

Workforce Profile: April 2021

SALLY KIPPING: HR MANAGER



Overview:

As at the 1st January 2021, there were 421 employees working for Waverley Borough Council. These are split by service as follows:

Service	Avg No. Employees in Q3 2020/21 (Oct – Dec 2020)	% of Waverley employees
Business Transformation	56.67	13%
Commercial Services	65.33	15%
Environmental & Regulatory Services	42.5	10%
Finance & Property	36	9%
Housing Operations	65.67	16%
Housing Delivery & Communities	37	9%
Planning & Economic Development	68.33	16%
Policy and Governance	43.17	10%
Audit	2	0.5%
CE, Directors, PA	6	1%

This profile examines how these staff are grouped by age, gender, those who identify as having a disability, race and religion.

The report has sections on:

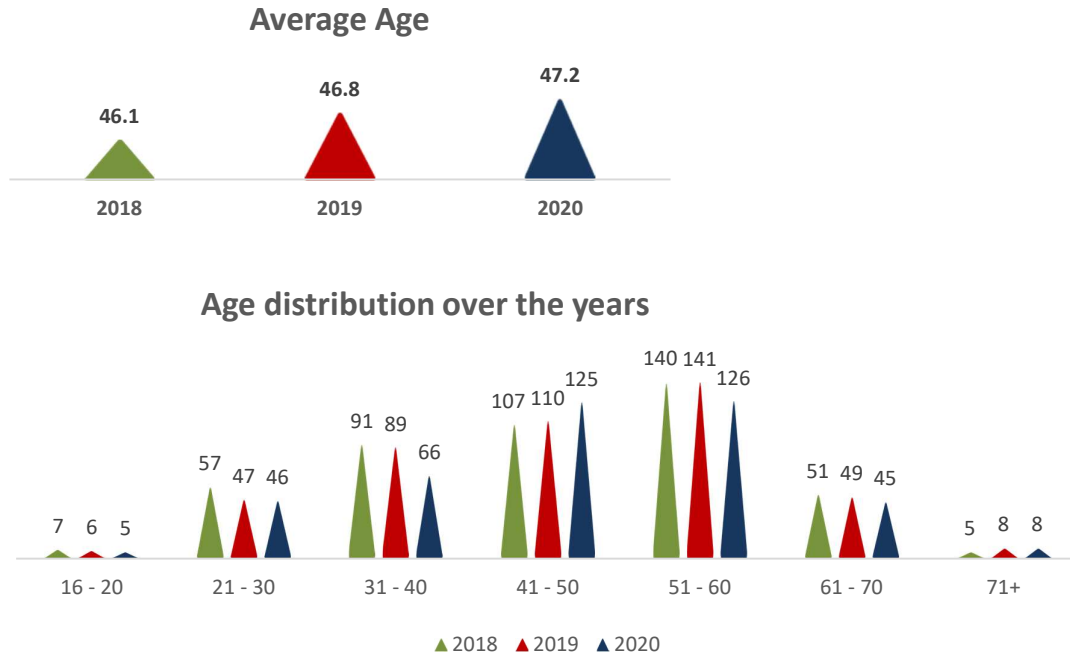
- Impact on staff: Covid-19
- Flexible working arrangements
- Turnover reviewing against local and national trends
- Sickness absence trends, patterns and underlying causes.

Finally, it reports on work that is ongoing within the Human Resources Department to combat the issues identified as a result of this analysis.

Profile by age, gender, disability, race and religion:

AGE

The staff age distribution has been constant over the past 3 years, with a high percentage of staff at the age between 40 – 60 years. The average age of the staff however has shown a slight increase of overall 2% from 2018 to 2020.

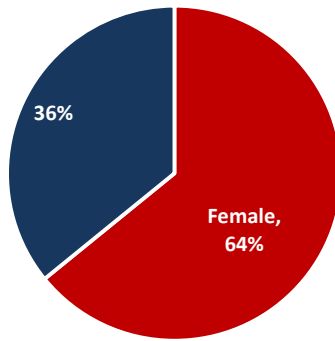


GENDER

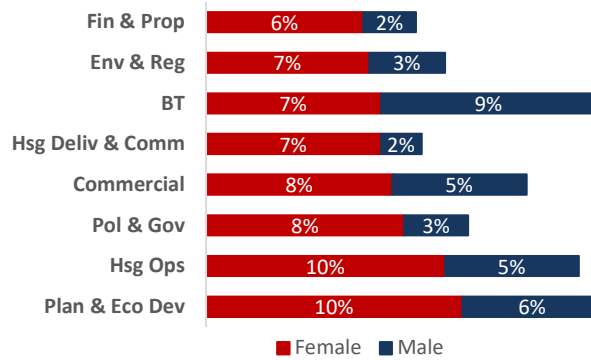
Waverley Borough Council recorded approximately 64% female and 36% male staff as on **31st December 2020**. The division of gender has been relatively stable over the last few years.

