# COVID-19 Workforce Survey

## Research Report

Relating to the week ending 5 March 2021

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# Summary

## Background

This report is part of a series of monthly surveys of all councils in England and Wales collecting key workforce data on how the sector is responding to COVID-19. An online survey is emailed to heads of human resources, or a nominated contact, in councils from England and Wales on the second Wednesday of the month. The data requested relates to the week ending the preceding Friday. The intention is that this collection is the single national source through which such data is gathered, and it will, as appropriate, be shared with government departments and others in addition to providing comparator information for councils.

This report relates to the survey sent out on 10 March 2021 and covers the week ending 5 March 2021. The overall response rate was 58 per cent and covered around a third of the total workforce.

## Key findings

- Some 40 per cent of councils reported recruiting additional staff (of any type including casual, agency, contingent, etc) in the week ending 5 March 2021. In total 3,107 additional staff had been recruited in responding authorities: the median number of staff per authority was four and the mean was 38.
- Just over two-thirds of respondent councils (147 respondents) have recorded deaths in service since lockdown. A total of 663 deaths in service were reported by respondents since the start of lockdown (cause not specified).
- Thirty-four per cent of councils reported that they had furloughed at least one member of staff. In total, responding authorities reported there were 8,621 staff furloughed in the week ending 5 March 2021, which was 1.5 per cent of the current workforce.
- The main reason given for furloughing staff was that the service had stopped (57 per cent) or that funding had stopped (40 per cent).
- Some 62 per cent of councils had redeployed staff. In total, in the responding authorities, there were 5,964 staff redeployed in the week ending 5 March 2021, which was one per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff redeployed was five and the mean was 32.
- Nearly nine in ten councils (87 per cent) reported that they had at least one member of staff unavailable for work. In total, respondents reported there were 27,791 staff unavailable for work in the week ending 5 March 2021, five per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff unavailable for work was 31 and the mean was 146.
- Twenty one per cent of staff were unavailable through 'self-isolation (other)' and 48 per cent were unavailable due to 'non-COVID sickness'.

- When asked whether individual services had enough staff to run them normally or not, the worst affected services were schools and public health: 12 per cent and 11 per cent of single tier and county councils, respectively, reported these services were operating with severe disruption due to staffing numbers. A further 26 per cent of single tier and county councils reported that adult social care services were operating with moderate disruption.
- When asked to assess the council overall, in terms of whether there are enough staff to run services normally or not, 59 per cent reported they were not operating normally.
- Councils were asked about the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 testing for staff. For the first time since we back this collection all councils who answered this question said they had the right amount of PPE. Ninety eight per cent reported they had about the right amount of PPE or more than they need, two per cent don't need it. Eighty four per cent said all the staff who need testing can access it.
- Looking ahead, councils were asked if they were experiencing significant difficulties recruiting for some posts or not: 105 (51 per cent) said they were. Councils were subsequently asked to choose from a list of specialist occupations where they were experiencing difficulties: 94 per cent of county councils were having difficulties recruiting children's social workers.
- In district councils, 50 per cent of those that responded to the question said they were having problems recruiting planning officers and 38 per cent said they were having problems recruiting environmental health officers.
- Councils were asked to choose the five occupations or roles where recruitment difficulties were most acute. Again, all respondent county councils reported that they had acute difficulties recruiting children's social workers.
- Out of the councils who had said they had acute difficulties in recruiting children's social workers, 50 per cent said they had both difficulty recruiting generally and difficulty recruiting the required expertise, experience or qualification.
- Councils were asked if they are likely to recruit additional staff specifically to COVID-19 and/or the EU transition or not: 40 per cent said they were likely recruit additional staff in response to COVID-19, 35 per cent said they were not likely to recruit additional staff at all and 21 per cent said they did not know.
- Councils were asked to look ahead and think about staff and what they were considering doing in this current financial year and in the next one (2021/22). Twelve per cent of those that answered this question said that they were thinking of reducing staff numbers overall in 2020/21, and 18 per cent said they were thinking to do this in 2021/22.  Twenty eight per cent of those that

answered this question said they were thinking to increase apprenticeships in 2020/21 and thirty nine per cent said they were thinking to do this in 2021/22.

- Councils were asked to think about the COVID-19 vaccination and whether they thought that the staff who need the vaccine had received it or not: 52 per cent reported that all or most of the staff who need the vaccine had received it.

# Introduction

Councils face significant challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has required a joined-up approach between government departments, health agencies, local resilience fora and national agencies like the Local Government Association (LGA), all working with and trying to support councils. The LGA, National Association of Regional Employers (the collective body comprising all the regional employers organisations) and PPMA (the membership association for HR and OD professionals in the public sector) joined forces to coordinate an approach to workforce data collection in the sector.

To provide councils with the intelligence to effectively compare progress and plan locally, regionally and nationally, a short workforce survey was sent out to all heads of human resources in England and Wales. Findings from the survey will give councils a stronger position to build capacity in partnership with others; give the LGA and associations the evidence needed to ask government for support and resources; and help shape government thinking as we emerge from lockdown.

# Methodology

On 10 March 2021, the LGA's Research and Information Team sent an online survey to all heads of human resources, or their nominated contact, in England and Wales (a total of 361 councils). The survey was in the field for two weeks. A total of 208 councils responded, which is a response rate of 58 per cent.

