



HUMAN RESOURCES SUB COMMITTEE

16 JUNE 2025

ANNUAL HUMAN RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

Report by Chief Executive

PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the Report is to detail the Comhairle's HR performance in 2024/25.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Within the Driving Performance Transformation Project the Human Resources and Performance service was used to trial a review of performance reporting. Examination showed that there was a number of separate reports on performance which could be amalgamated into one comprehensive report.
- 2.2 This is the first report using the draft template which aims to provide an overview on recruitment and retention, employee wellbeing, equality, training and apprenticeships.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 **It is recommended that the Comhairle notes the Annual Human Resources and Performance Report 2024/25.**

Contact Officer: Norma Skinner, Chief Officer, HR and Performance



IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The following implications are applicable in terms of the Report.

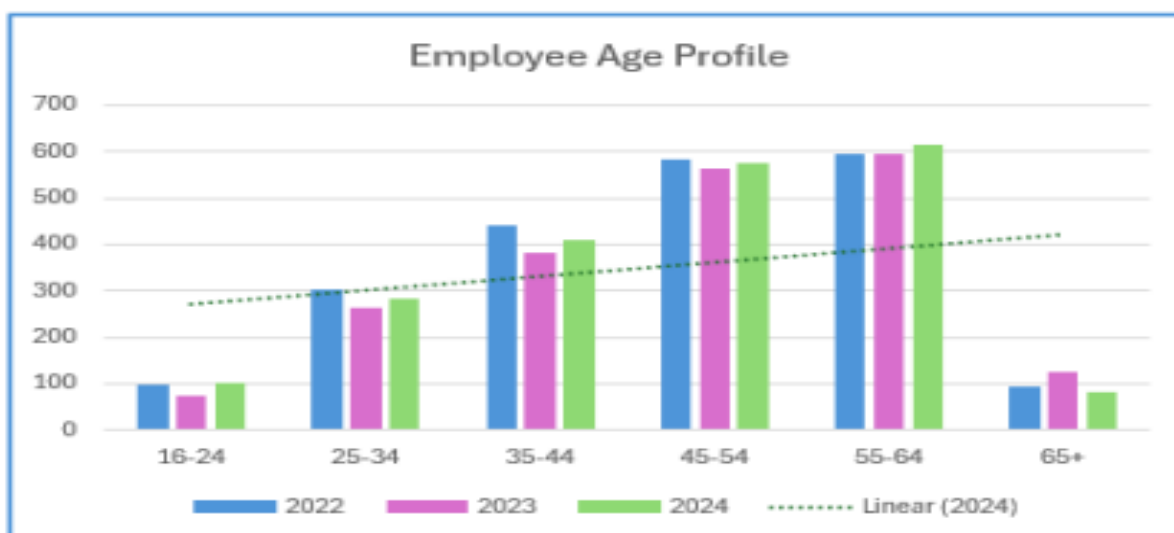
Resource Implications	Implications/None
Financial	None
Legal	None
Staffing	This Report provides corporate employee data
Assets and Property	None
Strategic Implications	Implications/None
Risk	Annual monitoring provides assurance and reduces the risk of impact to service delivery.
Equalities/Child Rights	This Report provides corporate equality information related to employees.
Corporate Strategy	This Report relates to the delivery of community leadership and supporting equality of opportunity.
Environmental Impact	None
Consultation	None

BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The Human Resources and Performance Service is responsible for a wide range of services across the Comhairle including HR and Occupational Health, OD and Strategy, Internal Training, Employability and Accredited Training, Health and Safety, Council Officer, Risk and Business Continuity, Business Planning and Performance Management, Equalities, Resettlement and Reprographics.
- 5.2 The service monitors a range of performance measures on behalf of the Comhairle and reporting on these is detailed in this Report.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION




- 6.1 In 2024/25 the Comhairle had 1581 FTE employees with a headcount of 2025.
- 6.2 The age profile of our employees continues to demonstrate that a significant proportion of the Comhairle's employees are in the 45-64 age range. Services must continue to focus on workforce planning to mitigate the risks associated with an ageing workforce.



- 6.3 In 2024 there were 860 posts advertised, and 2462 applications received. This is an average ratio of 2.86 applications per posts. Of these, 425 were filled and 435 were not appointed to. 157 posts received no applications and 146 received only 1 applicant with over 276 posts readvertised. For comparison in 2023, 503 posts were not appointed to on initial advert, 350 were readvertisements of unfilled posts.
- 6.4 Analysis demonstrates that (*out of the 425 posts filled, 51 of those posts were internal*) 12% of posts were recruited to internally.

