

COVID-19 Workforce Survey

Research Report

Relating to week ending 16 October 2020



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Summary

Background

This report is part of a series of bi-weekly surveys of all councils in England, Wales and Northern Ireland 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, Wales and Northern Ireland on alternate Wednesdays. 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 21 October 2020. The overall response rate was 56 per cent and covered over a third of the total workforce.

Key findings

- Some 30 per cent of councils reported recruiting additional staff (of any type including casual, agency, contingent, etc) in the week ending 16 October 2020. In total 1,075 additional staff had been recruited in responding authorities: the median number of staff per authority was five and the mean was 20.
- More than a third of councils (115) recorded deaths in service since lockdown. A total of 306 deaths in service were reported by respondents since the start of lockdown (cause not specified).
- Twenty-four per cent of councils reported that they had fully furloughed at least one member of staff. In total, responding authorities reported there were 2,755 staff furloughed full-time in the week ending 16 October 2020, which was 0.5 per cent of the current workforce.
- In addition, 22 per cent of councils reported that they had partially furloughed at least one member of staff. In total, respondents reported there were 2,237 staff furloughed part-time in the week ending 16 October 2020, which was 0.4 per cent of the current workforce.
- The main reason given for furloughing staff was that the service had stopped (81 per cent) or that funding had stopped (35 per cent).
- Some 53 per cent of councils had redeployed staff. In total, in the responding authorities there were 4,116 staff redeployed in the week ending 16 October 2020, which was one per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff redeployed was 1 and the mean was 24.
- Just over eight out of ten councils (82 per cent) reported that they had at least one member of staff unavailable for work. In total, respondents reported there were 24,375 staff unavailable for work in the week ending 16 October

2020, five per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff unavailable for work was 30 and the mean was 127.

- Sixteen per cent of staff were unavailable through 'self-isolation (other)' and 56 per cent were unavailable due to 'non-COVID sickness'.
- When asked whether individual services had enough staff to run them normally or not, the service most badly affected during the week ending 16 October was schools: 40 per cent of councils reported they were operating with moderate or severe disruption due to staffing numbers. Also badly affected were adults and children's services, with 28 per cent and 21 per cent of councils respectively reporting moderate or severe disruption.
- When asked to assess the council overall, in terms of whether there are enough staff to run services normally or not, 60 per cent of councils report minor or moderate disruption and 39 per cent were operating normally.
- Councils were asked about the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 testing for staff. Ninety per cent reported they had about the right amount of PPE they needed; whilst two per cent had less than they needed. Seventy-one per cent said all the staff who need testing can access it, whilst only one per cent said none of the staff that need testing can access it.
- Out of the 197 councils who completed the form this fortnight, 60 per cent were tier 2 councils, 27 per cent tier 1 and 12 per cent tier 3.
- Looking ahead, councils were asked if they were experiencing significant difficulties recruiting for some posts or not: 79 (39 per cent) said they were. Councils were subsequently asked to choose from a list of specialist occupations where they were experiencing difficulties: 53 per cent of councils were having difficulties recruiting children's social workers, 32 per cent were having difficulties recruiting planning officers and 42 per cent were having difficulties recruiting environmental health officers.
- Councils were asked to choose the five occupations or roles where recruitment difficulties were most acute. Fifty-four per cent of the 78 councils who answered the question had acute difficulties recruiting children's social workers.
- Out of the thirty-six councils who had said they had acute difficulties in recruiting children's social workers, 42 per cent said they had both difficulty recruiting generally and difficulty recruiting the required expertise, experience or qualification.
- Councils were asked if they have redundancy exercises currently in progress, 58 councils did have at least one member of staff at risk. A total of 1,024 staff were at risk from all councils that were able to provide total number of staff at risk, the median number was 12 and the average was 24.

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, Wales and Northern Ireland. 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 the 21 October 2020, the LGA's Research and Information Team sent an online survey to human resources contacts in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (a total of 372 councils). The survey was in the field for one week. A total of 205 councils responded, which is a response rate of 57 per cent. Due to having a nil response from Northern Ireland they have not been included in any of the following tables.

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	188	100	53
County	25	18	72
London borough	33	23	70
Metropolitan district	36	19	53
Unitary	57	35	61
Welsh unitary	22	10	45
All	361	205	57

Table 2: Response rate by region

Region	Total number	Number of responses	Response rate %
Eastern	50	37	74
East Midlands	45	25	56
London	33	23	70
North East	12	7	58
North West	41	23	56
South East	70	38	54
South West	33	13	39
Wales	22	10	45
West Midlands	33	11	33
Yorkshire and Humber	22	18	82

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 16 October 2020

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 1st March 2020, pre-lockdown. The councils that responded to the survey employed 509,346 staff or approximately a third of the total local government workforce.

