

# COVID-19 Workforce Survey

Research Report

Relating to the week ending 9 April 2021



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# Contents

- Summary ..... 1
  - Background..... 1
  - Key findings ..... 1
- Introduction..... 4
- Methodology ..... 4
  - Technical notes ..... 5
- COVID-19 Workforce Survey: week ending 9 April 2021 ..... 6
  - Size of local authority workforce ..... 6
    - Workforce as at 1 March 2020 ..... 6
    - Recruitment week ending 9 April 2021 ..... 6
    - Current headcount as at 9 April 2021 ..... 7
  - Death in service ..... 8
  - Furloughed staff ..... 9
    - Reason staff were furloughed..... 9
  - Redeployed staff ..... 10
  - Unavailable for work ..... 11
    - Reason staff were unavailable for work..... 11
  - Service disruption ..... 13
  - Availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) ..... 14
  - Availability of testing ..... 15
- Planning ahead ..... 16
  - Recruitment difficulties ..... 16
  - COVID-19 / EU transition recruitment..... 20
  - Thinking about staffing ..... 21
  - COVID-19 vaccines ..... 21
- Employment support schemes..... 23



# 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 14 April 2021 and covers the week ending 9 April 2021. The overall response rate was 55 per cent and covered around a third of the total workforce.

## Key findings

- Some 29 per cent of councils reported recruiting additional staff (of any type including casual, agency, contingent, etc) in the week ending 9 April 2021. In total 1,636 additional staff had been recruited in responding authorities: the median number of staff per authority was five and the mean was 26.
- Nearly three-quarters of respondent councils (138 respondents) have recorded deaths in service since lockdown. A total of 691 deaths in service were reported by respondents since the start of lockdown (cause not specified).
- Thirty-eight per cent of councils reported that they had furloughed at least one member of staff. In total, responding authorities reported there were 6,477 staff furloughed in the week ending 9 April 2021, which was 1.2 per cent of the current workforce.
- The main reason given for furloughing staff was that the funding had stopped (51 per cent) or that a service had stopped (43 per cent).
- Some 62 per cent of councils had redeployed staff. In total, in the responding authorities, there were 3,822 staff redeployed in the week ending 9 April 2021, which was one per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff redeployed was one and the mean was 22.
- Just over four out of five councils (83 per cent) reported that they had at least one member of staff unavailable for work. In total, respondents reported there were 22,323 staff unavailable for work in the week ending 9 April 2021, four per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff unavailable for work was 27 and the mean was 125.
- Fifty-five per cent of staff were unavailable due to 'non-COVID sickness' and 12 per cent were unavailable through 'self-isolation (other)'.

- When asked whether individual services had enough staff to run them normally or not, the worst affected service was public health, with 11 per cent of councils with this service reporting they were operating with severe disruption due to staffing numbers. A further 19 per cent of single tier and county councils reported that public health 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, 53 per cent of councils reported they were not operating normally.
- Councils were asked about the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 testing for staff. Ninety-nine per cent reported they had about the right amount of PPE or more than they need. Eighty-eight 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: 99 (50 per cent) said they were. Councils were subsequently asked to choose from a list of specialist occupations where they were experiencing difficulties: 100 per cent of county councils were having difficulties recruiting children's social workers.
- In district councils, 55 per cent of those that responded to the question said they were having problems recruiting planning officers and 45 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, 43 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 in response to COVID-19 and/or the EU transition or not: 37 per cent said they were likely recruit additional staff in response to COVID-19, 39 per cent said they were not likely to recruit additional staff at all. Nineteen per cent of respondents said they did not know.
- Councils were asked to look ahead and think about staff and what they were considering doing in the current financial year. Nineteen per cent of those that answered this question said that they were thinking of reducing staff numbers overall in 2021/22. Thirty-eight per cent of those that answered this question said they were thinking to increase apprenticeships 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: 60 per

cent reported that all or most of the staff who need the vaccine had received it.