Year	No of posts advertised	No of applications received	Average Ratio
2024	860	2462	2.86 applications per post
2023	1077	2013	1.9 applications per post
2022	882	2089	2.4 applications per post
2021	625	1671	2.7 applications per post
2020	303	1231	4.0 applications per post

- 6.5 It is important to measure customer satisfaction with the Comhairle's recruitment process and a survey was undertaken in 2024 asking both managers and applicants about their experience with recruitment. 96% of applicants were satisfied with the recruitment process.

Overall, how satisfied were you with the recruitment process at the Comhairle?			Response Percent
1	Very Satisfied		59.09%
2	Satisfied		36.36%
3	Dissatisfied		4.55%
4	Very Dissatisfied		0.00%

- 6.6 In 2024/25, 266 employees left the Comhairle. The Comhairle's turnover rate is measured by total number of leavers (266) divided by average total number employed (2025) X 100. Historically this has been below national averages for the public sector. The turnover rate for 2024/25 was 13.1% while the national rate in the public sector is around 25%.

DEPARTMENT/NUMBER OF LEAVERS	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Leavers over a 3-year period
Chief Executive	55	30	46	131
Education, Skills & Children's Services	170	201	156	527
Health & Social Care	47	49	56	152
Strategic Finance	3	7	8	18
Total	275	287	266	828

- 6.7 In 2024/25 resignation continued to be the main reason for leaving the Comhairle. At 48% of leavers, this is slightly below the 56% in 2023/24.



Leaving Reason	No. of Employees	%
End of contract	73	27.4
Resignation	128	48.1
Retirement (including early, age related and ill health)	50	18.8
Other	15	5.6

EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

- 7.1 The Comhairle has undertaken employee surveys since 2008, and benchmarks results to understand employee experience. The 2024 survey had a response rate of 35%. The survey has shown that 69% of employees are satisfied with their job, an increase on the 2018 survey.

