

Wednesday 21 February 2024

To: Chair – Councillor Sally Ann Hart
Vice-Chair – Councillor Anna Bradnam
Members of the Employment and Staffing Committee – Councillors
Sunita Hansraj, Mark Howell, William Jackson-Wood, Richard Stobart and
John Williams

Quorum: 3

Substitutes: Councillors Heather Williams, Sue Ellington, Graham Cone, Bunty Waters,
Dr. Shrobona Bhattacharya, Peter Fane, Ariel Cahn,
Dr. Aidan Van de Weyer, Peter Sandford and Bridget Smith

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **Employment and Staffing Committee**, which will be held in **Council Chamber - South Cambs Hall** at South Cambridgeshire Hall on **Thursday, 29 February 2024 at 10.00 a.m.**

Yours faithfully
Liz Watts
Chief Executive

Agenda

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To receive Apologies for Absence from Committee members. | |
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If you would like to ask a question or make a statement, then please refer to the Document called Public Speaking Scheme (Physical Meetings) and contact Democratic Services by no later than 11.59pm three clear working days before the meeting. | |
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[Link to further information for members of the public attending South Cambridgeshire District Council meetings.](#)

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[Link to the Public Speaking Scheme](#)

Further information for Councillors

[Declarations of Interest – Link to Declarations of Interest - Information for Councillors](#)

Councillors are reminded that Democratic Services must be advised of substitutions in advance of meetings. It is not possible to accept a substitute once the meeting has started.

Agenda Item 3

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Employment and Staffing Committee held on
Thursday, 9 November 2023 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Sally Ann Hart – Chair
Councillor Anna Bradnam – Vice-Chair

Councillors: Sunita Hansraj Richard Stobart
John Williams Heather Williams

Officers: Jonathan Corbett HR Advisor
Helen Cornwell HR Service Manager
Laurence Damary-Homan Democratic Services Officer
Jeff Membrey Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate
Services
Emma Weston HR Advisor
Chloe Whitehead HR Business Partner

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Mark Howell. Councillor Heather Williams was present as a substitute.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Richard Stobart.

2. Declarations of Interest

With respect to Minute 6, Councillor Heather Williams declared that she had previously been involved in campaigning for fertility treatment.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Councillor Heather Williams requested that the second line of the penultimate paragraph of Minute 4 be amended from "...staff preferred to work from and how attendance..." to "...staff preferred to work from home and how attendance..."

Councillor Sally Ann Hart requested that the abbreviation of CMT be clarified as Corporate Management Team in Minute 4.

Councillor Sally Ann Hart requested that the first sentence of the second paragraph of Minute 5 be amended to read as follows:

"Councillor Dr Richard Williams suggested that the reported savings of £550,000 through replacing agency staff with permanent employees might be misleading because **other agency staff were being employed as other permanent posts** became vacant."

The Committee agreed to the amendments by affirmation. With the amendments, the Committee authorised the Chair to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 15

September 2023 as a correct record by affirmation.

4. 4 Day Week Review

Councillor John Williams advised the Committee that since the publication of the report (which only made reference to Key Performance Indicators [KPIs] statistic from Q1), the Q2 KPI data had been published and that it continued the trends shown by the Q1 data.

Councillor Richard Stobart joined the Committee.

The Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate Services presented the report. Officers provided the following points of clarity, in response to questions:

- The comparison with “a range of organisations” in page 7 of the report referred to both private and public sector organisations.
- The reduction in projected net cost for agency staff was based on both the salary costs and percentage to cover other costs, such as pensions, associated with hiring staff on a permanent basis.
- That staff turnover reduction was a comparison between figures from the 9 months of the trial and the 9 months preceding the trial.
- That the KPIs presented in the report were the public KPIs agreed, by both the Scrutiny & Overview and Employment & Staffing Committees, to be reported as part of the monitoring of the 4DW trial. Officers advised that further management information, beyond KPIs, was collected by the Council and further information could be added in future reports if required.
- Officers were able to share their experiences of the 4DW on the staff intranet, with these comments being captured, and members of the public were able to submit comment on the 4DW trial through the Council’s website.
- The Bennett Institute were expecting to produce a report at the end of the trial, but there were no plans for reports to be produced in the meantime.
- With regard to co-working with other 4DW organisations, the Council had received interest from other organisations but had been focused on delivering its own service. The Council had publicly published data and reports on the 4DW but had not been engaging on consultations with other organisations interested in the 4DW.
- That the ongoing year-long trial referred to the trial running for office-

based staff taking place between March 2023-March 2024, which had been agreed following the initial 3-month trial.

- The definition of hard-to-fill roles was nationally recognised and based off national shortages and/or high levels of specialisation required for specific posts, rather than being based on how long the Council had advertised specific posts.
- Of the posts covered by agency staff in July 2022, 14 of the roles were considered to be hard-to-fill.

Officers agreed to provide written response to some questions that required further information to answer. The Committee discussed the challenges of accounting for external factors in the data and the reduction of sickness was raised as an example of an area where both the 4DW and other variables could influence the data. Members acknowledged that the data in the report was indicative and that conclusions on the trial in its entirety could not yet be drawn. Comment was made that it was important to capture anecdotes that accompanied the increase in productivity. Some Members felt that the data was rich and that the indications were positive, whilst others held concerns over the data and the principle of the trial.

Members requested that the following be included in the next report:

- The definition of “hard to fill” roles.
- Pre-trial recruitment data to be used as a comparison alongside the recruitment numbers in the trial.
- Details of longstanding vacancies within the Council, even if they did not fall under the definition of “hard to fill”.
- Information on resident responses to the 4DW.

The Committee **noted** the report.

5. Resolution Policy & Toolkit

The HR Advisor, Emma Weston, presented the report. Members noted the need for the introduce a resolution policy and commended the solution-focused approach laid out by officers.

In response to a question regarding confidentiality and complaints, officers advised that the confidentiality varied from case to case and action towards resolution would take into consideration the context of individual cases. Members suggested that, if the details of the complainants were to be disclosed in a case, the complainant be advised of this before the information was shared.

Members noted that some of the links in the documents were not working and officers advised that this would be resolved. Members also requested that, where cross-reference was made between the policy and the toolkit, specific details be included in the references to provide clarity on which part of the corresponding document was being referred to.

Officers clarified that complainants had a right to be accompanied throughout the resolution process, by either a work colleague or a union representative, and that this was laid out in the toolkit.

Members noted the important of speed in resolutions and, in response to a question, officers advised that some timeframes were laid out in the policy and toolkit, but that speed of resolution would vary from case to case. Officers advised that a plan for monitoring the policy most effectively would have to be taken away but noted that colleague feedback had been a useful feedback mechanism for the success of other policies and that it would likely be useful in this instance.

By affirmation, the Committee **recommended** that the new style resolution policy and toolkit be progressed to Union discussion and colleague feedback and signalled the Committee's support for the resolution policy and accompanying toolkit as the replacement for the grievance policy.

6. Fertility Treatment Policy & Manager Toolkit

Councillor John Williams expressed pleasure that the Council was ahead of the game and was introducing the Fertility Policy before the Government had taken the Fertility Treatment Bill for second reading. The HR Advisor, Emma Weston, presented the report.

The Committee expressed support for the policy. Members requested that the time granted as paid leave for cycles of fertility treatment be described as "a working week" to accommodate for the different working patterns amongst staff. The flexibility of the policy was commended, and Members welcomed the additional options listed on page 45 of the report. The Committee discussed the support available to staff receiving fertility treatment, including partners involved, and officers advised that follow return to work, HR staff had an open-door policy for colleagues who wished to talk and would happily signpost staff toward support available to them, approaching each case individually and encouraging an employee-led approach. The Committee agreed that this was the appropriate approach as it would allow individuals to manage their situations in a way that best suits them. Members commended officers for bringing the policy forward prior to the introduction of the national legislation, and endorsed the Council's culture of openness around fertility and related topics.

By affirmation, the Committee **recommended** that officers proceed with policy and toolkit as presented, taking into account the comments of the Committee.

7. HR Recruitment, Retention and Absence Data Aug-Sept 2023

The HR Advisor, Jonathan Corbett, presented the report. The Committee welcomed the level of data provided in the report and encouraged adaptive reporting which responded to new data analysis opportunities. It was suggested that benchmarking data and comparisons with similar organisations be included as part of the dataset presented to Committee, where possible. Members requested that quarterly data shown as line graphs utilise separate lines for different years, rather than a singular continuous line covering multiple years, to allow for greater ease of comparison- coloured graphs were also requested. Officers took away an enquiry as to the reasons for the peak in sickness in August.

The Committee **noted** the report.

Prior to the close of the meeting, Members requested that information on the 4DW trial and progress in the Waste Service be brought to the next meeting.

The Meeting ended at 11.45 a.m.

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Agenda Item 5



**South
Cambridgeshire**
District Council

Report to:	Employment & Staffing Committee	29 February 2024
Lead Cabinet Member:	Councillor John Williams (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources)	
Lead Officer:	Anne Ainsworth – Chief Operating Officer	

Update on the Four-Day Week Trial

Executive Summary

1. To review the attached draft Cabinet report.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Employment and Staffing Committee reviews and comments on the report attached at Appendix A and recommends it to Cabinet for approval, with any amendments proposed.

Reasons for Recommendations

3. To inform the Cabinet decision.

Appendix

Appendix A: Four-day week update Cabinet report

Appendix B: Letter received from Government following Local Government Finance Settlement Consultation

Appendix C: Robertson Cooper Health and Wellbeing surveys summary

Appendix D: Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service Health and Wellbeing survey

Appendix E: Performance data on Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service trial

Appendix F: Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service customer service data - 18 September to 10 November 2023

Appendix G: Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service official complaints and compliments data - 18 September to 15 December 2023

Please note: In appendix A, the Four-day week Cabinet report, references to appendices will relate to the planned appendices for the Cabinet meeting.

Report Authors:

Anne Ainsworth – Chief Operating Officer
Telephone: 01954 712920

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Appendix A



**South
Cambridgeshire**
District Council

Report to:	Cabinet	12 March 2024
Lead Cabinet Member:	Councillor John Williams (Lead Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources)	
Lead Officer:	Anne Ainsworth, Chief Operating Officer	

Update on the Four-Day Week Trial

Executive Summary

1. The Council has been trialling a desk-based four-day week since January 2023. This included an initial three-month trial and in May 2023, following independent assessment of performance data, Cabinet extended the trial by 12 months, meaning it is due to finish at the end of March 2024.
2. A three-month trial for waste crews was approved in May 2023. This followed the initial desk-based trial due to the complexities of reorganising bin collection rounds for around 128,000 households across Greater Cambridge.
3. Under a four-day week, officers are expected to carry out 100% of their work, in 80% of the time, for 100% of the pay.
4. The Council undertook the trials because of the acute recruitment and retention issues it was facing, which is amplified in Greater Cambridge due to the high cost of housing. Similar trials are taking place across the UK, Ireland, and US, as outlined by the [4 Day Week Global Campaign](#).
5. During the trials, the Council has spent £434,000 less on agency staff covering roles that were previously identified as hard to fill. This covers the period from 2 September 2022, when the trial was announced, to 31 December 2023.
6. On 18 December 2023, the Government published a four-week consultation on the Local Government Finance Settlement, setting expectations around local authority funding in future years. The Government reiterated that they do not support a four-day week for local authorities and asked for views about the use of financial levers in future settlements to disincentivise the practice.
7. The Council had expected, subject to data showing performance had been maintained or improved and a member decision, to consult on a four-day week shortly after the end of the formal trial.
8. This report therefore sets out the position following the publication of the Government's Local Government Finance Settlement consultation in December 2023 and an assessment of the impact of this on the Council's ability to consult at this time.

Key Decision

9. No

Recommendations

10. It is recommended that:

- a) Cabinet agrees to continue with four-day week working arrangements for **desk-based colleagues** (pro rata for part time colleagues) until: (i) information is provided by the Government regarding potential future financial levers they might impose on Councils using this working practice, as announced in their Local Government Financial Settlement consultation in December 2023, and (ii) a subsequent consultation is carried out by the Council, analysed, and all trial data is presented to Full Council for a final decision.
- b) Cabinet agrees to continue with four-day week working arrangements for **the Waste service operational colleagues (the crews)** (pro rata for part time colleagues) until: (i) information is provided by the Government regarding potential future financial levers they might impose on Councils using this working practice, as announced in their Local Government Financial Settlement consultation in December 2023, and (ii) a subsequent consultation is carried out by the Council, analysed, and all trial data is presented to Full Council for a final decision, noting that with a seasonal service, ideally a full year's data is required.
- c) Cabinet agrees to undertake a **consultation** on the four-day week, once the financial implications of the Government's Local Government Financial Settlement consultation are confirmed and all implications of considering adoption of a four-day week permanently are understood.
- d) Cabinet approves that, for all colleagues working a four-day week (desk-based and waste operations), the **hours are harmonised** at 32 hours per week (pro rata for part time colleagues) at 86.5% of contracted hours from 1 April 2024.
- e) Cabinet notes that the proposal to approve a continuation of a four-day week (pro rata for part time) working model for waste and desk-based colleagues post the end of March 2024, will also be brought to the Strategy and Resources Committee at Cambridge City Council on 25 March 2024, and that both Councils are required to support the decision for the services which are shared (Waste and Planning).
- f) Cabinet agrees that an update report to Employment & Staffing Committee, Cabinet and Full Council and Cambridge City council committees, no later than the end of July 2024, will provide data on the trial periods (desk-based and waste), up until the end of March 2023, and information about the ongoing effectiveness, including recruitment and retention, costs and savings of a four-day week working model.

Reasons for Recommendations

11. On 18 December, the Government published a four-week consultation on the Local Government Finance Settlement. The consultation sets out the expectations for local authorities on funding they will receive from Government in future years. In the consultation it said: "The government believes that local authorities, including combined authorities, should not be practising an arrangement where it has an overall policy (temporary or permanent) which allows its employees to reduce their contracted hours per week by a consequential amount, for example 20%, without a reduction in their pay and benefits."

12. Question 10 in the consultation asked: “Do you have any views about the government using levers in future local government finance settlements (those occurring after 2024-25) to disincentivise the so-called ‘4 day working week’...?”
13. After the Government’s consultation closed, they wrote to all local councils. This letter did not give any further information regarding potential future financial levers. See **Appendix A**.
14. Given that any future decision concerning the Council potentially becoming a permanent four-day week employer would be a significant change to the operations of the Council, the Council has committed publicly to consulting.
15. Until the Local Government Finance Settlement consultation was announced on 18 December, the expectation was that the consultation was likely to be carried out shortly after the end of the formal trial, subject to i) the data suggesting the new way of working was not impacting overall performance and ii) Cabinet approval. Some initial work to scope what a consultation might look like was carried out with the support of the Consultation Institute.
16. The Council must be able to demonstrate economy (spending less), efficiency (spending well) and effectiveness (spending wisely) as part of our Best Value duties. The Council would need to understand the full implications of any proposed changes to the working arrangements of the Council under the same headings to be able to consult. It will take some time beyond the end of March to analyse data from the four-day week trial period, but until a point is reached that all future financial implications are understood following the Government’s Local Government Finance Settlement consultation, it is not feasible to communicate effectively all the information necessary to launch a consultation on a possible permanent change. Consulting earlier would mean consulting again once the financial information was available.
17. To minimise disruption to colleagues whilst this analysis is taking place, and the necessary information is provided by Government before a consultation can be carried out, it is recommended that four-day week working arrangements continue (pro rata for part time colleagues). This is not to pre-empt any decisions taken in the future by Council, but to ensure colleagues have some certainty over arrangements until such point as a decision is made.
18. Following the conclusion of the formal trial period another Health and Wellbeing survey of colleagues will be carried out to provide further information on the effectiveness of a four-day week working.
19. The three-month four-day week trial for waste collections has seen performance maintained and early feedback from colleagues through an in-house survey suggests it has been positive for their health and wellbeing. A longer period of working in this way will help establish whether the service can sustain the levels of improved operational effectiveness that have been achieved and if the early indications of a positive impact on recruitment and retention at the Depot continue.
20. If the current working arrangements for office-based colleagues do continue past the end of March 2024, it will be important to harmonise the working hours for all colleagues across the Council. To do otherwise would be contrary to good employment practices. The waste trial was always planned to begin later than the desk-based trial as it required

the reorganisation of collections for all homes in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. This is work the service must carry out on a regular basis. The changes for the trial were made at the same time as a regular review of collection rounds. The planning process for the waste trial showed that it was not feasible to trial waste collections at 30 hours for full time colleagues. Therefore, Waste Operatives have been working a 32 hour four-day week during their 3-month trial. The trial has shown that it is not possible to reduce this to 30 hours to align to office-based colleagues and therefore it is recommended that all colleagues harmonise at 32 hours per week (or pro rata for part time colleagues) from 1 April if this model of working continues beyond the end of March 2024.

21. Due to the four-day week working model, leave allowance for colleagues, which is calculated in hours, has been reduced to 80% during the extended trial. Leave will be adjusted to 86.5% of the full allowance if this model of working continues at a harmonised 32 hours per week.
22. The Shared Waste Service has been running staff recruitment and retention schemes for two years. The rationale for the schemes was to overcome the acute driver shortages due to a backlog of HGV driving tests (post Covid) and the much higher cost of living in and around Cambridge (which was unattractive to the few drivers that were in the market). We have now been able to attract drivers more readily and retain them, and this has enabled the service to cancel the schemes and start to realise savings from doing so.
23. The Council also regularly reviews colleague benefits and support and has introduced an employee assistance programme including counselling and 24-hour support, access to a health cash plan and wellbeing online portal. We also continue to review our policies for both hybrid and flexible work practice to support colleagues in their work life balance. However, these measures alone were not adequate in addressing the recruitment and retention challenges faced by the Council.
24. As the Waste and Planning Services are both shared services with Cambridge City Council, it is important that the information contained within this report is also shared with, and submitted to, Cambridge City Council for consideration and approval vis-à-vis these two services. This is scheduled for their Strategy and Resources Committee on 25 March.

Details

25. In September 2022, Cabinet agreed to carry out an initial three-month trial of a four-day week for desk-based colleagues, with a commitment that a trial for waste colleagues and facilities would be carried out later due to the longer planning period required. Following independent assessment of data from the initial trial, Cabinet agreed in May 2023 to undertake a 12-month trial of a four-day working week and carry out a three-month trial in late summer/autumn for waste. The desk-based trial is due to finish at the end of March 2024.
26. The Council embarked on a four-day week trial – where officers are expected to carry out 100% of their work, in 80% of the time for 100% of the pay – to help attract and retain talented colleagues in an incredibly competitive local employment market. The Council was finding it could not compete on salary alone and colleagues, often in specialist roles such as Planning, were leaving for better pay and terms and conditions in the private sector.

27. Council services continued to be provided for the same hours as previously, except that the Customer Contact Centre extended its hours one evening a week, to enable customers to access the Council outside normal office hours.
28. Officers on their non-working day (or non-working hours for part time colleagues) due to a four-day week working practice are not allowed to take up other paid employment during this time.
29. Before the initial trial was announced in September 2022, the Council identified 22 roles that were being covered by agency staff. This was because the Council was not able to recruit to the roles permanently. The cost of agency workers covering them was around £2 million a year.
30. As things currently stand – of those 22 posts, 10 have been recruited to with permanent colleagues, two posts have been deleted and as part of our continued transformation work (which is expected to bring further savings of £2 million), a further 10 have been subsumed into other roles or are externally funded. We have judged it best to only include the 10 roles that were covered by agency, and have now been recruited to permanently, in the cost reduction calculation in this report.
31. During the trial, we have also identified other hard-to-fill roles that were filled by agency at the beginning of the trial and have been successfully filled permanently (such as two Business Analysts). However, because these were not on the original list of 22 roles, we have not included them in the savings. Appointing to these two posts permanently (on fixed term contracts) rather than employing agency staff resulted in an annual reduction of £32,000.
32. During the trial the Council was using projections for potential savings. However, the actual saving from employing the 10 colleagues permanently rather than using agency cover is £434,000 (period between 2 September 2022 to 31 December 2023).
33. As the 10 roles were filled at different points in time during the trial period, the cost reduction for each varies. The earlier the post is filled the greater the contribution over the trial period. If all 10 roles were filled with permanent colleagues for an entire year the cost reduction amounts to £483,000.
34. As the Council is the employing authority for shared waste and planning services, shared with Cambridge City Council, the figures quoted include both the South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City elements.
35. It is important to note that the Council's agency spend still fluctuates due to the need to bring in agency workers to carry out short term programmes where permanent colleagues are not required. For example, this includes employing temporary staff to support the Council's commitments under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and time limited Planning work that is funded by a developer.
36. Quarterly performance reports have continued to be presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Cabinet, throughout the trial in the same way as before it commenced. This will continue as business as usual to monitor performance.
37. When announcing the trial, Cabinet said it could be stopped at any point if there was a concern over performance. At any point during the trial, or at any point during any continuation of a four-day week working practice, the Council's Chief Executive would

make Cabinet aware of any concern and a public performance report would be presented to councillors at the relevant committee.