- Councils were asked whether they had used each of a list of employment support schemes or opportunities in the previous 12 months, whether they were currently using them, or whether they planned to use them in the next 12 months. The most used scheme was apprenticeship incentives, with 71 per cent of councils reporting they had used, were currently using or planned to use these.

## 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 workforce survey was sent out to all heads of human resources in England and Wales. Findings from the survey 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 14 April 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 355 councils). The survey was in the field for two weeks. A total of 197 councils responded, which is a response rate of 55 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.

Type of authority	Total number	Number of responses	Response rate %
District	181	89	49
County	24	19	79
London borough	33	20	61
Metropolitan district	36	22	61
Unitary	59	36	61
Welsh unitary	22	11	50
All	355	197	55



**Table 2: Response rate by region**

Region	Total number	Number of responses	Response rate %
Eastern	50	36	72
East Midlands	39	19	49
London	33	20	61
North East	12	9	75
North West	41	23	56
South East	70	31	44
South West	33	15	45
Wales	22	11	50
West Midlands	33	13	39
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 9 April 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 527,108 staff or approximately a third of the total local government workforce.

There are 174 single tier and county councils in England and Wales 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 108 councils that responded to the survey and had responsibility for schools, 22 (11 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 9 April 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 9 April 2021.

Of the councils that responded, 58 (29 per cent) reported recruiting additional staff. In total 1,636 additional staff were recruited from responding authorities during the week ending 9 April 2021. The median number of staff per council was five and the mean was 26.

**Table 3: Has the council recruited additional staff (of any type including casual, agency, contingent, etc during week ending 9 April 2021)?**

	Yes		No. of additional staff		
	No.	%	Total	Median	Mean
County	9	47	91	7	11
District	13	15	82	4	6
London borough	13	65	653	5	13
Metropolitan borough	8	36	140	6	28
Unitary	11	31	281	7	35
Welsh unitary	4	36	389	2	2
English single tier	31	40	1072	5	43
All councils	58	29	1636	5	26

Base: all respondents 197 councils – 19 counties, 89 districts, 20 London boroughs, 22 metropolitan borough, 36 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 78 English single tier)

### Current headcount as at 9 April 2021

The total headcount for those councils that responded had increased by 0.6 per cent since the 1 March 2020 and now stands at 530,441 on the 9 April 2021.

**Table 4: Change in headcount from 1 March 2020 – 9 April 2021**

	At 1 March	At 9 April	% change
County	125,612	128,299	2.1
District	39,666	39,625	-0.1
London borough	65,654	64,535	-1.7
Metropolitan borough	117,048	119,149	1.8
Unitary	109,457	109,194	-0.2
Welsh unitary	69,671	69,639	0.0
English single tier	273,804	274,571	0.3
All councils	527,108	530,441	0.6

Base: all respondents 197 councils – 19 counties, 89 districts, 20 London boroughs, 22 metropolitan borough, 36 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 78 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 193 councils that answered this question, 138 (72 per cent) recorded deaths in service as of 9 April 2021, totalling 691 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?**

	<b>No. deaths</b>	<b>No. of councils recording one or more deaths</b>
County	138	18
District	54	39
London borough	103	20
Metropolitan borough	173	21
Unitary	155	30
Welsh unitary	68	10
English single tier	409	71
All councils	691	138

Base: all respondents (193 councils – 18 counties, 88 districts, 20 London boroughs, 21 metropolitan boroughs, 35 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 76 English single tier)

## Furloughed staff

Councils were asked to provide details of staff that were furloughed in the week ending 9 April 2021. Of councils that answered the question, 52 (38 per cent) reported that they had furloughed at least one member of staff.

In total there were 6,477 staff furloughed in responding councils in the week ending 9 April, 1.2 per cent of their current workforce. This was 25 per cent less than reported in the previous survey. Of those councils that had furloughed staff, the median number was 53 and the mean was 123; but this varied considerably across different types of authority.