**Table 1** and **Table 2** provide a breakdown of responses by authority type and region. Whilst these results should strictly be taken as a snapshot of the views of this group of respondents, rather than representative of all heads of human resources, this level of response means that the results are likely to provide a good indication of the position of the sector more widely.

| Table 1: Response rate by type of authority | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Type of authority** | **Total number** | **Number of responses** | **Response rate %** |
| District | 188 | 93 | 49 |
| County | 25 | 20 | 80 |
| London borough | 33 | 23 | 70 |
| Metropolitan district | 36 | 24 | 67 |
| Unitary | 57 | 37 | 65 |
| Welsh unitary | 22 | 11 | 50 |
| All | 361 | 208 | 58 |

| Table 2: Response rate by region | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Region** | **Total number** | **Number of responses** | **Response rate %** |
| Eastern | 50 | 37 | 74 |
| East Midlands | 45 | 19 | 42 |
| London | 33 | 23 | 70 |
| North East | 12 | 9 | 75 |
| North West | 41 | 25 | 61 |
| South East | 70 | 34 | 49 |
| South West | 33 | 15 | 45 |
| Wales | 22 | 11 | 50 |
| West Midlands | 33 | 15 | 45 |
| Yorkshire and Humber | 22 | 20 | 91 |

**Technical notes**

- Where tables and figures report the base, the description refers to the group of people who were asked the question. The number provided refers to the number of respondents who answered each question. Please note that bases vary throughout the survey.

- Throughout the report percentages in figures and tables may add to more than 100 per cent due to rounding.

# COVID-19 Workforce Survey: week ending 5 March 2021

This section contains analysis of the full results from the survey.

## Size of local authority workforce

**Workforce as at 1 March 2020**

In order to establish a baseline, councils were asked the number of staff employed by the council on the 1 March 2020, pre-lockdown. The councils that responded to the survey employed 554,567 staff or approximately a third of the total local government workforce.

There are 173 single tier and county councils that have responsibility for schools. As it is not always possible to separate out school-based staff from human resources (HR) systems, a supplementary question was asked to determine how many returns included school-based staff.

Of the 115 councils that responded to the survey and had responsibility for schools, 45 (12 per cent) reported that their return included school-based staff. For expediency this report doesn't separate those that included/excluded schools-based staff as it was felt that it would add significantly to the burden on councils returning the data and would have little effect on the overall findings.

**Recruitment week ending 5 March 2021**

Councils are at the forefront of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to continue to deliver vital services to their communities they have had to be flexible in how they deploy their workforce in order to increase capacity in high demand services or to fill gaps in services caused by the pandemic.

One option available to councils is the recruitment of additional staff. To understand the scale of recruitment, councils were asked whether they had recruited additional staff (of any type including casual, agency, contingent, etc) during the week 5 March 2021.

Of the councils that responded, 84 (40 per cent) reported recruiting additional staff. In total 3,107 additional staff were recruited from responding authorities during the week ending 5 March 2021. The median number of staff per council was four and the mean was 38.

| Table 3: Has the council recruited additional staff (of any type including casual, agency, contingent, etc during week ending 5 March 2021)? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | | No. of additional staff | | |
| | No. | % | Total | Median | Mean |
| County | 14 | 70 | 190 | 13 | 15 |
| District | 25 | 27 | 1,421 | 2 | 59 |
| London borough | 14 | 61 | 735 | 10 | 17 |
| Metropolitan borough | 11 | 46 | 169 | 5 | 21 |
| Unitary | 14 | 38 | 146 | 8 | 15 |
| Welsh unitary | 6 | 55 | 446 | 7 | 13 |
| English single tier | 36 | 43 | 1,039 | 8 | 35 |
| All councils | 84 | 40 | 3,107 | 4 | 38 |

Base: all respondents 208 councils – 20 counties, 93 districts, 23 London boroughs, 24 metropolitan borough, 37 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 84 English single tier)

## Current headcount as at 5 March 2021

The total headcount for those councils that responded had increased by 1.4 per cent since the 1 March 2020 and now stands at 562,252 on the 5 March 2021.

| Table 4: Change in headcount from 1 March 2020 – 5 March 2021 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | At 1 March | At 5 March | % change |
| County | 130,736 | 134,181 | 2.6 |
| District | 42,083 | 42,170 | 0.2 |
| London borough | 73,488 | 76,179 | 3.7 |
| Metropolitan borough | 127,125 | 127,473 | 0.3 |
| Unitary | 111,130 | 111,238 | 0.1 |
| Welsh unitary | 70,005 | 71,011 | 1.4 |
| English single tier | 292,152 | 295,187 | 1.0 |
| All councils | 554,567 | 562,252 | 1.4 |

Base: all respondents (208 councils –20 counties, 93 districts, 23 London boroughs, 24 metropolitan boroughs, 37 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 84 English single tier)

## Death in service

Councils were asked to provide details on the number of staff that have died in service since 24 March 2020 (lockdown). Of the 205 councils that answered this question, 147 (72 per cent) recorded deaths in service as of 5 March 2021, totalling 663 staff. Councils were not asked the cause of death, so this figure relates to all causes, not only COVID-19 deaths.

| Table 5: Since 24 March when lockdown started, how many local authority staff, if any, have died in service? | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | No. deaths | No. of councils recording one or more deaths |
| County | 121 | 19 |
| District | 59 | 42 |
| London borough | 101 | 22 |
| Metropolitan borough | 164 | 23 |
| Unitary | 152 | 32 |
| Welsh unitary | 66 | 9 |
| English single tier | 395 | 77 |
| All councils | 663 | 147 |

Base: all respondents (205 councils – 20 counties, 92 districts, 23 London boroughs, 23 metropolitan boroughs, 36 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 82 English single tier)

## Furloughed staff

Councils were asked to provide details of staff that were furloughed in the week ending 5 March 2021. Of councils that answered the question, 68 (34 per cent) reported that they had furloughed at least one member of staff.

