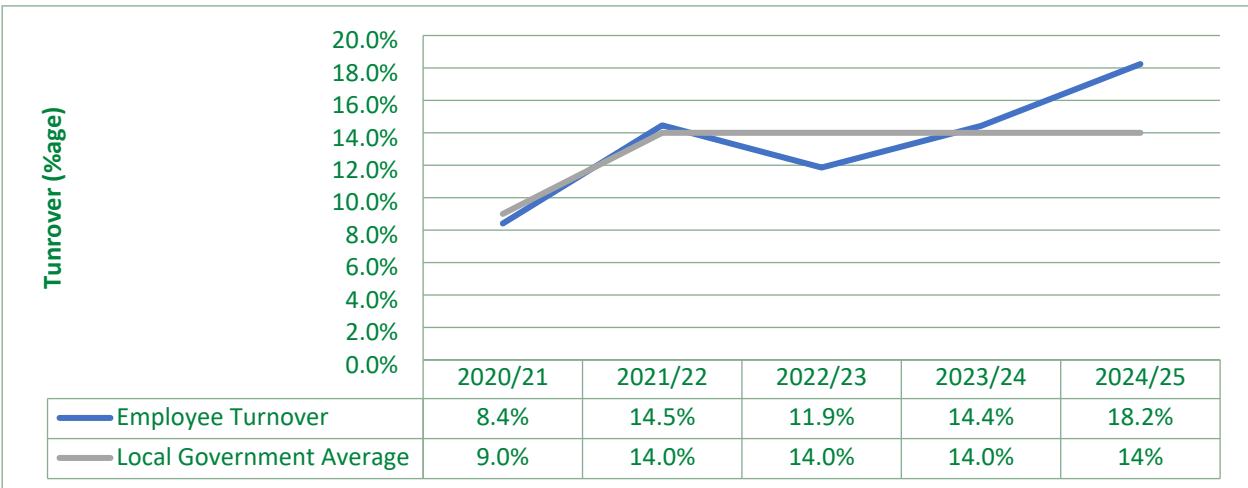


Annual Turnover Report 24/25

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 There were a total of 58 leavers in 2024/25: Fifty of those were voluntary leavers and eight were involuntary leavers.
- 1.2 Figure 1 below shows the council’s turnover rate (for all leavers) over the last 5 years compared with the local government average. Global Turnover (both voluntary and involuntary) in the council in 2024/25 was 18.2% which is higher than the last local government East of England average (14% in 2023/24*).

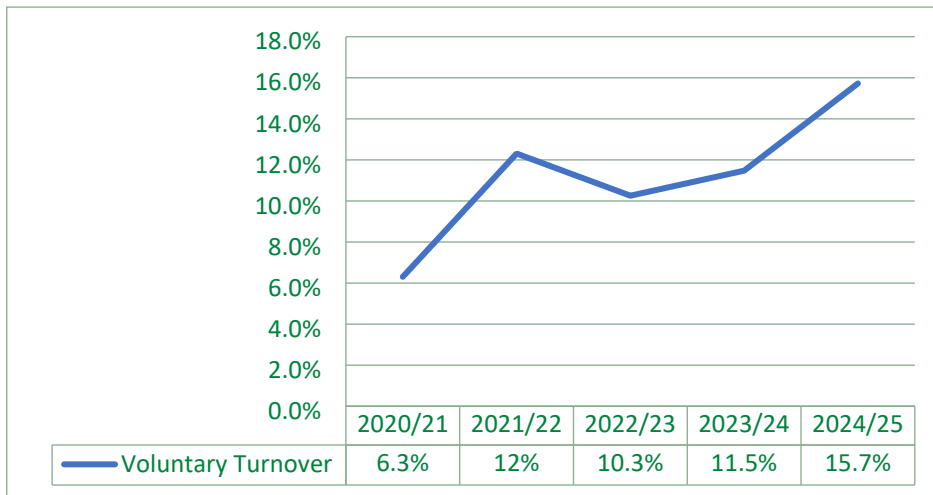
Figure 1 – Annual Turnover trends



* The Local Government Average is the mean for all English authorities and is taken from the ‘LG Inform Benchmarking - Workforce Metrics.’