Planning and Economic Development and Housing Operations together employ approximately 20% of the total female workforce. Other services employing a high percentage of women are Policy and Governance and Commercial.

Gender Split



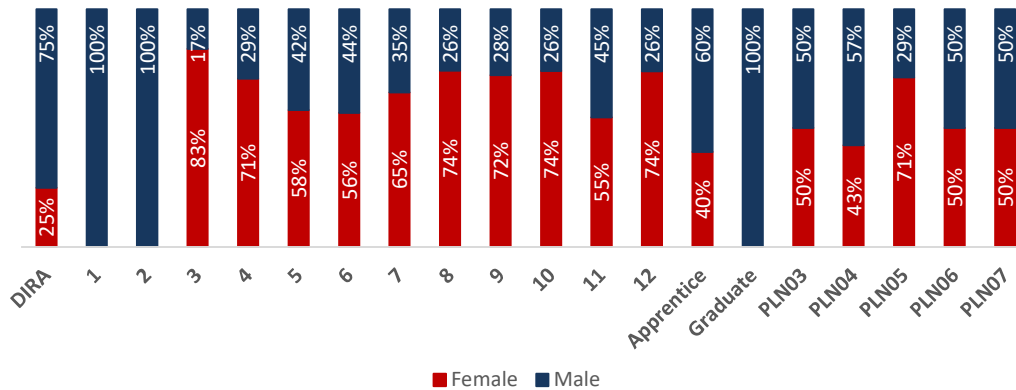
Gender By Service



Gender by Grade:

The following chart shows the distribution of gender by grades. It draws attention to the top few Grades 1, 2 and DIRA (Directors) where Female representation is low or non-existent. It should be noted that Grades 3 and 4 (which might be expected to be the ‘feeder’ grades into the Senior Management Team) are predominantly female.

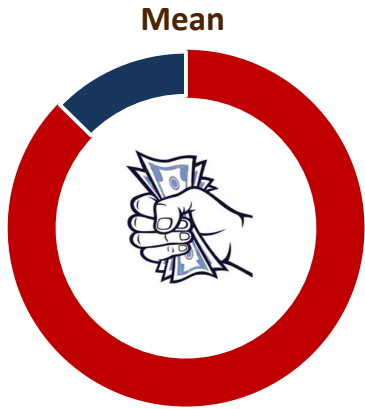
Gender By Grade



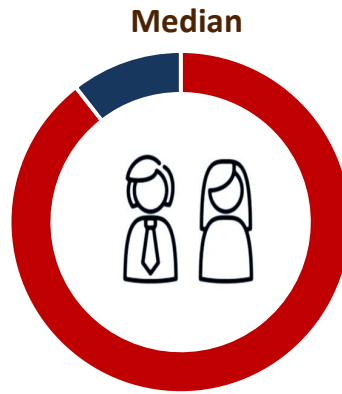
Gender Pay Gap

As might be expected from the above gender profile, Gender Pay Gap figures recently published using a snapshot of data from 31 March 2020 indicate

- The mean gender pay gap was 14.53%
- The median gender pay gap was 11.76%



WOMEN EARNED
0.85£
FOR EVERY £1 EARNED BY MEN



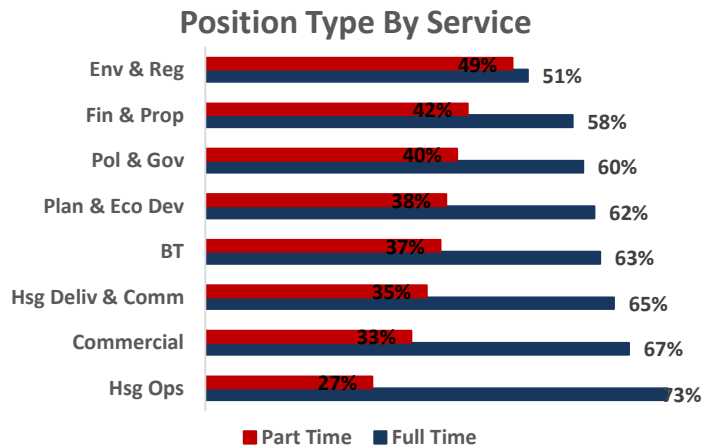
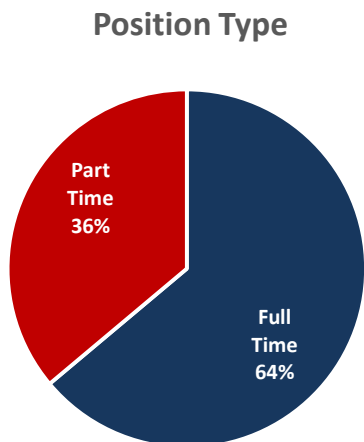
WOMEN EARNED
0.88£
FOR EVERY £1 EARNED BY MEN

The below table shows the comparison with previous years' data:

	Mean	Median
2017	16.6%	13.6%
2018	14.5%	11.5%
2019	15.4%	7.8%
2020	14.53%	11.76%

The trends in data indicate that the overall trend in the gender gap is gradually decreasing however progress will continue to be slow whilst there continues to be a lack of diversity within the senior management team.