In total there were 8,621 staff furloughed in responding councils in the week ending 5 March, 1.5 per cent of their current workforce. This was seven per cent less than reported in the previous survey. Of those councils that had furloughed staff, the median number was 60 and the mean was 126; but this varied considerably across different types of authority.

| Table 6: No. of staff furloughed (week ending 5 March) | | | | Of those councils with furloughed staff | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. of councils | % of councils | Total no. staff | Median | Mean |
| County | 8 | 44 | 2,547 | 197 | 318 |
| District | 22 | 24 | 1,646 | 35 | 75 |
| London borough | 6 | 29 | 304 | 43 | 51 |
| Metropolitan borough | 10 | 43 | 746 | 50 | 75 |
| Unitary | 14 | 38 | 1,688 | 31 | 91 |
| Welsh unitary | 8 | 73 | 1,690 | 234 | 259 |
| English single tier | 30 | 37 | 2,738 | 54 | 91 |
| All councils | 68 | 34 | 8,621 | 60 | 126 |

Base: all respondents (202 councils – 18 counties, 92 districts, 21 London boroughs, 23 metropolitan boroughs, 37 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 81 English single tier)

**Reason staff were furloughed**

The councils that had furloughed staff in the week ending 5 March 2021 were subsequently asked to indicate the reason the member of staff had been furloughed, and 64 (32 per cent) were able to provide the reason or reasons.

In the week ending 5 March 2021, 57 per cent of staff were furloughed because 'Service has been stopped' and 40 per cent of staff were furloughed because the 'Funding has stopped'. The pattern varied across authority types: in Welsh unitaries, 99 per cent of staff were furloughed due to 'Service has been stopped'; while in counties, 82 per cent of staff were furloughed because 'Funding has stopped'.

| Table 7: For those staff furloughed, what is/are the reason/s? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Funding has stopped | Staff are shielding | Caring responsibilities | Service has been stopped | Other reasons |
| | % staff | % staff | % staff | % staff | % staff |
| County | 82 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 0 |
| District | 26 | 3 | 0 | 71 | 0 |
| London borough | 57 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 25 |
| Metropolitan borough | 5 | 6 | 0 | 89 | 0 |
| Unitary | 42 | 1 | 0 | 55 | 2 |
| Welsh unitary | 0 | 1 | 0 | 99 | 0 |
| English single tier | 35 | 2 | 0 | 58 | 5 |
| All councils | 40 | 1 | 0 | 57 | 2 |

Base: respondents with furloughed staff (64 councils – seven counties, 22 districts, five London boroughs, nine metropolitan boroughs, 13 English unitaries, eight Welsh unitaries, 27 English single tier)

## Redeployed staff

Councils were asked to indicate the number of staff that had been redeployed in the week ending 5 March 2021. Of councils that answered the question, 111 (62 per cent) reported that they had redeployed at least one member of staff.

In total there were 5,964 staff redeployed by responding authorities in the week ending 5 March, one per cent of their current workforce. The median number of staff redeployed was five and the mean was 32.

| Table 8: No. of staff redeployed (week ending 5 March) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. of councils | % of councils | Total no. staff | Median | Mean |
| County | 11 | 69 | 834 | 27 | 52 |
| District | 42 | 48 | 892 | 0 | 10 |
| London borough | 14 | 74 | 904 | 22 | 48 |
| Metropolitan borough | 17 | 94 | 1,730 | 69 | 96 |
| Unitary | 19 | 66 | 1,053 | 13 | 36 |
| Welsh unitary | 8 | 80 | 551 | 0 | 55 |
| English single tier | 50 | 76 | 3,687 | 29 | 56 |
| All councils | 111 | 62 | 5,964 | 5 | 32 |

Base: all respondents (180 councils – 16 counties, 88 districts, 19 London boroughs, 18 metropolitan boroughs, 29 English unitaries, 10 Welsh unitaries, 66 English single tier)

## Unavailable for work

Councils were asked to indicate the number of staff that were unavailable for work in the week ending 5 March 2021. Of councils that answered the question, 167 (87 per cent) reported that they had at least one member of staff unavailable.

In total there were 27,791 staff unavailable for work in responding authorities in the week ending 5 March, five per cent of their current workforce. The median number of staff unavailable for work was 31 and the mean was 146.

| Table 9: No. of staff unavailable for work (week ending 5 March) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. of councils | % of councils | Total no. staff | Median | Mean |
| County | 19 | 100 | 7,316 | 219 | 385 |
| District | 71 | 82 | 1,276 | 11 | 15 |
| London borough | 20 | 95 | 3,534 | 93 | 168 |
| Metropolitan borough | 21 | 95 | 7,055 | 308 | 321 |
| Unitary | 29 | 85 | 6,251 | 101 | 184 |
| Welsh unitary | 7 | 88 | 2,359 | 268 | 295 |
| English single tier | 70 | 91 | 16,840 | 152 | 219 |
| All councils | 167 | 87 | 27,791 | 31 | 146 |

Base: all respondents (191 councils – 19 counties, 87 districts, 21 London boroughs, 22 metropolitan boroughs, 34 English unitaries, eight Welsh unitaries, 77 English single tier)

**Reason staff were unavailable for work**

The 167 councils that reported they had one or more member of staff unavailable for work in the week ending 5 March 2021 were subsequently asked to indicate the reason for them being unavailable, and 153 (92 per cent) were able to provide the reason.