Table 6: No. of staff furloughed (week ending 9 April)					
	No. of councils	% of councils	Total no. staff	Of those councils with furloughed staff	
				Median	Mean
County	7	39	2,385	224	341
District	15	17	1,397	47	93
London borough	4	25	58	11	15
Metropolitan borough	8	36	354	25	44
Unitary	11	33	1,031	23	57
Welsh unitary	7	70	1,252	180	208
English single tier	23	32	1,443	27	63
All councils	52	28	6,477	53	123

Base: all respondents (185 councils – 18 counties, 86 districts, 16 London boroughs, 22 metropolitan boroughs, 3 English unitaries, 10 Welsh unitaries, 71 English single tier)

## Reason staff were furloughed

The councils that had furloughed staff in the week ending 9 April 2021 were subsequently asked to indicate the reason the member of staff had been furloughed, and 45 (87 per cent) were able to provide the reason or reasons.

In the week ending 9 April 2021, 43 per cent of staff were furloughed because 'Service has been stopped' and 51 per cent of staff were furloughed because the 'Funding has stopped'. The pattern varied across authority types: in Welsh unitaries, 97 per cent of staff were furloughed due to 'Service has been stopped'; while in counties, 83 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	83	0	0	7	10
District	12	0	0	88	0
London borough	16	0	0	42	42
Metropolitan borough	36	0	0	64	0
Unitary	43	0	0	54	3
Welsh unitary	0	2	1	97	0
English single tier	39	0	0	56	5
All councils	43	0	0	51	5

Base: respondents with furloughed staff (45 councils – six counties, 14 districts, two London boroughs, eight metropolitan boroughs, eight English unitaries, seven Welsh unitaries, 18 English single tier)

## Redeployed staff

Councils were asked to indicate the number of staff that had been redeployed in the week ending 9 April 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 3,822 staff redeployed by responding authorities in the week ending 9 April, one per cent of their current workforce. The median number of staff redeployed was one and the mean was 22.

**Table 8: No. of staff redeployed (week ending 9 April)**

	No. of councils	% of councils	Total no. staff	Median	Mean
County	8	57	235	11	17
District	26	32	474	0	6
London borough	9	60	468	5	31
Metropolitan borough	15	88	1,388	49	82
Unitary	16	59	724	6	27
Welsh unitary	9	82	533	0	48
English single tier	40	68	2,580	20	44
All councils	83	50	3,822	1	22

Base: all respondents (166 councils – 14 counties, 82 districts, 15 London boroughs, 17 metropolitan boroughs, 27 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 59 English single tier)

## Unavailable for work

Councils were asked to indicate the number of staff that were unavailable for work in the week ending 9 April 2021. Of councils that answered the question, 148 (83 per cent) reported that they had at least one member of staff unavailable.

In total there were 22,323 staff unavailable for work in responding authorities in the week ending 9 April, four per cent of their current workforce. The median number of staff unavailable for work was 27 and the mean was 125.

	<b>No. of councils</b>	<b>% of councils</b>	<b>Total no. staff</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mean</b>
County	18	100	5,443	194	302
District	59	71	1,065	9	13
London borough	17	94	2,383	70	132
Metropolitan borough	16	89	4,509	261	251
Unitary	31	94	6,307	97	191
Welsh unitary	7	78	2,616	193	291
English single tier	64	93	13,199	125	191
All councils	148	83	22,323	27	125

Base: all respondents (179 councils – 19 counties, 83 districts, 18 London boroughs, 18 metropolitan boroughs, 33 English unitaries, nine Welsh unitaries, 69 English single tier)

### **Reason staff were unavailable for work**

The 148 councils that reported they had one or more member of staff unavailable for work in the week ending 9 April 2021 were subsequently asked to indicate the reason for them being unavailable, and 145 (98 per cent) were able to provide the reason.