- 1.3 Figure 2 below shows the council’s voluntary turnover rate (for all voluntary leavers) over the last 5 years. It is important to note this separately from Global turnover (which includes both voluntary and involuntary leavers). The council’s voluntary turnover rate has increased to 15.7% in 2024/25. This increase was mainly due to people making lifestyle changes e.g. retirement, career changes.

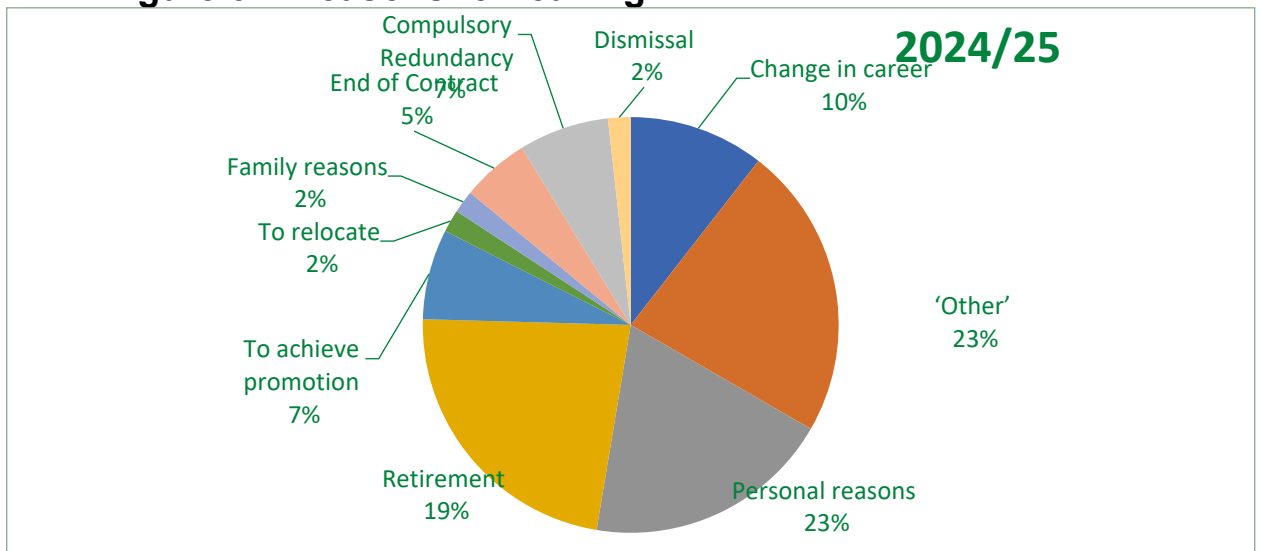
Figure 2 – Voluntary Turnover rate over last 5 years



2.0 Reasons for Leaving

2.1 The reasons employees gave for leaving the council in 2024/25 can be found in Figure 3

Figure 3 – Reasons for leaving



2.2 The most common reason for leaving in 2024/25 was personal reasons (23%) and other (23%). Other consists of ill health retirement, death in service and work challenges.

2.3 The second most common reason for employees leaving in 2024/25 was retirement (19%) Employees are auto-enrolled in the Local Government Pension Scheme which is a much-valued scheme. The council has an older workforce and therefore

retirement is likely to continue to be a common reason for leaving. The council has a flexible retirement policy which gives employees the potential option of reducing their hours whilst drawing their pension. to achieve promotion (19%) The third most common is for personal reasons (12%)