38. Regular reports have been provided to Employment and Staffing Committee throughout the trial, and performance data is reported quarterly to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee where requested. The latest report was presented to Employment and Staffing Committee in November 2023.
39. On 3 November, the Council received a Best Value Notice from Government relating to the four-day week trial. The Notice required the Council to provide 5 years of annual historical data and weekly data returns to Government through a portal. A further request was received on 29 December for new data sets. All of the data submitted to the Government is published on the Council's [website](#).

Desk-based trial next steps

40. The performance data collected during the trial will need to be analysed and assessed post-March 2024. This will be presented to Council no later than in July.
41. The Bennett Institute for Public Policy at the University of Cambridge independently reviewed the Council's data from the initial 3-month trial. They approached the Council to offer their expertise in this area for free. They looked at data from 18 different key areas, covering performance in Planning, Housing, Transformation, Human Resources and Corporate Services and Finance.
42. The Bennett Institute said that nine out of the 16 areas monitored showed substantial improvement when comparing the trial period from January to March to the same period in 2022. The remaining seven areas monitored either remained at similar levels compared to the same period the previous year or saw a slight decline. They noted however that not a single area of performance fell to a concerning level during the trial.
43. The latest data will be analysed by Professor Brendan Burchell, Professor in the Social Sciences from the University of Cambridge, and his team.
44. Alongside the analysis of the performance data, the Council will also undertake a further Health and Wellbeing survey of colleagues. Two surveys have already taken place, one in August 2022 which provided a baseline before the trial was announced, and the second in April 2023, which showed an improvement in colleagues' health and wellbeing. A summary dashboard of the survey of all colleagues can be found in **Appendix B**.
45. The Council will undertake a consultation, in line with the Best Value Duty for Local Authorities. For this consultation to be transparent and comprehensive, it will be important for all implications of any longer-term changes to the working practices of the Council to be understood. This includes any aspects of service delivery, financial and staffing matters.
46. We do not have a timescale for when the Government will provide the information regarding potential financial levers they have consulted on. However, the Government's consultation stated any financial measures could be from 2025-26 onward. As this is the case, the Council would expect, at the latest, to be provided with information regarding the Local Government Financial Settlement for 2025-26 before the end of 2024. However, information regarding the outcome of the Government's consultation could be provided earlier.

Aligning working hours

47. As mentioned above, in September 2022 Cabinet authorised a three-month trial of a four-day week for most desk-based colleagues, whereby people were expected to complete 100% of their current work, in 80% of the time, for 100% of the pay. In May 2023 Cabinet further authorised an extended trial which is currently ongoing to the end of March 2024.
48. Full time colleagues taking part in this office-based trial are generally contracted to work for 37 hours. This means that, under the four-day week trial arrangements, their normal working hours are 80% of this or 29.6 hours (sometimes rounded up to 30 hours in reports). For colleagues who were working part time before the trial, their working hours for the trial are also 80% of their contracted hours.
49. In May 2023, as well as agreeing to an extended trial for office-based colleagues, Cabinet also agreed that an initial three-month trial of a four-day working week be undertaken by the waste service. Analysis of work demands undertaken before this trial identified that the service could likely be delivered effectively within 4 days if waste colleagues worked 32 hours a week, (86.5% of contracted hours) and the trial was approved on that basis.
50. It has always been the intention and expectation that once the initial waste trial was completed - and the required working hours in the waste service confirmed – then hours between waste and office-based colleagues would be harmonised. The initial 3-month waste trial is now complete, and management of the waste service has confirmed that the 32-hour model (86.5% of contracted hours) is needed for the service to operate effectively. It is therefore recommended that from 1 April 2024, the office-based trial adopts the 32-hour model of the 4-day week and all colleagues across the Council have working hours that are 86.5% of their contracted hours, until such time as any further decision is taken by Council.
51. This proposal not only ensures that the trials are operating in a fair and equitable way, but also recognises that some colleagues in the desk-based trial are already working slightly more than the expected 29.6 hours. This was referenced in the wellbeing survey reported to Cabinet in May 2023 where 28% of colleagues responding to the survey indicated that they worked additional hours per week. Of those working more than the expected 29.6 hours per week, 53% worked an extra 2-3 hours, roughly the same as the 32 hours now being proposed. Adopting the same approach to hours for all colleagues also ensures that the Council is operating in a legal and safe manner.
52. Before the trial began many colleagues were working more than the 37 hours expected to ensure tasks were completed as required. Most colleagues recouped this time using the flexitime system, but the People Team were aware of some colleagues unable to recoup the hours as they had exceeded the 37 hours that scheme allowed to be accumulated. Under a four-day week model, time is not recorded in this way and colleagues work with their manager to ensure early morning, evening or weekend working time can be recouped at another time.

The Waste Trial

53. Due to growth in the number of households served, collection rounds have expanded at a significant rate since they were last reviewed in 2017/2018 and are forecast to increase further, resulting in the need to review and optimise routes. Local Land Property Gazetteer data shows that between December 2022 and September 2023 alone,

approximately 2,500 new Council Tax properties came online, i.e., a significant proportion of the circa 4,000 new properties expected for the period 2023/24 and 2024/25.

54. Reduction, reuse, and recycling are the top priority choices in UK Government policy for waste. The Government has published a recycling target of 64% by 2035 in its Resources and Waste Strategy. This presents a challenge to Waste Collection Authorities due to the stagnation of recycling rates and increased pressure because of impending legislation designed to increase recycling. It is therefore essential that collection services are as efficient as possible, prior to implementing these national changes.
55. In October 2023, the UK government announced the “Simpler Recycling” scheme which now mandates local authorities to collect food waste separately on a weekly basis with effect from April 2026; and requires businesses / non-municipal premises to arrange for the separate collection of recyclables and food waste from April 2025. These two policies alone will require a significant level of additional waste collection resource input and operational enhancements by Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service (GCSWS).
56. Consolidating routes prior to the introduction of national legislation to eliminate avoidable waste and increase recycling rates will improve operational effectiveness and productivity by re-balancing existing collection rounds. It will enable the service to better accommodate past growth and future-proof waste collections to accommodate new growth.
57. The trial, and current ongoing collection arrangements, have ceased Monday waste collections. This is expected to contribute to an increase in recycling rates due to less confusion for residents when collections coincide with bank holidays, many of these take place on Mondays. A reduction in overtime incurred by bank holiday catch-up work will result in fewer commutes to work and shorter vehicle journeys.
58. Muscular-skeletal injuries are more common for waste operatives than desk-based colleagues due to the physical nature of the work. A four-day collection service increases rest days and continuing this working pattern will also more fully test whether this increases wellbeing and reduces sickness levels and injuries by consolidating the number of days colleagues commute and work. It should also increase recruitment and retention rates and reduce the reliance on agency staff to operate the service.
59. Noting these challenges, Cabinet endorsed a three-month trial in May 2023 to assess whether a four-day week would be operationally effective for the service. The trial itself was not expected to address recruitment and retention issues (as the time frame was too short) but was designed to see whether performance could be maintained and whether health and wellbeing improved. If both outcomes were positive, this would indicate that a longer period of working in this way could be considered viable, at which point recruitment and retention could be properly measured.
60. The route optimisation exercise conducted showed that GCSWS could deliver the service based on operational crews working 32 hours over four days (with drivers working an additional two hours, to inspect their vehicles and fuel up etc before / after rounds). This working pattern was deemed to be the most appropriate to balance the wellbeing of crews and resource requirements of moving towards a four-day week. Vehicles were not required for the initial trial, but should the working pattern become permanent two additional vehicles would be required. The trial began for domestic waste collections on 18 September. To date there has not been any negative impact on service delivery or

performance. A more detailed summary of performance during the trial can be found in **Appendices C, D, E, and F.**

Options

61. Cabinet could decide to continue four-day week working practices until information is provided by the Government regarding potential future financial levers they might impose on councils using this working practice, as announced in their Local Government Financial Settlement consultation in December 2023, and a subsequent consultation is carried out, analysed, and formal decision made. Given the positive data reported around performance, and health and wellbeing to date, this is the recommended option.
62. Cabinet could decide that the Council should revert back to five-day working weeks for all colleagues while the results of the desk-based and waste trials are being analysed and information is being provided by Government regarding potential financial levers. This is not recommended due to the amount of disruption to residents and colleagues, and the additional costs this would incur to reorganise bin collection rounds. Members should also note that there is a significant lead in time needed for collection round changes to be planned and implemented.
63. Cabinet could decide to continue with the waste four-day week trial but revert to a five-day working pattern for desk-based colleagues. Although not the recommended option, this has fewer operational challenges than including waste.
64. Cabinet could decide on an alternative option to address the recruitment and retention challenges for the Council; however, this is not recommended due to the potential for disruption and loss of benefits identified in this report.
65. Cabinet could decide not to align the working hours for desk-based and waste colleagues, if a four-day week working model was to continue. This is not recommended as it would create longer-term inequalities in working practices within the Council.
66. Cabinet could decide to hold a consultation before all the implications of becoming a four-day week employer were known (the financial implications arising from the Government's Local Government Financial Settlement consultation as a key implication). However, this would risk having to consult for a second time once all the implications were understood.
67. Members could decide on an alternative option not identified above.
68. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial

69. The four-day week trial has made savings from recruiting to permanent posts which were previously filled by agency staff, and has incurred some additional costs. The table below shows **known full year costs** for each area:

-	Savings £	Costs £
Reduced agency expenditure	483,000	-
Waste service revenue related to extra rounds*	-	132,000
Discontinuation of recruitment and retention incentives Waste Service	53,000	-
Revenue contribution to two extra vehicles	-	75,000
Additional cleaning staff	-	13,000
Total saving/cost	536,000	220,000
Net saving	316,000	-

* Includes staffing and maintenance for two vehicles and two hours flat pay per week for drivers.

These costs do not include round reorganisation in the Waste Service as this task needs to be completed every few years to ensure collections remain efficient and rounds balanced as the area grows. This was due to be carried out separate to the four-day week trial.

At the time the Council's budget was being prepared it was not known whether four-day week working would continue beyond the end of March 2024. To ensure any costs, such as from waste services, were factored into the Council's budget these have already been allowed for as a prudent measure.

There are also savings expected to be realised through reduced sickness absence due to the health and wellbeing benefits to staff from a four-day week model of working. These benefits are particularly expected in roles that are more physical – such as amongst waste crews where musculoskeletal injuries can be more commonplace than in desk-based roles. A reduced overall fuel cost for Greater Cambridge Shared Waste, owing to the route re-optimisation programme and four-day week collection pattern, is also anticipated to deliver savings to the councils.

70. The route optimisation exercise conducted showed that GCSWS could deliver the service based on operational crews working 32 hours over four days (with drivers working an additional two hours – paid at flat rate, to inspect their vehicles and fuel up etc before /

after rounds). This working pattern was deemed to be the most appropriate to balance the wellbeing of crews and resource requirements of moving towards a four-day week.

- 71. There have not been any capital costs for the three-month trial in Waste as the service has retained existing vehicles due for replacement.
- 72. Costs for the Waste trial so far have been funded from the service's operational budget underspends for the 2023/24 financial year.
- 73. The Best Value Notice from Government has required a data lead to be retained to ensure the data requested on a weekly basis could be provided.
- 74. Costs would be incurred for consultation if this point is reached. While these are not confirmed they are likely to be in the region of £40,000.

Legal

- 75. The trial, or the proposed extended period of four-day week working, do not require any changes to employee terms and conditions as participation is on a voluntary basis. However, it is recommended that working hours for desk-based and waste colleagues are aligned.
- 76. The Monitoring Officer has reviewed the Council's responsibilities to consult in line with the Best Value Duty for local authorities and recommends that no consultation is undertaken at this stage owing to the lack of information from Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on the implications of any potential future financial penalties. In the absence of information on the potential future financial penalties, the Council is unable to provide sufficient information for a consultation to be meaningful.

Staffing

- 77. Two health and wellbeing surveys carried out to date have shown a positive impact from the trial on employees. There is more detail in the appendices.
- 78. The results of the future health and wellbeing survey will be presented to members as data from the full trial period is assessed.
- 79. Colleagues were concerned early in the trial period that the time to carry out training and development would be impacted by a four-day working week. The People team at SCDC has run fewer sessions in 2023 compared to 2022 but average attendance per session was broadly comparable. E-learning course completions went up significantly from 875 in 2022 to 1288 in 2023. This indicates that colleagues are making time for training and development.
- 80. There is now a need to align hours following the formal trial periods if four-day week working is to continue.

Risks/Opportunities

- 81. The four-day week trial is referred to in the Council's Strategic Risk Register in three places:

- a. It is listed as a control measure for the Council's Strategic Risk SR03 – Recruitment and Retention - due to the potential for a successful trial to assist with attracting new colleagues to the Council, and to contribute to the wellbeing and satisfaction of existing colleagues, thereby reducing turnover
- b. It is listed as Risk SR30 – that the trial may be stopped prematurely by the government.
- c. It is listed as Risk SR31 – that the trial may be unsuccessful in achieving its aims of solving the recruitment and retention challenge.

82. Operationally, the following risks exist:

- a. there is a risk of continuing a four-day week working model without aligning hours being worked by waste crews and desk-based colleagues. This risk would be eliminated should Cabinet approve the recommendation to align working hours set out above.
- b. There is a risk that people might perceive continuing four-day week working practices without consulting now may mean a final decision has been taken and communications would need to be clear on this point, noting that until the outcome of the Local Government Finance Settlement consultation is published, the consultation is recommended to be delayed.
- c. The longer a four-day week working practice is in place, the more challenging it would be to return to a 5-day working pattern without loss of morale, or a big impact on recruitment and retention.

83. There was a risk associated with launching new bin collection routes. Collections can suffer as crews adapt and the changes bed in. This risk was not realised, and the transition was successful.

Equality and Diversity

84. An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out for the desk-based and waste trials to ensure all impacts were properly captured. The Equality Impact Assessments support the need to align hours if a four-day week working practice was to continue and has not identified any other negative impacts.

Climate Change

85. Evidence from the [Henley Business School](#) suggests that 67% of employees would drive their car less if they were to work a four-day week. Given that the Council already offers significant home-working this approach has already reduced commuting for desk-based colleagues. Depot colleagues under a four-day week model commute to the depot one day less per week.

86. The Council has set targets to reduce the organisation's carbon emissions by 45% by 2025 and by 75% by 2030 and reach net zero carbon reduction by 2050. The route optimisation exercise has resulted in consolidation of journeys and improved grouping of properties for bin collection to reduce mileage and this could make a modest positive impact to the Council's direct / Scope 1 emissions for diesel / fuel usage. The carbon emissions associated with commuting to work have decreased with a four-day week pattern, however commute mileage is not currently monitored within the Council's Scope 3 indirect emissions. This is considered displacement of emissions to non-work-related personal travel rather than a full reduction. It should also be noted that provision of additional non-working time can lead to more sustainable lifestyle choices and reduction on convenience consumption choices which are more carbon intensive.

Health and wellbeing

87. Two Health and Wellbeing surveys have been undertaken by Robertson Cooper, an industry leader in collecting and analysing comprehensive data about employee experiences and comparing an organisation's employees against benchmarked data from 90,000 employees in other organisations (in the public and private sectors). The first survey was conducted pre-trial and included all colleagues, and the second was conducted during the trial and included only colleagues involved in the trial. The results showed there had been a positive impact on wellbeing following the introduction of the four-day week trial.
88. A comparison of the survey results can be found in **Appendix B**.
89. Following the 3 month four-day week trial within the shared waste service, we conducted an in-house health and wellbeing survey to assess the impact of the trial. The results of this survey also suggested the trial had had a positive impact on colleagues' health and wellbeing. A summary of the results can be found in **Appendix C**.

Consultation responses

90. A consultation has been committed to as part of a full assessment of the trial. The planning period in advance of the first trial successfully engaged colleagues and the unions to make changes in the way teams work to deliver this working practice.
91. The work with local Trade Unions for waste services have helped to transition to a four-day week and the smooth introduction of new routes.
92. Further colleague engagement will take place in waste now the new rounds have embedded. This will enable the service to ensure rounds are fully balanced and that colleagues are content with the changes.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

A modern and caring Council

93. The trials for desk-based colleagues and waste have demonstrated data to show that it is possible to provide services under a four-day week working practice, without jeopardising performance and service delivery. However, a full assessment and analysis is required before any final conclusions can be made.

Background Papers

- [Cabinet meeting on Monday 12 September 2022](#) – Cabinet Members agreed to proceed with an initial three-month trial.
- [Cabinet meeting on Monday 15 May 2023](#) – Cabinet Members agreed to extend the trial for 12 months. At that Cabinet meeting, Members also agreed for waste crews to take part in a 3-month trial. Data from the three-month waste trial will be discussed by Councillors once that three-month trial is completed.

- [Four-day week update to Employment and Staffing Committee, November 2023](#)
– latest data on performance and update on recruitment and retention.

Appendices

Appendix A: Letter received from Government following Local Government Finance Settlement consultation

Appendix B: Robertson Cooper Health and Wellbeing surveys summary

Appendix C: Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service Health and Wellbeing survey

Appendix D: Performance data on Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service trial

Appendix E: Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service customer service data - 18 September to 10 November 2023

Appendix F: Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service official complaints and compliments data - 18 September to 15 December 2023

Report Author:

Anne Ainsworth – Chief Operating Officer
Telephone: 01954 712920



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
*Secretary of State for Levelling up
Housing & Communities
Minister for Intergovernmental
Relations*
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

To All Council Leaders in England

5 February 2024

Dear Leader,

2024-25 FINAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT

On 18 December 2023, the Government published the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2024-25 and launched our formal consultation on proposals, which closed on 15 January 2024. I would like to express my gratitude again to all who responded. Having listened to your views, on 24 January I announced additional measures for local authorities worth £600 million, including £500 million of new funding for social care.

Today I have laid before Parliament: the Local Government Finance Report (England) 2024 to 2025; the Referendums Relating to Council Tax Increases (Principles) (England) Report 2024 to 2025; and the Referendums Relating to Council Tax Increases (Alternative Notional Amounts) (England) Report 2024 to 2025. Together, these form the final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024-25. On Wednesday 7 February, Parliament will have the opportunity to consider these reports.

In recognition of the vital work councils do for the communities you serve, I am pleased to confirm that this year's Settlement makes available a total of £64.7 billion, an increase of £4.5 billion or 7.5% in cash terms in Core Spending Power on 2023-24 – an above-inflation increase. By making progress on the Government's plan to halve inflation, grow the economy and reduce debt, we now can provide this extra funding to councils so that you can continue to deliver vital services for your communities.

As announced on 24 January, this Settlement will provide:

- **£1.5 billion in additional grant funding for social care**, compared to 2023-24, in recognition of pressures facing both adult and children's social care;
- a **4% Funding Guarantee** to ensure that all local authorities will see their Core Spending Power increase by a minimum of 4% in cash terms before any local decisions on council tax – this is an increase from the 3% Funding Guarantee in 2023-24; and
- **£110 million through the Rural Services Delivery Grant**, in recognition of the specific challenges local councils can face serving dispersed populations – an increase of £15 million or over 15% on 2023-24, the largest increase in this grant since 2018-19 and the second successive year of above-inflation increases.

The Government is committed to continuing to protect local residents from excessive council tax increases. This Settlement confirms our intention for referendum principles of up to 3% for core council tax and up to 2% for the adult social care precept in 2024-25. These provisions are not a cap, nor do they force councils to set taxes at the threshold level. When taking decisions on council tax levels, I expect all Councillors, Mayors, Police and Crime Commissioners and local councils to take into consideration the pressures many households are facing and the need to control unnecessary and wasteful expenditure. We have been clear that councils should take steps to mitigate the impact on those least able to pay when implementing any council tax increases.

The Government's view continues to be that councils that have taken decisions to get themselves in the most severe financial failure should continue to take all reasonable local steps to support recovery including additional council tax increases. For the 2024-25 Settlement, in consideration of the significant financial failure of Thurrock Council, Slough Borough Council, and Woking Borough Council, the Government has confirmed the council tax referendum principles as proposed in the provisional Settlement. In recognition of the scale of the Council's failure, the Government will not oppose a request for flexibility to increase council tax bills by an additional 5% from Birmingham City Council. Whilst the Government will not oppose this request given the seriousness of the circumstances, any decision to increase council tax is solely one for Birmingham City Council, who should have taken into account the pressures that people in Birmingham are currently facing on living costs.

Every authority in England also stands to benefit from increased growth in business rates income, which has generated a surplus in the business rates levy account in 2023-24. I can confirm that £100 million will be returned to the sector on a one-off basis, to be distributed based on each local authority's 2013-14 Settlement Funding Assessment.