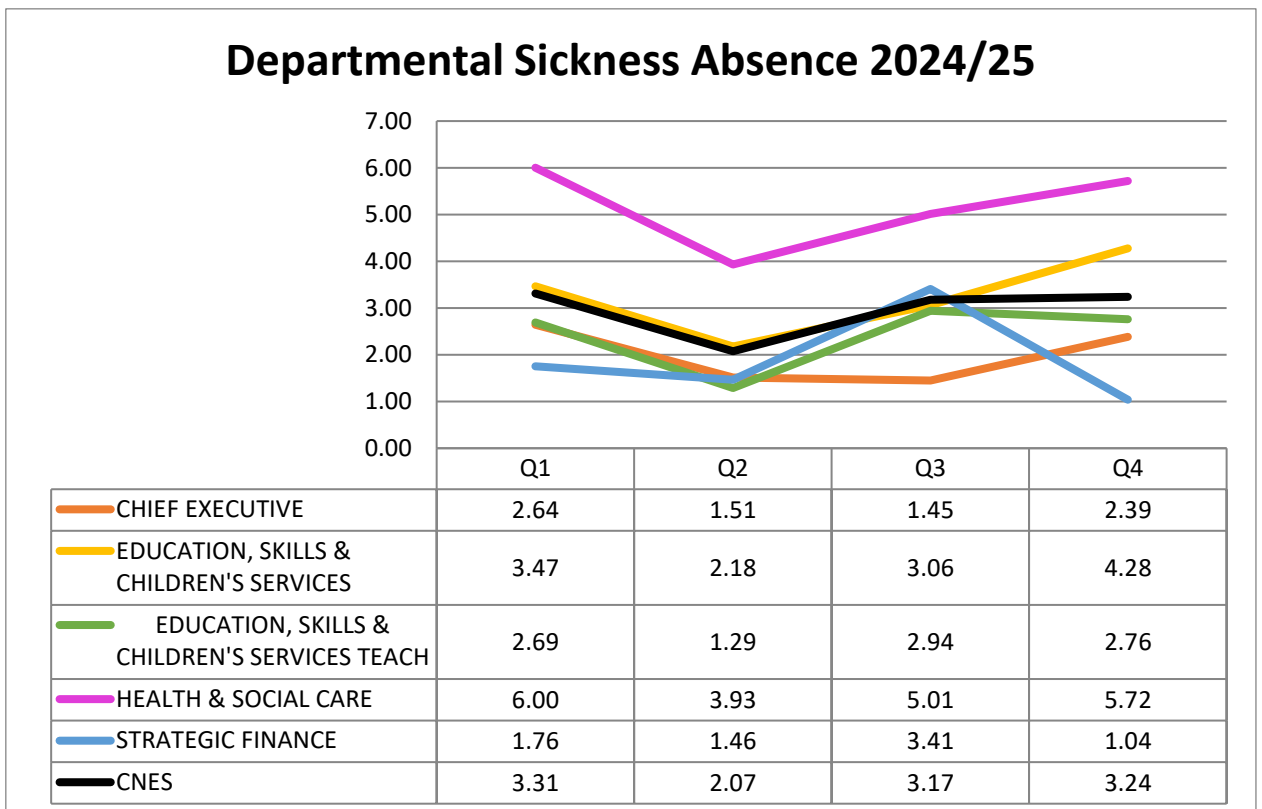
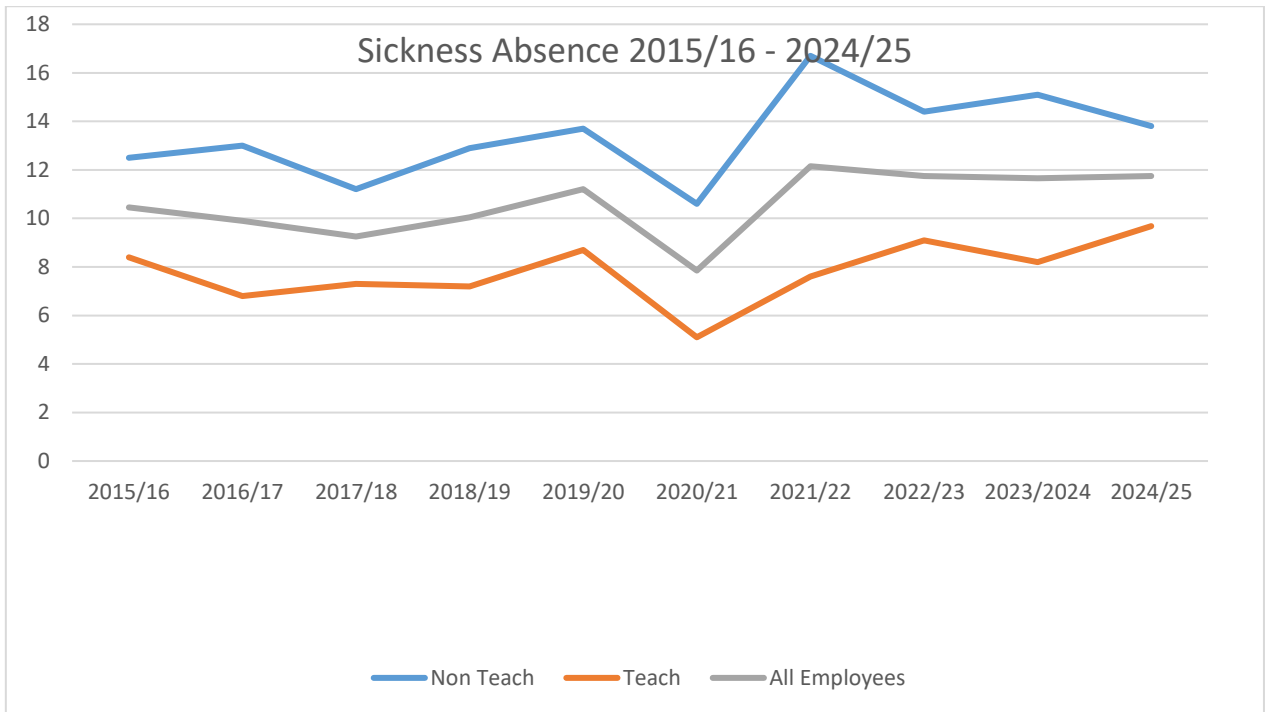
“How satisfied are you with your present job?”

