

Workforce – Q3 2024/25

Leadership & Management		Indicator 2024/25	Q3 2024/25	Q2 2024/25
Leadership Stability	Percentage of Leadership Group positions filled by permanent WSCC employees (<i>vacant positions not included in calculation</i>)	On-going	G	A
		93%	93%	89%
	Rolling 12-month turnover percentage for permanent positions at HAY Grade (or equivalent) and above	On-going	G	G
		<11%	6.9%	6.5%
Resourcing & Talent		Indicator 2024/25	Q3 2024/25	Q2 2024/25
Employed workforce (Includes all staff directly employed by WSCC. Excludes casuals, agency, outside bodies, pensioners & partners)	Total Employed Headcount (total number of people employed over reporting period)	Not Applicable	6,746	6,742
	Employed Headcount (at the end of the reporting period)	Not Applicable	6,615	6,607
	Employed FTE (at the end of the reporting period)	Not Applicable	5,982	5,967
	Number of new Apprentice starters since the start of the financial year (excluding Schools)	End of Year	G	G
		113	119	87
Agency (Matrix)	Total contract spend with Matrix	Not Applicable	£3,477,949	£3,437,664
	Agency (Matrix) % of Employed workforce	Not Applicable	5.2%	5.4%
Staff Turnover	Rolling 12-month turnover rate	On-going	A	A
		Between 9% & 13%	8.6%	8.4%
Performance & Development		Indicator 2024/25	Q3 2024/25	Q2 2024/25
Performance	Percentage positive response to the Pulse Survey question: "I have regular meaningful conversations with my manager about my performance/wellbeing" [see Note 1 below]	On-going	G	A
		82%	82% (Sept 2024 survey)	79% (Sept 2023 Survey)
Learning & development	Percentage positive response to the question: "I have access to good L&D opportunities to enable me to be effective in my job" [see Note 2 below]	On-going	G	N/A
		78%	79% (Sept 2024 survey)	Question not asked in Sep 2023 Survey
	Staff induction completion rates	On-going	G	G
		93%	97%	98%

Wellbeing, Values & Ways of Working		Indicator 2024/25	Q3 2024/25	Q2 2024/25
Behaviours & Values	Percentage positive response to the Pulse Survey question: "I am treated with dignity and respect by my work colleagues"	On-going	A	G
		90%	89% (Sept 2024 survey)	90% (Sep 2023 Survey)
Ways of Working	Percentage positive response to the Pulse Survey question: "I am part of a supportive team where we regularly reflect on our successes and challenges enabling us to continuously improve"	On-going	G	A
		82%	83% (Sept 2024 survey)	81% (Sep 2023 Survey)
	Percentage positive response to the Pulse Survey question: "My ideas and opinions are valued and are used to help shape the way we work and our future planning"	On-going	A	A
		76%	73% (Sept 2024 survey)	74% (Sep 2023 Survey)
Level of sickness absence <i>(May retrospectively change due to late reporting of sickness)</i>	Rolling 12-month average number of calendar days lost due to sickness absence per FTE	On-going	A	A
		15 Calendar Days p.a.	16.1	16.1
	Number of calendar days lost due to short term sickness absence (less than 21 calendar days)	Not Applicable	8,213	6,275
	Top reason for short term absence (less than 21 calendar days)	Not Applicable	Respiratory, Cough, Cold, Flu	Respiratory, Cough, Cold, Flu
	Number of calendar days lost due to long term sickness absence (21 or more calendar days)	Not Applicable	17,412	16,464
	Top reason for long term absence (21 or more calendar days)	Not Applicable	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health
Diversity & Inclusion		Indicator 2024/25	Q3 2024/25	Q2 2024/25
Employee Disclosure Rate	Disclosure rate for self-declaration of an employee's: disability; sexual orientation; race/ethnicity; religion	End of Year	A	A
		65%	57.2%	57.0%
Health & Safety		Indicator 2024/25	Q3 2024/25	Q2 2024/25
RIDDOR Incidents <i>(Reported to HSE)</i>	RIDDOR incidents for Directorates and Services (excl. Schools)	Not Applicable	3	1
Accidents & Incidents <i>(Not reported to HSE)</i>	Total accidents & incidents for Directorates and Services (excl. Schools)	Not Applicable	149	158 <i>(revised from 153 reported in Q2)</i>

RAG Rating Key:

R Significant Risk **A** At Risk **G** On Track

Table Notes:

1. Figure for 'Percentage positive response to the Pulse Survey question: "I have regular meaningful conversations with my manager about my performance, wellbeing and support needs" is now the combined percentage positive response to two individual questions "I have regular meaningful conversations with my manager about my performance" and "I have regular meaningful conversations with my manager about my wellbeing".
2. Previous question "I have good opportunities to develop my skills and knowledge in line with my role and my aspirations" replaced with "I have access to good L&D opportunities to enable me to be effective in my job". Further details provided in the Workforce Summary Narrative.