Today, I am also announcing that we will compensate local authorities for the Green Plant and Machinery business rates exemption via grant. This includes £21.7 million backdated for each of 2022-23 and 2023-24, which we aim to pay by the end of March 2024, and £21.7 million to be paid across 2024-25 and on a continuing basis until the system is reset. We will distribute this amount based on proportion of rateable value at local authority-level.

As part of our efforts to return the sector to sustainability in the future, we are also asking local authorities to develop and share productivity plans. These plans will set out how local authorities will improve service performance and reduce wasteful expenditure, for example on consultants or discredited equality, diversity and inclusion programmes. The Government will monitor these plans, and funding settlements in future will be informed by performance against these plans.

My Department will work with the local government sector on the approach to producing these plans. The plans should be short and draw on work councils have already done, identifying ways to unlock productivity improvements and setting out the key implementation milestones. Plans should be published by July 2024 before the House rises for the summer recess. They must be agreed by Council Leaders and members and published on local authority websites, together with updates on progress.

We expect them to cover four main areas:

- 1) transformation of services to make better use of resources;
- 2) opportunities to take advantage of advances in technology and make better use of data to inform decision making and service design;
- 3) ways to reduce wasteful spend within systems, including specific consideration of expenditure on consultants and discredited staff Equality, Diversity and Inclusion programmes – this does not include programmes designed to promote integration and civic pride, and counter extremism; and
- 4) barriers preventing activity that the Government can help to reduce or remove.

Alongside this ask, we will establish a new productivity review panel, made up of sector experts including the Office for Local Government and the Local Government Association.

I am grateful to all councils who provided views on the proposal to use levers in local government finance settlements beyond 2024-25 to disincentivise the ‘four day working week’ or equivalent arrangements of Part-Time Work for Full-Time Pay. The Government continues to believe that this reduces the potential capacity to deliver services by up to 20%, and as a result does not deliver value. We will consider responses to this question carefully as part of continuing policy development, to deter local government from operating these practices, with any changes at future Settlements subject to further consultation.

Further detail on the final Settlement has been published today here:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/final-local-government-finance-settlement-england-2024-to-2025

We are committed to improving the local government finance system beyond this settlement in the next Parliament and the Minister for Local Government will be engaging with the sector over the coming months.

With every good wish,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael Gove". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and the last name "Gove" clearly distinguishable.

RT HON MICHAEL GOVE MP

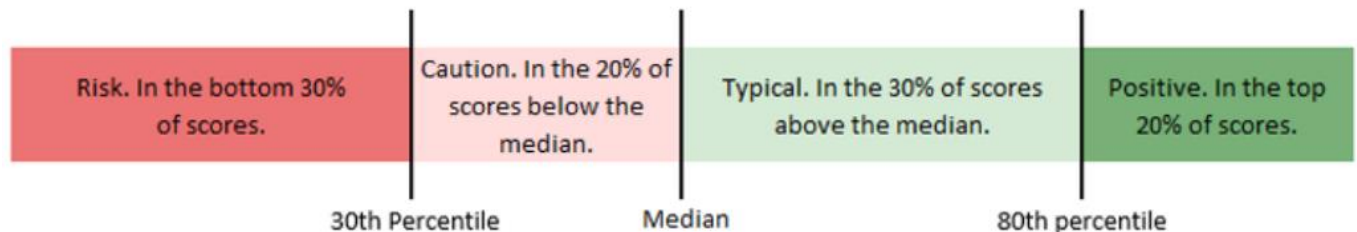
Secretary of State for Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

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Appendix C - Robertson Cooper Health and Wellbeing surveys summary

1. Two Health and Wellbeing surveys have been undertaken by Robertson Cooper, an industry leader in collecting and analysing comprehensive data about employee experiences and comparing an organisation's employees against benchmarked data from 90,000 employees in other organisations (in the public and private sectors.) The first survey was conducted pre-trial and included all staff, and the second was conducted during the trial and included only the staff involved in the trial. The results showed there had been a positive impact on staff wellbeing following the introduction of the four-day week trial.
2. A comparison of the survey results can be found below
3. Below are screenshots of the dashboards from the 2022 and 2023 surveys, so you can visually compare the results. The key for the results is as outlined in the image below. Risk, which means in the bottom 30% of scores, is dark red. Caution, which is in the 20% of scores below the median, is light red. Typical, which is in the 30% of scores above the median, is light green. Positive, which is in the top 20% of scores, is dark green.

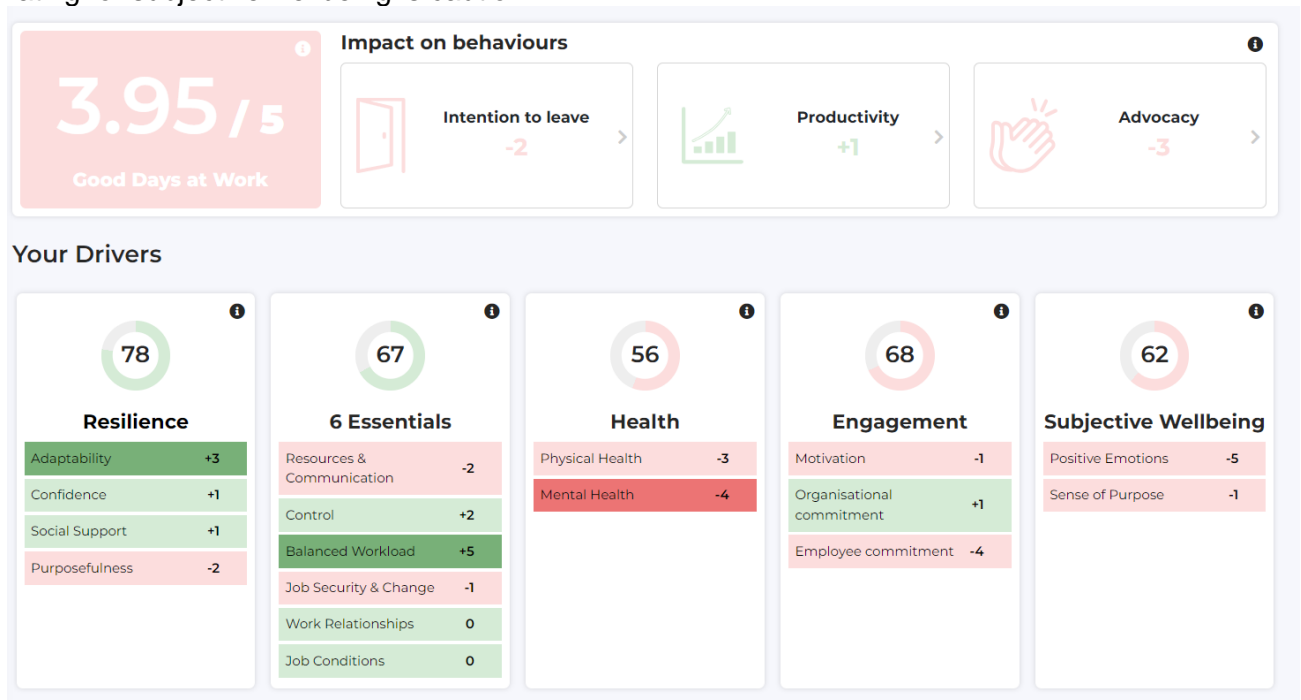




4. All staff dashboard

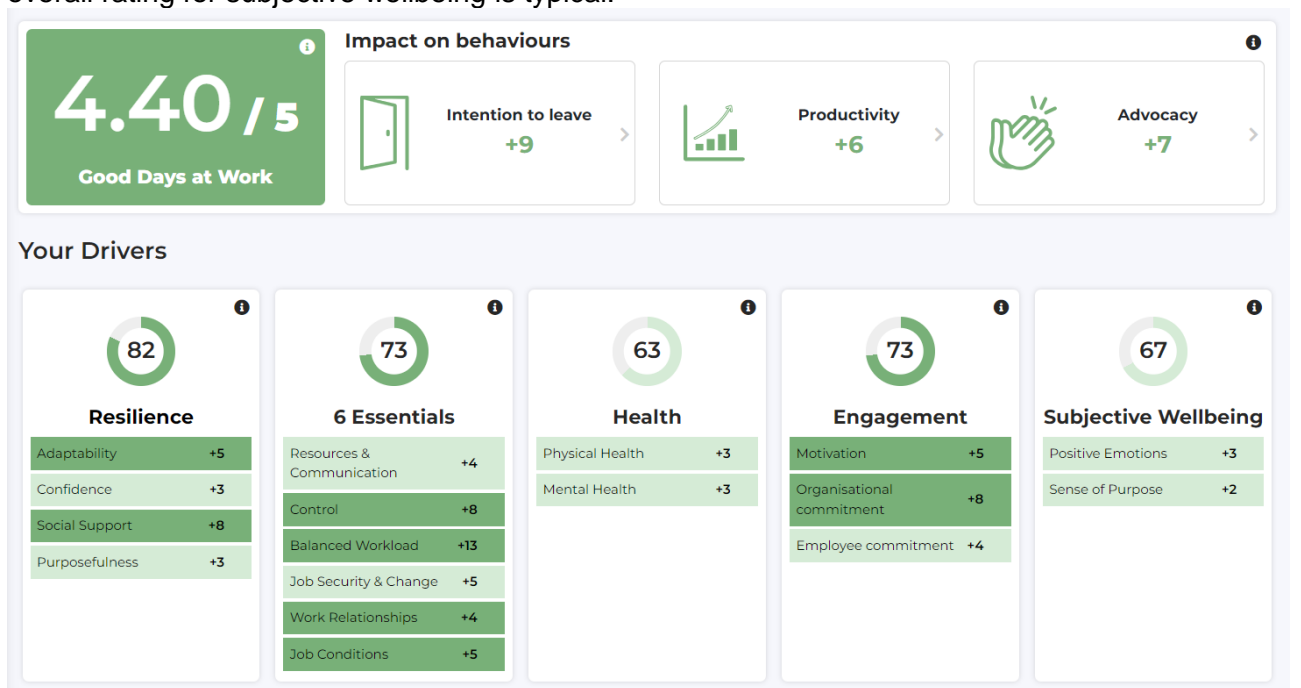
2022 – 310 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is typical. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is typical. The overall rating for health is caution. The overall rating for engagement is caution. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is caution.



2023 – 331 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is positive. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is positive. The overall rating for health is typical. The overall rating for engagement is positive. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is typical.

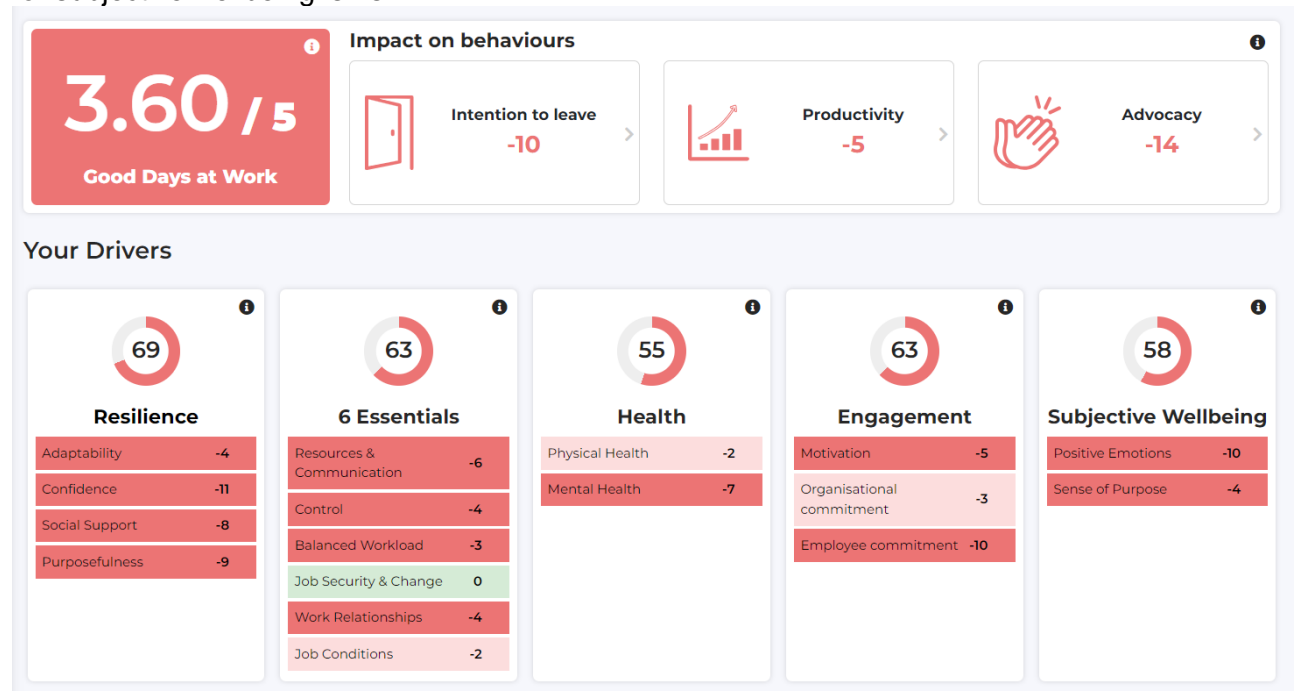




5. Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service

2022 – 58 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is risk. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is risk. The overall rating for health is risk. The overall rating for engagement is risk. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is risk.



2023 – 91 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is typical. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is typical. The overall rating for health is typical. The overall rating for engagement is typical. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is typical.

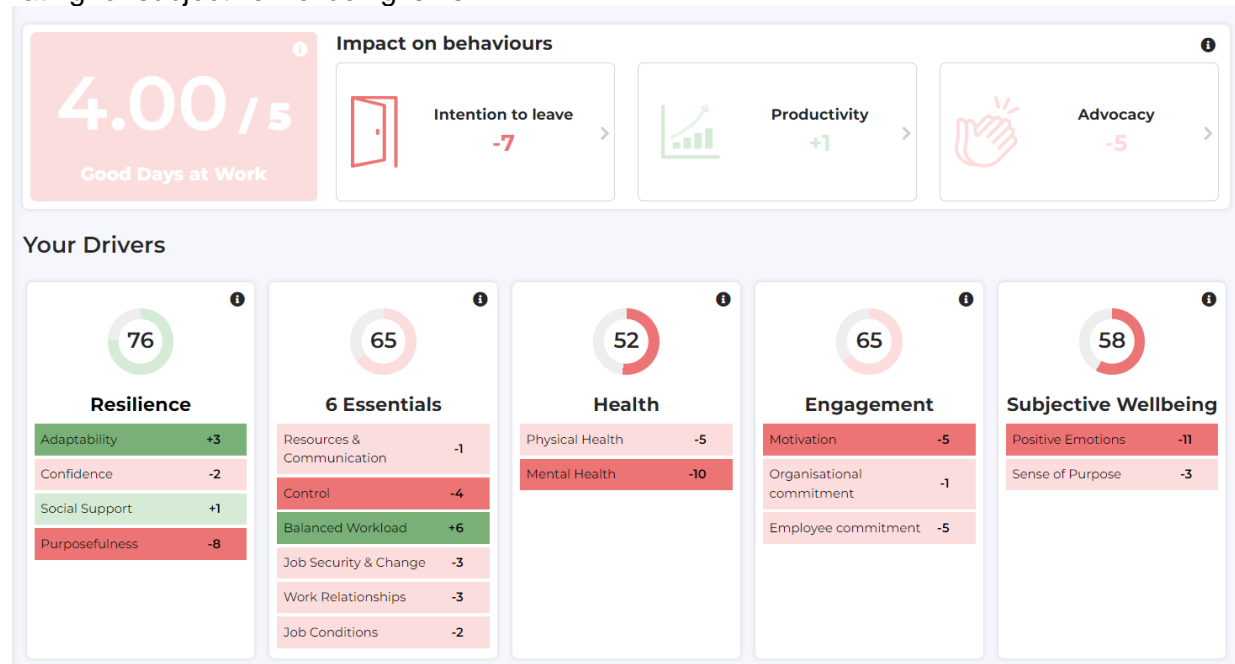




6. Part time staff

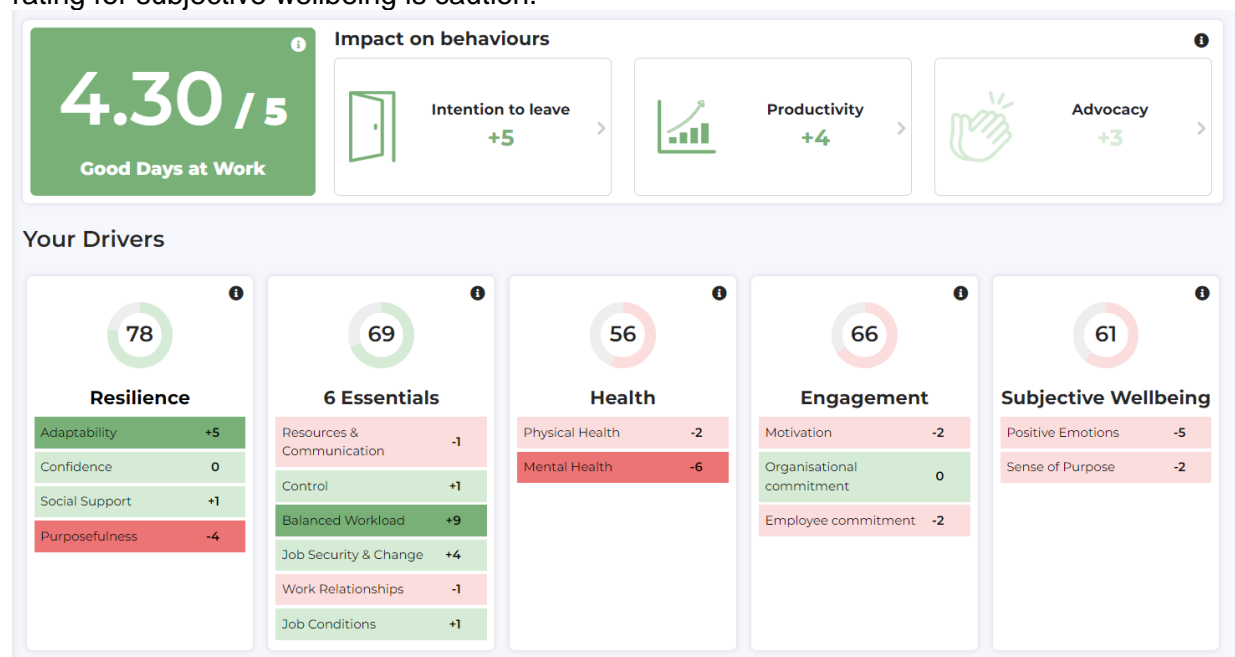
2022 – 49 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is typical. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is caution. The overall rating for health is risk. The overall rating for engagement is caution. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is risk.



2023 – 56 respondents

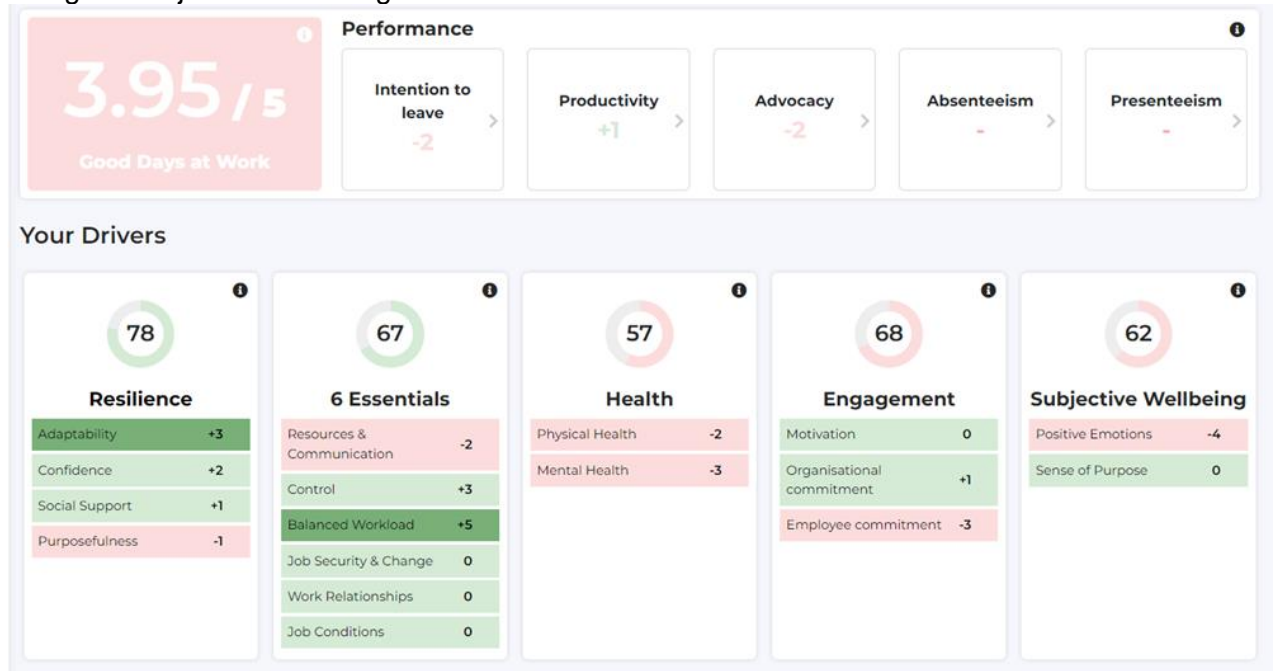
The overall rating for resilience is typical. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is typical. The overall rating for health is caution. The overall rating for engagement is caution. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is caution.