SATISFIED 69%
DISSATISFIED 18%

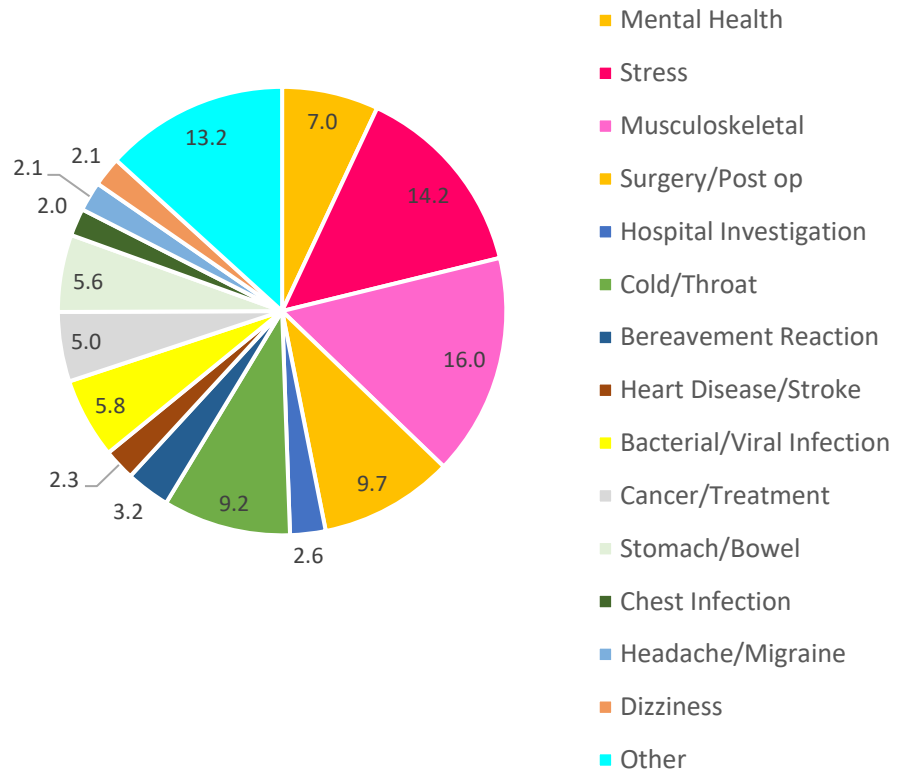
How satisfied are you with your present job?		Response Percent	Response Total
1 Very Satisfied		18.90%	134
2 Fairly Satisfied		50.07%	355
3 Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied		12.69%	90
4 Fairly Dissatisfied		13.26%	94
5 Very Dissatisfied		4.80%	34
6 No Opinion / Prefer not to answer		0.28%	2

- 7.2 The unverified sickness absence data for 2024/25 demonstrates that overall employee absence including Teachers decreased from 13.8 days per employee in 2023/24 to 11.8 days in 2024/25. The main reasons for absence continue to be musculoskeletal, stress related absence, and surgery/post op. The cost of sickness absence in 2024/25 is £2.33M although much of this cost is associated with lost productivity.
- 7.3 The breakdown of this data shows a decrease in non-teaching staff absence at 13.8 days per FTE (15.1 days per FTE in 2023/24) but an increase in Teacher's absence at 9.7 days per FTE (8.2 days per FTE in 2023/24).
- 7.4 HR has been working with managers to ensure sickness absence review meetings are undertaken. These meetings are essential to support employees and to identify interventions to support returns to work wherever possible.