POSITION TYPE



Waverley offers many of its employees the ability to work in an agile way and the impact of the global pandemic has forced the Council to accept and support very different working practices in 2020. Most employees may work on a flexi time basis in order to manage their work/life balance in a more effective way.

Data taken as at **31 December 2020** indicate that 36% of Waverley's staff work on a part time basis. The above table shows the distribution of staff within each service employed in full time and part time positions. Housing Operations has 73% of its staff working full time, whereas Environment and Regulatory Services the distribution of staff choosing to work full time vs part time is almost equal.

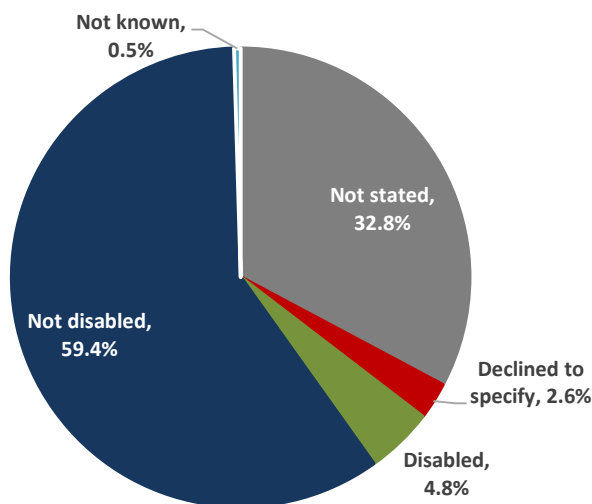
Part time working has been severely impacted nationally by the pandemic and the ability of the Council to offer meaningful, interesting and well-paid work to part time workers is a valuable benefit to the wider community.

Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Data

The data on the below areas is not truly representative as many employees who have either selected the option of 'declined to specify' or have chosen not to record some aspects of their personal data.

Several communications have encouraged staff to complete the sensitive information page, including reminders in Cascade. These communications do have an impact on reporting, however there are still data gaps.

Disability (Data as at 31 December 2020)



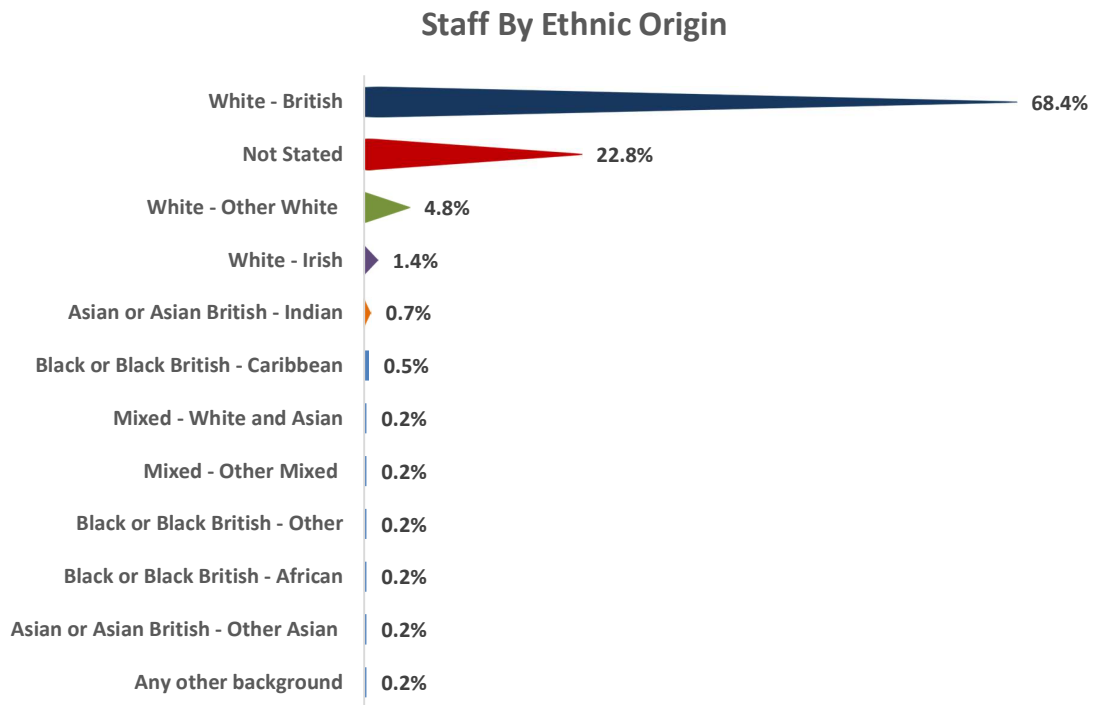
Disability Status

Waverley Borough Council is a Disability Confident Employer. This means that as an employer the Council we challenge attitudes towards disability by removing barriers to disabled people and those with long term health conditions.