In the week ending 5 March 2021, 48 per cent of staff were unavailable because of 'Non-COVID sickness' and 21 per cent were unavailable due to 'Self-isolation (other)'. Reasons for self-isolation (other) included being in an at-risk group, because the staff member believed they were symptomatic or because the staff member shared a household with someone who was symptomatic. Nine per cent of staff were unavailable due to 'Confirmed/suspected COVID'.

| Table 10: For those staff currently unavailable for work, what is/are the reason/s? | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Non-COVID sickness | Confirmed/ Suspected COVID | Self-isolation (Track and trace) | Self-isolation (Other) | Caring for dependents/ at risk relative/som eone who is sick | Other reason |
| | % staff | % staff | % staff | % staff | % staff | % staff |
| County | 40 | 12 | 1 | 34 | 1 | 12 |
| District | 53 | 7 | 3 | 16 | 2 | 19 |
| London borough | 46 | 10 | 0 | 12 | 1 | 30 |
| Metropolitan borough | 51 | 9 | 6 | 19 | 0 | 15 |
| Unitary | 50 | 8 | 3 | 16 | 2 | 21 |
| Welsh unitary | 64 | 7 | 14 | 11 | 1 | 3 |
| English single tier | 50 | 9 | 3 | 16 | 1 | 21 |
| All councils | 48 | 9 | 4 | 21 | 1 | 17 |

Base: respondents with unavailable staff (153 councils –16 counties, 69 districts, 19 London boroughs, 16 metropolitan boroughs, 27 English unitaries, six Welsh unitaries, 62 English single tier)

## Service disruption

When asked whether individual services had enough staff to run them normally or not, the worst affected services were schools and public health, with 12 and 11 per cent of councils with these services, respectively, reporting they were operating with severe disruption due to staffing numbers. A further 25 per cent of single tier and county councils reported that schools were operating with moderate disruption. Also badly affected was adult social care (directly employed, with 26 per cent reporting moderate disruption.

When asked to assess the council overall, in terms of whether there are enough staff to run services normally or not, 59 per cent of councils reported they were not operating normally.

| Table 11: Please select the status of the services to the show if there are enough staff to run the service normally or not. | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Base | Operating normally | Operating with minor disruption | Operating with moderate disruption | Operating with severe disruption |
| | No. councils | % councils | % councils | % councils | % councils |
| Adult social care (directly employed) | 105 | 31 | 36 | 26 | 7 |
| Bereavement services | 139 | 62 | 25 | 13 | 0 |
| Children's services | 106 | 42 | 35 | 21 | 3 |
| Environment health | 171 | 47 | 30 | 19 | 4 |
| Household waste (doorstep collection) | 157 | 71 | 20 | 8 | 2 |
| Housing and homelessness services | 177 | 62 | 25 | 11 | 2 |
| Planning | 188 | 64 | 26 | 9 | 1 |
| Public health | 103 | 47 | 24 | 18 | 11 |
| Revenue and benefits | 167 | 61 | 25 | 12 | 2 |
| Schools | 83 | 31 | 31 | 25 | 12 |
| Trading standards | 98 | 51 | 30 | 16 | 3 |
| Overall council | 200 | 42 | 42 | 16 | 1 |

Base: all respondents which run the relevant service (base varies by service).

## Availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Councils were asked to indicate whether they had enough of the correct type of PPE for those staff that needed it. A total of 194 (93 per cent of councils who responded to the survey) answered the question, of which 98 per cent reported they had about the right amount of PPE or more than they needed; whilst two per cent said they didn't need it.

| Table 12: At present, do you have enough of the correct PPE for those local authority staff who need it or not? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | More than we need | About what we need | Less than we need | We don't need it |
| | % councils | % councils | % councils | % councils |
| County | 5 | 95 | 0 | 0 |
| District | 5 | 92 | 0 | 4 |
| London borough | 14 | 86 | 0 | 0 |
| Metropolitan borough | 4 | 96 | 0 | 0 |
| Unitary | 9 | 91 | 0 | 0 |
| Welsh unitary | 0 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| English single tier | 9 | 91 | 0 | 0 |
| All councils | 6 | 92 | 0 | 2 |

Base: all respondents (194 councils – 20 counties, 84 districts, 22 London boroughs, 23 metropolitan boroughs, 34 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 79 English single tier)

## Availability of testing

Councils were asked to indicate whether staff who needed it were able to access testing or not. A total of 197 (95 per cent of councils who responded to the survey) answered the question, of which 84 per cent said all the staff that need testing can access it, and 14 per cent that most of the staff that need testing can access it.

| Table 13: And would you say that, currently, the staff who need testing are able to access it or not? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **All the staff that need testing can access it** | **Most of the staff that need testing can access it** | **Some of the staff that need testing can access it** | **None of the staff that need testing can access it** | **None of our staff need testing** |
| | % councils | % councils | % councils | % councils | % councils |
| County | 63 | 32 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| District | 85 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| London borough | 81 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Metropolitan borough | 87 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Unitary | 89 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Welsh unitary | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| English single tier | 86 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| All councils | 84 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 2 |

Base: all respondents (197 councils – 19 counties, 86 districts, 21 London boroughs, 23 metropolitan boroughs, 37 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 81 English single tier)

## Planning ahead

**Recruitment difficulties**

Councils were asked if they were experiencing significant difficulties recruiting for some occupations and roles: 105 (51 per cent) said they were. Those that had answered yes to this question were then asked to choose from a list of specialist occupations where they were experiencing difficulties. Table 14 shows 74 per cent of English single tier councils and 94 per cent of county councils were having difficulties recruiting children's social workers. In district councils, 50 per cent of those that responded to the question said they were having problems recruiting planning officers and 38 per cent said they were having problems recruiting environmental health officers.

From the specialist occupations and roles they were having difficulties recruiting, councils were asked to choose the five where difficulties are most acute. This is either if their council has a large number of staff vacancies for some posts or it has a small number of vacancies that have a big impact. More than nine out of 10 (93 per cent) of county councils said they had acute difficulties recruiting children's social workers. This can be seen in Table 15.