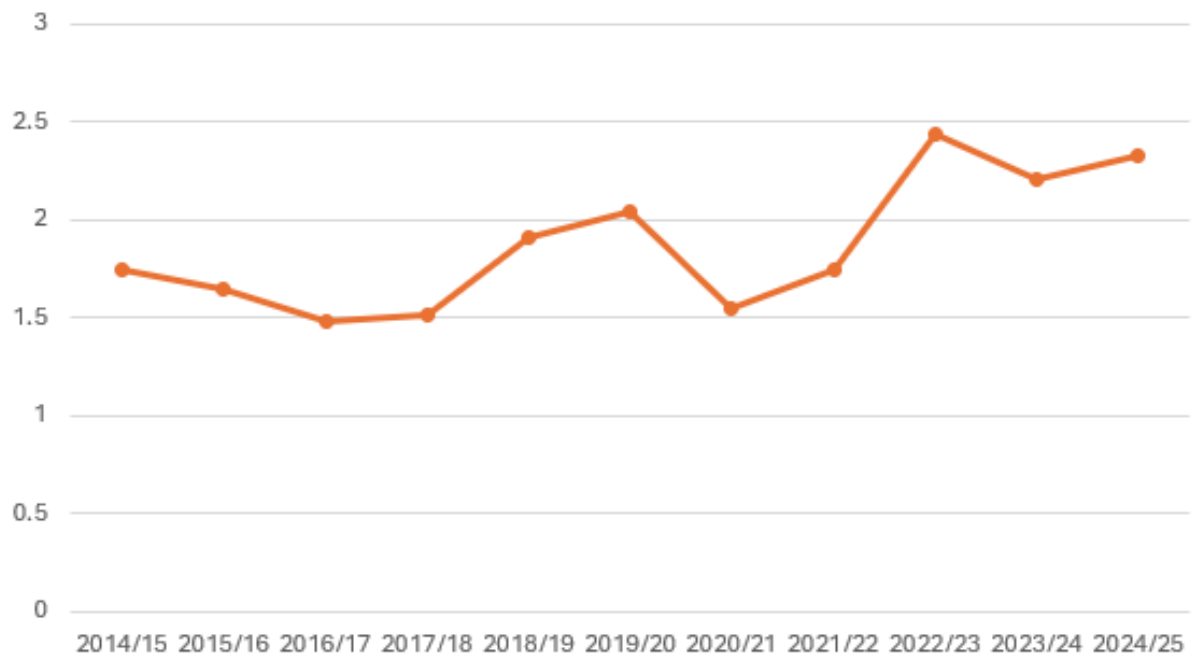




Reasons for Sickness Absence % 2024/25



Sickness Cost (£)million



- 7.5 Special leave rates for 2024/25 are detailed below calculated by hours taken. The costs for paid special leave relate to lost productivity. The savings generated through unpaid leave are a real cost saving for the Comhairle.

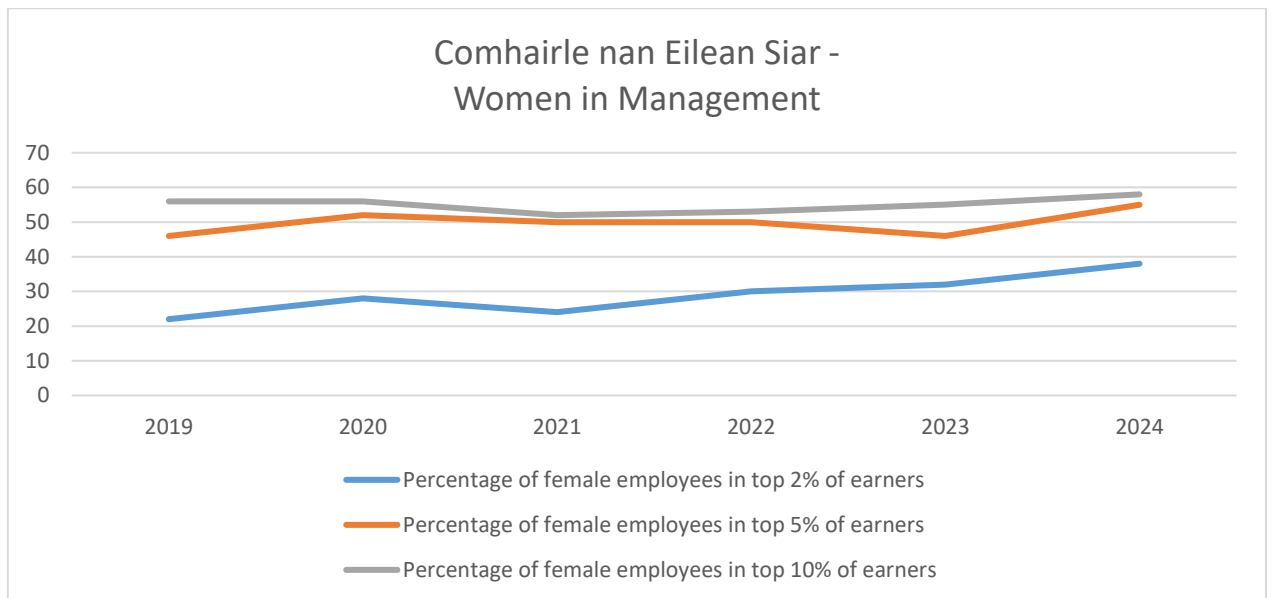
Reason	Paid Hours	Unpaid Hours	Total SL Hours	Costs (£)	Savings (£)
Bereavement	2103		2103	38028	0
Charity & Community Work		286	286	0	6080
Community Service	113		113	2131	0
Election Duty	350		350	6916	0
Emergency Domestic		144	144	0	2283
Family/Friendly		3090	3090	431	55728
Jury Service/Witness	269		269	4512	0
Kinship Carers and Foster Carers	4		4	78	0
Medical Appointment	1716		1716	34027	0
Medical Appointment & Travel Time	569		569	11330	78
Probationer Teacher - Interview Attendance	60		60	616	0
Requirement to Escort to Hospital	1552		1552	29390	220
Time Off for Dependants		1345	1345	152	19634
Trade Union Duties	384		384	10014	0
Grand Total	7120	4865	11984	137626	84024

