. Among full-time employees, 47.5% identify as male and 52.5% as female. At senior management level, gender representation is currently evenly balanced, with 50% of posts held by men and 50% by women, compared with 55.1% male and 44.9% female when previously reported.

As part of its commitment to meeting its equality obligations and maintaining an inclusive workplace, the Council is exploring a partnership arrangement with Colchester City Council and Braintree District Council to share a dedicated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead Officer. Subject to agreement, this shared resource would provide additional capacity and specialist expertise to support the Council's Equality Ambassador network, promote inclusive employment practices, and help ensure compliance with statutory responsibilities, whilst sharing costs and resources across the three authorities.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the content of this Workforce Update Report be noted.

REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)

The analysis of workforce data provides Members with statistical information relating to the Council's workforce and enables comparison with Tendring district and national averages. Regular monitoring of workforce, recruitment and retention data supports the early identification of emerging trends and enables the Council to respond appropriately to any changes, particularly as preparations continue for Local Government Reorganisation.

This is a standard report provided periodically to the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee as part of its ongoing oversight of workforce matters.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

As this report provides a periodic workforce update for Members' information and oversight, no substantive alternative options have been identified. The report supports the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee's role in maintaining oversight of workforce and staffing matters in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

An alternative would be not to provide the update at this stage; however, this would reduce Members' visibility of current workforce trends, recruitment and retention data, and wider workforce planning considerations, particularly as preparations continue for Local Government Reorganisation.

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

The Council's Corporate Plan, *Our Vision 2024–2028*, includes the theme of Financial Sustainability and Openness, with a commitment to continue delivering effective services while looking after the public purse. This requires careful planning, effective use of capacity, and clear prioritisation of the Council's time, money and assets.

This report supports the following Corporate Plan priorities:

- Working with partners to improve quality of life
- Raising aspirations and creating opportunities

By monitoring workforce trends and supporting effective workforce planning, the Council is better able to maintain service resilience, support employees, and contribute positively to the wider community.

This report also supports the Council's People Strategy 2024–2029 by helping to ensure that:

- the organisation complies with legislative and best practice requirements for employment;
- managers are appropriately knowledgeable and skilled in people management alongside their professional expertise; and
- Human Resources and Organisational Development practitioners are appropriately skilled and qualified to provide professional advice and guidance on operational and strategic workforce matters.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (including legislation & constitutional powers)

The Council must ensure compliance with current employment legislation, including the Equality Act 2010 and the Working Time Regulations 1998. The introduction of new employment legislation, including changes arising from the Employment Rights Act 2025 and associated implementation regulations, will require the Council to review and update relevant employment policies and procedures during 2026 and 2027.

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

The Human Resources and Council Tax Committee has responsibility for the discharge of Part II miscellaneous functions, as set out in Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, as amended, and as detailed in Appendix 1 to Part 3 of the Council's Constitution. This includes decision-making on key Human Resource and Personnel issues not reserved by the Council or delegated to officers. The receipt of this workforce update supports the Committee's role in maintaining oversight of workforce and staffing matters, employment practices, workforce trends and organisational capacity.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Head of Paid Service holds delegated authority to determine the overall staffing structure, ensuring alignment with organisational needs and strategic priorities. The Director of People holds delegated authority to make operational decisions and implement changes to Human Resources policies and procedures, including those necessary to ensure compliance with legislation and best practice, in consultation with the Head of Paid Service where appropriate.

FINANCE AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, which is provided for update and oversight purposes.

USE OF RESOURCES AND VALUE FOR MONEY

This report does not require any additional resources. The following information is provided in respect of the indicated use of resources and value for money indicators:

A) Financial sustainability: how the body plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;	Regular monitoring of the Council's workforce supports effective oversight of staffing resources and assists the authority in ensuring that sufficient capacity is in place to maintain service delivery.
B) Governance: how the body ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks.	The report supports informed decision-making, effective risk management and alignment with legal requirements. Regular workforce monitoring and the review of people practices and policies help to ensure continued compliance with employment legislation and recognised best practice.
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.	The Council uses workforce data and performance insights to support effective service delivery and workforce planning. As a major local employer and Anchor organisation, the Council also contributes to the development of the local workforce and the wider economic and social wellbeing of the district.