184 single tier and county councils 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 104 councils that responded to the survey and had responsibility for schools, 20 (10 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 16 October 2020

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 16 October 2020.

Of the councils that responded 61 (30 per cent) reported recruiting additional staff: in total 1,075 additional staff were recruited during the week ending 16 October 2020. The median number of staff per council was 5 and the mean was 20.

Table 3: Has the council recruited additional staff (of any type including casual, agency, contingent, etc during week ending 16 October 2020)?

	Yes	%	Total	Median	Mean
County	8	44	66	8	9
District	14	14	35	2	3
London borough	13	57	591	13	13
Metropolitan borough	9	47	141	2	24
Unitary	11	31	45	5	5
Welsh unitary	6	60	197	9	33
English single tier	33	43	777	6	28
All councils	61	30	1075	5	20

Base: all authorities (205 councils – 18 counties, 10 districts, 23 London boroughs, 19 metropolitan boroughs, 35 unitary, 10 Welsh unitary, 77 English single tier)

Current headcount as at 16 October 2020

Total headcount for those councils that responded has decreased by 0.5 per cent since the 1 March 2020 and now stands at 507,046 on the week ending 16 October 2020.

Table 4: Change in headcount from 1 March – 16 October 2020

	At 1 March	At 16 October	% change
County	119333	120877	1.3
District	53036	53038	0.0
London borough	71420	68168	-4.6
Metropolitan borough	95891	95197	-0.7
Unitary	107131	107305	0.2
Welsh unitary	62535	62461	-0.1
English single tier	274442	270670	-1.4
All councils	509346	507046	-0.5

Base: all authorities (205 councils – 18 counties, 100 districts, 23 London boroughs, 19 metropolitan boroughs, 35 unitary, 10 Welsh unitary, 77 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 202 councils that answered this question, 115 (57 per cent) recorded a total of 306 deaths in service as of 16 October 2020. 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 1 or more deaths
County	56	15
District	37	30
London borough	47	19
Metropolitan borough	65	16
Unitary	63	26
Welsh unitary	38	9
English single tier	175	61
All councils	306	115

Base: all authorities (202 councils – 18 counties, 99 districts, 23 London boroughs, 18 metropolitan boroughs, 34 unitary, 10 Welsh unitary, 75 English single tier)

Furloughed staff

Councils were asked to provide details of staff that were furloughed – full-time and part-time – in the week ending 16 October 2020. Of councils that answered the question about full-time furloughing, 46 (24 per cent) reported that they had furloughed at least one member of staff.

In total there were 2,755 staff furloughed full-time in responding councils in the week ending 16 October, 0.5 per cent of their current workforce. Of those councils that had furloughed staff full-time, the median number was 31 and the mean was 60; but this varied considerably across different types of authority.

Table 6: No. of staff furloughed full time (week ending 16 October)					
	No. of councils	% of councils	Total no. staff	Of those councils with furloughed staff	
				Median	Mean
County	6	38	473	61	79
District	18	18	497	13	28
London borough	3	15	13	2	4
Metropolitan borough	6	33	249	5	42
Unitary	9	29	791	19	88
Welsh unitary	4	40	732	156	183
English single tier	18	26	1053	5	48
All councils	46	24	2755	31	60

Base: all authorities (194 councils – 16 counties, 99 districts, 20 London boroughs, 18 metropolitan boroughs, 31 unitary, 10 Welsh unitary, 69 English single tier)

Of councils that answered the question about part-time furloughing 42 (22 per cent) reported that they had furloughed at least one member of staff on this basis.

In total there were 2,237 staff partially furloughed in responding councils in the week ending 16 October, 0.4 cent of their current workforce. Of those councils that had furloughed staff part-time, the median number was 18 and the mean was 53, but this varied considerably across different types of authority.

Table 7: No. of staff furloughed part time (week ending 16 October)

	No. of councils	% of councils	Total no. staff	Of those councils with furloughed staff	
				Median	Mean
County	4	25	534	99	134
District	21	21	550	10	26
London borough	2	10	19	10	27
Metropolitan borough	5	28	204	26	41
Unitary	8	26	691	43	86
Welsh unitary	2	20	239	120	120
English single tier	15	22	914	32	48
All councils	42	22	2237	18	53

Base: all authorities (199 councils – 16 counties, 99 districts, 20 London boroughs, 18 metropolitan boroughs, 31 unitary, 10 Welsh unitary, 69 English single tier)

Reason staff were furloughed

The councils that had furloughed staff in the week ending 16 October 2020 were subsequently asked to indicate the reason the member(s) of staff had been furloughed, and 55 were able to provide the reason or reasons.