Where councils had ticked that they had acute difficulties recruiting certain roles, they were then asked to indicate whether the difficulty is in recruiting generally or recruiting at the required level of expertise/experience/qualification. Fifty-two per cent of councils who had acute difficulties recruiting children's social workers, said these were both difficulties recruiting generally, and in terms of recruiting the required expertise, experience or qualification.

| Table 14: From the list of specialist occupations and roles below, please tick those where your council is experiencing recruitment difficulties | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | County | District | London borough | Metropolitan borough | Unitary | Welsh unitary | English single tier | All councils |
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| Accountants | 6 | 22 | 23 | 19 | 4 | 0 | 13 | 14 |
| Adult's social workers | 81 | 0 | 62 | 44 | 44 | 50 | 48 | 56 |
| Building control officers | 0 | 19 | 23 | 6 | 20 | 50 | 17 | 18 |
| Chartered surveyors | 19 | 25 | 8 | 13 | 16 | 0 | 13 | 17 |
| Children's social workers | 94 | 0 | 62 | 81 | 76 | 50 | 74 | 78 |
| Economic development officers | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Educational psychologists | 63 | 0 | 46 | 6 | 28 | 0 | 26 | 33 |
| Engineers | 44 | 0 | 8 | 19 | 20 | 0 | 17 | 15 |
| Environmental health officers | 0 | 38 | 31 | 31 | 36 | 50 | 33 | 35 |
| Health visitors | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Homelessness officers | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 4 | 5 |
| ICT professionals | 25 | 6 | 38 | 0 | 20 | 50 | 19 | 16 |
| Legal professionals | 44 | 19 | 38 | 38 | 16 | 0 | 28 | 27 |
| Mental health social workers | 56 | 0 | 31 | 13 | 12 | 50 | 17 | 26 |
| Occupational therapists (adults') | 56 | 0 | 54 | 19 | 28 | 0 | 31 | 36 |
| Occupational therapists (children's) | 31 | 0 | 31 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 15 | 18 |
| Planning officers | 44 | 50 | 23 | 13 | 12 | 0 | 15 | 30 |
| Public health officers | 19 | 0 | 23 | 25 | 20 | 0 | 22 | 21 |
| Regulatory services officers | 0 | 0 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 6 | 3 |
| School nurses | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| Test and trace team leaders | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| Test and trace officers (clinical case officers) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 2 |
| Trading standards officers | 31 | 0 | 23 | 6 | 12 | 50 | 13 | 18 |
| Youth workers | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Other | 13 | 13 | 23 | 13 | 8 | 0 | 13 | 13 |

Base: all authorities experiencing recruitment difficulties (104 councils – 16 counties, 32 districts, 13 London boroughs, 16 metropolitan boroughs, 25 English unitaries, two Welsh unitary, 54 English single tier)

| Table 15: For those specialist occupations and roles where you have difficulties recruiting, below, please tick up to five where the difficulties are most acute. | County | District | London borough | Metropolitan borough | Unitary | Welsh unitary | English single tier | All councils |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| Accountants | 0 | 21 | 0 | 15 | 4 | 0 | 14 | 10 |
| Adult's social workers | 71 | - | 42 | 38 | 38 | 50 | 53 | 46 |
| Building control officers | - | 21 | 17 | 0 | 4 | 50 | 18 | 13 |
| Chartered surveyors | 0 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 14 | 9 |
| Children's social workers | 93 | - | 42 | 85 | 75 | 50 | 82 | 74 |
| Economic development officers | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Educational psychologists | 50 | - | 33 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 29 | 22 |
| Engineers | 7 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 17 | 0 | 18 | 6 |
| Environmental health officers | - | 39 | 25 | 31 | 21 | 50 | 37 | 30 |
| Health visitors | 7 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Homelessness officers | - | 4 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 4 | 13 |
| ICT professionals | 7 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 13 | 50 | 20 | 8 |
| Legal professionals | 14 | 18 | 25 | 31 | 8 | 0 | 31 | 17 |
| Mental health social workers | 50 | - | 25 | 15 | 13 | 50 | 18 | 25 |
| Occupational therapists (adults') | 29 | - | 25 | 15 | 8 | 0 | 35 | 17 |
| Occupational therapists (children's) | 14 | - | 8 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 16 | 6 |
| Planning officers | 14 | 50 | 8 | 15 | 4 | 0 | 16 | 22 |
| Public health officers | 21 | 0 | 17 | 23 | 21 | 0 | 24 | 20 |
| Regulatory services officers | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 6 | 1 |
| School nurses | 7 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Social care commissioners | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Test and trace team leaders | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 1 |
| Test and trace officers (clinical case officers) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 0 |
| Trading standards officers | 7 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 8 | 50 | 14 | 0 |
| Youth workers | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 14 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 14 | 9 |

Base: authorities experiencing recruitment difficulties (93 councils – 14 counties, 28 districts, 12 London boroughs, 13 metropolitan boroughs, 24 English unitaries, two Welsh unitaries, 49 English single tier)

| Table 16: For each of these roles where you have acute difficulties, please indicate whether the recruitment difficulty is in recruiting generally, or recruiting at the required level of expertise/experience/qualification? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Base | Difficulty recruiting generally | Difficulty recruiting required expertise, experience or qualification | Both | Don't know |
| | No. councils | % councils | % councils | % councils | % councils |
| Accountants | 9 | 11 | 33 | 56 | 0 |
| Adult's social workers | 30 | 37 | 20 | 43 | 0 |
| Building control officers | 10 | 20 | 40 | 40 | 0 |
| Chartered surveyors | 8 | 25 | 38 | 38 | 0 |
| Children's social workers | 48 | 31 | 17 | 52 | 0 |
| Economic development officers | 0 | - | - | - | - |
| Educational psychologists | 14 | 21 | 36 | 43 | 0 |
| Engineers | 6 | 50 | 0 | 50 | 0 |
| Environmental health officers | 24 | 33 | 4 | 63 | 0 |
| Health visitors | 1 | 0 | 0 | 100 | 0 |
| Homelessness officers | 3 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ICT professionals | 7 | 43 | 29 | 29 | 0 |
| Legal professionals | 16 | 25 | 25 | 50 | 0 |
| Mental health social workers | 16 | 19 | 13 | 69 | 0 |
| Occupational therapists (adults') | 11 | 18 | 27 | 64 | 0 |
| Occupational therapists (children's) | 4 | 25 | 50 | 25 | 0 |
| Planning officers | 20 | 25 | 15 | 60 | 0 |
| Public health officers | 13 | 31 | 23 | 38 | 8 |
| Regulatory services officers | 1 | 0 | 0 | 100 | 0 |
| School nurses | 1 | 0 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| Test and trace team leaders | 1 | 0 | 0 | 100 | 0 |
| Test and trace officers (clinical case officers) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 100 | 0 |
| Trading standards officers | 5 | 20 | 20 | 60 | 0 |
| Youth workers | 0 | - | - | - | - |
| Other | 8 | 25 | 25 | 50 | 0 |