7. Full time staff

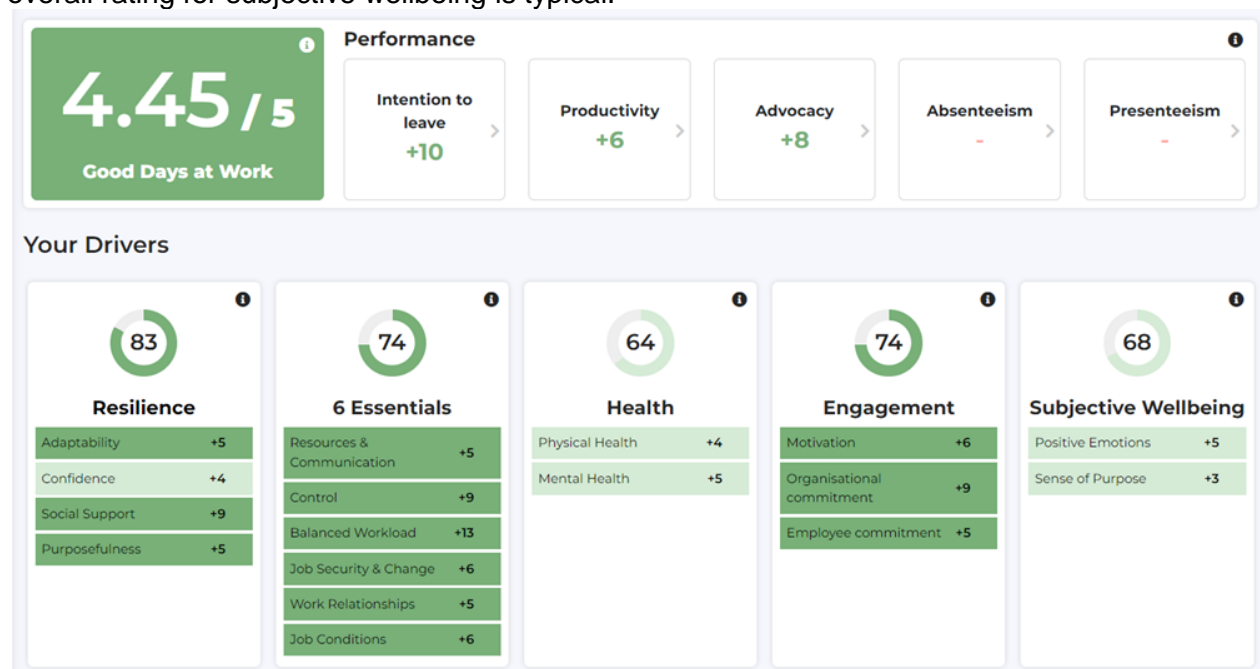
2022 – 261 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is typical. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is typical. The overall rating for health is caution. The overall rating for engagement is caution. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is caution.



2023 – 275 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is positive. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is positive. The overall rating for health is typical. The overall rating for engagement is positive. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is typical.

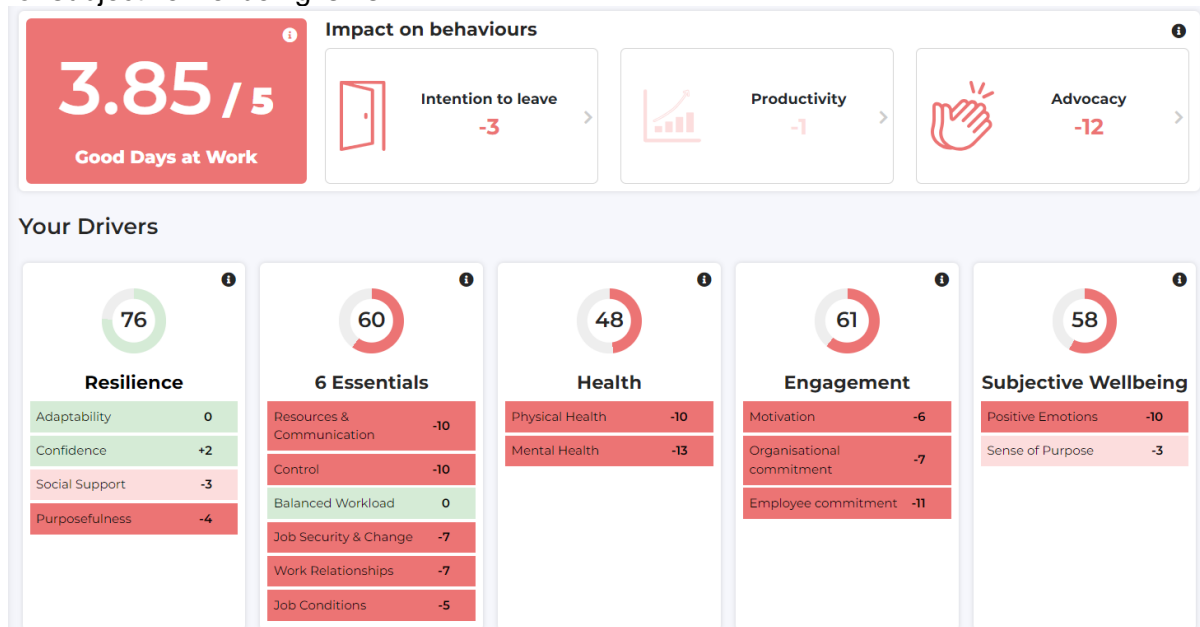




8. Disabled staff

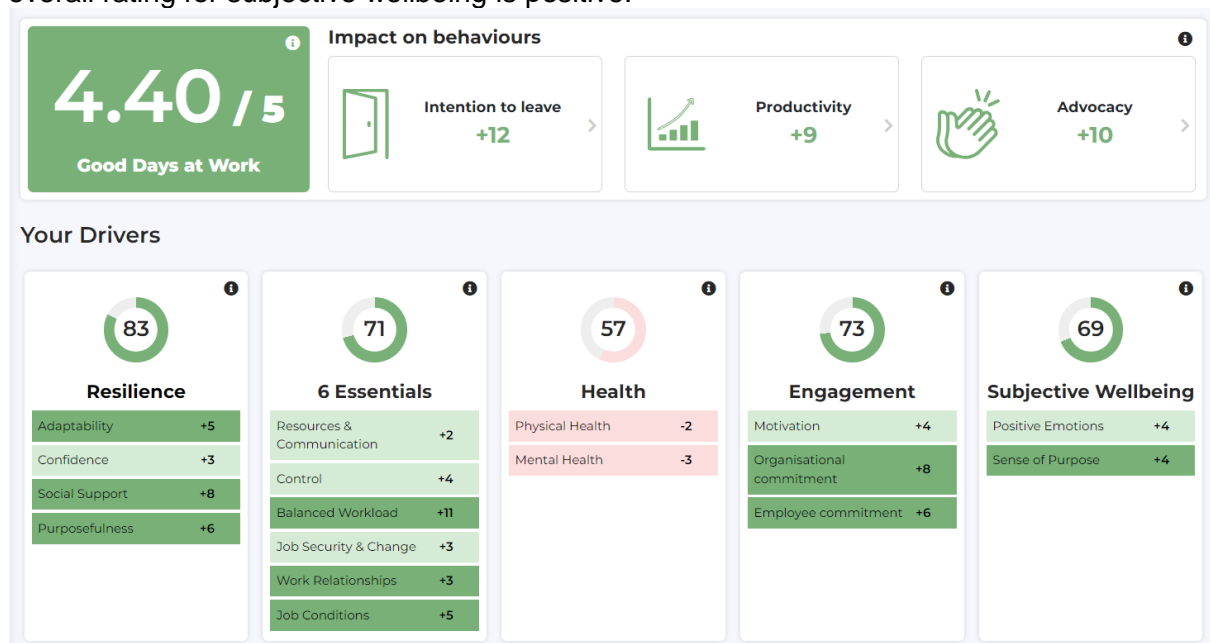
2022 – 37 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is typical. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is risk. The overall rating for health is risk. The overall rating for engagement is risk. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is risk.



2023 – 30 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is positive. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is positive. The overall rating for health is caution. The overall rating for engagement is positive. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is positive.

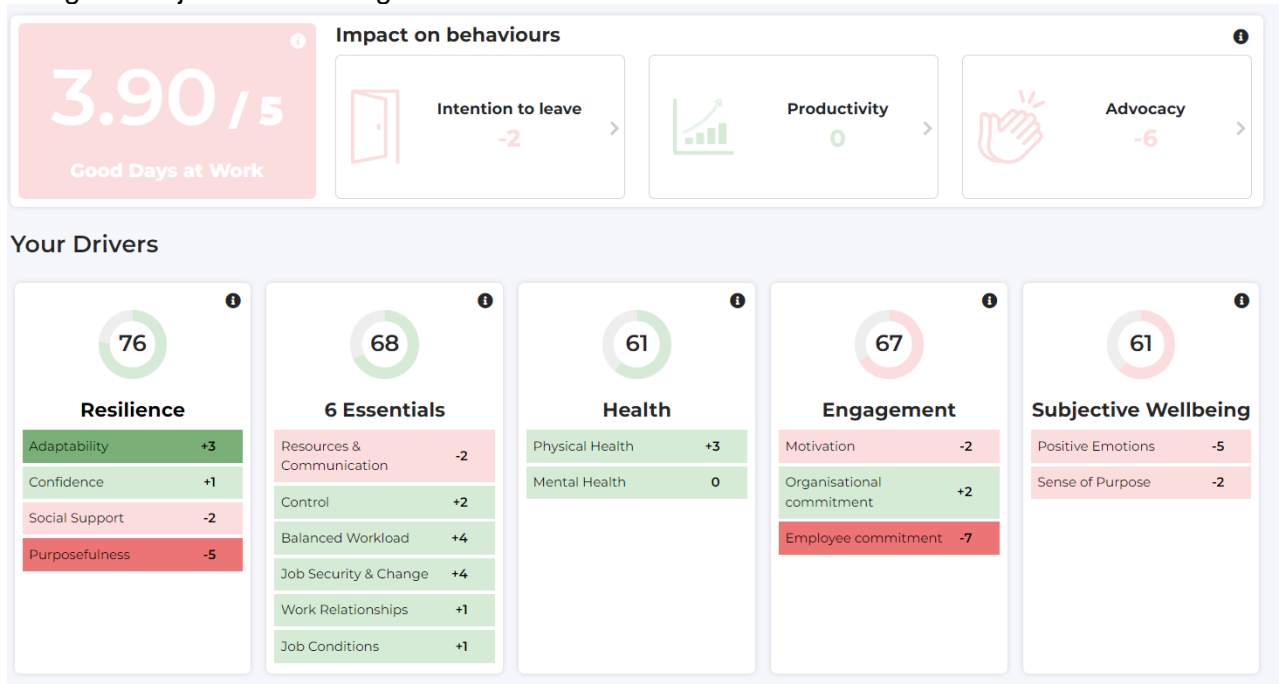




9. Male employees

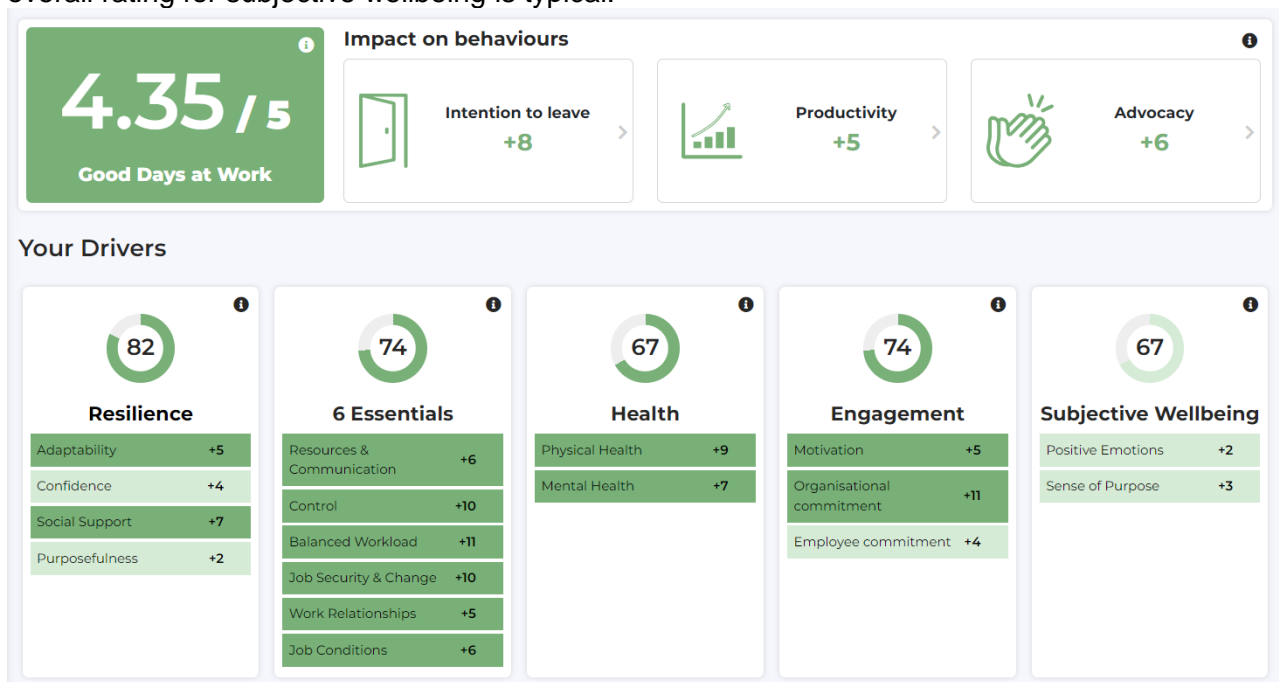
2022 – 117 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is typical. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is typical. The overall rating for health is typical. The overall rating for engagement is caution. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is caution.



2023 – 100 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is positive. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is positive. The overall rating for health is positive. The overall rating for engagement is positive. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is typical.

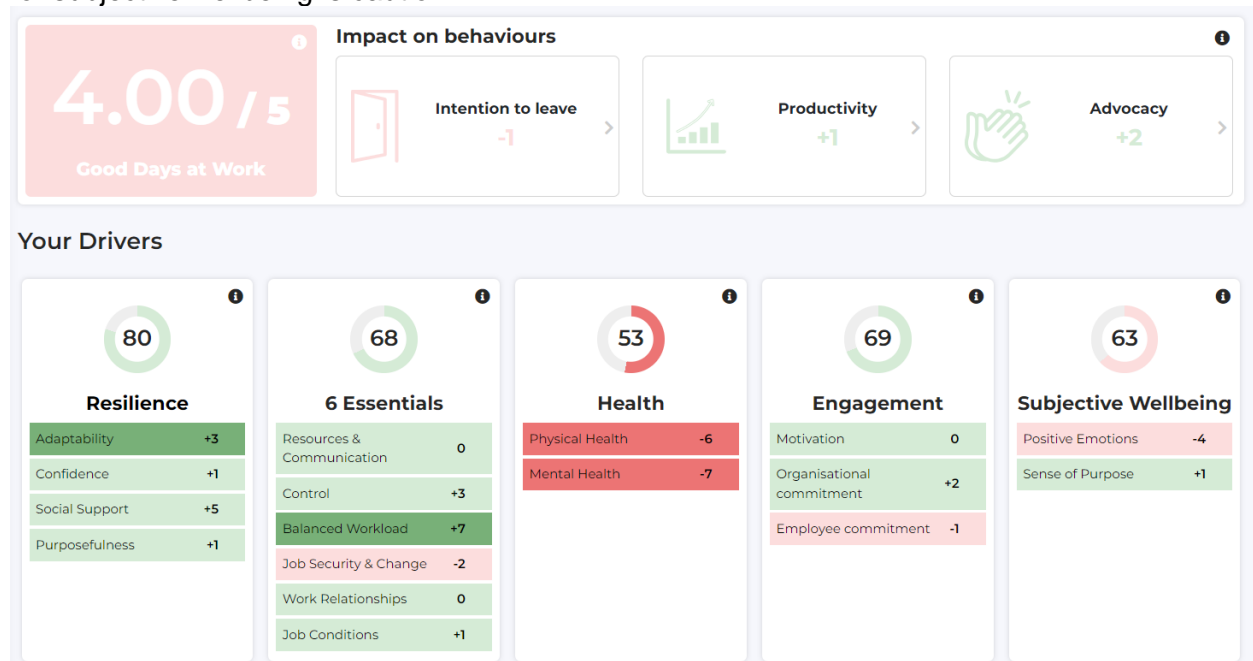




10. Female employees

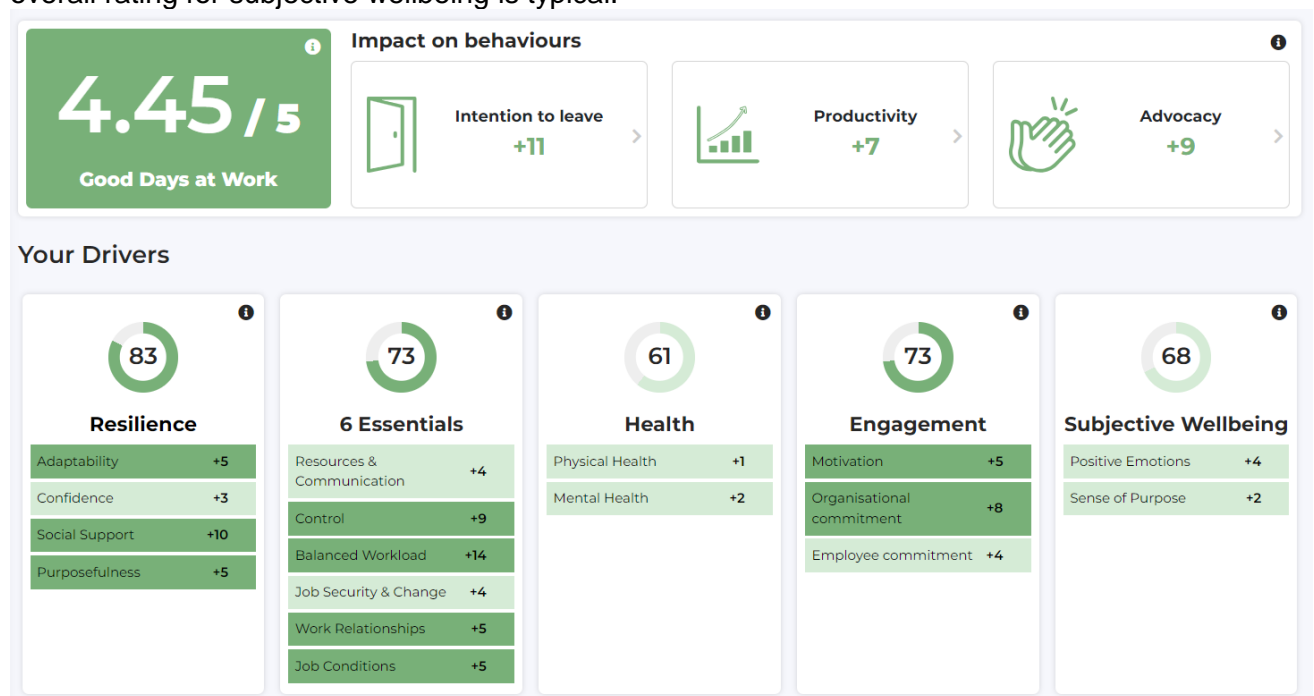
2022 – 175 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is typical. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is typical. The overall rating for health is risk. The overall rating for engagement is typical. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is caution.