In the week ending 16 October 2020, 81 per cent of staff were furloughed because the 'Service has been stopped' and 35 per cent of staff furloughed as 'Funding has stopped'. The pattern varied across authority types: in districts 61 per cent of staff were furloughed due to 'Service has been stopped', while in London boroughs 41 per cent of staff were furloughed due to 'Funding has stopped'.

Table 8: 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	80	0	0	6	14
District	10	0	0	61	29
London borough	38	22	0	41	0
Metropolitan borough	3	0	0	97	0
Unitary	27	2	0	68	3
Welsh unitary	0	3	0	97	0
English single tier	20	2	0	76	2
All councils	35	2	0	81	4

Base: all authorities with furloughed staff (55 councils – 6 counties, 23 districts, 4 London boroughs, 7 metropolitan boroughs, 10 unitary, 5 Welsh unitary, 21 English single tier)

Redeployed staff

Councils were asked to indicate the number of staff that had been redeployed in the week ending 16 October 2020, either formally or informally. Of councils that answered the question, 92 (53 per cent) reported that they had redeployed at least one member of staff.

In total there were 4,116 staff redeployed in the week ending 16 October, one per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff redeployed was 1 and the mean was 24.

	No. of councils	% of councils	Total no. staff	Median	Mean
County	9	82	546	20	50
District	34	36	332	0	4
London borough	13	65	782	7	39
Metropolitan borough	11	85	871	38	67
Unitary	19	70	763	10	28
Welsh unitary	6	67	822	65	91
English single tier	43	72	2416	15	40
All councils	92	53	4116	1	24

Base: all authorities (174 councils – 11 counties, 94 districts, 20 London boroughs, 13 metropolitan boroughs, 27 unitary, 9 Welsh unitary, 60 English single tier)

Unavailable for work

Councils were asked to indicate the number of staff that were unavailable for work in the week ending 16 October 2020. Of councils that answered the question, 157 (82 per cent) reported that they had at least one member of staff unavailable.

In total there were 24,375 staff unavailable for work in responding authorities in the week ending 16 October, five per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff unavailable for work was 30 and the mean was 127.

	No. of councils	% of councils	Total no. staff	Median	Mean
County	16	100	5134	211	321
District	68	69	2090	9	21
London borough	20	95	2337	71	111
Metropolitan borough	18	100	6245	396	347
Unitary	28	93	5603	141	187
Welsh unitary	7	88	2966	254	371
English single tier	66	96	14185	157	206
All councils	157	82	24375	30	127

Base: all authorities (192 councils – 16 counties, 99 districts, 21 London boroughs, 18 metropolitan boroughs, 30 unitary, 8 Welsh unitary, 69 English single tier)

Reason staff were unavailable for work

The 157 councils that reported they had at least one or more member of staff unavailable for work in the week ending 16 October 2020 were subsequently asked to indicate the reason for them being unavailable, and 154 were able to provide the reason.

In the week ending 16 October 2020, 562 per cent of staff were unavailable because of 'Non-COVID sickness' and 16 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.

The pattern varied across authority types: in metropolitan boroughs nine per cent of staff were unavailable due to 'Confirmed/suspected COVID'.

Table 7: 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	55	7	1	24	1	13
District	53	4	3	12	2	26
London borough	58	4	0	9	0	29
Metropolitan borough	50	9	1	22	0	19
Unitary	61	4	1	11	1	21
Welsh unitary	59	8	3	13	2	14
English single tier	56	6	1	15	0	22
All councils	56	6	1	16	1	19

Base: all authorities with staff unavailable for work (154 councils – 16 counties, 68 districts, 20 London boroughs, 15 metropolitan boroughs, 28 unitary, 7 Welsh unitary, 63 English single tier)

Service disruption

When asked whether individual services had enough staff to run them normally or not, the service most badly affected was schools: 40 per cent of single tier and county councils reported they were operating with moderate or severe disruption due to staffing numbers. Also badly affected were adults and children's services, with 28 per cent and 21 per cent of councils respectively reporting moderate or severe disruption. Eleven per cent of councils that responded to this question reported severe disruption to public health services.

When asked to assess the council overall, in terms of whether there are enough staff to run services normally or not, 60 per cent of councils reported minor or moderate disruption and 39 per cent were operating normally.