Base: respondents experiencing acute recruitments difficulties; bases vary depending on whether the respondent was experiencing acute recruitment difficulties for particular the role.

**COVID-19 / EU transition recruitment**

Councils were asked if they were likely to recruit additional staff specifically in response to COVID-19 and/or the EU transition or not. Of the 207 councils who responded to the question, 40 per cent said they were likely recruit additional staff in response to COVID-19, 35 per cent said they were not likely to recruit additional staff at all and 21 per cent said they did not know.

| Table 17: Are you likely to recruit additional staff specifically in response to COVID-19 and/or the EU transition, or not? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes, in response to COVID-19 | Yes, in response both to COVID-19 and EU transition | Yes, in response to EU transition | No | Don't know |
| | % councils | % councils | % councils | % councils | % councils |
| County | 55 | 5 | 0 | 25 | 15 |
| District | 28 | 0 | 2 | 49 | 20 |
| London borough | 48 | 4 | 0 | 17 | 30 |
| Metropolitan borough | 52 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 30 |
| Unitary | 46 | 16 | 0 | 27 | 11 |
| Welsh unitary | 45 | 0 | 0 | 27 | 27 |
| English single tier | 48 | 8 | 0 | 22 | 22 |
| All councils | 40 | 4 | 1 | 35 | 21 |

Base: all respondents (207 councils – 20 counties, 93 districts, 23 London boroughs, 23 metropolitan boroughs, 37 unitary, 11 Welsh unitary, 83 English single tier)

**Thinking about staffing**

Out of the councils that answered this question 58 per cent said they were thinking of making no substantive changes within this financial year, and 49 per cent said they were not thinking it for 2021/22. Twelve per cent of those that answered this question said that they were thinking of reducing staff numbers overall in 2020/21, and 18 per cent said they were thinking to do this in 2021/22. When thinking about increasing the use of apprenticeships, 28 per cent of councils said they were considering doing this in this financial year and 39 per cent said they were considering it for 2021/22.

| Table 18: Thinking about staffing, is your council <u>currently</u> considering doing any of the following within 2020/21 (current financial year) and in 2021/22? | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | 2020/21 (current financial year | 2021/22 |
| | % councils | % councils |
| Making no substantive changes to staffing numbers | 58 | 49 |
| Recruiting more staff overall | 4 | 4 |
| Reducing staff numbers overall | 12 | 18 |
| Recruitment freeze | 12 | 10 |
| Recruiting more staff in specialist roles | 13 | 11 |
| Increasing use of contractors or agencies | 7 | 3 |
| Reducing use of contractors or agencies | 21 | 26 |
| Increasing apprenticeships | 28 | 39 |
| Decreasing apprenticeships | 3 | 1 |

Base: all respondents (2020/21 (current financial year) = 188; 2021/22 = 179), excludes don't knows (2020/21 (current financial year = 20; 2021/22 = 28).

Note: columns do not total to 100 per cent as respondents were able to pick more than one option.

## COVID-19 vaccines

Councils were asked to think about the COVID-19 vaccination and whether they thought that the staff who need the vaccine have received it or not. A total of 206 councils answered the question, of which 52 per cent reported that all or most of the staff who needed the vaccine had received it. A further 24 per cent of councils said they didn't know; and no councils reported that none of their staff who needed vaccinations had received them.

Within the 75 councils (36 per cent) who were able to provide a figure, a total of 68,163 staff had received the vaccine. Within the 36 councils (17 per cent) who were able to provide a figure, 1,626 staff had refused it.

| | All the staff who need vaccinations have had them | Most of the staff who need vaccinations have had them | Some of the staff who need vaccinations have had them | None of the staff who need vaccinations have had them | None of our staff need vaccinations | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Table 19:** Thinking about vaccinations, would you say that the staff who need vaccinations have had them or not? | | | | | | |
| | % councils | % councils | % councils | % councils | % councils | % councils |
| County | 5 | 40 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 25 |
| District | 26 | 17 | 15 | 1 | 10 | 31 |
| London borough | 17 | 17 | 35 | 0 | 0 | 30 |
| Metropolitan borough | 22 | 39 | 26 | 0 | 0 | 13 |
| Unitary | 11 | 61 | 14 | 0 | 3 | 11 |
| Welsh unitary | 27 | 55 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 9 |
| English single tier | 16 | 43 | 23 | 0 | 1 | 17 |
| All councils | 20 | 32 | 19 | 0 | 5 | 24 |

Base: all respondents (206 councils – 20 counties, 93 districts, 23 London boroughs, 23 metropolitan boroughs, 36 unitary, 11 Welsh unitary, 82 English single tier)

## Annex A: Questionnaire

# COVID - 19 Workforce Collection

Q1.1 Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

If you would like to see **an overview of the questions** before completing the survey online, you can access a PDF here: Covid 19 workforce collection

You can navigate through the questions using the buttons at the bottom of each page. If you stop before completing the return, you can come back to this page using the link supplied in the email and you will be able to continue where you left off.