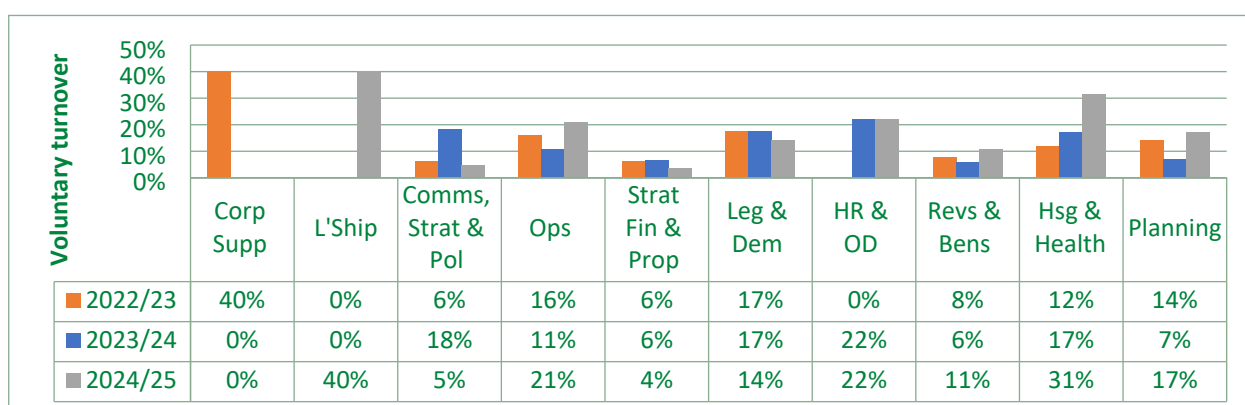
3.0 Stability Rate

- 3.1 The council reports its stability rate to understand whether it is retaining employees in their first year of service.
- 3.2 The stability rate is calculated by dividing the number of leavers with 1 or more years' service by the total number of voluntary leavers (multiplied by 100 to express as a percentage).
- 3.3 In 2024/25 the council's stability rate was 88%. This is an increase of 5% from 23/24. This means that 13% of voluntary leavers (6 employees) had less than 1 years' service. 2 employees left for a promotion, 2 left for personal reasons and the other two employees did not comment.

4.0 Voluntary turnover in each service area

- 4.1 The voluntary turnover rate in each service area for 2024/25, including comparisons with the previous 2 years, can be found in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4 – Turnover in each service



Average headcount in 2022/23: Corp Supp – 1; L'Ship – 5; Comms, Strat & Pol – 43; Ops – 38; Strat Fin & Prop – 28; Leg & Dem – 21, HR & OD – 9; Revs & Bens – 84; Hsg & Health – 51; Planning – 41.

- 4.2 Turnover in 2024/25 has increased in 4 out of the 10 services since the previous year (Revenue and Benefits, Operations, Planning and Housing and Health) This is mainly due to promotions and retirements.
- 4.3 Leadership Team had the highest turnover rate of 40% (based on 2 employees). Housing and Health had the second highest turnover rate of 31% (based on 16 employees)

5.0 Exit Questionnaire analysis

- 5.1 All voluntary leavers are asked to complete an exit questionnaire to help the council identify any improvements it could make e.g. to its policies and practices. The questionnaires are returned to HR however leavers are asked whether their feedback can be shared with their manager.
- 5.2 More than half of voluntary leavers (58%, 29 out of 50 leavers) completed an exit questionnaire.
- 5.3 The key highlights from the exit questionnaires are as follows:
 - 86% (25 employees) would recommend others to join the council.
 - 78% (19 employees) said that they would rate the council 7 or higher out of 10 as an employer (1 being poor and 10 being excellent)
 - 93% (27 employees) said they 'mostly' or 'completely' enjoyed their time at the council;
 - 100% (29 employees) said their relationship with their colleagues were either 'excellent' or 'good'.
 - 97% (28 employees) said their relationships with their manager was either 'excellent' or 'good'.

- 95% (27 employees) said that flexible working options at the council were either 'very good' or 'good' (2 employees, 12% did not answer the question).
- 79% (23 employees) agreed 'completely' or 'mostly' that they had received an effective induction;
- 72% (21 employees) agreed 'completely' or 'mostly' that they had received adequate training/coaching;
- 66% (19 employees) said that prospects for promotion/advancement were either 'excellent' or 'good'. 28% (8 employees) felt they were poor in the main due to size of the council and some specialist teams being small/limited in terms of levels at the council and in the sector. (2 employees, 6% did not answer the question).

