



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

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

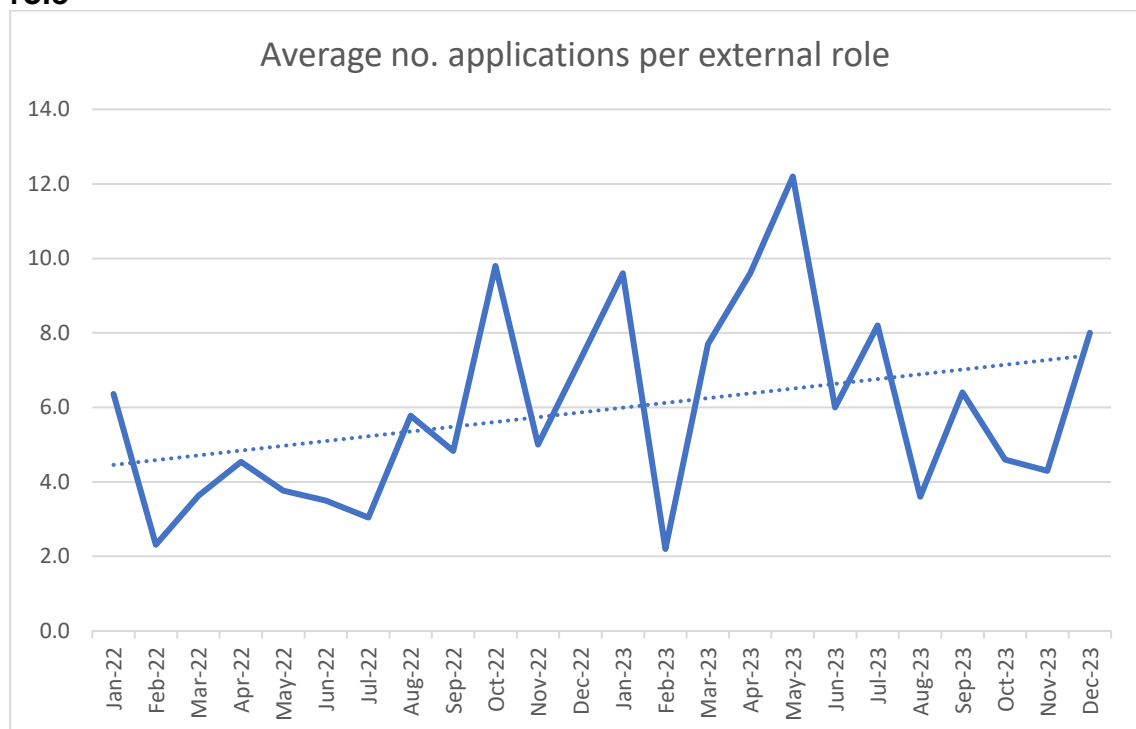
5. Within Q3 (October – December 2023) we have seen steady recruitment, with a decrease in adverts and applications within the month of December – this is typical of this time of year due to high levels of annual leave. We received an average of 3.6 applications per advert within this period.