In the week ending 9 April 2021, 55 per cent of staff were unavailable because of 'Non-COVID sickness' and 12 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. Seven 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?**

	<b>Non- COVID sickness</b>	<b>Confirmed/ Suspected COVID</b>	<b>Self- isolation (Track and trace)</b>	<b>Self- isolation (Other)</b>	<b>Caring for dependents/ at risk relative/som eone who is sick</b>	<b>Other reason</b>
	<b>% staff</b>	<b>% staff</b>	<b>% staff</b>	<b>% staff</b>	<b>% staff</b>	<b>% staff</b>
County	48	12	0	27	0	12
District	64	3	1	3	1	29
London borough	48	7	0	4	1	40
Metropolitan borough	56	7	0	11	0	26
Unitary	52	5	2	9	1	32
Welsh unitary	76	7	3	2	1	11
English single tier	52	6	1	9	1	31
All councils	55	7	1	12	1	24

Base: respondents with unavailable staff (145 councils –17 counties, 58 districts, 17 London boroughs, 16 metropolitan boroughs, 30 English unitaries, seven Welsh unitaries, 63 English single tier)



## Service disruption

When asked whether individual services had enough staff to run them normally or not, the worst affected service was public health, with 11 per cent of councils with this service reporting they were operating with severe disruption due to staffing numbers. A further 19 per cent of single tier and county councils reported that public health services were operating with moderate disruption. Also badly affected was adult social care (directly employed), with 24 per cent reporting moderate disruption and schools, with 26 per cent 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, 53 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.**

	<b>Base</b>	<b>Operating normally</b>	<b>Operating with minor disruption</b>	<b>Operating with moderate disruption</b>	<b>Operating with severe disruption</b>
	<b>No. councils</b>	<b>% councils</b>	<b>% councils</b>	<b>% councils</b>	<b>% councils</b>
Adult social care (directly employed)	102	36	36	24	4
Bereavement services	129	61	28	11	0
Children's services	100	45	33	19	3
Environment health	164	46	33	16	4
Household waste (doorstep collection)	147	73	18	7	1
Housing and homelessness services	167	63	24	12	1
Planning	179	66	25	8	1
Public health	119	45	25	19	11
Revenue and benefits	163	56	29	13	1
Schools	78	44	24	26	6
Trading standards	97	48	37	11	3
Overall council	190	47	39	13	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 180 (91 per cent of councils who responded to the survey) answered the question, of which 99 per cent reported they had about the right amount of PPE or more than they needed; whilst one 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?**

	<b>More than we need</b>	<b>About what we need</b>	<b>Less than we need</b>	<b>We don't need it</b>
	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils
County	0	100	0	0
District	9	89	0	3
London borough	16	84	0	0
Metropolitan borough	15	85	0	0
Unitary	24	76	0	0
Welsh unitary	9	91	0	0
English single tier	19	81	0	0
All councils	12	87	0	1

Base: all respondents (180 councils – 18 counties, 79 districts, 19 London boroughs, 20 metropolitan boroughs, 33 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 72 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 187 (95 per cent of councils who responded to the survey) answered the question, of which 88 per cent said all the staff that need testing can access it, and 10 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?**

	<b>All the staff that need testing can access it</b>	<b>Most of the staff that need testing can access it</b>	<b>Some of the staff that need testing can access it</b>	<b>None of the staff that need testing can access it</b>	<b>None of our staff need testing</b>
	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils
County	78	22	0	0	0
District	84	10	0	0	6
London borough	89	11	0	0	0
Metropolitan borough	95	5	0	0	0
Unitary	92	8	0	0	0
Welsh unitary	100	0	0	0	0
English single tier	92	8	0	0	0
All councils	88	10	0	0	3

Base: all respondents (187 councils – 18 counties, 83 districts, 18 London boroughs, 21 metropolitan boroughs, 36 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 75 English single tier)

## Planning ahead

### **Recruitment difficulties**

Councils were asked if they were experiencing significant difficulties recruiting for some occupations and roles: 99 (50 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 78 per cent of English single tier councils and 100 per cent of county councils were having difficulties recruiting children's social workers. In district councils, 55 per cent of those that responded to the question said they were having problems recruiting planning officers and 45 per cent said they were having problems recruiting environmental health officers.