To support this, we use services such as Access to Work and our Occupational Health Service to identify reasonable adjustments that we can make to the workplace to keep those people who identify as having a disability in employment and enable them to reach their potential.

Ethnic Origin (Data as at 31 December 2020)

The data indicates that more than 68% of the staff are White – British by origin. 23% have not stated their ethnicity. 2% of staff identify as from either Black or Asian ethnicities (BAME).



Following the Black Lives Matters protests in Summer 2020, the Council reflected on its own approach. As a result of this, we now have a dedicated Race Equality Focus Group that works on equality issues with a particular interest in ethnicity. The Group has worked on three main strands:

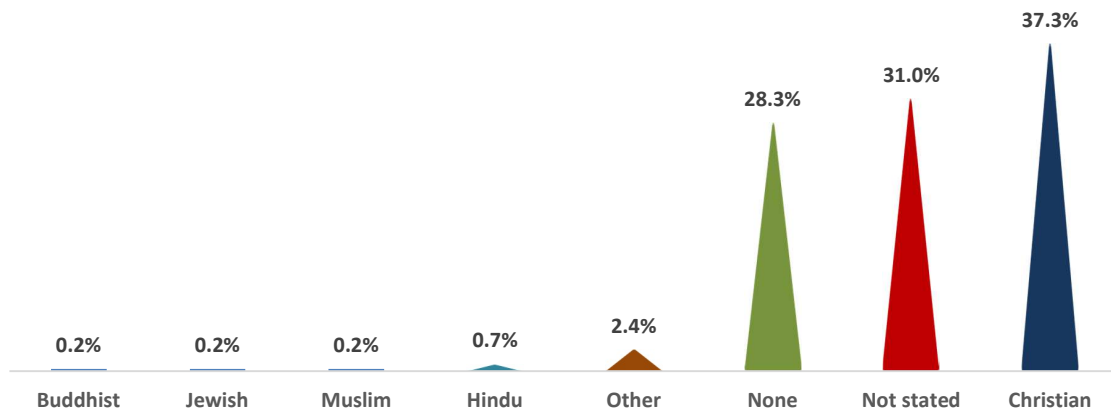
1. Education – providing a programme of education on equality issues to help people reflect, understand and become anti-racist.
2. Diversity Calendar celebrating and acknowledging important events throughout the year on several equality issues (not wholly race related)

3. Supporting those who encounter micro aggressions – we have just launched the Active Citizens scheme

Religion (Data as at 31 December 2020)

30% of our employees have chosen to not declare their religion. Around 38% identify themselves as Christian.

Staff By Religion



Corporate Equalities Group

The Council has a Corporate Equalities Group chaired by a Head of Service which regularly meets to discuss equalities issues. The group also review equalities policies and processes including Equality Impact Statements. Some of the initiatives in 2020 are shown below:

- Spreading awareness about diversity and inclusion by articles published in Backstage and cascade about different race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, or other ideologies. These include: Black History month, LGBTQ+ history, Holocaust Memorial, Alzheimer's day, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Diwali, Dyslexia, Navratri, Christmas, Hanukah.
- Time to talks for all staff including 'Being yourself at work' focussed on LGBTQ+ month but also encouraging workplace trust and authenticity for all.
- Equality group conversations on Teams channel – Human Rights Day, issues and status of LGBTQ+ rights awareness through popular films, documentaries and books.

Impact of Covid-19 on staff

Direct impact of the pandemic:

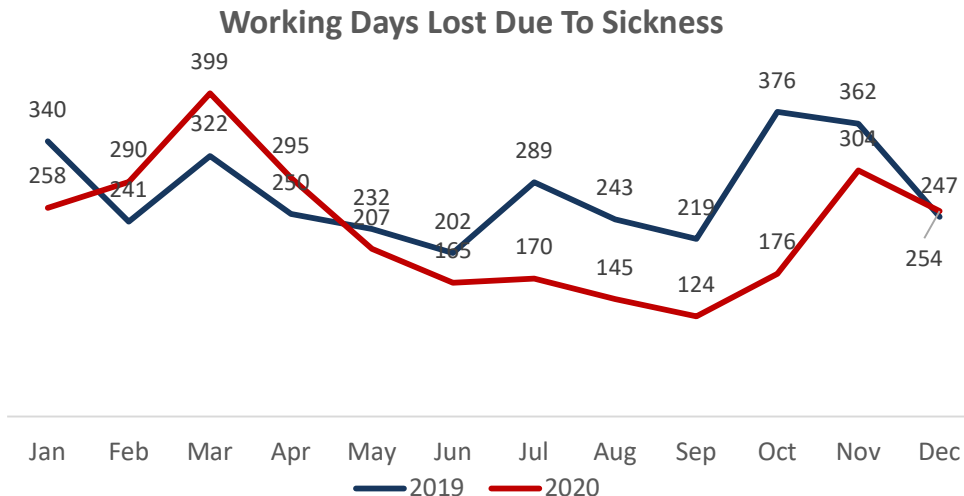
The Council were fortunate in that infection rate for Covid-19 was low and there were no deaths reported within the work force. There are a low number of reported long Covid-19 symptoms still being experienced by staff. Long Covid-19 predominantly impacts on women aged over 45 (which reflects our workforce profile).

The direct impact of Covid-19 however should not be under-estimated as several officers reported severe impacts within their families including bereavement, hospitalisation and loss of work/income as a direct result of the pandemic. Many officers had to juggle their employment and home schooling their children which led to high levels of stress. Officers also saw their work rapidly change in terms of their working environments (having to suddenly work from home), their systems usage and the demand on them. Many Services experienced increases in demand whilst trying to cope with the changes.

The Council made several initiatives to support people including:

- Introducing light breaks, time to talks
- Changing policies rapidly including increasing special leave for carers, developing changes to flexible working, the Return to Office Working policy, Home Working Guidelines, Site Visit Guidance and Digital Meetings Guidance.
- Redeploying staff to support business critical initiatives such as supporting shielded and vulnerable people.
- Sending out regular communications including FAQs
- Increasing wellbeing events across the year.

Absence from work due to sickness



Top 10 sickness absence reasons in 2020

Mental health related sickness contributed to around 39% of the total sickness absences in the year 2020.

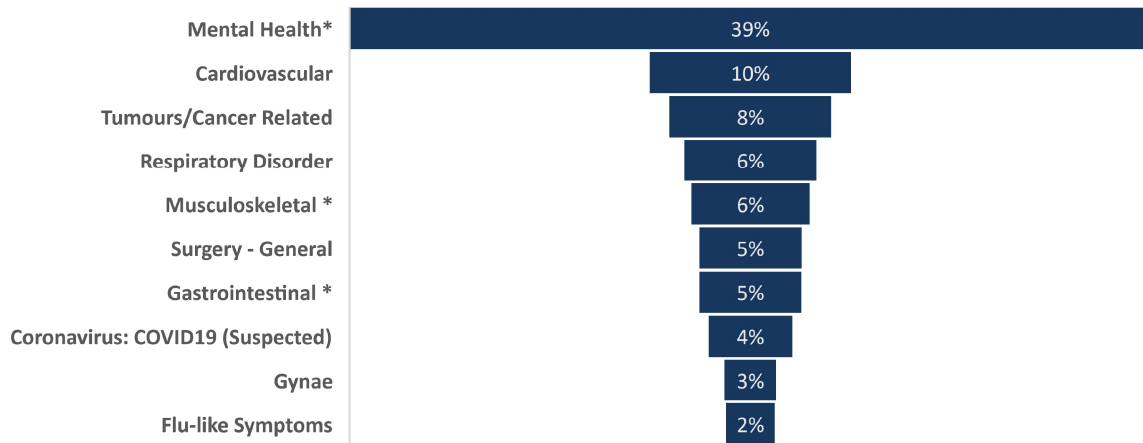
Please note: the reasons marked with an asterisk (*) are reasons which have been grouped together.

The category 'Mental Health'* includes the following absence reasons: anxiety; stress; depression; bipolar; panic attacks and post-traumatic stress disorder.

'Musculoskeletal'* includes arm; elbow; back; hand/wrist/fingers; heel/foot/toe; hip; neck; rheumatoid arthritis and sciatica.

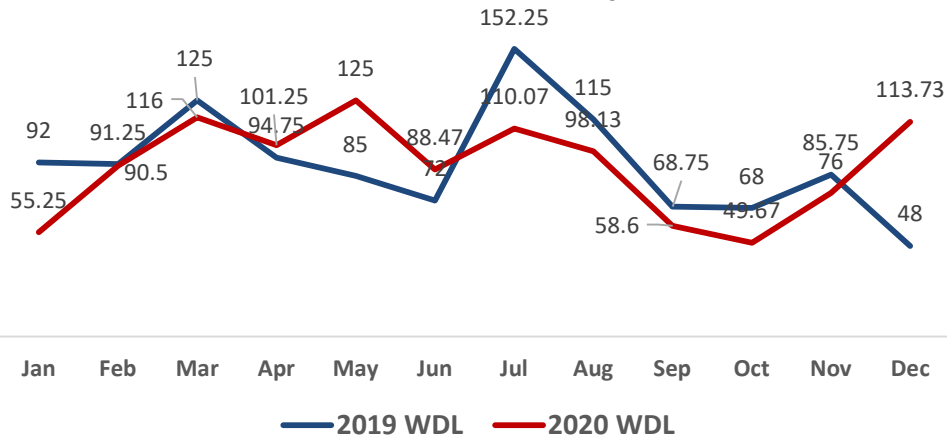
'Gastrointestinal'* includes abdominal pain; diarrhoea; vomiting and nausea.