6. Chart 1 – Q3 Recruitment Activity

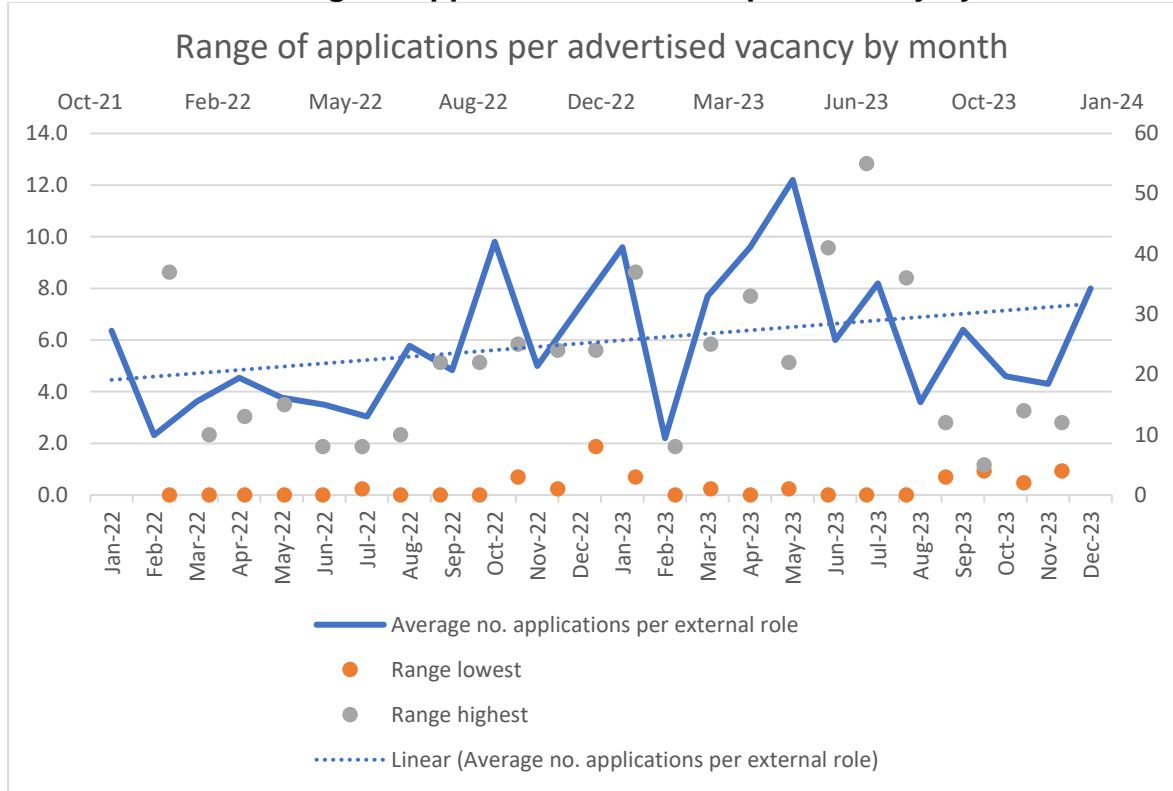
Quarter	Month	Total no. roles advertised	Total no. roles advertised externally	No. applications for roles advertised externally	Average no. applications per external role	Range in number of applicants (minimum – maximum)
Q4 21/22	Jan 2022	16	14	89	6.4	0 – 37
	Feb 2022	21	19	44	2.3	0 – 10
	Mar 2022	33	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

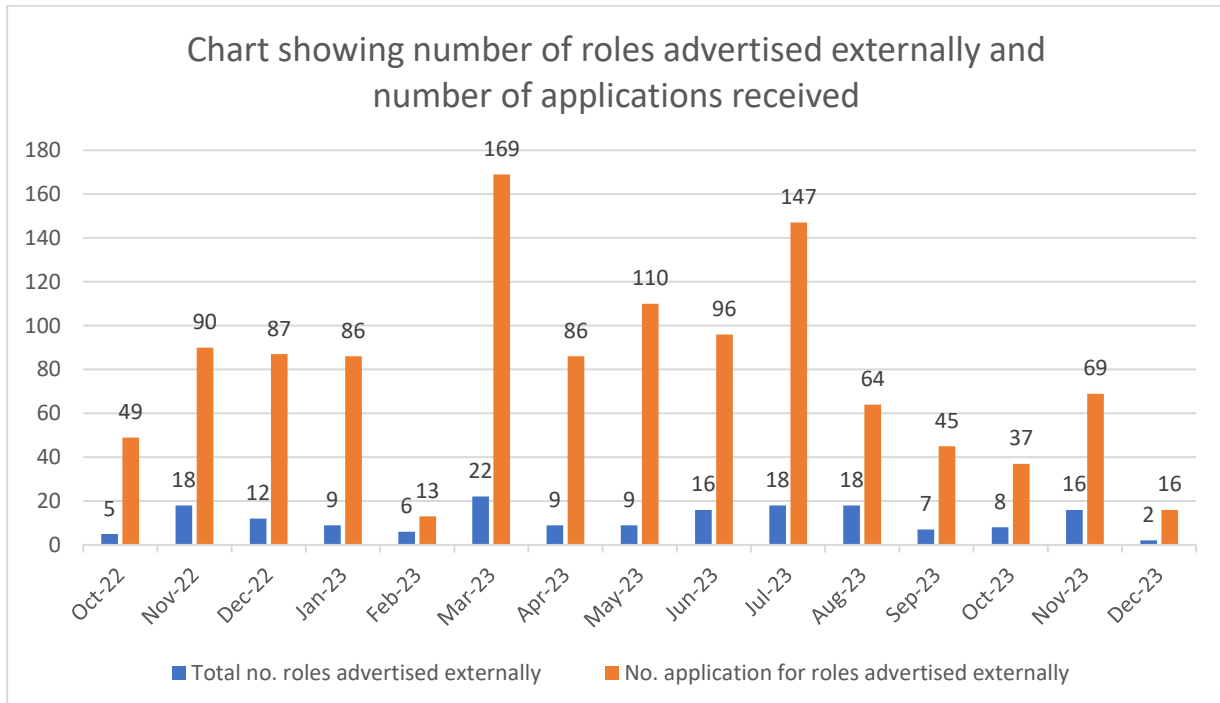
7. Column 3 of the table above (Total no. roles advertised) includes roles that are only advertised internally or roles that are subject to restricted competition following a restructure. In these situations, we typically only see small numbers of applications, often only one per role, so have excluded 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 readvertised 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.