EQUALITY

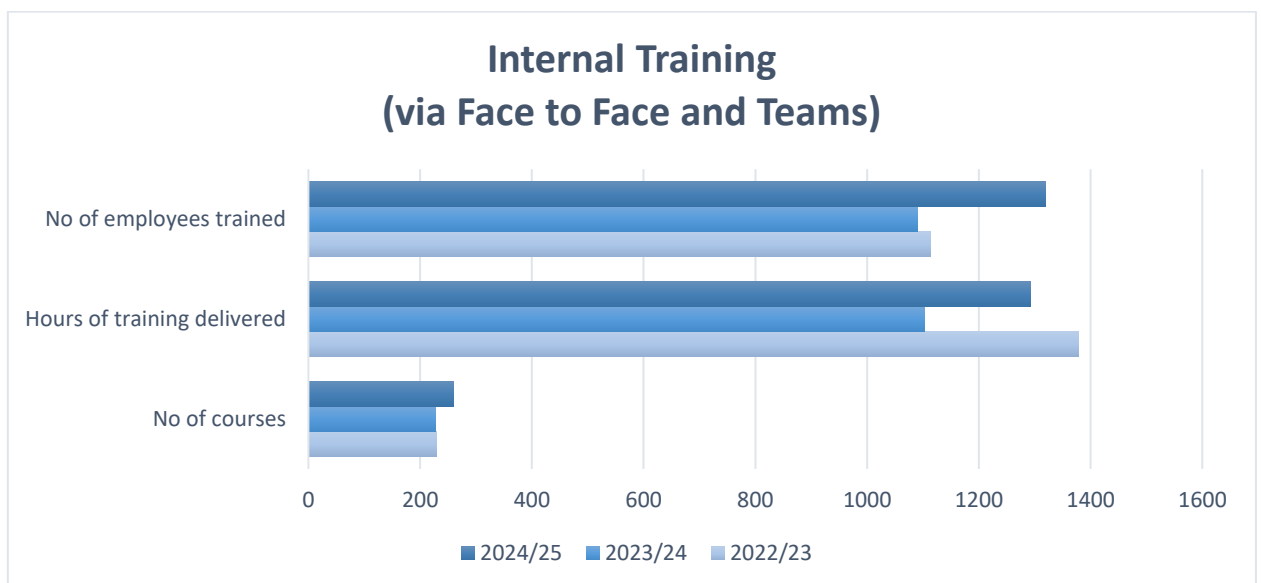
- 8.1 In recent years there has been some improvement in the equality statistics within the Comhairle. It should be noted however that the numbers these percentages relate to are small, and therefore any movement of employees within these percentage bands can influence the statistics.

- 38% of senior management positions are occupied by women in 2024
- The overall gender pay gap was 9.6% in 2024 down from 12.3% in 2022.
- The disability pay gap was 10.2% in 2024.
- The Minority Racial Group pay gap was 7.3% in 2024.