Top 10 Sickness Absence Reasons



Sickness (Mental Health)

Mental Health - Work Days Lost



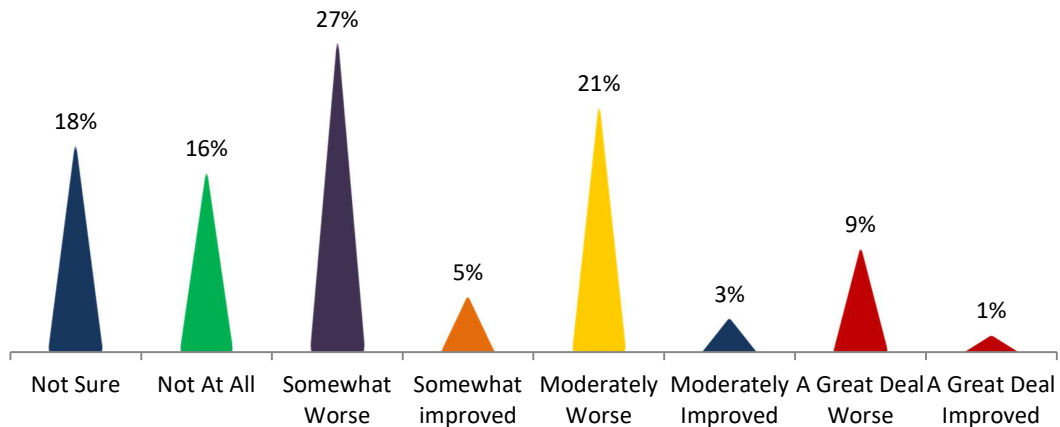
As could be anticipated, there were two key peaks in mental health over the year reflecting the lock downs in March and November/December and the concerns about the pandemic. The lowest period of the year was August/September/October, possibly reflecting the period of the year in which most annual leave is taken (as this is the end of the leave year). This underlines the importance of taking regular leave, even during a time when taking a holiday was difficult.

Mental Health Working days lost comparison:

Months	2019 WDL	2020 WDL	Diff %
Jan	92	55.25	-40%
Feb	91.25	90.5	-1%
Mar	125	116	-7%
Apr	94.75	101.25	7%
May	85	125	47%
Jun	72	88.47	23%
Jul	152.25	110.07	-28%
Aug	115	98.13	-15%
Sep	68.75	58.6	-15%
Oct	68	49.67	-27%
Nov	85.75	76	-11%
Dec	48	113.73	137%

As part of our wellbeing planning, in April 2020 we ran a mental health survey with officers. This showed that 58% of responders indicated that the pandemic had impacted adversely on their mental health.

Has the recent developments around the Covid-19 pandemic affected your mental health? If yes to what level?



The survey identified that workplace demand was a key factor in poorer mental health and that the most effective support was given by colleagues, line managers and HR.

Use of EAP Services

Total 85 EAP sessions were delivered in 2020.

Mental health issues affect men and women equally, yet women are more likely to seek treatment for a mental health issue. Our EAP providers (Wellbeing Solutions Management or WSM) confirm that this is reflected in their own usage data and so they have started reporting on customer specific gender metrics which will enable us to determine in the future whether this is the case within the Council.

The current data shows that 16 women and 11 men contacted WSM for their services or a split of 59%/41%. As our workforce is split 64%/36% female/male, this does not indicate a reluctance to use the service by men, however the data may not be entirely reflective of experience as the service may be contacted for issues other than mental health support (the service provides family, legal and financial advice) and of course the data set is very small. We will need to continually promote the service and in particular focus on mental health and emotional wellbeing, particularly if remote working becomes the norm.

Impact of Home Working (Where Work Happens)

In May 2020, the Business Transformation Team surveyed staff to review the experience of home working. This indicated that 81% of workers could do their job to a satisfactory standard at home and that 74% of people believed that they were as productive or more productive than working in the office. 73% wanted to work at home in the future half, most or all the time. However, it was clear that experience was mixed and probably better suited people who were longer in service and at higher grades, who had separate working space and were not so reliant on the space or opportunities for informal learning and social benefits that an office environment brings.