All responses will be treated confidentially. In order that councils do not get multiple requests for such data, the Local Government Association will share the data provided by you in this survey in confidence with the following organisations:

- Other councils (including in LG Inform, via sign-in)
- Regional employers' organisations
- Welsh Local Government Association
- Northern Ireland Local Government Association
- Relevant government departments
- Welsh Government
- Northern Ireland Assembly
- All local resilience fora (LRFs) (through the medium of the LRF dashboard)
- Bain and Company (purely for the purpose of updating the LRF dashboard)

Any information that is published or shared outside of that arrangement will be aggregated, and no authority will be identified without your consent. The information used within the LGA will be held and processed in accordance with our privacy statement; and we will not share it with the organisations listed above unless we have ensured they have the right controls in place to use your information responsibly and only for the reasons for which we have given permission. We are

undertaking this survey in line with the legitimate interests of the LGA in supporting and representing authorities. It will also:

- allow you to compare key data with other authorities
- minimise the number of data requests you respond to from other organisations
- assist in recovery planning, workforce testing and risk profiling, and
- help the LGA evidence our government asks for support and resources.

If you have any queries or problems, please contact research@local.gov.uk.

Q2.1 How many staff did you have on 1 March 2020 (that is the usual headcount before COVID -19) and how many staff in the week ending 5 March 2021

*Please enter a whole number without a comma or decimal place.  Please only include permanent and fixed term staff. If you answered this question for 1 March previously, your answer is already added below.*

| | Number of staff (headcount) |
|---|---|
| Headcount of staff at 1 March 2020 | |
| Headcount of staff week ending 5 March 2021 | |

Q2.2 Do the figures you are providing for this return include or exclude school staff?

○ Includes school staff

○ Excludes school staff

○ Don't know

Q2.3 Have you recruited any additional <u>excluding permanent and fixed term staff</u> in the week ending 5 March?

Yes

○ No

Q2.4 How many additional staff have you recruited excluding permanent and fixed term staff?

*Please enter a whole number. If you do not know please leave blank.*
*If you answered this question previously, your answer is already added below.*

| | Number of staff (headcount) |
|---|---|
| Additional staff week ending 5 March | |

Q2.5 Since 24 March when lockdown started, how many local authority staff, if any, have died in service (from all causes)?

*Please enter the number of staff.  If none, please enter "0". If you do not know please leave bank.*

| | Number of staff (headcount) |
|---|---|
| Number of staff died in service | |

Q3.1 How many staff, if any, do you currently (week ending 5 March 2021) have in the categories below?

*Please enter the headcount. If none, please enter zero. If you do not know please leave bank.*

| | Number of staff (headcount) |
|---|---|
| Number of staff furloughed – full time | |
| Number of staff furloughed – part time | |
| Number of staff redeployed (both formal and informal, and either internally or externally) | |
| Number of staff unavailable for work | |

Q4.1 For those staff furloughed, what is/are the reason/s?

*Please provide the number of staff furloughed broken down by reason for week*

*ending 5 March 2021. If zero please enter "0". If you do not know please leave bank.*

| | Number of staff (headcount) |
|---|---|
| Total number of staff furloughed | |
| Funding has stopped | |
| Number of staff unavailable for work | |
| Shielding (or relevant health reasons) | |
| Caring responsibilities | |
| Service has been stopped | |
| Other | |

Q5.1 For those staff currently unavailable for work, what is the primary reason?

*Please provide the number of staff unavailable broken down by reason for week ending 5 March 2021.*

*If zero please enter "0". If you do not know please leave bank.*

*\*Self-isolating can be due to any of the following:*

*Being in an at-risk group*

*Believe they are symptomatic*

*Share a household with someone who is symptomatic*

| | Number of staff (headcount) |
|---|---|
| Total number of staff unavailable for work | |
| Non-COVID sicknesses | |
| Confirmed / Suspected COVID | |
| Self-isolation (Test and trace) | |
| Self Isolation (Other) | |
| Caring for dependants/at-risk relative/someone who is sick | |
| Other | |

Q6.1 Please select the status of the services to the show if there are <u>enough of the right staff</u> to run the service normally or not (at the current level of demand).
*This is to allow us to understand whether staff capacity (including redeployed staff) is enough to run the service.  It will give us a feel of the pressure points for some of the highest profile service areas.*

| | Operating normally | Minor disruption | Moderate disruption | Severe disruption | Don't know | Not applicable |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adult social care (directly employed | | | | | | |
| Bereavement services (cemeteries and crematoria) | | | | | | |
| Children's services | | | | | | |
| Environmental health | | | | | | |
| Household waste (doorstep collection) | | | | | | |
| Housing and homelessness services | | | | | | |
| Planning | | | | | | |
| Public health | | | | | | |
| Revenue and benefits | | | | | | |
| Schools | | | | | | |
| Trading standards | | | | | | |

Q6.2 In summary, how would you assess the council overall, in terms of whether there are enough staff overall to run services normally or not?

○ Operating normally

○ Minor disruption

○ Moderate disruption

○ Severe disruption

○ Don't know

Q7.1 At present, do you have enough of the correct PPE for those local authority staff who need it or not?

○ More than we need

○ About what we need

○ Less than we need

○ We don't need it

○ Don't know

Q7.2 And would you say that, currently, the staff who need testing are able to access it or not?

○ All the staff who need testing can access it

○ Most of the staff who need testing can access it

○ Some of the staff who need testing can access it

○ None of the staff who need testing can access it

○ None of our staff need testing

○ Don't know

Q8.1 **Looking ahead**

Over the next few fortnights we shall be asking questions to help us understand where councils may need some guidance and support in certain areas.  These questions won't be asked every fortnight, but they will be asked maybe every other fortnight as you may want to change your answer as your council's circumstances may change.