MILESTONES AND DELIVERY

- a) Management Team 7th July 2026.
- b) Human Resources and Council Tax Committee 30th July 2026.

ASSOCIATED RISKS AND MITIGATION

Failure to monitor the authority's staffing levels, workforce demographics and vacancies could affect the Council's ability to respond effectively to service demand, workforce pressures and emerging organisational risks.

OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The local union branch executive is consulted on staff change management programmes and is regularly updated on the authority's staffing levels. No specific consultation has been undertaken in relation to this update report.

EQUALITIES

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 establishes the Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- a. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- b. advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- c. foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership is also a protected characteristic, but only in relation to the first limb of the duty.

The Council is committed to being an inclusive employer and a Family Friendly Employer in its people policies and practices.

As a Disability Confident Leader and Anchor organisation, the Council will continue to identify and facilitate ways to recruit individuals who may experience barriers to employment. The Council will also seek to encourage and work with local communities and employers to support inclusive employment practice more widely.

SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS

Social value is defined through the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, which requires public sector organisations and their suppliers to consider how commissioned and procured services can improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of an area.

Although this report does not relate directly to a procurement exercise, the Council seeks to lead by example as a major local employer. This includes following recognised best practice, complying with employment legislation and supporting inclusive employment practices.

As a major local employer and service provider, the Council plays an important anchor role within the district, supporting local workforce development, contributing to the wider determinants of health and wellbeing, and promoting economic and social value.

IMPLICATIONS RELATED TO DEVOLUTION AND/OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

Effective workforce monitoring is essential as the Council prepares for Local Government Reorganisation. By maintaining a clear and up-to-date understanding of workforce composition, skills, and capacity, the Council is better positioned to manage change, support staff through transition, and ensure continuity of service delivery. Monitoring also enables informed decision-making around resource planning, succession strategies, and the identification of potential risks or gaps during the reorganisation process.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S AIM TO BE NET ZERO BY 2050

This report has no direct implications for the Council's aspiration to be net zero by 2050.

OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS

Consideration has been given to the implications of this report in respect of the matters set out below. Any significant issues are identified where relevant.

Crime and Disorder	Not applicable.
Health Inequalities	Employment is a significant factor in supporting individual health and wellbeing. As a major local employer, the Council contributes to the wider determinants of health and wellbeing in the district.

Subsidy Control (the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and the related Statutory Guidance)	This report does not involve the provision of financial assistance or confer any economic advantage to external organisations; therefore, subsidy control considerations are not applicable in this instance.
Area or Ward affected	Not applicable.
ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION	
There is no additional relevant information arising from this report.	

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND
In April 2024, the Payroll and Human Resources teams implemented iTrent, a new integrated Payroll and HR software system. The system supports the monitoring and analysis of workforce data and enables statistical reports and workforce profiles to be generated. <u>Workforce Statistics</u> As at the 31st May 2026, of the total workforce of 783, Tendring employed 427 full-time staff. The gender balance of the full-time staff is: 203 males* (47.5%) and 224 females* (52.5%). For the remaining 149 part-time staff, 24 are males* (16.2%) and 125 are females* (83.8%). The remaining workforce are made up of 18 apprentices and 189 staff employed on a casual basis. (*The terms 'female' and 'male' used throughout this report refer to how individuals have identified themselves.) <u>Senior Management Gender Representation</u> As at 31 May 2026, there were 77 senior managers (Grade 9 and above) across the organisation, with 37 males* and 40 females*, indicating a balanced gender representation at leadership level. The Council's Management Team currently has a 28.6% female representation. <u>Staff Retention Data</u> Since the last Workforce Update report was submitted to the Committee in October 2025, a total of 66 individuals have been appointed to the organisation generated from advertised vacancies, up to 31st May 2026, of which 29 are males* and 37 are females* (some vacancies were advertised prior to the reporting period). Within those appointments, the following types of contract terms were issued: • 14 permanent employees • 9 temporary employees • 8 Career Track apprentices and 1 external apprentice • 35 casual workers

The People Team introduced a new recruitment module in December 2025, delivered through the MHR iTrent HR and Payroll system. This has replaced the previous recruitment and advertising process.