6.0 Vacancy rate

- 6.1 The council monitors its vacancy rate as this can have an impact on employee turnover e.g. employees may feel under additional pressure to cover the work of any vacant posts.
- 6.2 The vacancy rate in 2024/25 was 16.7% which is lower than the local government average (the mean for all English authorities was 17% in 2021/22).
- 6.3 As at 31 March 2025, there were 53 vacant posts across the council. Ten of these posts are in Revenue and Benefits and are on hold pending an external service review. There may be some potential savings, posts are being covered by agency staff or fixed term temporary staff where required.

Advertising/recruitment has commenced for 9 of the 44 vacancies, 2 are being reviewed before being advertised.

11 of the vacancies are to be deleted as cost savings.

3 posts have now been filled i.e. an offer has been made and accepted, the candidates are being pre-employment checked or have agreed a start date following checks.

14 vacancies are in Planning, some of which are yet to go out to advert following resignations. The team will be going back out to hard to recruit positions.

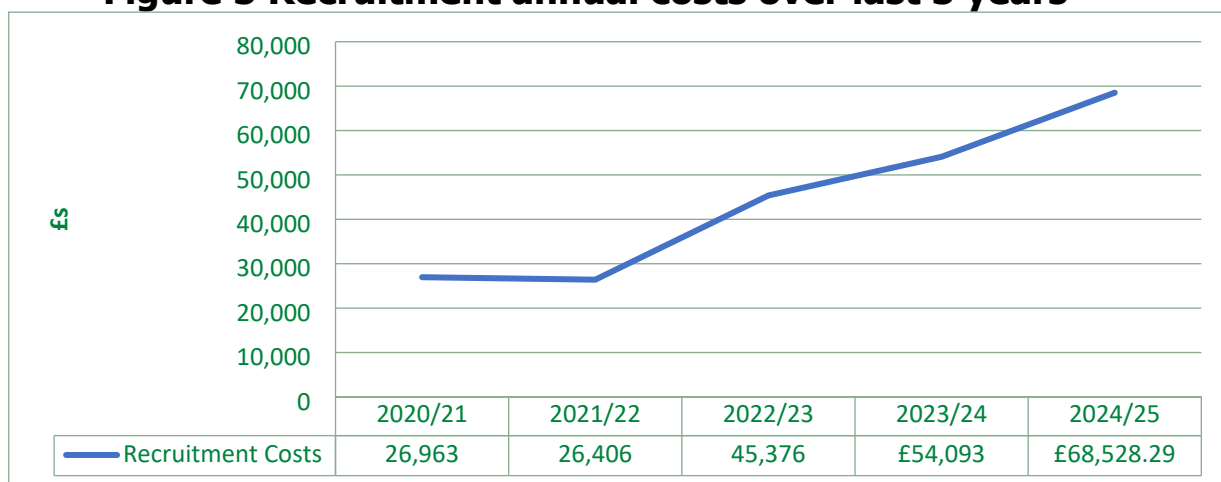
The remainder of the vacancies are on hold pending the outcome of the change to the council's target operating model.

6.4 The council has focussed on upskilling employees through introducing career graded posts (most posts in Planning are career graded) and funding professional study. Career graded posts allow the recruitment of candidates with more transferable skills which can then be developed.

7.0 Recruitment Costs

7.1 Recruitment costs have risen in 2024/25 (£68,528 compared to £54,093 in 2023/24). Recruitment costs include external advertising costs, job boards and search fees. Figure 5 below shows the councils recruitment costs over the last 5 years.