Table 12: 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)	103	36	36	25	3
Bereavement services	137	72	19	9	0
Children's services	99	47	31	19	2
Environment health	175	49	30	16	6
Household waste (doorstep collection)	158	67	25	8	0
Housing and homelessness services	177	60	25	12	2
Planning	187	64	28	9	0
Public Health	120	49	29	11	11
Revenue and Benefits	170	62	25	11	2
Schools	81	41	20	30	10
Trading standards	94	57	29	13	1
Overall council	198	39	44	16	0

Base: all authorities (base for each category varied by authority type)

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 185 (90 per cent of councils who responded to the survey) answered the question, of which 90 per cent reported they had about the right amount of PPE; whilst two per cent had less than they needed.

Table 13: 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	6	94	0	0
District	3	92	0	4
London borough	10	85	5	0
Metropolitan borough	12	82	6	0
Unitary	10	87	3	0
Welsh unitary	0	100	0	0
English single tier	10	85	4	0
All councils	6	90	2	2

Base: all authorities (185 councils – 18 counties, 89 districts, 20 London boroughs, 17 metropolitan boroughs, 31 unitary, 10 Welsh unitary, 68 English single tier)

Availability of testing

Councils asked to indicate whether staff who needed it were able to access testing or not. A total of 187 (91 per cent of councils who responded to the survey) answered the question, of which 25 per cent said most of the staff that need testing can access it, with only one per cent saying none of the staff that need testing can access it.

Table 14: 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	56	44	0	0	0
District	78	18	3	0	1
London borough	60	30	5	5	0
Metropolitan borough	67	28	0	0	6
Unitary	59	41	0	0	0
Welsh unitary	100	0	0	0	0
English single tier	61	34	1	1	1
All councils	71	25	2	1	1

Base: all authorities (187 councils – 16 counties, 91 districts, 20 London boroughs, 18 metropolitan boroughs, 32 unitary, 10 Welsh unitary, 70 English single tier)

Availability of testing

Councils were asked which tier they fell under during week ending 16 October, 197 (96) councils responded to this question. Twenty-seven per cent of councils were part of medium (tier 1), 60 per cent were part of high (tier 2) and 12 per cent were part of very high (tier 3).

Table 15: Please select which tier your council was in during week ending 16 October

	Medium (Tier 1)	High (Tier 2)	Very high (Tier 3)
	% councils	% councils	% councils
County	22	78	0
District	13	79	8
London borough	83	17	0
Metropolitan borough	47	0	53
Unitary	26	68	6
Welsh unitary	0	20	80
English single tier	49	36	16
All councils	27	60	12

Base: all authorities (197 councils – 18 counties, 98 districts, 23 London boroughs, 19 metropolitan boroughs, 34 unitary, 5 Welsh unitary, 76 English single tier)

Planning ahead

Recruitment difficulties

Councils were asked if they were experiencing significant difficulties recruiting for some occupations and roles: 79 (39 per cent) said they were. Those that had answered yes to this question were then subsequently asked to choose from a list of specialist occupations where they were experiencing difficulties. Table 16 shows 76 per cent of English single tier councils were having difficulties recruiting children's social workers. In district councils 56 per cent of those that responded to the question said there were have problems recruiting environmental health officers and 56 per cent also said they were having problems recruiting planning officers. Hundred per cent of county councils said they were having problems recruiting children's social workers. Other roles councils were having difficulties in recruiting were registered general and clinical leads, public health consultants, care assistants - adults, learning disability nurses, school crossing patrols, COVID Hub/support worker roles, Covid/neighbourhood wardens and building operations manager.

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. Fifty-four per cent of councils who answered the question had acute difficulties recruiting children's social workers. This can be seen in Table 17.

Table 16: 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	13	14	17	22	11	0	15	14
Adult's social workers	67	0	67	44	58	50	56	38
Building control officers	0	29	17	0	11	50	9	15
Chartered surveyors	13	14	33	11	21	0	21	16
Children's social workers	100	0	33	100	79	50	76	53
Economic development officers	20	4	0	0	0	0	0	5
Educational psychologists	33	0	50	11	21	0	24	16
Engineers	33	7	17	33	16	0	21	18
Environmental health officers	0	57	50	44	47	50	47	42
Health visitors	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Homelessness officers	0	11	0	0	5	0	3	5
ICT professionals	20	11	67	0	11	50	18	16
Legal professionals	40	29	50	44	11	0	26	29
Mental health social workers	53	0	50	22	37	0	35	25
Occupational therapists (adults')	40	0	50	11	37	0	32	22
Occupational therapists (children's)	27	0	33	0	21	0	18	13
Regulatory services officers	0	0	33	0	0	0	6	3
Planning officers	27	57	50	11	5	0	15	32
Public health officers	13	4	17	22	16	0	18	11
School nurses	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Test and trace team leaders	0	0	17	11	0	0	6	3
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)	0	0	33	22	5	0	15	6
Trading standards officers	20	0	33	0	5	0	9	8
Youth workers	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Other	20	7	0	33	5	0	12	11