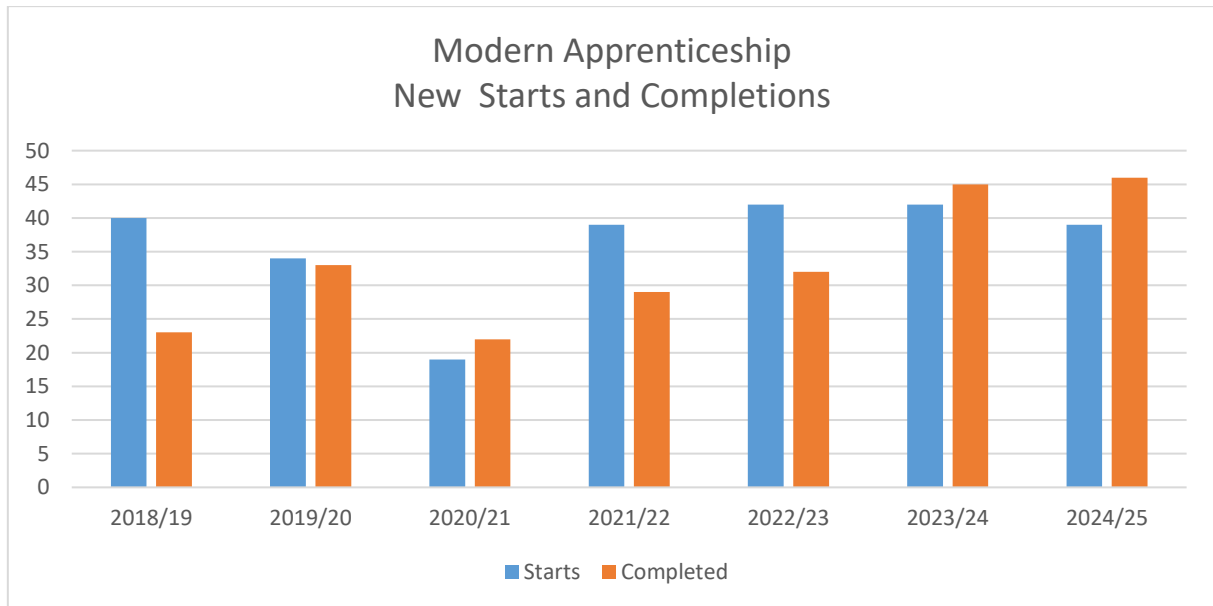
TRAINING



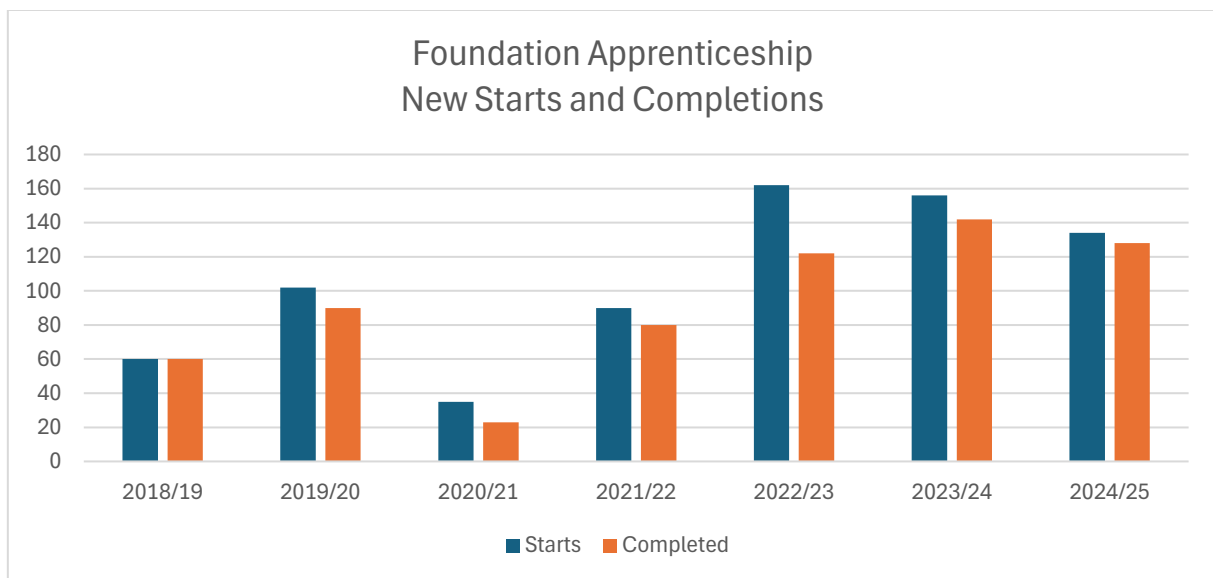
- 9.1 The training team delivered (via face to face or over Microsoft Teams) 260 training courses to 1,320 employees and spent 1,292 hours training employees in 2024/25.
- 9.2 Through the online training platform, LearnPro, there were 46 courses available including Freedom of Information, Equality and Diversity, Fire Awareness, Information Security and Data Protection. 6,340 courses were completed by employees. With 900 unique Employee accounts, this will include employees undertaking numerous courses and gives a positive indication of engagement with internal training. In comparison, 2023/24 had 4,024 completions with 747 unique employee accounts.
- 9.3 In 2025 a number of courses were made mandatory within LearnPro, the Comhairle's online learning platform. This included training on Cyber Security and Equality and Diversity. Completion rates are currently 37% and 28% respectively with an average of 25% across all the mandatory training courses. Follow up will be undertaken to encourage compliance.
- 9.4 In 2024/25 feedback was received from 400 participants and overall satisfaction was rated at 95.5%. 95% of participants believed their learning objectives were achieved, 94% felt their understanding of the subject has been improved and 95.3% felt their skills had been improved.