Figure 5 Recruitment annual costs over last 5 years

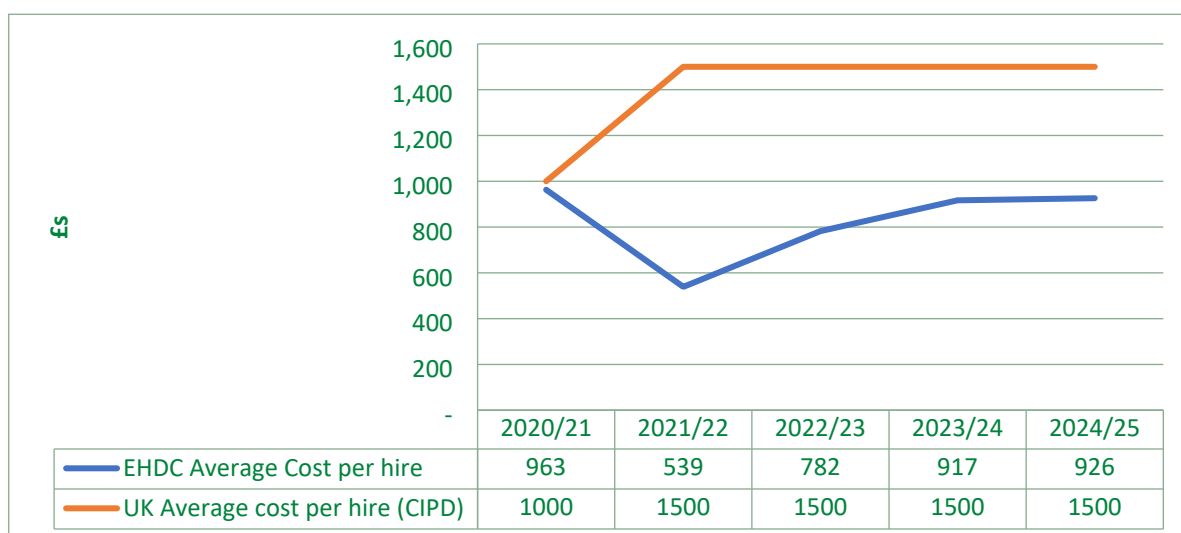


7.2 In 2024/25 there were 68 advertisements and 6 readvertisements, 74 campaigns in total. The increase in the annual cost is partly due increased recruitment compared to 2023/24 (59 campaigns) and also due to a significant spend on recruitment campaigns for Planning (including headhunting) in 24/25 (£17,927) and Housing and Health (£22,354) which continues to be hard to recruit area both locally and nationally. We also recruited to the S151 Officer post in 24/5 which largely

contributed to the increased costs. Market supplements have been introduced for some hard to fill planning roles (which has become common practice in sector) to increase attraction and retention as opposed to welcome payments. Due to the difficulty to recruit, the council has had to invest in more significant advertising in trade press, video campaigns and use agency searches where advertising has been unsuccessful.

7.3 The cost per hire in 2024/25 is £926 based on 74 vacancies during the period. This remains lower than the UK average cost per hire of £1500 (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Resourcing and Talent Planning Report 2022). Figure 6 below shows East Herts average cost per hire compared to the CIPD UK average.

Figure 6 Average cost per hire for East Herts over last 5 years compared CIPD average



7.4 Other key findings from the 2024 CIPD report are that 64% of organisations experienced difficulties attracting candidates. Recruiting for senior and skilled roles was most challenging, particularly in the public sector (52%), although 19% also had difficulties attracting low-skilled candidates. Many organisations are experiencing increasing retention challenges (56%), so are introducing entry-level or career-returner programmes to access and grow the skills they need. 51% currently offer apprenticeships, 44% graduate programmes, 35% intern schemes, 34% post-A-level entry routes and 34% career-returner programmes.

- 7.5 The council has aimed to keep recruitment costs as low as possible, we have an arrangement with LinkedIn 'Recruiter' which enable us to target/promote five jobs at one time.
- 7.6 The A package was agreed with Web Recruit the council's old Applicant Tracking System (ATS) of £265 per job for multi-site online advertising. The multi-site package advertises roles across range of leading generalist job boards (Totaljobs, Jobsite, Monster, CV Library, Fish4Jobs, Indeed and Find a Job(.Gov)).
- 7.7 Where deemed appropriate additional advertising has been used both online and in the trade/sector press which tend to be more expensive. As stated, it has become more difficult to attract candidates as supply is not meeting demand.