From the specialist occupations and roles to which they were having difficulties recruiting, councils were asked to choose the five where difficulties were 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. Every county council (100 per cent) 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. Forty-three 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	7	18	30	7	8	0	12	13
Adult's social workers	86	-	70	47	36	50	46	55
Building control officers	-	24	20	0	20	50	14	20
Chartered surveyors	29	18	10	13	20	0	16	18
Children's social workers	100	-	60	87	80	50	78	82
Economic development officers	-	3	0	0	4	0	2	6
Educational psychologists	71	-	40	20	20	0	24	33
Engineers	43	0	20	27	24	0	24	18
Environmental health officers	-	45	20	40	24	50	28	35
Health visitors	14	-	0	0	0	0	0	3
Homelessness officers	-	9	10	7	4	0	6	7
ICT professionals	29	3	40	7	16	50	18	15
Legal professionals	43	24	40	40	24	0	32	30
Mental health social workers	50	-	40	27	16	50	24	30
Occupational therapists (adults')	50	-	40	27	24	0	28	32
Occupational therapists (children's)	29	-	30	0	8	0	10	14
Planning officers	36	55	20	7	8	0	10	28
Public health officers	29	-	30	13	28	0	24	24
Regulatory services officers	7	0	10	13	4	0	8	5
School nurses	7	-	0	0	4	0	2	3
Test and trace team leaders	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)	0	0	0	13	0	0	4	2
Trading standards officers	43	0	20	7	8	0	10	17
Youth workers	7	-	0	0	0	0	0	2
Other	14	15	20	13	8	0	12	13

Base: all authorities experiencing recruitment difficulties (99 councils – 14 counties, 33 districts, 10 London boroughs, 15 metropolitan boroughs, 25 English unitaries, two Welsh unitary, 50 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	17	0	7	4	0	13	8
Adult's social workers	50	-	44	43	33	50	49	41
Building control officers	-	27	11	0	0	50	15	13
Chartered surveyors	0	13	0	7	4	0	17	6
Children's social workers	100	-	56	93	75	50	83	81
Economic development officers	-	3	0	0	4	0	2	3
Educational psychologists	50	-	33	7	13	0	26	22
Engineers	7	0	0	7	13	0	26	5
Environmental health officers	-	47	22	21	17	50	30	30
Health visitors	7	-	0	0	0	0	0	2
Homelessness officers	-	10	11	7	4	0	6	13
ICT professionals	7	3	22	7	17	50	19	11
Legal professionals	14	23	33	43	13	0	34	23
Mental health social workers	36	-	33	21	4	50	26	21
Occupational therapists (adults')	29	-	11	14	4	0	30	13
Occupational therapists (children's)	14	-	0	0	0	0	11	3
Planning officers	7	50	11	7	4	0	11	20
Public health officers	21	-	11	7	25	0	26	17
Regulatory services officers	0	0	0	0	4	0	9	1
School nurses	7	-	0	0	0	0	2	2
Social care commissioners	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0
Test and trace team leaders	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	1
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
Trading standards officers	7	0	11	0	8	0	6	6
Youth workers	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	14	13	11	14	8	0	13	12

Base: authorities experiencing recruitment difficulties (93 councils – 14 counties, 30 districts, nine London boroughs, 14 metropolitan boroughs, 24 English unitaries, two Welsh unitaries, 47 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	Both	Don't know
	No. councils	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils
Accountants	7	29	29	43	0
Adult's social workers	26	50	19	31	0
Building control officers	10	40	10	50	0
Chartered surveyors	6	33	33	33	0
Children's social workers	51	33	20	43	0
Economic development officers	2	100	0	0	0
Educational psychologists	14	36	14	50	0
Engineers	5	40	20	20	20
Environmental health officers	24	38	13	50	0
Health visitors	1	0	0	100	0
Homelessness officers	6	67	0	33	0
ICT professionals	10	40	30	30	0
Legal professionals	21	24	14	62	0
Mental health social workers	13	31	23	38	8
Occupational therapists (adults')	8	38	13	50	0
Occupational therapists (children's)	2	50	50	0	0
Planning officers	19	53	11	37	0
Public health officers	11	36	36	18	9
Regulatory services officers	1	0	0	0	100
School nurses	1	0	100	0	0
Test and trace team leaders	1	0	100	0	0
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)	0	0	0	0	0
Trading standards officers	4	0	0	75	25
Youth workers	0	0	0	0	0
Other	11	45	27	27	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 197 councils who responded to the question, 37 per cent said they were likely recruit additional staff in response to COVID-19, while 39 per cent said they were not likely to recruit additional staff at all. Nineteen per cent of respondents 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	53	5	0	26	16
District	26	2	1	47	24
London borough	50	5	0	20	25
Metropolitan borough	59	0	0	27	14
Unitary	42	11	3	31	14
Welsh unitary	18	0	0	73	9
English single tier	49	6	1	27	17
All councils	37	4	1	39	19