That survey is now being repeated with the addition of listening panels with a view to making longer term changes to the working environment and office footprint.

Return to Office Working

The People and Staff project delivered several products to support staff including:

- 1) Return to Office Working Policy and Plan
- 2) Home Working Guidance
- 3) Site Visit Guidance
- 4) Digital Meeting Guidance

These products provided a successful framework for staff to use to manage their working environment successfully and safely. Feedback on them has been good and the framework has held up during a number of changes in the pandemic experience.

Turnover

During 2020, turnover has been as follows:

Reporting Period	Total Staff Turnover	Resignation Turnover	Public Sector Average
Apr 19 - Mar 20	18.72	10.47	15.5
Jul 19 - Jun 20	17.38	8	15.5
Oct 19 - Sept 20	15.53	7.00	15.5
Jan 20 - Dec 20	14.34	6.94	15.5

As can be seen, turnover due to resignation (unplanned turnover) is lower than would usually be expected and has fallen over 2020. This is due to the reduced opportunities in the external economy due to the pandemic.

Overall turnover has been slightly higher than the public sector average. This is partly because there have been several change programmes that have exited people from the organisation as well as fixed term contracts ending. This has meant that planned turnover has been higher than the public sector average however this has been needed to make savings and streamline services.

Labour turnover (from 2012/13 to 2017/18) for Surrey

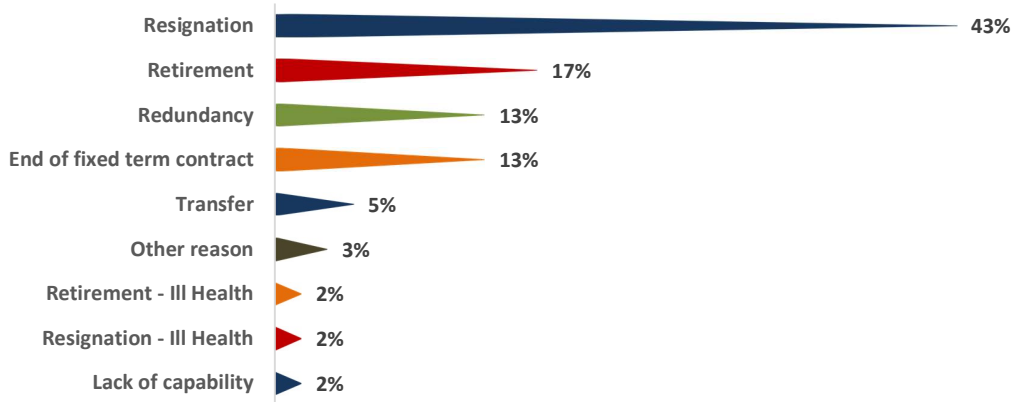


Period	Labour turnover			
	%			
	Surrey	Minimum for All English county local authorities	Mean for All English county local authorities	Maximum for All English county local authorities
2012/13	12	10	15	23
2013/14	13	11	15	24
2014/15	17	8	16	25
2015/16	16	12	18	23
2016/17	16	10	15	19
2017/18	17	9	15	23

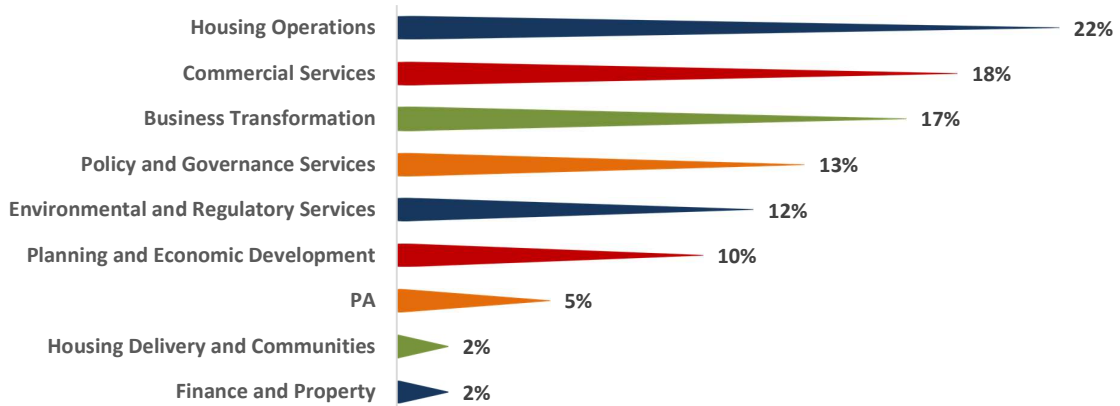
Exit interview data suggests that 30% of the resignations in the year 2020 were due to pay, career opportunities or career changes and 7% due to family or personal reasons. Please see the 'Work in Progress' section for information about work that has been started to mitigate against these reasons.