8.0 Actions taken in 2024/25 to improve recruitment and retention

8.1 Applicant Tracking System: Tribepad

- 8.1.1 A new applicant tracking system- Tribepad has been launched to streamline and improve the onboarding experience for candidates. Our ultimate goal is to provide a welcoming experience for new hires and support our managers in this process.
- 8.1.2 A new careers site has been developed with an enhanced Planning section with multiple videos from staff and the leader of the council to encourage more applications and promote East Herts and the Planning service.

8.2 Promotion of the council's health and wellbeing programme

- 8.2.1 A variety of campaigns were supported and events held each month to support employee mental, physical and social wellbeing such as International Women's Day (virtual staff event), promotion of dementia action week, employee

awards, bring and share Eid event in the kitchen hub, and monthly 'payday' drinks organised on the Friday closest to payday in Hertford. We also had a lunchtime celebration of the end of Ramadan, Eid. This was attended by a large number of staff to hear about Ramadan and sample some delicious food. We aim to plan more events like this as we continue to value and celebrate all of our staff equally so that everyone feels they belong.

- 8.2.2 A variety of campaigns were supported and events held each month to support employee mental, physical and social wellbeing 4 of our Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs) took part in a 13 week Mental Health in the Workplace Bootcamp, comprising of online and face to face training sessions, followed by a final assessment. The course covered a wide range of matters from workplace culture, understanding the role of a MHFA, and listening and support techniques. All current Mental Health First Aiders also received refresher training in 2024/25.

8.3 Employee Awards

- 8.3.1 The council's employee award scheme has changed from quarterly to biannually. The scheme is connected to our core behaviours and values and rewards employees for excellent work or exceptional modelling of the council's values and behaviours. Details of the scheme will be added to the 'work with us' section so it can support recruitment as well as retention. The two award ceremonies will be linked with a summer and Christmas event to encourage staff participation

8.4 Market Forces Supplement

- 8.4.1 The council introduced market forces supplements in hard to recruit areas such as Planning and Legal services. The aim is to aid both recruitment and retention. The supplement will continue to be reviewed annually taking in to account salary survey data and whether there is still a need for the supplement.

8.5 East Herts Together

- 8.5.1 We have re-established the East Herts Together staffing group, which is supported by the Transformation Board. Through this initiative, we aim to listen to our staff's feedback and incorporate their views and opinions in shaping our approach to supporting them. Our objective is to ensure staff feel valued, heard, and appreciated. This group will help us develop plans based on the feedback from the staff engagement survey which closed on 30 April 2025.

9.0 Actions planned for 2025/26 to improve recruitment and retention

- 9.1 To continue enhancing our ATS with the introduction of name blind recruitment to be trialled.
- 9.2 We have implemented a management development programme. The program aims to provide our staff with the necessary skills and expertise to support individual growth and development. Following cohort 1 we are reviewing the First Steps programme, and our leadership development activities, which targets aspirant, in-role and senior leadership staff. These initiatives seek to address the need to grow and develop our team members and leaders.
- 9.3 We have simplified the PDR process to concentrate more on meaningful conversations rather than filling in lots of forms. We believe that this will enhance staff engagement and better facilitate training needs analysis to allow for the delivery of training interventions throughout the year that positively develop staff which leads to improved organisational performance.
- 9.4 As part of our approach to retaining staff we will be introducing a new offer to staff that allows them to have a private conversation outside of their service area to talk through why they thinking of leaving and where possible help them find a 'path' that will help them stay and get further support if needed.
- 9.5 We will be targeting jobs that are hard to recruit by reviewing and redesigning job roles where necessary to ensure they remain attractive and fit for purpose. We aim to create clear pathways

for growth, by focusing on career progression and development opportunities,