2023 – 221 respondents

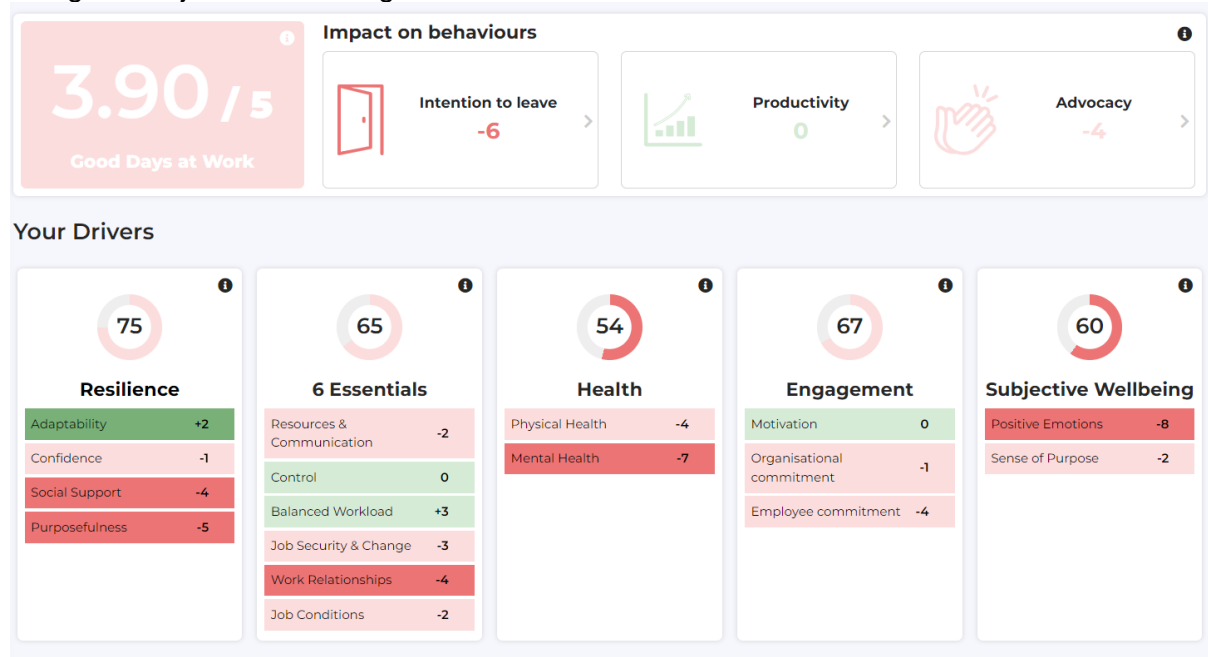
The overall rating for resilience is positive. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is positive. The overall rating for health is typical. The overall rating for engagement is positive. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is typical.



11. Childcare responsibilities

2022 – 107 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is caution. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is caution. The overall rating for health is risk. The overall rating for engagement is caution. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is risk.



2023 – 112 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is positive. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is positive. The overall rating for health is typical. The overall rating for engagement is typical. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is typical.

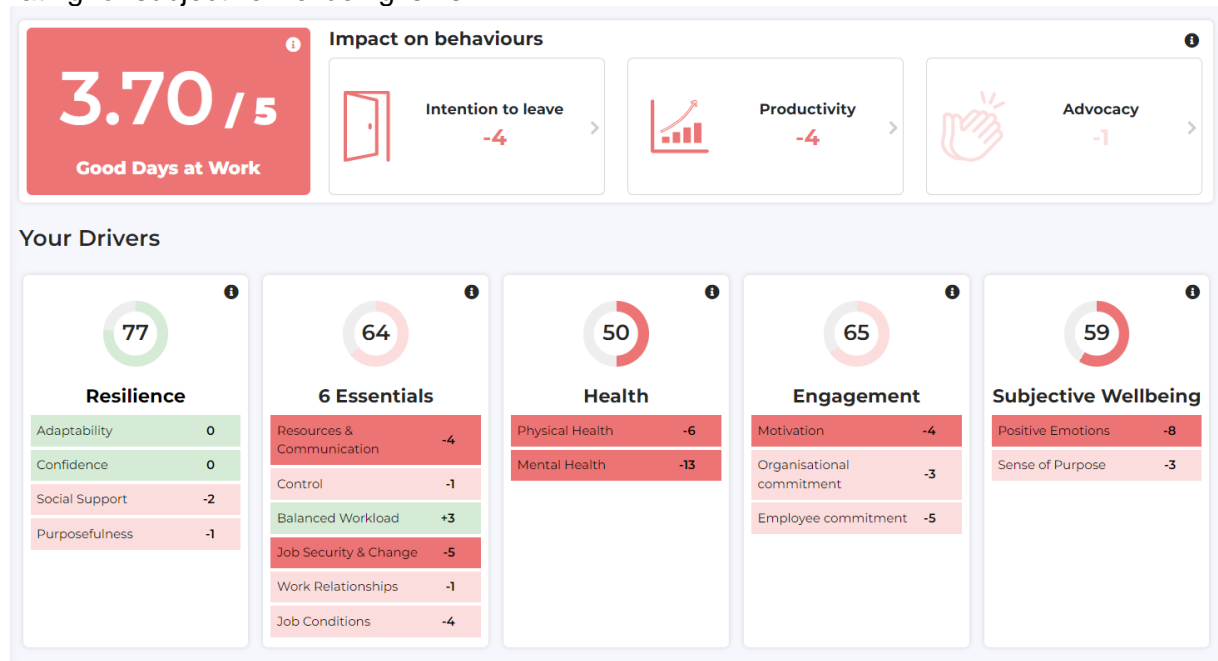




12. Caregiving responsibilities

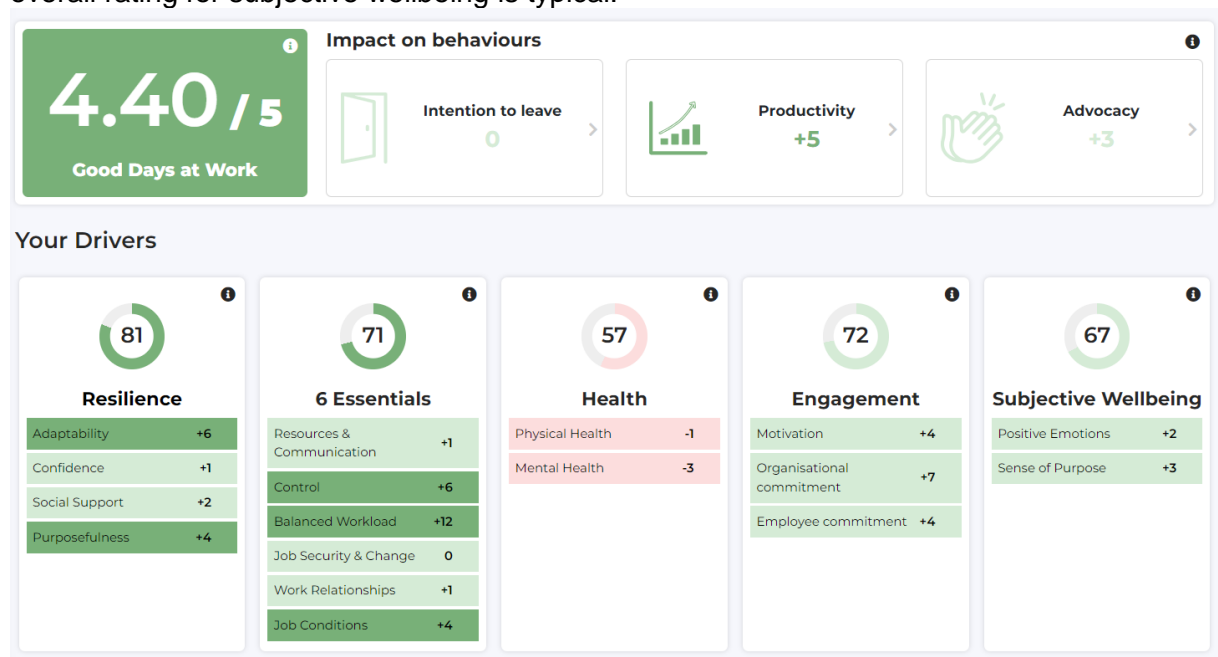
2022 – 45 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is typical. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is caution. The overall rating for health is risk. The overall rating for engagement is caution. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is risk.



2023 – 47 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is positive. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is positive. The overall rating for health is caution. The overall rating for engagement is typical. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is typical.



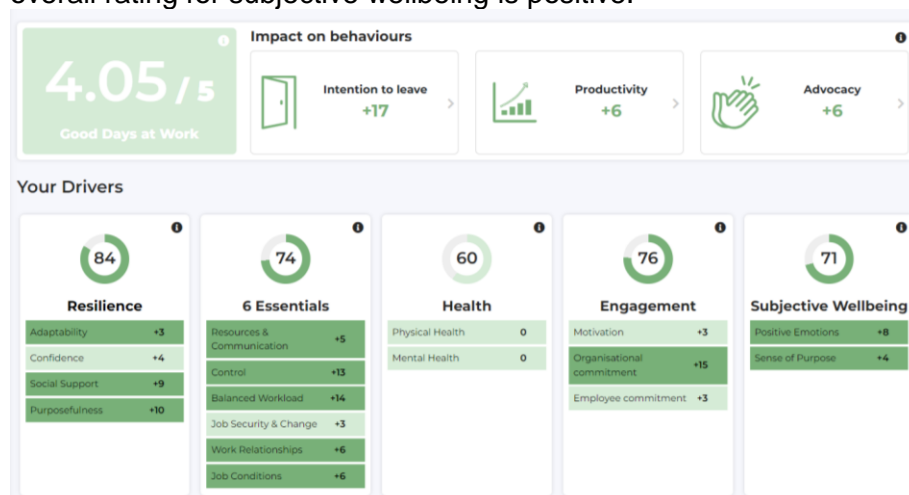


13. Length of service

2022

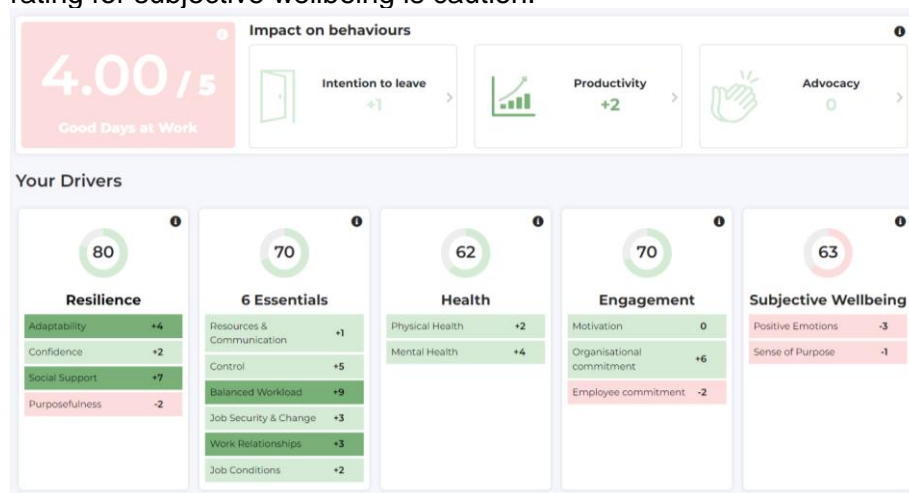
Less than 1 year – 31 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is positive. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is positive. The overall rating for health is typical. The overall rating for engagement is positive. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is positive.



1-3 years – 77 respondents

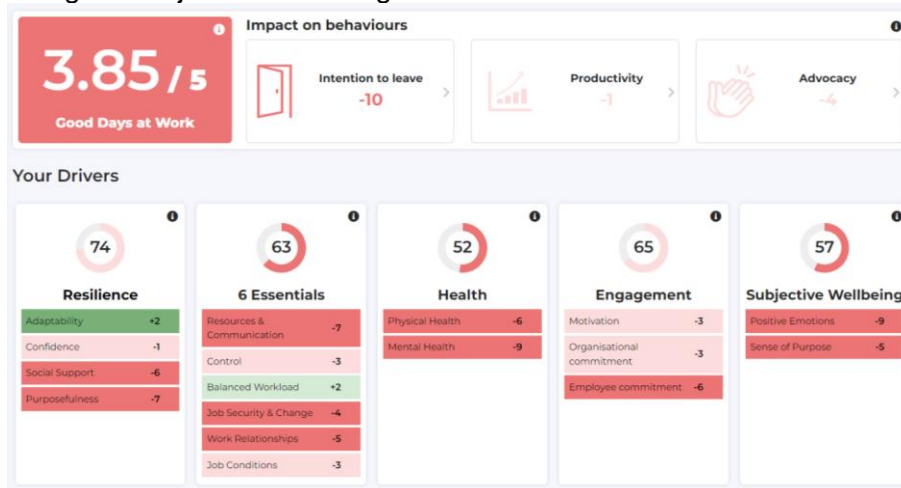
The overall rating for resilience is typical. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is typical. The overall rating for health is typical. The overall rating for engagement is typical. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is caution.





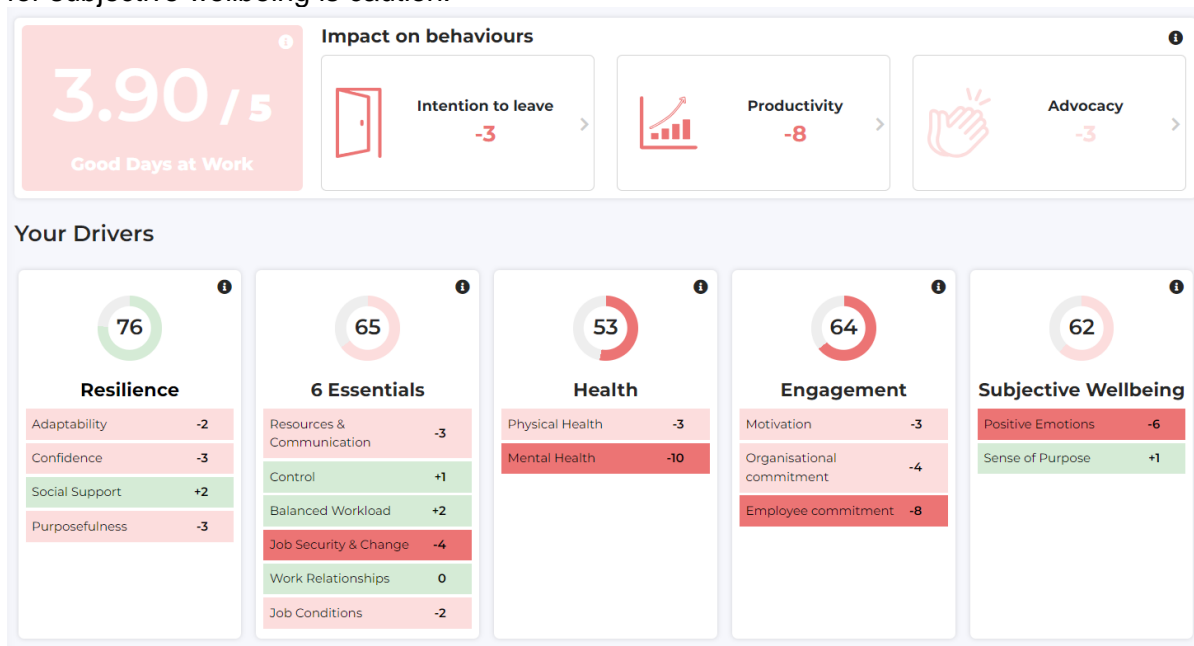
3-6 years – 88 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is caution. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is risk. The overall rating for health is risk. The overall rating for engagement is caution. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is risk.



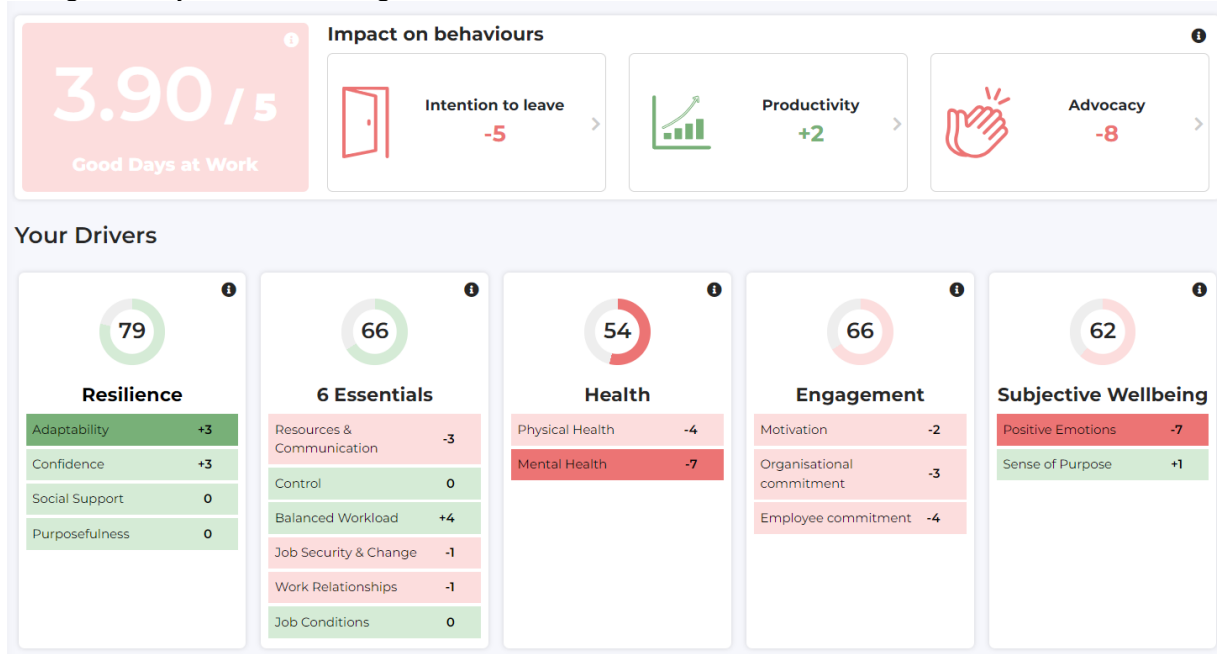
6-10 years – 31 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is typical. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is caution. The overall rating for health is risk. The overall rating for engagement is risk. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is caution.



More than 10 years – 82 respondents

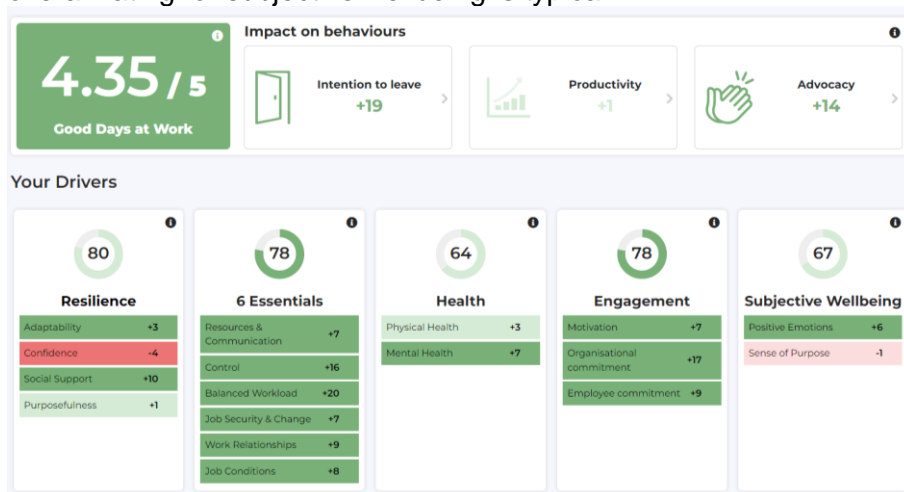
The overall rating for resilience is typical. The overall rating for ‘six essentials’ is typical. The overall rating for health is risk. The overall rating for engagement is caution. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is caution.



2023

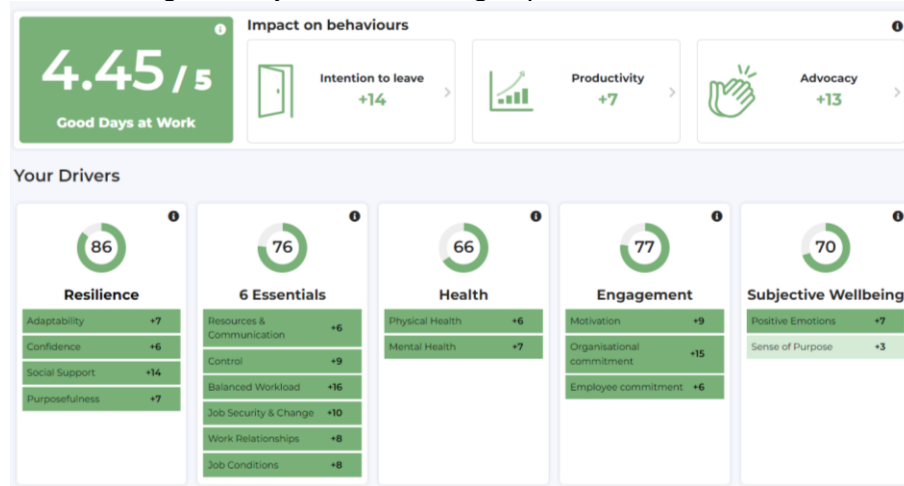
Less than 1 year – 44 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is typical. The overall rating for ‘six essentials’ is positive. The overall rating for health is typical. The overall rating for engagement is positive. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is typical.