Workforce Summary Narrative

1. Of the twelve KPIs with a RAG status indicator, this quarter, five are reported as Amber and seven are reported as Green. This compares to Q2's data, where there were seven Amber and five Green status KPIs, however one is now shown in the table above as not applicable – see Table Note 2.
2. Five of the KPIs are related to the staff Pulse Survey. The annual survey was undertaken in September 2024 and achieved a response rate of 55% with over 3,600 responses. The figures for the five KPIs have been updated to reflect the results of the survey and these figures will remain the same until Q3 next year when they will be updated with the 2025 survey results.
3. In summary, one KPI question has remained Amber; one has moved from Green to Amber; two have changed from Amber to Green; and one question has been replaced and is rated as Green. The results for the five KPI questions are:
 - The KPI question that has remained Amber is "**My ideas and opinions are valued and are used to help shape the way we work and our future planning**". The net positive score for this question in the latest survey is 73%. This is one percentage point lower than the previous survey (74% in September 2023) and three percentage points lower than the indicator level of 76%.
 - The KPI question that has changed from Green to Amber is "**I am treated with dignity and respect by my work colleagues**". The net positive score for this question is 89%, one percentage point lower than the last survey and one percentage point lower than the indicator, both of which are 90%.
 - The two KPI questions that have changed from Amber to Green are "**I have regular meaningful conversations with my manager about my performance/wellbeing**" and "**I am part of a supportive team where we regularly reflect on our successes and challenges enabling us to continuously improve**". In the redesigned survey for September 2024, the question was split into two, one asking "I have regular meaningful conversations with my manager about my performance"; and the other asking "I have regular meaningful conversations with my manager about my wellbeing". This change was made to provide greater clarity of the question(s) and thus achieve a better understanding of employee's opinion. The reported figure of 82%, is the combined net positive score for the two

individual questions and is the same figures as the indicator, so is rated as Green. The other question relating to being part of a supportive team, achieved a net positive score of 83%. This is two percentage points higher than the last survey in September 2023 (81%), and one percentage point higher than the indicator (82%).

- The new question is "**I have access to good Learning and Development opportunities to enable me to be effective in my job**". This replaces the previous question "I have good opportunities to develop my skills and knowledge in line with my role and my aspirations". This change has been made because the previous question was re-worded in the new survey to make it clearer. The question asked in the new survey was "I have good opportunities to develop in line with my aspirations". Whilst this provides the clarity desired, the emphasis moved away from the employee's current role and onto their future aspirations. By replacing the KPI with the new question, the relationship to the employee's job role is maintained and aligns well with the intention for the previously used question. The net positive score for this question is 79.

4. Of the remaining three KPIs have that have remained Amber:

- a. The **Rolling 12-month turnover rate** is 8.6% this quarter which means it remains below the indicator range (9%-13%). The figure was 8.4% in Q2. Like last quarter, an element of this fall in turnover percentage can be attributed to the 12-month rolling nature of the KPI. There may be other factors affecting the turnover rate, which is a long-term measure, and with two quarters falling outside of the indicator range, it is still too early to identify if this is a concern. The reason turnover has a range for the indicator is because there are both benefits and pressures associated with turnover. When turnover is within range there is a balance between new people bringing fresh thinking and maintaining organisational stability, plus budgetary pressures can be managed and better controlled e.g. recruitment costs. When turnover is high, there is a loss of experience and increased recruitment costs. When turnover is low, savings such as though achieved via vacancy factors are harder to realise. The turnover figures for the next two quarters will give a clearer picture on whether this is a developing trend.
- b. **Rolling 12-month average number of calendar days lost due to sickness absence per FTE**. The Q3 figure is 16.1 calendar days per FTE which is the same as Q2 and 1.1 calendar days higher than the on-going indicator level of 15. Further details on sickness absence, including a breakdown of sickness by Directorate, are provided later in this narrative.
- c. **Employee declaration rate for diversity data**. This KPI combines four Protected Characteristics: Disability; Ethnicity; Sexual Orientation; and Religion/Belief. The KPI shows the percentage of the workforce who have provided their data across all four of these Protected Characteristics. The Q3 figure has risen for the eighth consecutive quarter, from 57.0% in Q2 to 57.2% in Q3, to match the council's ambition to improve the declaration rate, the indicator for 2024/25 has been increased from 60% to 65%. This means that the gap between the new indicator and the Q3 figure is 7.8 percentage points. The declaration rate for the four individual Protected Characteristics is: 76% for Ethnic Origin; 67% for Disability; 65% for Sexual Orientation; and 58% for Religion/Belief (Q2: 76%, 67%, 65% and 58% respectively). The work in collaboration with Unison and staff led networks is