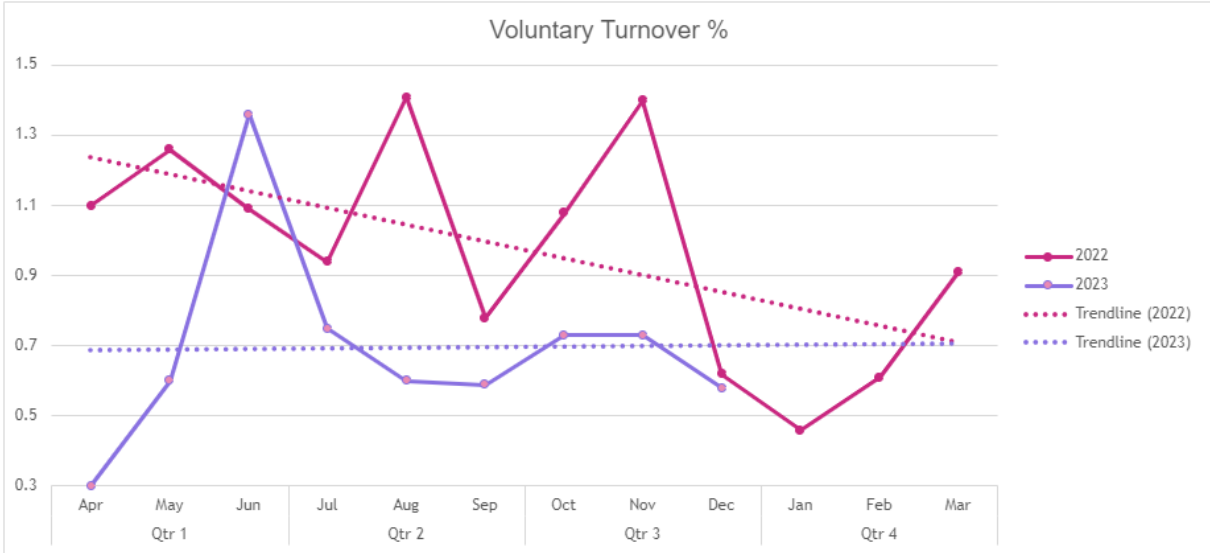
17. Induction and Onboarding

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.

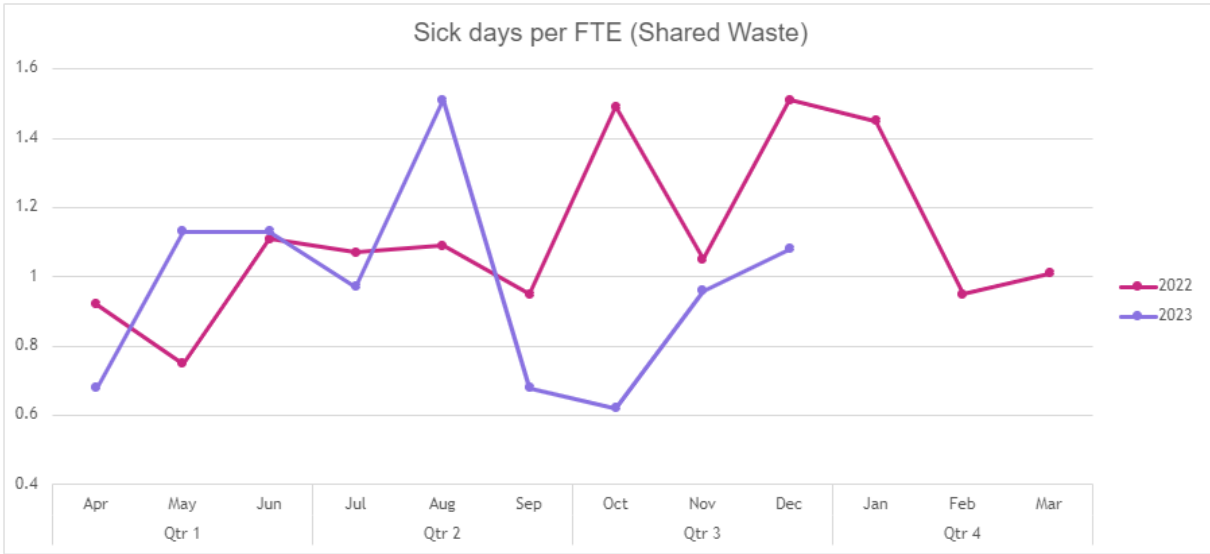
24. Exit interviews have taken place with six voluntary leavers. One of the leavers left due to a lack of career progression at the Council whilst another left due to job dissatisfaction arising from operational issues.

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.