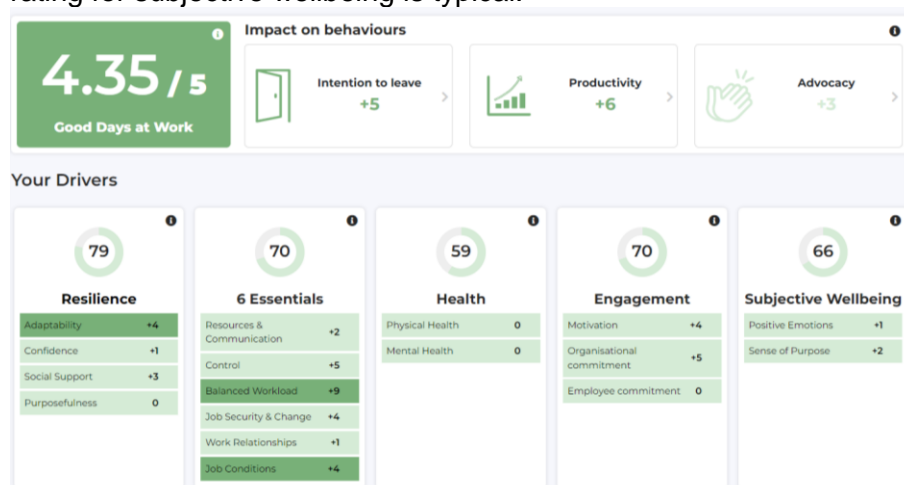
1-3 years – 74 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is positive. The overall rating for ‘six essentials’ is positive. The overall rating for health is positive. The overall rating for engagement is positive. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is positive.



3-6 years – 94 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is typical. The overall rating for ‘six essentials’ is typical. The overall rating for health is typical. The overall rating for engagement is typical. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is typical.



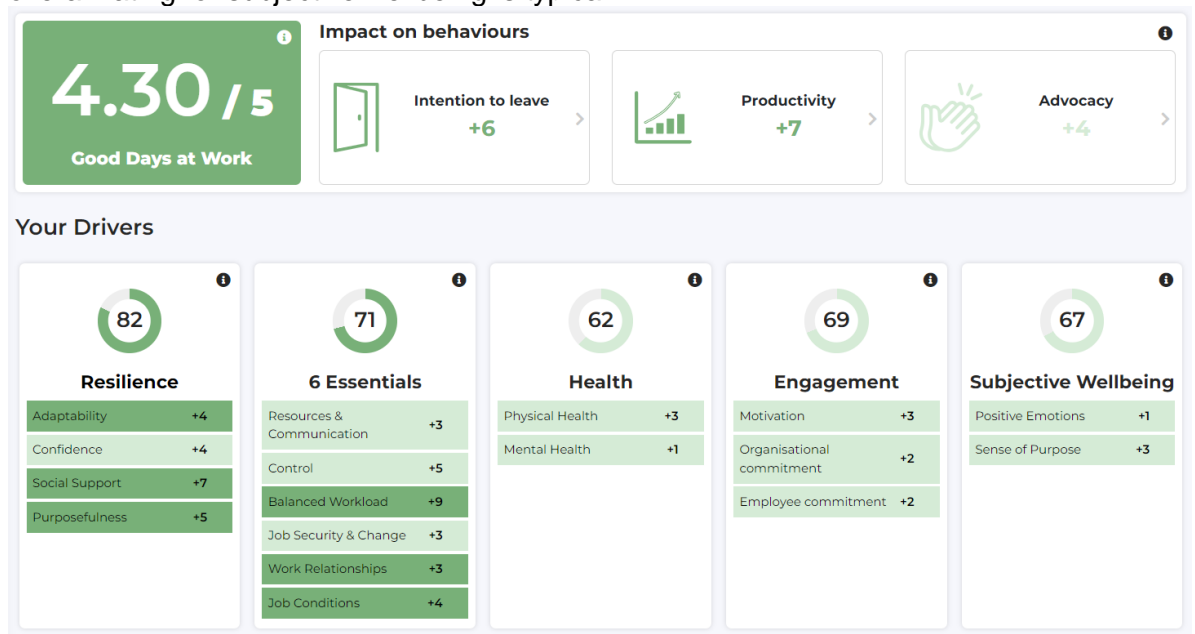
6-10 years – 37 respondents

The overall rating for resilience is positive. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is positive. The overall rating for health is typical. The overall rating for engagement is typical. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is typical.



More than 10 years

The overall rating for resilience is positive. The overall rating for 'six essentials' is positive. The overall rating for health is typical. The overall rating for engagement is typical. The overall rating for subjective wellbeing is typical.

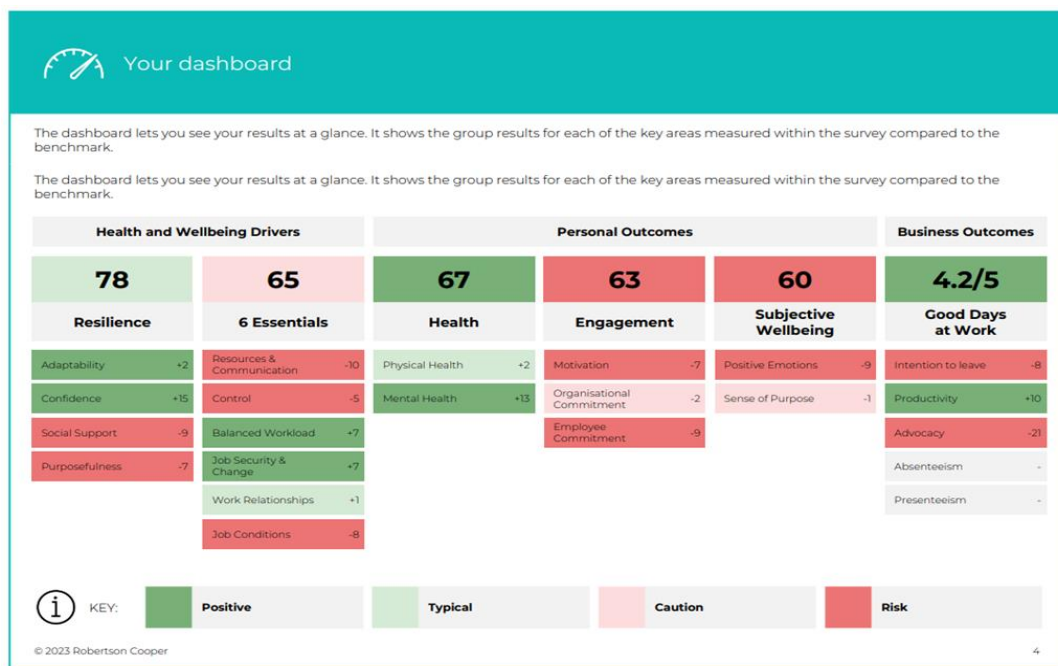


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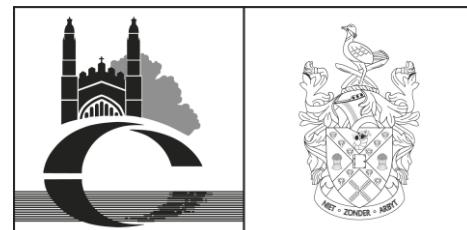
Appendix D - Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service Health and Wellbeing Survey

1. A Health and Wellbeing survey was undertaken by Robertson Cooper, an industry leader in collecting and analysing comprehensive data about employee experiences and comparing an organisation's employees against benchmarked data from 90,000 employees in other organisations (in the public and private sectors.)
2. The survey was conducted in August 2022, and we received 17 responses. The results are shown on the dashboard below (**Table 1**), and highlighted several areas of concern, but especially Advocacy, Resources & Communication, Social Support, Positive Emotions, and Employee Commitment.

Table 1: Wellbeing survey results August 2022. The table shows a typical overall rating for the resilience section, a caution overall rating for the 'six essentials' section, a positive overall rating for health, a risk overall rating for engagement, a risk overall rating for subjective wellbeing and positive overall rating for the good days at work section.



3. The next all staff survey is due to take place in April 2024, but in addition we conducted a wellbeing survey of the shared waste service in December 2023 to gather early insight into the effects of the four-day week trial. Both operatives and office-based staff were invited to take place in the survey, and we received 35 responses in total. We asked eight questions targeted at the areas of concerns highlighted in the 2022 survey: On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is strongly disagree and 10 is strongly agree, how much do you agree with the following statements:



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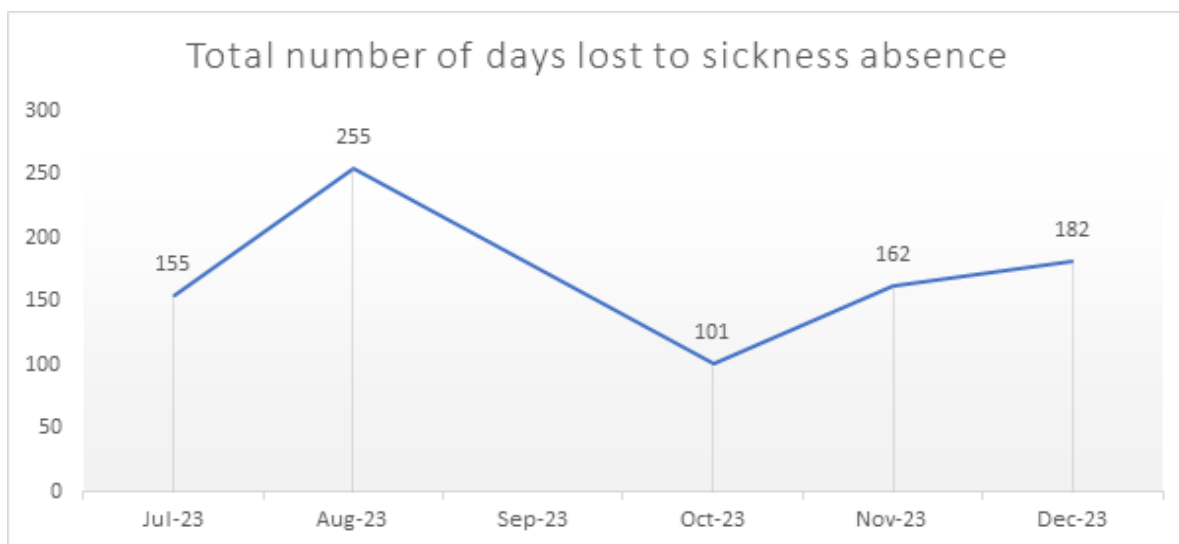
Statement	Average response
I feel valued by the Council	6.9
I feel the Council cares about me and my wellbeing	7.4
I am looking for another job, right now or within the next 12 months	3.1
I feel the Four-Day week trial has helped my physical health	8.3
I feel the Four-Day week has helped my mental health	8.5
Following the introduction of the Four-Day week trial, I enjoy my work more	8.1
I feel I know what is going on at work, and information updates are shared with me	7.6
I would recommend the Council as an employer to a friend or family member	8.2

4. These results suggest staff have felt that the Four-Day week trial has been beneficial to their wellbeing and their relationship with the Council. There is still more work to be done around communication and ensuring colleagues feel valued by the Council, and we will continue to address this in the coming months.
5. The survey also asked colleagues if they had any further recommendations or feedback, and we received a total of 13 comments; 4 comments were praising the 4 Day Week and the benefits it has given them, 7 comments were suggesting further improvements that could be made to rounds or communication, and 2 comments were saying the 4 Day Week had impacted negatively on them as they struggled to fit their work into the reduced time.
6. Looking at the sickness data since July 2023, we can see a slight decrease in sickness absence, although it does start to pick back up in December. We would usually expect to see increased sickness absence over the winter, especially for flu and similar sickness reasons. In the period Oct-Dec 2022 we lost a total of 631.5 days due to sickness, to a cost of £62,872. In the same period in 2023, we lost 445 days to sickness, with a cost of £45,248. This is £17,624 less than the previous year.
7. In analysing the sickness data, we have excluded the data for September due to the trial starting part way through the month, so it would not provide a useful comparison for pre-trial to trial period.

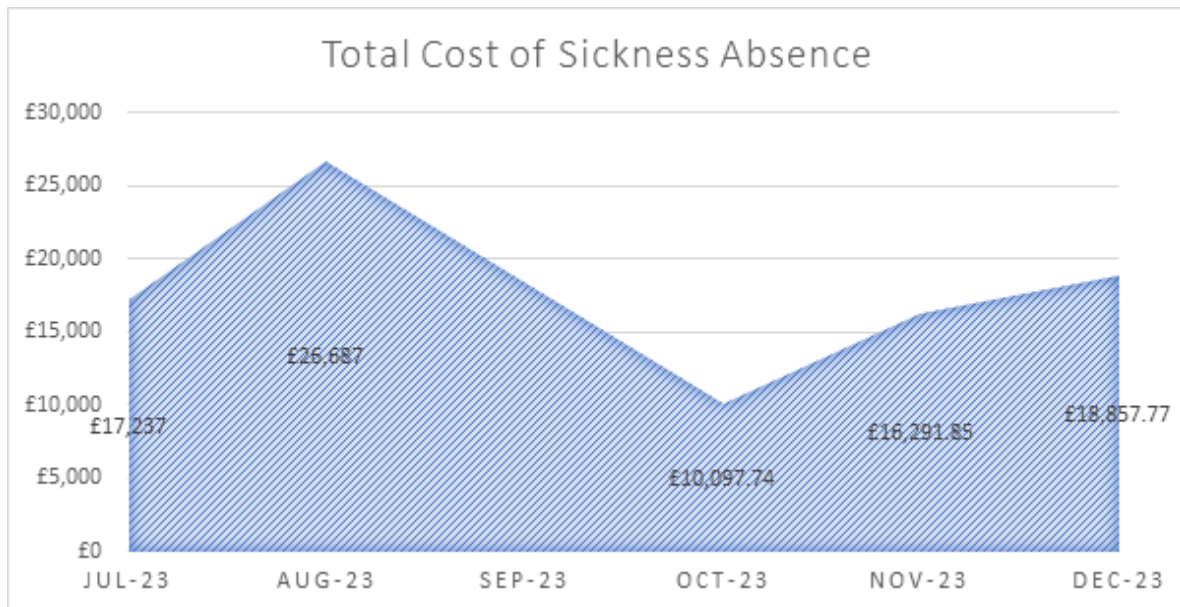
8. **Table 2** below shows comparison data for sickness levels and associated costs.

Month	Total number of days lost to sickness absence	Sick days per FTE	Average duration of sickness period	Total cost of sickness absence
October 2022	233.5	1.5	5.4	£22,353
November 2022	157	1	5	£15,253
December 2022	241	1	5.4	£25,266
July 2023	155	0.96	6.35	£17,237
August 2023	255	1.5	7.4	£26,687
September 2023	Excluded due to trial starting part way through September			
October 2023	101	0.6	4.81	£10,098
November 2023	162	0.93	5	£16,292
December 2023	182	1.05	5.35	£18,858

Graph 1: Total number of days lost to sickness absence. The graph shows the figure stood at 155 in July 2023, 255 at August, 101 in October, 162 at November and 182 in December.



Graph 2: Total cost of sickness absence. The graph shows the figure stood at £17,237 in July 2023, £26,687 in August, £10,097 in October, £16,291 in November and £18,857 in December.



Appendix E - Performance data on Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service (GCSWS) trial

What was the experience of the trial and what was the key learning?

1. There were two parts to the trial: an eleven-month planning period (October 2022 – September 2023) and the trial itself (September 2023 – December 2023.)
GCSWS spent the first part of the trial working through a route optimisation exercise, to make informed decisions on the most efficient way of delivering new routes that would future proof waste collections, increase wellbeing and recruitment and retention whilst simplifying the service for residents.
2. Collection day changes were made to 79% of households across the Greater Cambridge area. (This compares with the previous route optimisation exercise conducted in February 2017 when 82% of households were affected).
3. As with the changes in 2017, clerical lists of bin store codes were checked with managing agents and provided to crews, temporary hire vehicles were secured to manage potential disruptions whilst new collection rounds became firmly embedded. An external contact centre provided additional support for six weeks to ensure that residents enquiries were dealt with in a timely way.
4. Taking account of lessons learned from the previous route optimisation exercise, crews were engaged to review proposed rounds and provide feedback. Where rounds looked heavy, these were tested and where necessary corrected. Pre-emptive collections were conducted in locations where residents would experience extended collection waiting times due to the change in day or week or both.
5. Overall, the aim was to create compact rounds that improved and maximised productivity.
6. Engaging specialist consultants (ISL), the Service developed a Geographical Information System based simulation model to reflect the existing five-day week (10-day collection cycle), which was verified using data collated by existing vehicles. The “As-is” model was then used to develop the optimised four-day week collection scenarios (8-day collection cycle).
7. This design approach and the theoretical simulation models showed that the total mileage travelled by the vehicles on the five-day week cycle was 19,916 miles; whilst vehicles would travel 19,636 miles under the four-day week cycle. The four-day week cycle also included capacity for growth that occurred during the planning stages and also future housing growth, up to a total of 4,000 properties over two years.
8. Refuse and recycling routes were optimised to enable the crews to collect more waste containers in the working day - this has reduced the amount of travel time and increased tonnages collected on second loads, resulting in a reduction in overall travel. Crews are averaging more collections per day.
9. New collection zones have been created to enable 70% of the crews to return for their own missed bins, if any. This approach aims to encourage crews to complete rounds and ultimately reduce the number of bins missed in the first place.

10. Refuse (black) and recycling (blue) bins are now collected by the same crews on alternate weeks. This “mirroring” approach has enabled crews to learn new routes quickly. It has reduced the number of bin store keys needed and meant that crews have got to grips with bin store codes and assisted collection locations more readily.
11. Prior to the trial, the Service operated 320 domestic collection rounds (3 waste streams) over a 2-week / 10-day cycle using 32 vehicles, with each vehicle collecting an average of 1,123 containers per day.
12. Since the trial began, the Service has operated 288 domestic collection rounds (3 waste streams) over a 2-week / 8-day cycle using 36 vehicles, with each vehicle collecting an average of 1,248 containers per day.
13. GCSWS collects a total of 359,307 domestic waste containers. **Table 1** below summarises the number of containers collected, and vehicles utilised pre-trial and post-trial.

GCSWS collects 359,307 domestic containers (all waste streams)			
Number of Collection days	Number of collection rounds	Number of vehicles	Average number of containers collected per round
Five-day week (pre-trial)	320	32	1,123
Four-day week (trial)	288	36	1,248

Table 1: Domestic collections summary

14. Organic routes have been optimised to reduce the number of annualised hours¹ and overtime required to cover seasonal highs in the summer months. This has enabled the service to save three hours per week per employee on an organic round which is a 60% reduction.

Residents' Communications

15. Over a four-week period leading up to the go-live date, GCSWS communicated changes to residents using digital channels and print materials.
16. A key piece of communication was a tailored letter to each household that was affected (90,000). This detailed their change (whether change of day, change of order/sequence, or both) and

¹ Annualised hours: Under five-day week arrangements operational crews (drivers and loaders) on the organic (green) waste collection rounds, work five additional hours during the week (between April and October) to meet the demands of the service at these peak seasonal times, and then accrue the hours as annual leave which they then take in the winter months (December to March) when the service transitions to monthly organic waste collections, ie the crews work for two weeks, then have two weeks off as leave.

provided an eight-week collection calendar on the reverse of the letter and supporting Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

17. Dedicated webpages also provided FAQs, an online calendar, and an explanation of the changes.
18. Other communication avenues included regular social media posts, lamp post signs, poster boards, press releases and a flyer drop.
19. Prior to go-live Business Support teams and Contact Centres were provided with all necessary information to answer queries.

Performance

20. The Council's usual suite of key performance indicators (KPIs) is the first measure used to assess how well the trial is going. A successful trial would show that performance across the KPIs has been maintained.
21. The key performance indicators being monitored are:
 - a. % of bins collected as scheduled
 - b. % of waste recycled and composted

In addition, we have also monitored levels of public contact, complaints, and compliments to the waste service.

22. **Table 2** below shows that recycling performance is on par with the same three-month period in the previous year (2022) allowing for natural fluctuations e.g the quantity of garden waste collected fell in October and November.
Whilst the performance is largely due to residents' recycling, reuse, and composting (i.e., overall household waste management) practices, the inference is that the change in collection days has not negatively impacted behaviour.