During the reporting period since the last Committee was held on 21st October 2025, until 31st May 2026, the People Team has advertised 57 vacant posts. These vacancies were advertised both externally on the Council's website and internally via the Council's intranet, where posts were considered suitable opportunities for internal staff progression. The advertised posts generated a total of 638 applications received by the People Team.

During this reporting period, 37 staff left the organisation, of which 27 were full-time and 10 were part-time, with 9 Career Track apprentices completing their training programme. Of these 9 apprentices, 7 gained further employment within the Council, one apprentice progressed to a Level 4 Apprenticeship, and one gained external employment. Some vacant posts are still open to recruitment, while others form part of minor structure changes to better meet the service demands of the organisation.

Workforce Changes

All proposed changes to the Council's established workforce structure must be approved through the Workforce Panel, via submission of a Workforce Approval Proforma. The panel, managed by the People Team, comprises the Corporate Director Finance and IT and the Acting Head of People, with permanent approvals authorised by Ian Davidson, Chief Executive. Between 1st October 2025 and 31st May 2026, 120 proformas have been processed, covering a range of employment changes and other contractual amendments. In addition, 15 Career Grade progression requests have been approved by the Acting Head of People since the previous Committee report.

The Council continues to promote the organisation as an employer of choice, supporting family-friendly practices including flexible working, hybrid working, being accredited by the Essex County Council Charter Accreditation Scheme for Family Friendly Employers, and implementing a Fostering Friendly Policy and Family Leave and Support Policy.

Disability Profile

Of the 576 contracted staff (excluding apprentices and casuals), 13 employees have self-declared that they have a disability, which shows a change of 4 additional self-declarations since the last Committee report. Members should be reminded that the declaration of a disability is discretionary by employees, and we are only able to report on data submitted.

Ethnic Diversity

The 2021 Census states that ethnic minority groups (i.e. all groups other than White) make up 18.3% of the population in England and Wales, and 3.8% of the Tendring population. The current representation at the Council is 1.6%. Members should note that 442 staff have chosen not to disclose their ethnicity, which limits the ability to provide an accurate representation of our workforce in this statistic.

Gender Pay Gap Reporting

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. It is different from equal pay, which is about ensuring that men and women are paid the same for carrying out work of equal value.

Tendring District Council is confident that as a result of regular analysis and monitoring, we meet our equal pay obligations. This includes ensuring that all officers are paid fairly, have equal access to jobs and that employment practices are supportive of families and work-life balance. Our gender pay gap figures have been calculated in line with the regulations set out in the gender pay gap reporting legislation.

As previously reported, the Council's gender pay gap remains below the UK average of 6.9% (ONS April 2025). An overview of Tendring's pay gap figures is as follows, with data based on the 'snapshot date' of 31 March 2025.

Tendring's figures for 2025/26 are as follows: -

- The male* mean** hourly rate is 4.0% (£0.70) higher than the female* mean hourly rate.
- The female* median*** hourly rate is 0.8% (£0.12) 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.*

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 81. 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.

Sickness Absence

The reported absence figure for this reporting period is 6.44 days absence per employee, which shows the rate to be above the indicated national level at 4.4 days per employee. This may be reflected by the reporting period which includes the winter months of the year.

Sickness absence is closely monitored via the HR database system, iTrent, which enables any potential long-term ill health cases to be identified at an early stage. The top three system-recorded reasons for absence during the reporting period were viral illness, stomach-related illness, and cold/influenza.

In addition, the Council has supported seven employees with long-term ill health conditions, including cancer treatment, heart conditions and scheduled operations. Employees' general health and wellbeing continues to be supported through a fully funded Employee Assistance

Programme, flexible working options, Council-subsidised gym membership, flu vaccinations and access to Occupational Health support.

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

Not applicable – this report provides an update only.

BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL

Office for National Statistics: Census 2021 – [Census - Office for National Statistics](#)
Gender Pay Gap Report - [GPG - 2025 - 26 Reporting Year.pdf](#)

APPENDICES

None.

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