APPRENTICESHIPS AND INTERNAL COMHAIRLE QUALIFICATIONS

- 10.1 There has been significant work over recent years to support and promote apprenticeships across the Western Isles. Analysis of new starts and completion rates over recent years demonstrates that on average, 90% of MAs achieved their SVQ.

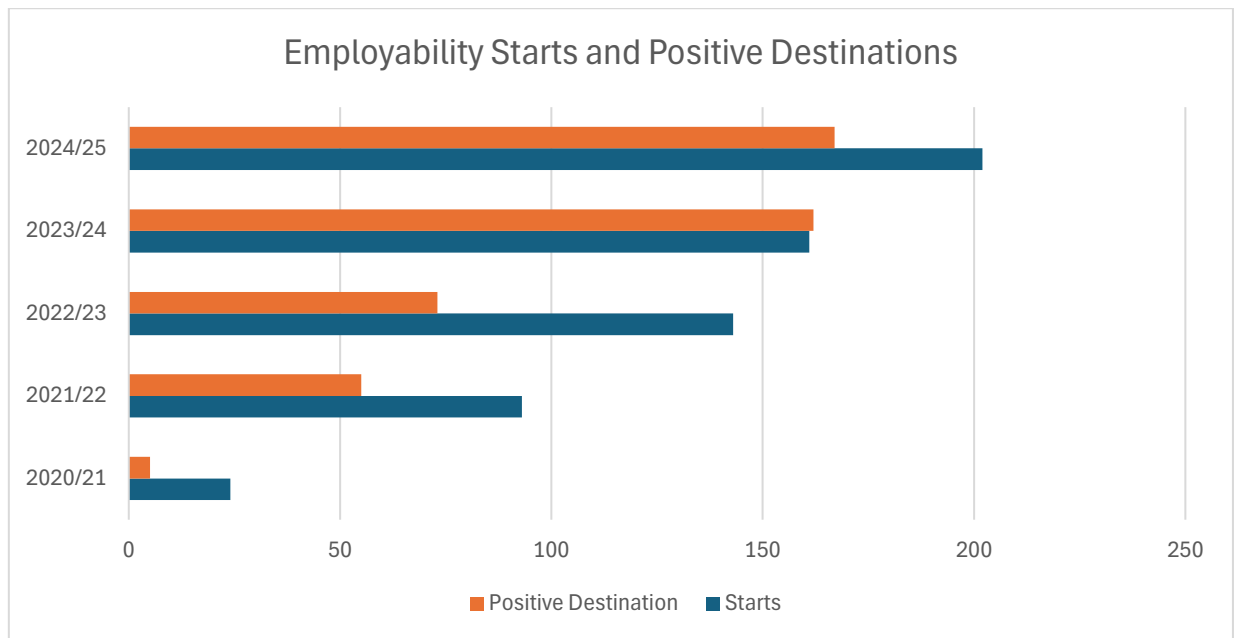


- 10.2 The Comhairle worked with SDS to develop the Foundation Apprenticeship offer to school aged pupils in 2018/19. The Foundation Apprenticeship is delivered across the four secondary schools in the Western Isles. Across the years since 2018/19 an average of 95% of FAs pupils achieved their qualification.



- 10.3 In 2024/25 there were 202 Employability starts with 83% of them going on to a positive destination. Employability supports a number of funded programmes including supported employment, No-one Left Behind and Parental Employability Support Fund.





10.4 The Comhairle currently has 32 apprentices in post many of whom will go on to achieve a post within the Comhairle.