Monthly Recycling Rate	August	September	October	November	End of year/ Year to date
2022	47.7%	49.8%	50.5%	50.8%	48.8% EOY
2023	54.0%	51.7%	49.2%	49.3%	51.7% YTD

Table 2: % of waste recycled and composted. (Target for end of year is 52%)

23. **Table 3** below shows that we have been able to meet our target of 99.7% of bins collected on time, and that the performance is comparable to the same period in the previous year (2022.)
The average collection rate across September, October and November 2022 was **99.63%**.

For the same period in 2023 the average collection rate was **99.76%**.

Monthly Bins collected on schedule	September 2022	October 2022	November 2022
% collected on schedule	99.61%	99.65%	99.64%
	September 2023 Month 1 of trial	October 2023 Month 2 of trial	November 2023 Month 3 of trial
% collected on schedule	99.79%	99.72%	99.78%

Table 3: % of bins collected on time. (Target is 99.7%)

Performance in 2017 (bins collected on time)

24. Following the 2017 route optimisation exercise service disruption was considerably higher (based on level of missed bins) and for six months following the change. The number of bins collected on schedule was typically between 96-98%.

Tonnages, Mileage, and fuel usage

25. Due to seasonal trends, temporary transitional changes, and housing growth, tonnages, mileage and fuel consumption data will require a longer monitoring period before evaluation can be completed and reported on.

Environment Operations Team (services for SCDC only)

26. The Awarded Watercourses, Envirocrime and Streets teams have all adopted the four-day week working pattern effectively.
27. For the Watercourses team, vital service provision for flooding and running of the pumping station remain in place 24 hours per day over seven days. The Watercourses team are on schedule with their annual seasonal works, but exceptionally wet weather conditions have required significant levels of response to flooding and maintaining of infrastructure due to continual high-water levels.
28. Using modern technologies, an aerial drone has been used to assist with surveying watercourses and identify maintenance requirements as well as a new program of works that provides single visit solutions. This approach has enabled the team to maintain and sustain the program of watercourses surveys and inspections. They have also been able to deliver a significant increase from eight inspections in the period 18th Sept – 18th Dec 2022 to 22 inspections for the same period during 2023.

29. Streets service levels are being monitored and maintained using the Land Audit Management System (LAMS) provided by the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE). LAMS is designed to monitor street cleansing levels and measure the quality of service delivery.
30. LAMS has also been used in the streets service to monitor service standards and demands, enabling resources to be targeted more effectively and proactively. The team has maintained the required level of site surveys and inspections under the four-day week.

Health & Safety Key Performance Indicators

31. As part of the Health and Safety Executives plan, 'do, check, act,' effective health and safety model, GCSWS has in place a monitoring and supervision programme to conduct service checks for operational staff. This monitoring program has a target of 65 service checks per quarter. For the trial period 18th September 2023 – 18th December 2023, 76 (116.9%) checks were carried out against the expected target of 65.

Commercial Collections

32. Routes were reconfigured using a staggered approach once domestic collection changes were introduced. Businesses are usually serviced over seven days, and it was recognised that some would continue to require this. The team therefore took a different approach to changing routes, redistributing most Friday collections throughout the remainder of the week. This has enabled the team to participate in the trial. Transition to a predominantly non-Friday working arrangement commenced on 16th October 2023.

Customer services

33. As with the previous route optimisation exercise in 2017, GCSWS outsourced telephone calls to an external contact centre for six weeks. This was to ensure that residents were able to get through on phones where they were uncertain about their new collection arrangements or were concerned that their bin had been missed.
34. As can be seen at **Appendix F**, call volumes were low throughout the six-week period. The launch of new routes coincided with renewals for green bin permits and most calls were business as usual calls from residents wanting to renew that service or requesting additional bins.
35. **Appendix F** also highlights that call volumes were higher in 2017. It should also be noted that in 2017 the external contact centre only managed calls for SCDC, Cambridge City Contact Centre managed their own calls and there are no records held for those call volumes. Therefore, the rate of calls relating to the changes is significantly lower than in 2017.
36. The level of complaints and compliments can be seen at **Appendix G**. Complaints received in the 12-week period following collection changes are comparable with those from the previous quarter. Some complaints related to unavoidable operational issues such as roads or bins being inaccessible due to roadworks or parked cars.

A slight increase in repeat missed bins was noted, primarily attributed to crews being unfamiliar with new rounds. This decreased during the second half of the trial period as collection round knowledge improved.

While there were no official complaints specifically about route optimisation, there were complaints relating to issues stemming from the changes, for example, change of collection times or change of crews.

Recruitment and agency staff financial implications

37. It is expected that improved recruitment due to the adoption of a four-day week will in time deliver savings by reducing GCSWS reliance on agency staff. However, following the launch of new routes, GCSWS employed temporary additional agency staff to manage changes efficiently whilst new routes embedded. Staff were tasked with making additional pre-emptive collections to reduce the number of residents experiencing extended waiting times, and to operate temporary additional vehicles to ensure any missed bins were collected promptly. This is common practice where additional workloads are temporary as is the case after a route optimisation exercise. It is therefore too early to understand if the four-day week is reducing the reliance GCSWS has on agency staff.
38. GCSWS has been running staff recruitment and retention schemes for two years. The rationale for the schemes was to overcome the acute driver shortages due to a backlog of HGV driving tests (post Covid) and the much higher cost of living in and around Cambridge (which was unattractive to the few drivers that were in the market). We have now been able to attract drivers more readily and retain them, and this has enabled the service to cancel the schemes and start to realise savings from doing so. The costs for the two schemes in 2022/23 totalled £110,900.
39. **Table 4** below shows the costs for the past two years of running the recruitment and retention schemes which have now ceased.
40. It is recommended that recruitment and retention rates continue to be monitored over the next 12 months so that the position can be fully established and reported on once more data is available.

Payments up to	Scheme	Total paid
31/03/2022	Retention Payment	£21,800
31/03/2022	Golden Hello	£7,500
31/03/2023	Retention Payment	£33,900
31/03/2023	Golden Hello	£13,150
31/10/2023	Retention Payment	£27,050
31/10/2023	Golden Hello	£7,500
	Total	£110,900

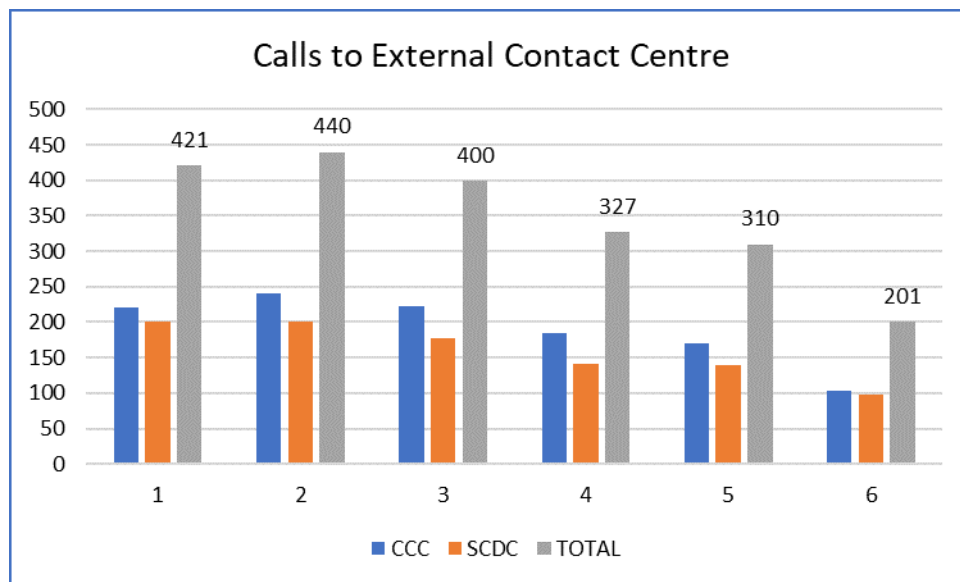
Table 4: Recruitment and retention scheme costs 2022/23

Appendix F - Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service customer service data - 18 September to 10 November 2023

1. Total number of calls to external contact centre over six-week period

Greater Cambridge Shared Waste outsourced telephone calls to an external contact centre for a period of six weeks for residents in SCDC and Cambridge City.

The graph shows that there were 421 calls made to the external contact centre in week one, 440 in week two, 400 in week three, 327 in week four, 310 in week five and 201 in week six.



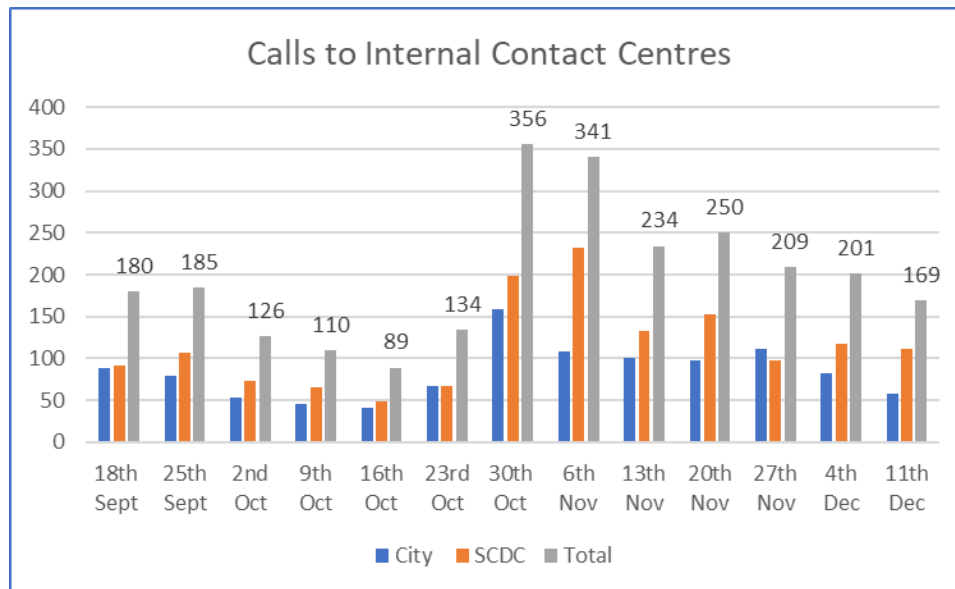
2. Total number of calls to internal contact centres over three months following route optimisation

Both internal contact centres continued to field some calls where for example customers selected incorrect service options or had multiple service enquiries.

The graph shows that there were:

- 180 calls to internal contact centres made during the week commencing 18 September.
- 185 calls to internal contact centres made during the week commencing 25 September.
- 126 calls to internal contact centres made during the week commencing 2 October.
- 110 calls to internal contact centres made during the week commencing 9 October.
- 89 calls to internal contact centres made during the week commencing 16 October.
- 134 calls to internal contact centres made during the week commencing 23 October.
- 356 calls to internal contact centres made during the week commencing 30 October.
- 341 calls to internal contact centres made during the week commencing 6 November.
- 234 calls to internal contact centres made during the week commencing 13 November.
- 250 calls to internal contact centres made during the week commencing 20 November.

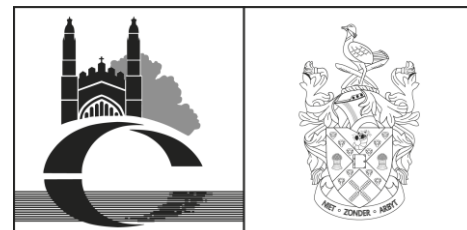
- 209 calls to internal contact centres made during the week commencing 27 November.
- 201 calls to internal contact centres made during the week commencing 4 December.
- 169 calls to internal contact centres made during the week commencing 11 December.



3. Total number of calls and emails received – all channels.

Calls and emails were managed by internal and external contact centres, and the Business Support team. The percentage of overall enquiries that related to route optimisation changes was **3.36%**.

All enquiries (Week beginning 18 September up to 15 December 2023)					
Week Beginning	Total calls to External Contact Centre	Total calls Internal Contact Centres	Total Calls to Business Support team	Total emails to Business Support Team	Total Combined Calls & Emails
18th Sept	421	180	31	1361	1993
25th Sept	440	185	42	1427	2094
2nd Oct	400	126	41	1228	1795
9th Oct	327	110	35	1171	1643
16th Oct	310	89	21	1131	1551
23rd Oct	201	134	23	964	1322
30th Oct	0	356	45	886	1287
6th Nov	0	341	46	741	1128



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13th Nov	0	234	15	466	715
20th Nov	0	250	25	479	754
27th Nov	0	209	25	404	638
4th Dec	0	201	28	398	627
11th Dec	0	169	22	348	539
Total	2099	2584	399	11004	16086

4. External contact centre call summary (nature of calls)

External Contact Centre - End of Campaign Outcomes	SCDC	CCC
Bin Not Collected - Info Provided	82	130
Bin Not Collected - Form Completed	299	264
Bin Collection Change Enquiry - Info Provided	19	24
Bin Collection Change Enquiry - Form Completed	15	17
Waste Service Issue - Info Provided	0	0
Waste Service Issue - Form Completed	118	112
Other Waste Enquiries/Requests - Info Provided	0	0
Other Waste Enquiries/Requests - Form Completed	227	455
All Other Services - Info Provided	9	9
All Other Services - Call Transferred	81	27
Unable to Access Website - Email Sent	4	9
Call Dropped	29	39
Declined to Proceed	40	74
Wrong Number	14	2
Total	937	1162

5. Issues referred to the Business Support team included:

- Collection day queries
- Online calendar issues
- Collection point issues
- Green bin permits – new, cancellations & payments
- Additional bin requests
- Bulky collections – new & payments
- Crew notifications ‘Not Out’, ‘contaminated’, ‘Overweight’

6. Shared Waste Customer services call comparison data (27 February – 7 April 2017)

During the previous route optimisation exercise in 2017, the external contact centre only managed calls for SCDC. There are no records for number of direct calls or emails received by the Business Support Team during that period. Cambridge City Contact Centre managed their own calls and there are no records held for those call volumes.

The rate of calls relating to the route optimisation is considerably lower than previously, especially when considering Cambridge City and Business Support calls are not included in the 2017 figures.

Call breakdowns (27 February - 7 April 2017)			
Week	Total Calls to External Contact Centre	Total Calls to SCDC Contact Centre	Total Calls
1	383	360	743
2	414	401	815
3	291	322	613
4	231	293	524
5	0	509	509
6	0	567	567
Total	1319	2452	3771

Comparison of Data – route optimisation calls (2017 v 2023)		
Week	Total Calls to External & Internal Contact Centre (SCDC) 2017	Total Calls to External & Internal Contact Centres 2023
1	743	601
2	815	625
3	613	526
4	524	437
5	509	399
6	567	335
Total	3771	2923

Appendix G - Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service official complaints and compliments data - 18 September to November 2023

1. Corporate complaints reporting methodology – Cambridge City / SCDC

SCDC and Cambridge City quarterly corporate complaints reporting methodology differs – Cambridge City report on 'responded to within target' and SCDC report on 'responses recorded and within target.' Stage 1 Complaints response target = 10 working days and Stage 2 Complaints response target = 20 working days.

% of complaints responded to within target	% responses recorded and within target
Cambridge City = 93%	SCDC = 89%

2. Total Shared Waste Official Complaints for 18 September – 15 December 2023

Cambridge City	31
South Cambs	29
Total	60

There were no official complaints received during this period that related to the route changes.

Several complaints were raised regarding the policy, including issues such as collection times, contaminated bins, and communal bins.

Complaints were registered when residents experienced recurring missed bin collections, primarily attributed to discrepancies in information between the operational system and the crew, such as collection point details. These were long term system errors that the changes highlighted rather than new issues attributable to the change.

The timeframe from September 18 to December 15 coincides with two quarterly reporting periods. When comparing the data with the preceding quarter (Q3), there was an increase of two complaints received by shared waste services this year.

3. Previous Complaints by Quarter

	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
	1- Oct - 31 Dec 22	1 Jan - 31 Mar 23	1 April - 31 June 23	1 July - 31 Sept 23	1 Oct - 31 Dec 23
CC	30	35	32	57	32
SCDC	30	24	21	21	30
Total	60	59	53	78	62

4. Compliments

A total of twelve crew compliments were received from residents. This is in keeping with the number of compliments the service usually receives.

Some examples of compliments received include:

Cambridge City 'I had a lovely gentlemen call in to say that he and his wife are new to the assisted collections and his bins were collected today, and he is very happy and pleased and just wanted to let us know.

Cambridge City - 'This morning I ordered another green wheelie bin. Within two hours it was delivered. I can't thank you enough for such amazing service and would like to pass on my thanks to your team.'

SCDC - 'I wanted to thank you for coming back to empty our green bin after it was missed on last week's collection. I am aware that the proportion of my council tax bill that is used for bin collection is tiny, so this is a service that is very much appreciated, and I am grateful for - Very proud of the service provided by South Cambs DC.

SCDC – 'Once again, thank you for such prompt and efficient action. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank your department for a generally great service; it's so important for our health that refuse is disposed of appropriately and I really appreciate the collection service.

Agenda Item 6



**South
Cambridgeshire**
District Council

Report to:	Employment and Staffing Committee, 29 th February 2024
Lead Cabinet Member:	Cllr John Williams
Lead Officer:	Jeff Mambery

People Recruitment, Retention and Absence Data – 1st October 2023 to 31st December 2023 (Q3)

Executive Summary

1. Monitoring of absence levels supports the People team's approach to colleagues' wellbeing. Review of recruitment and turnover information is critical to ensure that the Council is aware of risk areas. This may be in resourcing and delivering services to the public. Following a restructure, the HR Team is now known as the People Team and the HR Advisors have been renamed People Partners with amended work responsibilities. The People Partners have reviewed the data in this report to inform future policies and highlight areas where early intervention may be needed.

Key Decision

1. No

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the committee note the report and provide feedback to officers on any additional data that members would find useful in order to ensure appropriate oversight of recruitment, retention and absence at the Council.

Reasons for Recommendations

3. It is important that members are aware of ongoing recruitment, retention and absence trends and data, and what actions the Council is taking to improve/support these.

Details

4. Recruitment and Turnover

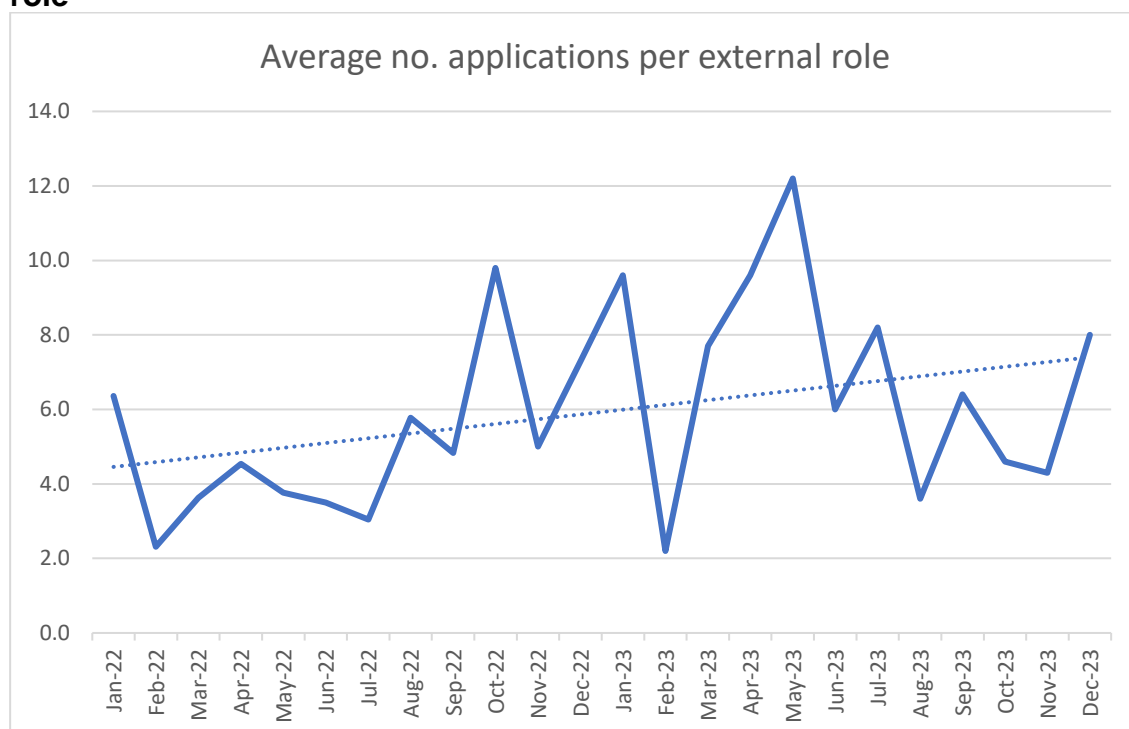
5. Within Q3 (October – December 2023) we have seen steady recruitment, with a decrease in adverts and applications within the month of December – this is typical of this time of year due to high levels of annual leave. We received an average of 3.6 applications per advert within this period.