continuing, aiming to promote and encourage employees to complete or update their diversity data.

5. The KPI that has changed from Amber to Green is the **Percentage of Leadership Group positions filled by permanent WSCC employees**. The percentage has changed from 89% in Q2 to 93% in Q3. This update is the result of one member of the Leadership Group, previously contracted on a Partner contract, being appointed to the same position but now as a permanent employee. This change means the KPI is now rated as Green as the new figure matches the indicator level of 93%.
6. Last quarter the **Number of new Apprentice starters since the start of the financial year (excluding Schools)** was 87 and this has risen to 119 in Q3. This means the annual target indicator has been achieved and exceeded.
7. The **Staff induction completion rate** was 98% last quarter, and it has dropped by one percentage point to 97% in Q3, but four percentage points above the target indicator level of 93%. Induction completion remains strong across most directorates. Finance and Support Services and Fire and Rescue Services were the only directorates not to hit the target indicator of 93% (89% and 90% respectively). The induction process continues to be closely monitored with managers being reminded of their responsibilities on inducting new staff members.
8. **Employee Headcount** has remained stable since last quarter, with a marginal increase 6,607 in Q2 to 6,615 this quarter, a rise of 8. Employed FTE also rose marginally by 15 with 5,982 FTE in Q3 compared to 5,967 FTE in Q2. A breakdown of Employed Headcount figures for Directorates is provided in Table 1:

Table 1 – Employee Headcount by Directorate/Service

Organisation Level	Employee Headcount	
	Q3 2024/25	Q2 2024/25
West Sussex County Council	6,615	6,607
Adult Services & Health	1,316	1,319
↳ <i>Adult Services</i>	<i>1,232</i>	<i>1,233</i>
Children, Young People & Learning	2,358	2,335
↳ <i>Children & Family Services</i>	<i>1,479</i>	<i>1,478</i>
Chief Executive's Office	28	29
Finance & Support Services	283	286
Fire & Rescue Service	620	621
HR & Organisational Development	196	200
Law & Assurance	170	168
Place Services	1,644	1,649

9. There have been minimal changes in headcount across the organisation. The biggest change has been within Children, Young People and Learning where the headcount has increased by 23 (from 2,335 in Q2 to 2,358 in Q3). Also, recruitment has been successful in Property and Assets this quarter with some hard to fill roles successfully appointed.
10. The stability of Employee Headcount is an indicator that the workforce controls on recruitment are being effective.