Q8.2 We have heard from some councils that there are significant difficulties recruiting for certain posts.

Is your authority experiencing recruitment difficulties for some posts or not?  *Difficulties may be in the form of a high number of staff vacancies for some posts, or a small number of vacancies that have a big impact.*

○ Yes

○ No

○ Don't know

Q8.3 From the list of specialist occupations and roles below, please tick those where your council is experiencing recruitment difficulties.

*This is whether your council either has a large number of staff vacancies for some posts or it has a small number of vacancies that have a big impact.*

| |
|---|
| Accountants |
| Adult's social workers |
| Building control officers |
| Chartered surveyors |
| Children's social workers |
| Economic development officers |
| Educational psychologists |
| Engineers |
| Environmental health officers |
| Health visitors |
| Homelessness officers |
| ICT professionals |
| Legal professionals |
| Mental health social workers |
| Occupational therapists (adults') |
| Occupational therapists (children's) |
| Regulatory services officers |
| Planning officers |
| Public health officers |
| School nurses |
| Social care commissioners |
| Test and trace team leaders |
| Test and trace officers (clinical case officers) |
| Trading standards officers |
| Youth workers |
| Other (please specify) |

Q8.4 For those specialist occupations and roles where you have difficulties recruiting, below, please tick <u>up to five</u> where the difficulties are most acute.

*This is whether your council either has a large number of staff vacancies for some posts or it has a small number of vacancies that have a big impact.*

| |
|---|
| Accountants |
| Adult's social workers |
| Building control officers |
| Chartered surveyors |
| Children's social workers |
| Economic development officers |
| Educational psychologists |
| Engineers |
| Environmental health officers |
| Health visitors |
| Homelessness officers |
| ICT professionals |
| Legal professionals |
| Mental health social workers |
| Occupational therapists (adults') |
| Occupational therapists (children's) |
| Regulatory services officers |
| Planning officers |
| Public health officers |
| School nurses |
| Social care commissioners |
| Test and trace team leaders |
| Test and trace officers (clinical case officers) |
| Trading standards officers |
| Youth workers |
| Other (please specify) |

Q8.5 For each of these roles where you have acute difficulties, please indicate whether the recruitment difficulty is in recruiting generally, or recruiting at the required level of expertise/experience/qualification?

| | Difficulty recruiting generally | Difficulty recruiting required expertise, experience or qualification | Both | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Accountants | | | | |
| Adult's social workers | | | | |
| Building control officers | | | | |
| Chartered surveyors | | | | |
| Children's social workers | | | | |
| Economic development officers | | | | |
| Educational psychologists | | | | |
| Engineers | | | | |
| Environmental health officers | | | | |
| Health visitors | | | | |
| Homelessness officers | | | | |
| ICT professionals | | | | |
| Legal professionals | | | | |
| Mental health social workers | | | | |
| Occupational therapists (adults') | | | | |
| Occupational therapists (children's) | | | | |
| Regulatory services officers | | | | |
| Planning officers | | | | |
| Public health officers | | | | |
| School nurses | | | | |
| Social care commissioners | | | | |
| Test and trace team leaders | | | | |
| Test and trace officers (clinical case officers) | | | | |
| Trading standards officers | | | | |
| Youth workers | | | | |
| Other (please specify) | | | | |

## Q9.1 **COVID-19 / EU Transition recruitment**
Are you likely to recruit additional staff specifically in response to COVID-19 and/or the EU transition, or not?

- ○ Yes, in response to COVID-19
- ○ Yes, in response to EU transition
- ○ Yes, in response both to COVID-19 and EU transition
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know


Q9.2 Can you please tell us what job roles these are?

_____


Q10.1 And thinking about staffing, is your council <u>currently</u> considering doing any of the following with this financial year (2020/21) and in 2021/21?

|  | 2020/21 (current financial year) | 2021/22 |
|---|---|---|
| Making no substantive changes to staffing numbers | ❑ | ❑ |
| Recruiting more staff overall | ❑ | ❑ |
| Reducing staff numbers overall | ❑ | ❑ |
| Recruitment freeze | ❑ | ❑ |
| Recruiting more staff in specialist roles | ❑ | ❑ |
| Increasing use of contractors or agencies | ❑ | ❑ |
| Reducing use of contractors or agencies | ❑ | ❑ |
| Increasing apprenticeships | ❑ | ❑ |
| Decreasing apprenticeships | ❑ | ❑ |
| ⊗Don't know | ❑ | ❑ |

Q10.2 Can you please tell us what these specialist roles are?

*Please enter in the space below*

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q11.1 **COVID-19 Vaccine**

And now, thinking about vaccinations, would you say that the staff who need vaccinations have had them or not?

❍ All the staff who need vaccinations have had them

❍ Most of the staff who need vaccinations have had them

❍ Some of the staff who need vaccinations have had them

❍ None of the staff who need vaccinations have had them

❍ None of our staff need vaccinations

❍ Don't know

Q11.2 Approximately how many staff have had the COVID-19 vaccine?

❍ Total headcount number of staff (approximately)
_____

Q11.3 As far as you are aware, how many staff have refused to have the vaccine?

○ Total headcount number of staff
_____

○ Don't know

Q9.1 Please enter the details of the person nominated to provide this data for your authority or amend the details we hold below if necessary.

○ Name _____

○ Authority _____

○ Job title _____

○ Email address _____

Q30 Please provide details of a secondary contact who we can email any notifications and reports which they might find useful.

○ Name _____

○ Authority _____

○ Job title _____

○ Email address _____

Q10.1
Once you press the 'Submit' button below, you will have completed the survey.

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this survey. You are in control of any personal data that you have provided to us in your response. You can contact us at all times to have the information changed or deleted. You can find our full privacy policy here: click here to see our privacy policy