6. Chart 1 – Q3 Recruitment Activity

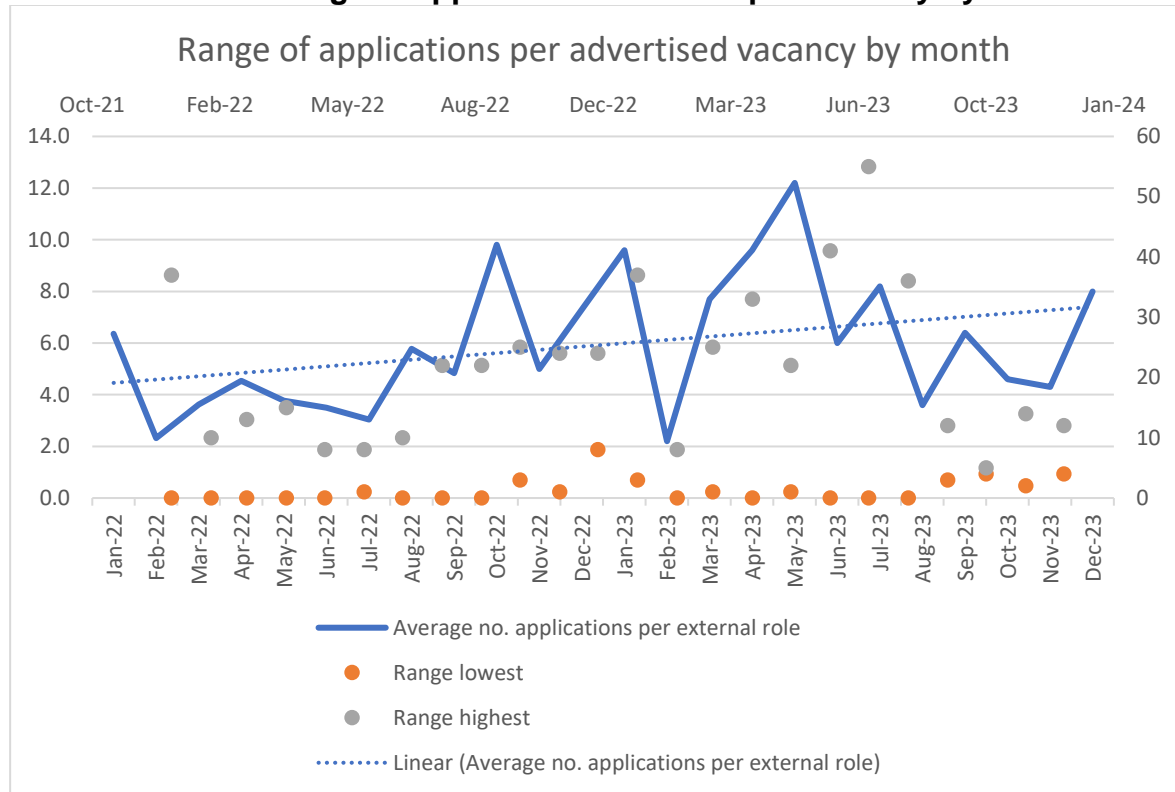
Quarter	Month	Total no. roles advertised	Total no. roles advertised externally	No. applications for roles advertised externally	Average no. applications per external role	Range in number of applicants (minimum – maximum)
Q4 21/22	Jan 2022	16	14	89	6.4	0 – 37
	Feb 2022	21	19	44	2.3	0 – 10
	Mar 2022	33	16	58	3.6	0 – 13
Q1 22/23	Apr 2022	17	13	59	4.5	0 – 15
	May 2022	15	13	49	3.8	0 – 8
	Jun 2022	16	10	35	3.5	1 – 8
Q2 22/23	Jul 2022	26	25	76	3.0	0 – 10
	Aug 2022	24	18	104	5.8	0 – 22
	Sep 2022	17	12	58	4.8	0 – 22
Q3 22/23	Oct 2022	6	5	49	9.8	3 - 25
	Nov 2022	26	18	90	5.0	1 - 24
	Dec 2022	18	12	87	7.3	8 - 24
Q4 22/23	Jan 2023	18	9	86	9.6	3 - 37
	Feb 2023	14	6	13	2.2	0 - 8
	Mar 2023	27	22	169	7.7	1 - 25
Q1 23/24	Apr 2023	14	9	86	9.6	0 - 33

	May 2023	15	9	110	12.2	1 - 22
	Jun 2023	24	16	96	6	0 - 41
Q2 23/24	Jul 2023	24	18	147	8.2	0 - 55
	Aug 2023	19	18	64	3.6	0 - 36
	Sep 2023	8	7	45	6.4	3 - 12
Q3 23/24	Oct 2023	14	8	37	4.6	4 - 5
	Nov 2023	20	16	69	4.3	2 - 14
	Dec 2023	1	2	16	8	4 - 12

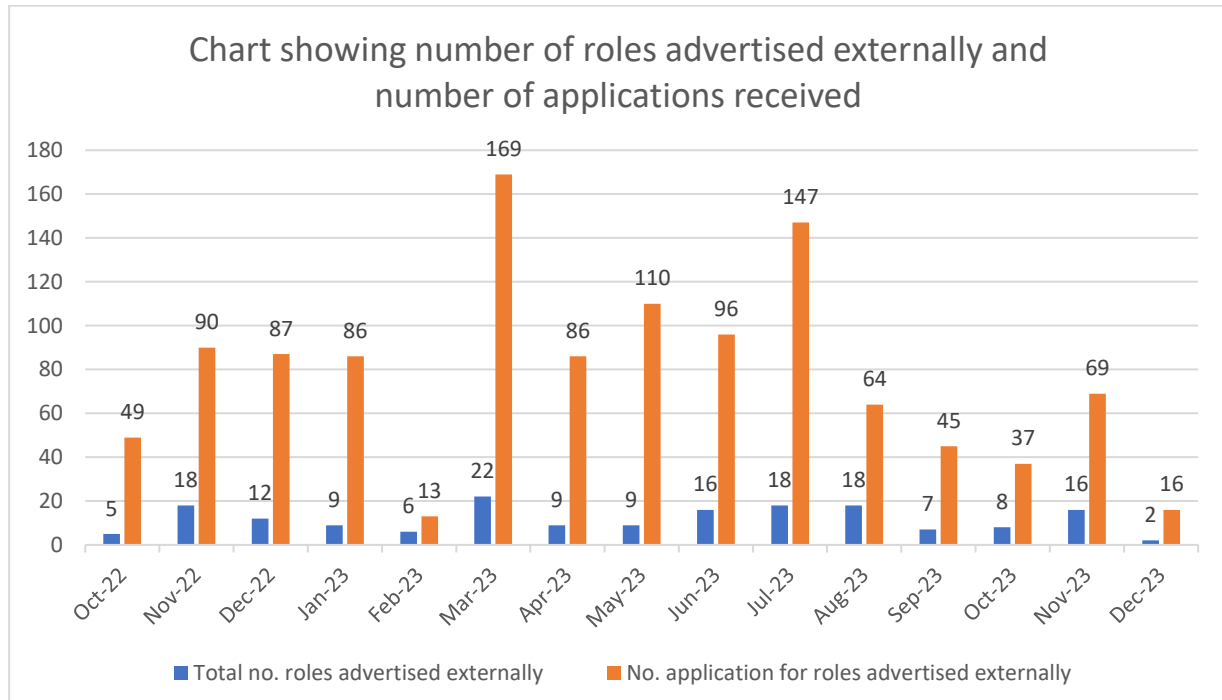
7. Column 3 of the table above (Total no. roles advertised) includes roles that are only advertised internally or roles that are subject to restricted competition following a restructure. In these situations, we typically only see small numbers of applications, often only one per role, so have excluded these roles from the following columns and the chart below.
8. We have seen a steady increase in the average number of applications received per role, and a decrease in the number of adverts that we haven't received any applications for.
9. **Chart 2 – Average number of applications received per externally advertised role**



9.1 Chart 2a - Range of applications received per vacancy by month.



10. Chart 3 – External adverts and applications



11. Although the increase in the number of applications received is generally across the board, for traditionally “hard to fill” posts – such as in planning and waste – it can sometimes still take more than one recruitment exercise to fill a vacancy.

12. In July 2023 we were unable to fill 1 Planning Apprentice post, 1 Planning Officer post, 2 Principal Planning Officer posts (including a 1-year contract), and a Team Leader post. All of these posts, except the apprentice role, were advertised and successfully recruited into in August and September 2023. In the shared waste service, we have previously struggled to recruit refuse loaders and refuse drivers, but in Q3 we successfully recruited 7 operatives, and currently only have 2 remaining vacant loader vacancies which we expect to fill in February 2024.
13. Another hard to fill role is that of business analysts, which are in demand across the UK. We were unable to recruit in December 2022 and March 2023, but did successfully recruit 3 Business Analysts to join our Transformation service in October 2023.
14. Of the unfulfilled roles since November 2022, 11 have been apprenticeship roles.

15.3 Month Post-induction Staff Survey

16. For the period 1st October to 31st December 2023 there were 23 new starters, 13 of whom completed the induction survey.
- a. 13 respondents rated their induction as 'good' or 'excellent'.
 - b. We received suggestions for improvements including more regular reviews of performance and more precise signposting of information.
 - c. 1 respondent rated their induction as 'average' and said they would have liked more information.
 - d. 10 out of 14 respondents said the 4-Day Week trial had impacted their decision to apply for a role at the Council, with 9 respondents saying the trial had had a positive impact on their wellbeing, 3 saying the trial had had no impact on them, and 1 respondent said it had had a negative impact due to the way their workload had been organised.
 - e. Commonly cited reasons for applying for roles at the Council include (in order of frequency mentioned) greater flexibility, health and wellbeing benefits, the opportunity for agile working, the ability to spend more time with family, feeling more relaxed and working more efficiently than they've had the opportunity to elsewhere.

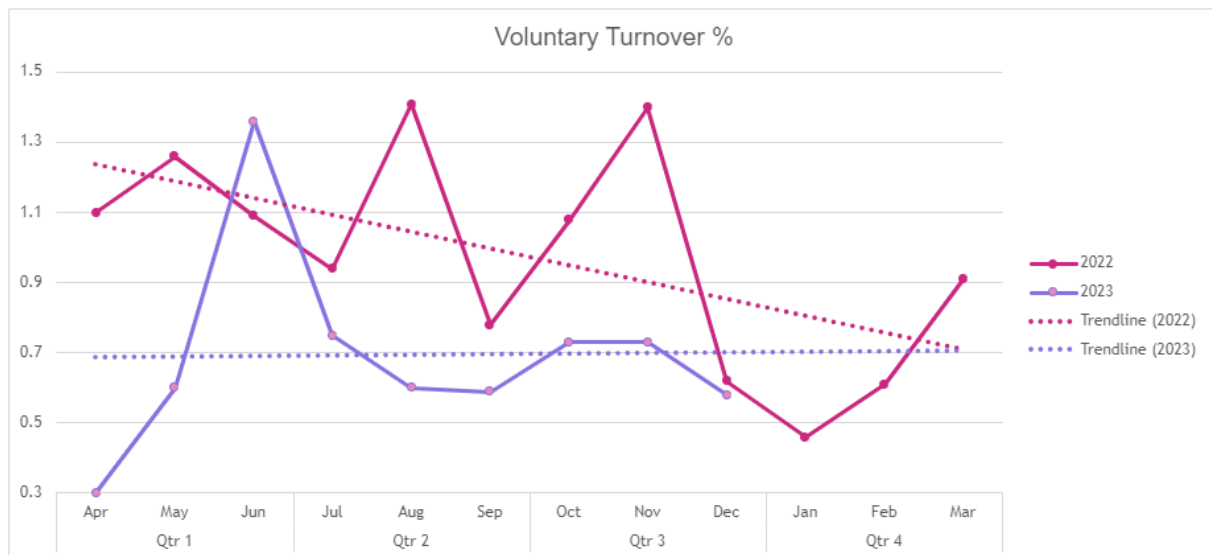
17. Induction and Onboarding

18. Following feedback from colleagues and a review of our induction process, we launched our new Corporate Induction programme on 29th November 2023. This is a half-day face-to-face session designed to warmly welcome new starters to the Council. We expect that this will be held ten times per year.
19. This includes sessions from the Chief Executive, Democratic Services, representatives from the Service Areas and the People Team. New starters learn about:
- the Council's services and the communities it serves.
 - engaging with members and our democratic processes.
 - our operating model and how we work within a network of other councils and partnerships, and within layers of government.

20. New starters can meet with colleagues face-to-face and start to build their internal network. Feedback so far has been very positive about the new induction programme.

21. Turnover Data

22. Chart 8 – Voluntary Turnover %



23. There were 14 voluntary leavers in this quarter. 11 employees completed the exit survey, and of these; - four employees accepted a new role with another organisation, two left due to having a career break, four retired and one left for personal health reasons.

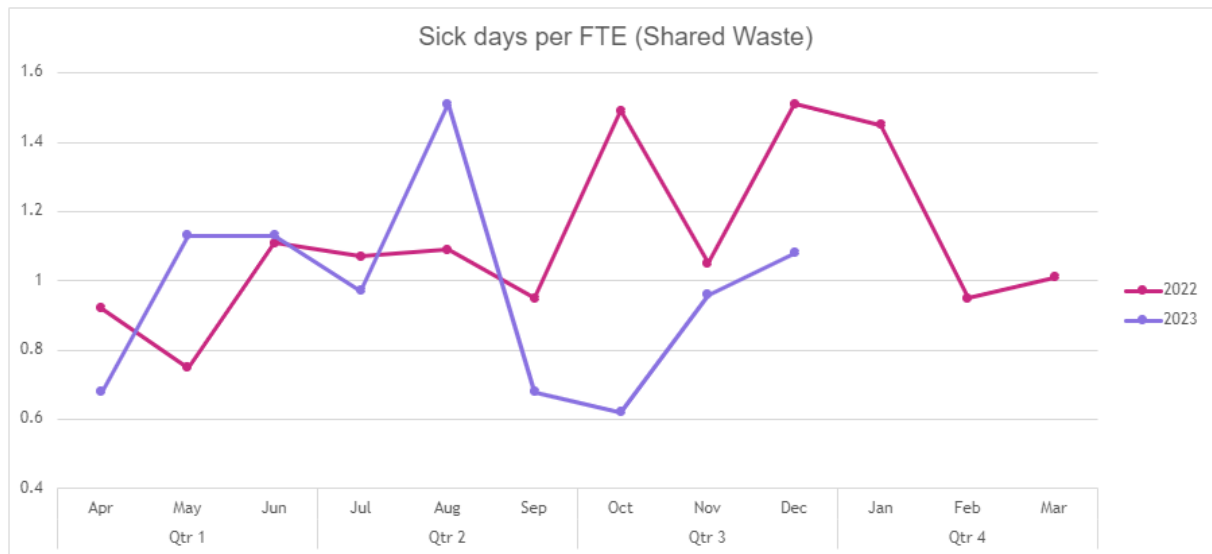
24. Exit interviews have taken place with six voluntary leavers. One of the leavers left due to a lack of career progression at the Council whilst another left due to job dissatisfaction arising from operational issues.

25. The People team encourages those leaving to share this information with their manager or allow us to send this to them for continuous improvement purposes. On this occasion three employees asked for the exit interview information to remain confidential.

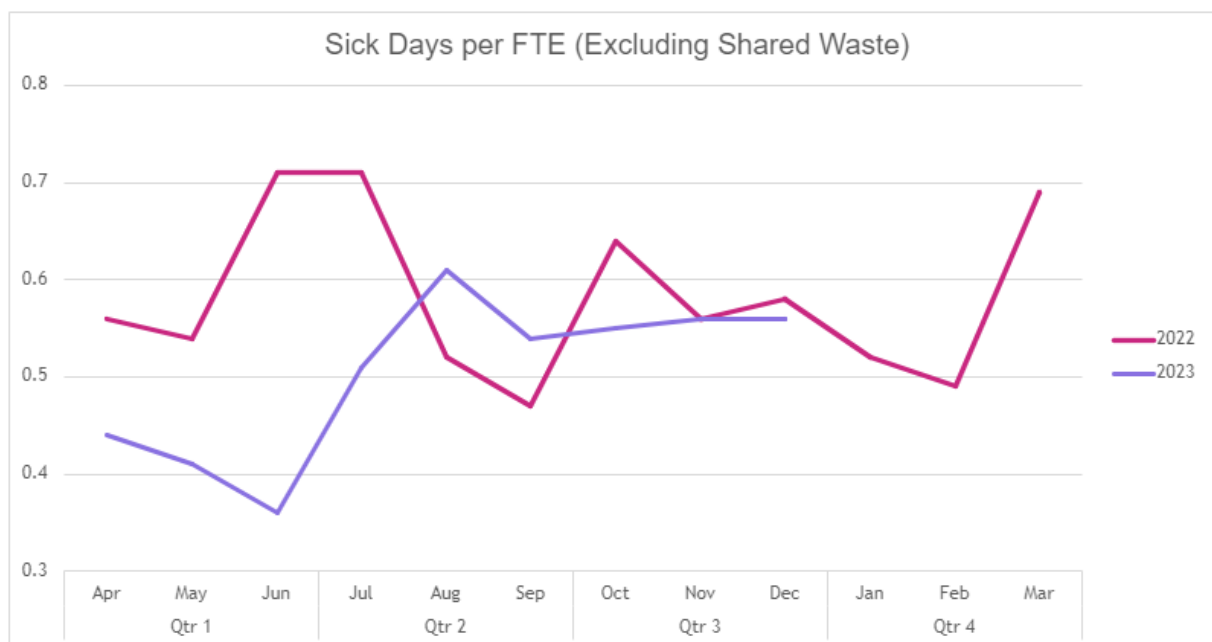
26. Sickness Absence Data

In considering this data, members should be aware that officers are now working 20% less hours as part of the 4-day week trial. There is therefore a possibility of people falling sick on their “non-working day” but not reporting this as sick. Although this does not impact on the cost of sickness reported below – or on the disruption to service caused by sickness absence – it should be taken into consideration on determining any improvement in officer wellbeing occasioned by the 4-day week trial.

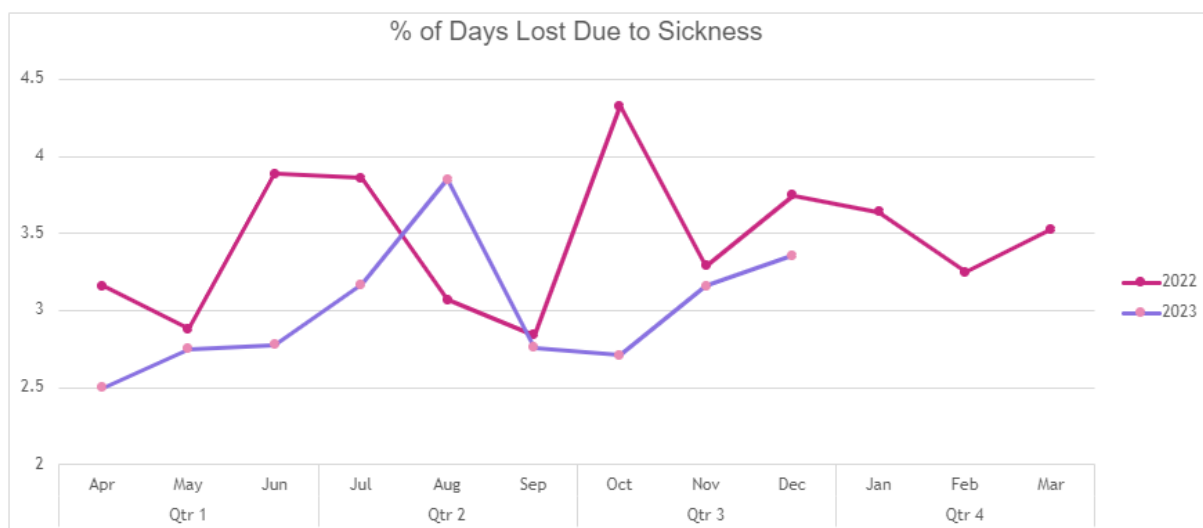
27. Chart 9 – Sick days per FTE (Shared Waste)



28. Chart 10 – Sick Days per FTE (Excluding Shared Waste)



29. Chart 11 – % of Days Lost Due to Sickness



30. Chart 12 – Cost of Days Lost Due to Sickness (£)



31. Within Q3 our sick days per FTE have remained steady across all areas excluding Shared Waste which has seen a rise during Q3. We do typically see an increase in sickness rates in the winter months, due to the cold weather and a rise in sickness bugs such as colds and flu. Our sickness rates and associated costs remain lower than in 2022.

Implications

Staffing

This report provides data about absence and recruitment both of which are directly relevant to staffing and the work of the Employment and Staffing Committee.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

A modern and caring Council

The review and response to these statistics helps us to inform policies and support measures for staff and to identify any improvement opportunities.

Background Papers

None

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