11. The previous two quarters saw the **Total contract spend with Matrix** fall by just under £1m for each of the quarters. At £3.477m, the total contract spend in Q3 is broadly the same as spend in Q2 which was £3.437m. There has been slight rise in the **Agency (Matrix) percentage of Employed workforce** which was 5.2% in Q2 and is 5.4% in Q3.
12. As previously presented to the committee, a Task and Finish Group (TFG), led by the Director of HR and Organisational Development, is overseeing work aiming to stabilise and reduce **sickness absence** levels. The group has overseen detailed analysis of sickness absence data and trends with Directorate Leadership Teams, the development of action plans to reduce sickness absence in key areas, and regular monitoring of progress by directorate leadership teams.
13. Key actions taken to date have included the introduction of an improved Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Procedure, training of management teams in key areas on preventing and managing absence, focused HR support for longer term absences, and improvements in advice provided from Occupational Health.
14. Over the coming quarter, the TFG will ensure that interventions continue and will also deliver a review of the Sickness Absence Policy and the conclusion of work to commission line manager training on people management fundamentals to ensure causes of absence are identified and addressed as early as possible.
15. The TFG will also review the way absence data is reported, monitored, and analysed. The paragraphs below set out current absence levels and reasons, as well as an update on progress for reviewing absence data. An internal audit on policy compliance is planned to take place in the first quarter of 2025/26 which will inform future action planning by the Task and Finish Group.
16. The **total number of sickness absence calendar days** increased from 22,739 calendar days in Q2 to 25,625 in Q3, a rise of 2,886 calendar days. Q3 will typically increase from Q2 as there are usually higher levels of absence due to respiratory conditions, colds, and flu and this is reflected in this quarter.
17. In the same quarter last year, total sickness absence was 24,419 calendar days, so this year's Q3 figure is 1,206 higher than last year. When comparing absence from one year to another, the figures will be affected by changes to headcount. Total Employed Headcount in Q3 2023/24 was 6,434, compared to 6,746 in the current quarter.
18. It is important to note that the current use of calendar days for reporting sickness absence over states sickness absence as the method automatically includes weekends as lost time during periods of absence whether or not an employee works weekends. The Sickness Absence TFG is currently reviewing calculation methods to establish more representative data for the financial year 2025-26 which is focussed on working days only. This will also provide a more reliable comparison with sickness absence in other Local Authorities in the region.
19. For **short-term sickness absence** (<21 calendar days), there has been an increase from 6,275 calendar days in Q2 to 8,213 calendar days in Q3 – a rise of 1,938 calendar days. The top reason for short-term sickness absence remains 'Respiratory, Cough, Cold, Flu'.
20. For **long-term sickness** (21+ calendar days) there was an increase from 16,464 calendar days in Q2, to 17,412 calendar days in Q3 – a rise of 948 calendar days. The top reason for long-term sickness absence remains 'Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health'.

21. **Rolling 12-month average sickness absence per FTE.** The focus of sickness absence reporting and monitoring has been based on a calculation of the average number of calendar days absence calculated over a rolling twelve-month period. The method has been used for a number of years and therefore provides a basis for comparison of trends over years.
22. Table 2 provides the Rolling 12-month average number of calendar days lost due to sickness absence per FTE. The table shows the figures for the current and last quarter, plus the corresponding quarter from last year to provide an annual comparison.

Table 2 - Rolling 12-month average number of calendar days lost due to sickness absence per FTE by Directorate

Organisation Level	Rolling 12-month average number of calendar days lost due to sickness absence per FTE		
	Q3 2024/25	Q2 2024/25	Q3 2023/24
West Sussex County Council	16.1	16.1	16.1
Adult Services & Health	21.2	21.7	21.6
↳ Adult Services	21.7	22.2	21.6
Children, Young People & Learning	15.7	15.2	14.5
↳ Children & Family Services	18.2	17.5	17.4
Chief Executive's Office	7.6	10.4	11.6
Finance & Support Services	6.6	6.7	9.4
Fire & Rescue Service	16.4	17.1	17.0
HR & Organisational Development	10.8	9.4	6.5
Law & Assurance	9.7	8.9	8.9
Place Services	15.6	16.1	17.3

23. The rolling 12-month average per FTE has remained unchanged from last quarter and Q3 last year. However, there are changes for individual Directorates which provides some indication that action to reduce sickness absence is beginning to have an impact in some areas. Sickness Absence has decreased in the following areas:
- From Q2 to Q3 and also from Q3 2023/24 to Q3 2024/25:
 - Adults Services
 - Chief Executives Office
 - Finance & Support Services
 - Place Services
24. Using rolling 12-month data means that the data can be skewed by those quarters with particularly high, or very low, levels of absence (e.g. a significant flu outbreak). Any such quarter would remain in the data for a year. This makes it difficult to monitor the impact of action being taken to reduce sickness absence. As an interim measure for the current financial year, Table 3 shows the average number of calendar days sickness absence per FTE in each quarter. There is no rolling reference period for this data which means that it cannot be directly compared with data in Table 2.