Below graphs show the breakup of turnover in 2020 by reason, service area, grade and length of service.

Reasons For Leaving

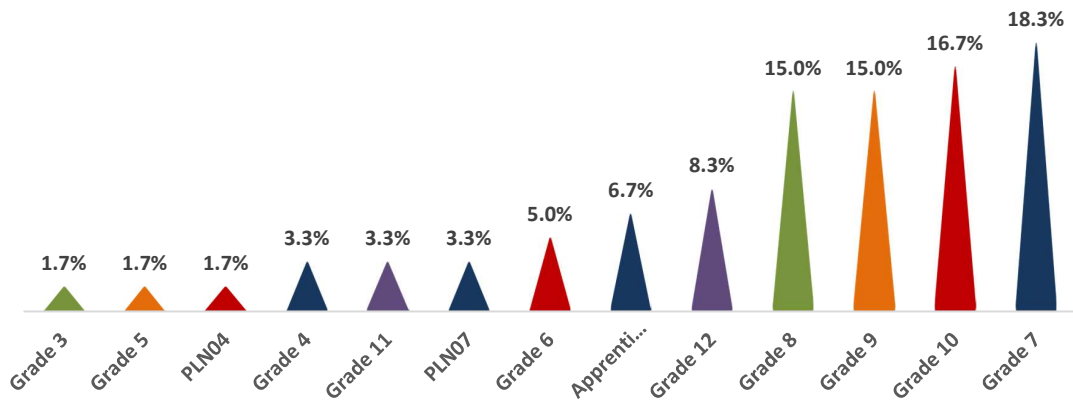


Turnover by Service

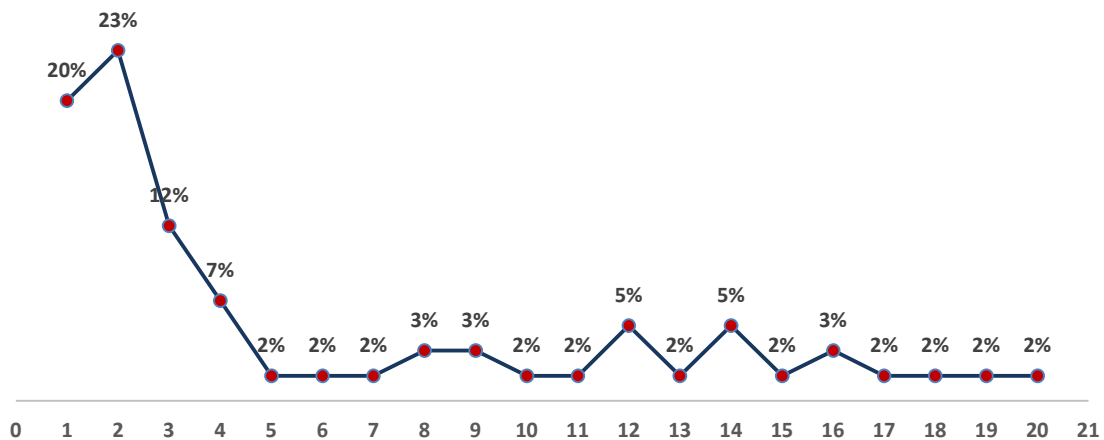


The following charts show the turnover by grade and by length of service in years.

Turnover by Grade



Turnover by Length of Service (in yrs)



The turnover data indicates that higher grades are very stable but that mid-grades (7-10) experience a higher turnover. This is to be expected as people seek different employment experiences to advance their career. Turnover at these levels may be regarded as beneficial as it brings new experience and fresh ideas into the organisation.

Impact of Business Change

The work done in terms of Business Transformation projects, the streamlining of services and improvements in delivery will be key factors in controlling costs whilst improving services. The control of the workforce establishment will be an important factor in future management as will the ability to be change ready and adaptable.

This will increase in importance over the next year as the Council seeks external as well as internal opportunities to continuously improve.

Outcomes of the workforce profile review and key areas of focus for HR 2021:

This workforce profile has demonstrated the impact of the pandemic on Waverley Borough Council and has highlighted the following key areas of focus:

- 1) The future of the working environment and in particular the use of agile working
- 2) The need for a continued focus on wellbeing and in particular mental health
- 3) The continued work on equalities, ensuring that the culture of Waverley Borough Council builds on existing focus on education, communications and supporting those who are from under-represented groups.
- 4) The need to maintain control of the workforce establishment, be change ready and adaptable.
- 5) The impact of age and gender on the workforce indicates a specific need to improve talent management at senior/mid manager level.

As part of the performance management process, objectives reflecting these key areas are being set within the HR Team for 2021.

Conclusion

This report has been prepared to inform Council members and officers. Questions, observations and feedback are welcomed.