Base: all respondents (197 councils – 19 counties, 89 districts, 20 London boroughs, 22 metropolitan boroughs, 36 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 78 English single tier)



## Thinking about staffing

Councils were asked about staffing and what they were currently considering doing within this financial year (2021/22). A total of 167 (85 per cent) answered the question, of which 60 per cent said they were 'making no substantive changes'. Thirty-eight per cent said they were currently considering 'increasing apprenticeships', 30 per cent were considering 'reducing the use of contractors or agencies' and 19 per cent were considering 'reducing staff numbers overall'

**Table 15: Thinking about staffing, is your council currently considering doing any of the following within this financial year?**

	County	District	London borough	Metropolitan borough	Unitary	Welsh unitary	English single tier	All councils
	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils
Making no substantive changes to staffing numbers	61	74	38	47	40	82	42	60
Increasing apprenticeships	56	22	69	58	40	27	52	38
Reducing use of contractors or agencies	39	16	56	47	43	0	48	30
Reducing staff numbers overall	11	12	50	26	23	0	31	19
Recruiting more staff in specialist roles	28	4	13	21	17	0	17	11
Recruitment freeze	0	8	19	26	17	0	20	11
Recruiting more staff overall	0	4	0	5	10	0	6	4
Increasing use of contractors or agencies	0	1	6	5	10	0	8	4
Decreasing apprenticeships	0	3	0	0	3	0	2	2

Base: asked to all respondents (167 councils – 18 counties, 73 districts, 16 London boroughs, 19 metropolitan boroughs, 30 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 65 English single tier)

## 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 197 councils answered the question, of which 60 per cent reported that all or most of the staff who needed the vaccine had received it. A further 25 per cent of councils said they didn't know; and four per cent of councils reported that none of their staff who needed vaccinations had received them.

Within the 45 councils (23 per cent) who were able to provide a figure, a total of 60,184 staff had received the vaccine. Within the 29 councils (15 per cent) who were able to provide a figure, 1,535 staff had refused it.

**Table 19: 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
	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils
County	0	63	21	0	0	16
District	27	24	4	0	8	37
London borough	10	40	20	0	0	30
Metropolitan borough	23	59	9	0	0	9
Unitary	17	53	14	0	3	14
Welsh unitary	45	36	9	0	0	9
English single tier	17	51	14	0	1	17
All councils	21	39	10	0	4	25

Base: all respondents (197 councils – 19 counties, 89 districts, 20 London boroughs, 22 metropolitan boroughs, 36 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 78 English single tier)

## Employment support schemes

The government provides support programmes and incentives to employers to provide opportunities for young people and the unemployed. Councils were asked whether they had used each of a list of employment support schemes or opportunities in the previous 12 months, whether they were currently using them, or whether they planned to use them in the next 12 months. The most used scheme was apprenticeship incentives, which 71 per cent of councils had used, were currently using or planned to use. This was followed by the Kickstart scheme which had been used or was planned to be used by 62 per cent of councils.