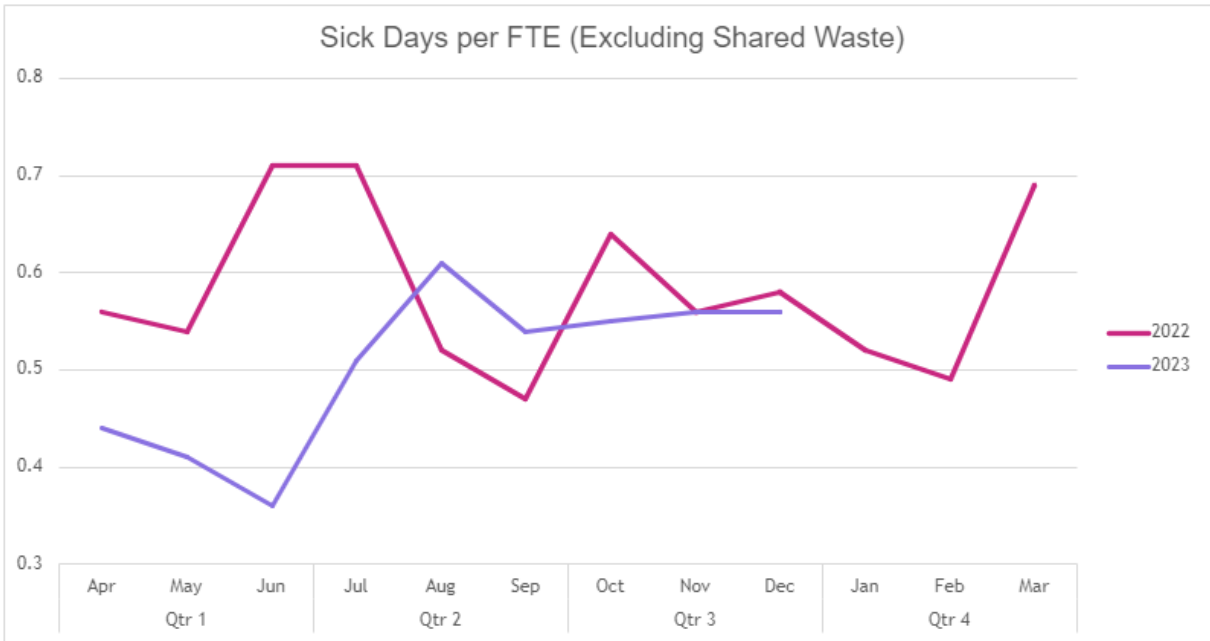
26. Sickness Absence Data

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.

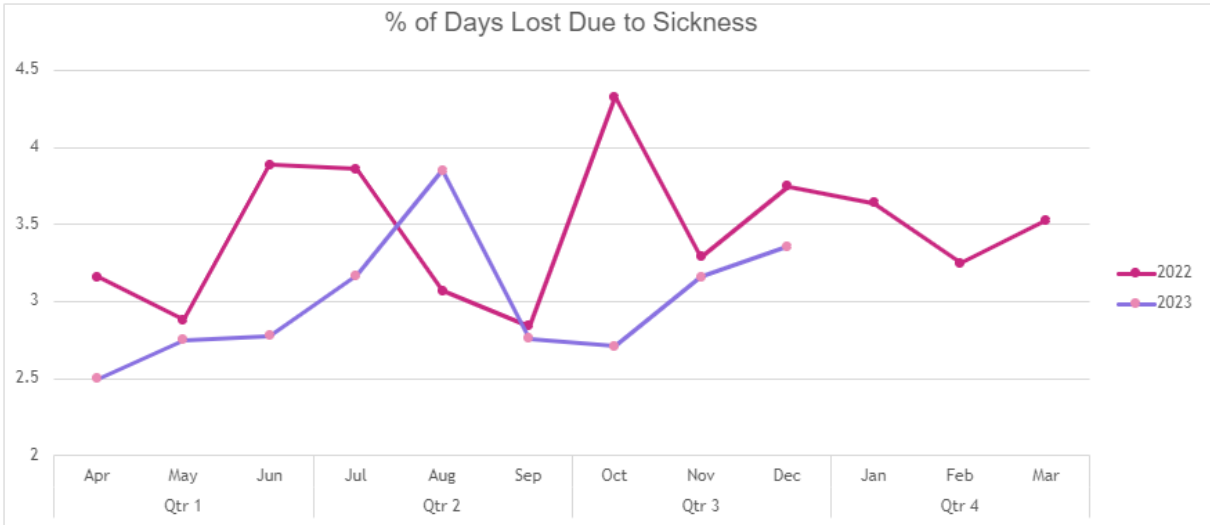
27. Chart 9 – Sick days per FTE (Shared Waste)



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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