Table 3 - Average number of calendar days lost due to sickness absence per FTE per Quarter by Directorate

Organisation Level	Average number of calendar days lost due to sickness absence per FTE per Quarter				
	Q3 2024/25	Q2 2024/25	Q1 2024/25	Q4 2023/24	Q3 2023/24
West Sussex County Council	4.2	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.4
Adult Services & Health	5.4	5.1	4.9	5.3	6.1
↳ Adult Services	5.6	5.4	4.9	5.4	6.3
Children, Young People & Learning	4.1	4.0	3.6	3.6	3.8
↳ Children & Family Services	4.9	4.9	4.1	3.9	4.4
Chief Executive's Office	1.3	0.7	2.8	2.9	4.1
Finance & Support Services	1.9	1.7	1.5	1.3	2.0
Fire & Rescue Service	3.6	4.2	4.8	3.7	4.5
HR & Organisational Development	3.3	2.5	2.8	2.0	1.9
Law & Assurance	3.1	2.7	2.0	1.6	2.4
Place Services	4.4	3.2	3.7	4.2	5.0

25. The increases from Q2 to Q3 again reflects that Q3 will usually have the highest level of absence. The data however indicates a reduction in absence from quarter 3 2023/24 to the current quarter. The data also shows reductions in the following areas:

- Adult Services & Health
- Chief Executives Office
- Finance & Support Services
- Fire & Rescue Service
- Place Services

26. Table 4 shows a further breakdown of the sickness absence figures, including the reason for the absence. Reasons vary across services and will, to some extent, be impacted by the nature of the work. The reasons for absence inform service specific action planning, for example increased focus on wellbeing and self-care where there are higher rates of stress related absence.

Table 4 – Q3 Service breakdown of average number of calendar days lost due to sickness absence per FTE by Directorate and reason for absence

Service / Team	Average Total Sickness Absence per FTE*	Top Category Reason for Sickness Absence	Top Category Average Sickness Absence per FTE*	Second Category Reason for Sickness Absence	Second Category Average Sickness Absence per FTE*
Adult Services	21.7	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	7.0	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery	4.0
Adults Commissioning	13.4	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery	4.2	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	2.0

Service / Team	Average Total Sickness Absence per FTE*	Top Category Reason for Sickness Absence	Top Category Average Sickness Absence per FTE*	Second Category Reason for Sickness Absence	Second Category Average Sickness Absence per FTE*
Adults Safeguarding	31.9	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	9.7	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery	8.1
Area Operations	18.6	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	6.9	Respiratory, Cough, Cold, Flu	2.7
Children and Family Services	18.2	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	7.6	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery	3.4
Children Social Care	17.7	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	8.4	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery	2.9
Children Social Care - Placements	19.9	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	7.1	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery	4.3
Places Services	15.6	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery	3.6	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	3.1
Communities	16.9	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	4.2	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery	3.8
Highways Transport and Planning	17.9	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery	4.2	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	2.7
Property and Assets	6.5	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery	1.7	Respiratory, Cough, Cold, Flu	1.3

Footnotes:

* Rolling 12-month average number of calendar days lost due to sickness absence per FTE

27. The KPI table contains the number of Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (**RIDDOR**) and **total number of accidents and incidents**. RIDDOR is the law that requires employers, and other people in charge of work premises, to report and keep records of:

- Work-related fatalities
- Work-related injuries
- Diagnosed cases of reportable occupational diseases
- Certain dangerous occurrences (incidents with the potential to cause harm)

28. In addition to the headline figures provided in the main KPI table, the following Tables 4 and 5, contain a breakdown by category for RIDDOR and accidents and incidents in Directorates/Services:

Table 4 – RIDDOR Incidents (reported to the HSE)

Organisation / Incident Type	Number of RIDDOR Incidents	
	Q3 2024/25	Q2 2024/25
Violence at work	2	0
Accident	1	1
Dangerous occurrence	0	0

Table 5 – Accidents and Incidents (Non-RIDDOR)

Organisation / Incident Type	Number of Accidents and Incidents	
	Q3 2024/25	Q2 2024/25*
Violence at work	55	51 (54)
Accident	37	47 (45)
Near miss	57	60 (54)
Dangerous occurrence	0	0
Work related disease	0	0

Footnotes:

* The number of accidents and incidents can change as new cases are reported and/or existing cases updated. To accommodate these changes whilst maintaining links with the previous report, the figures in brackets are the figures reported in the Q2 Performance and Resource Report. The other figures have been retrospectively produced to reflect the changes to cases occurring since the production of the previous PRR.

29. Of the 149 corporate accidents and incidents in Q3, three met the criteria to report to the Health and Safety Executive in accordance with RIDDOR. Schools' health and safety data is available on request.