**Table 18: Please let us know whether your council has used each of the following schemes or opportunities in the past, whether you are using them now, or will be in the next 12 months.**

	<b>We have used this scheme in the previous 12 months</b>	<b>We are currently using this scheme</b>	<b>We intend to use this scheme in the next 12 months</b>	<b>We have not used this scheme and do not plan to</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils
Traineeships	7	7	12	28	46
Restart	2	2	7	33	56
Kickstart Gateway	3	18	14	25	40
Kickstart (Scheme)	4	26	32	12	26
Apprenticeship Incentives	13	38	20	6	23
T Level Industry Placements	1	1	13	28	57
Social Work Together	5	5	5	34	51
Environmental Health Together	1	2	7	23	66
National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP)	9	16	6	28	41
Graduate Support	3	9	3	33	51

Base: all respondents (197 councils – 19 counties, 89 districts, 20 London boroughs, 22 metropolitan boroughs, 36 English unitaries, 11 Welsh unitaries, 78 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](mailto: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 9 April 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 9 April 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 excluding permanent and fixed term staff in the week ending 9 April?

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 9 April	

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 blank.*

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

Q3.1 How many staff, if any, do you currently (week ending 9 April 2021) have in the categories below?

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

	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 9 April 2021. If zero please enter "0". If you do not know please leave blank.*

	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 9 April 2021.*

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

*\*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 show if there are enough of the right staff 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 up to five 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 currently considering doing any of the following with this financial year (2021/22)?

	2020/21 (current financial year)	2021/22
Making no substantive changes to staffing numbers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruiting more staff overall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reducing staff numbers overall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruitment freeze	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruiting more staff in specialist roles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increasing use of contractors or agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reducing use of contractors or agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increasing apprenticeships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decreasing apprenticeships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



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

*Please enter in the space below*

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**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)

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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

#### Q12.1 **Government employment support schemes**

The government provides support programmes and incentives to employers to provide opportunities for young people and the unemployed.

Please let us know whether your council has used each of the following schemes or opportunities in the past, whether you are using them now, or will be in the next 12 months.

*Please tick all that apply*

	We have used this scheme in the previous 12 months	We are currently using this scheme	We intend to use this scheme in the next 12 months	We have not used this scheme and do not plan to	Don't know
<p><b>Traineeships</b> <i>A traineeship is a work placement programme designed to prepare participants for the world of work and give them a leg up towards an apprenticeship or starting role.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Restart A</b> <i>restart scheme gives Universal Credit claimants who have been out of work for at least 12 months enhanced support to find jobs in their local area.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Kickstart Gateway A**  
*Kickstart Scheme application must be for a minimum of 30 job placements. If a single employer is unable provide as many as 30 job placements, employers can use a Kickstart gateway to access funding.*

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- 

**Kickstart (Scheme)** *The Kickstart Scheme provides funding to employers to create job placements for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit.*

- 
- 
- 
- 
-

**Apprenticeship Incentives**

*Government introduced apprenticeship incentives in 2020. Currently an employer can access government incentive of £3,000 for new employees of any age who start their apprenticeship from 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021.*



**T Level Industry Placements**  
*T Levels are new 2 year technical programmes for young people aged 16-19.*

*Industry placements will be a mandatory and critical part of every T Level and demonstrate a shift from traditional work experience to a longer, more substantial period of time in the workplace.*



**Social Work Together** *Social Work Together helps councils quickly access qualified social workers to bolster vital front-line services during the COVID-19 pandemic.*



**Environmental Health Together** *Environmental Health Together is recruitment solution for councils experiencing capacity issues within their environmental health departments as they respond to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.*



**National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP)** *The NGDP is the local government sector's flagship management trainee programme and offers councils a unique opportunity to grow their own local government leaders. It is the only national graduate programme specifically for local government. Every year it provides the sector with high quality graduates ready to work on strategic projects which contribute to the delivery of your council's goals.*



**Graduate Support** *Local Government provides over 800 different professional career roles. Many of these require graduate qualifications. Many councils offer support and incentives to attract graduates into their council.*

---

Q12.1 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Q12.2 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](#)



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