Base: all authorities experiencing recruitment difficulties (79 councils – 14 counties, 28 districts, 6 London boroughs, 9 metropolitan boroughs, 19 unitary, 2 Welsh unitary, 34 English single tier)

Table 17: 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	13	15	17	22	11	0	15	14
Adult's social workers	67	0	67	44	58	50	56	38
Building control officers	0	30	17	0	11	50	9	15
Chartered surveyors	13	15	33	11	21	0	21	17
Children's social workers	100	0	33	100	79	50	76	54
Economic development officers	20	4	0	0	0	0	0	5
Educational psychologists	33	0	50	11	21	0	24	17
Engineers	33	7	17	33	16	0	21	18
Environmental health officers	0	59	50	44	47	50	47	42
Health visitors	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Homelessness officers	0	11	0	0	5	0	3	5
ICT professionals	20	11	67	0	11	50	18	17
Legal professionals	40	30	50	44	11	0	26	29
Mental health social workers	53	0	50	22	37	0	35	26
Occupational therapists (adults')	40	0	50	11	37	0	32	22
Occupational therapists (children's)	27	0	33	0	21	0	18	13
Regulatory services officers	0	0	33	0	0	0	6	3
Planning officers	27	59	50	11	5	0	15	32
Public health officers	13	4	17	22	16	0	18	12
School nurses	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Test and trace team leaders	0	0	17	11	0	0	6	3
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)	0	0	33	22	5	0	15	6
Trading standards officers	20	0	33	0	5	0	9	8
Youth workers	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Other	20	7	0	33	5	0	12	12

Base: authorities experiencing recruitment difficulties (78 councils – 15 counties, 27 districts, 6 London boroughs, 9 metropolitan boroughs, 19 unitary, 2 Welsh unitary, 34 English single tier)

Table 18: 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	6	17	0	67	17
Adult's social workers	22	45	18	32	5
Building control officers	8	25	13	63	0
Chartered surveyors	4	25	0	75	0
Children's social workers	38	37	18	42	3
Economic development officers	2	50	0	50	0
Educational psychologists	5	40	40	20	0
Engineers	6	50	0	50	0
Environmental health officers	24	25	8	67	0
Health visitors	2	0	50	50	0
Homelessness officers	2	0	50	50	0
ICT professionals	6	17	50	33	0
Legal professionals	16	31	25	44	0
Mental health social workers	13	23	15	62	0
Occupational therapists (adults')	12	25	17	50	8
Occupational therapists (children's)	5	40	20	40	0
Regulatory services officers	16	25	6	63	6
Planning officers	5	60	0	20	20
Public health officers	0	-	-	-	-
School nurses	2	0	50	50	0
Test and trace team leaders	1	100	0	0	0
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)	2	100	0	0	0
Trading standards officers	2	0	0	100	0
Youth workers	0	-	-	-	-
Other	8	50	25	25	0

Base: all responding to question and category applicable to the council, categories presented varied by authority type.

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. Out of the 54 councils who had said they had acute difficulties in recruiting Children's social workers, 42 per cent said they had both difficulty recruiting generally and difficulty recruiting the required expertise, experience or qualification.

Redundancy Cap

On the 4 November the legislation implementing the £95,000 cap on exit payments, including employer's contribution to pension costs will come into force. Councils were asked if they have redundancy exercises currently in progress, 58 (28 per cent) councils had at least one member of staff at risk. Those councils which had answered that they did have redundancy exercises in progress were subsequently asked how many staff were at risk 42 (72 per cent) were able to do this. A total of 1,024 staff were at risk from all councils, the median number was 12 and the average was 24.

Table 19: How many staff are 'at risk'?

	No. of councils	% of councils	Total no. staff	Median	Mean
County	7	58	165	13	24
District	14	88	183	9	13
London borough	6	75	142	19	24
Metropolitan borough	4	100	156	16	39
Unitary	8	57	333	7	37
Welsh unitary	3	75	45	8	15
English single tier	18	69	631	12	33
All councils	42	72	1024	12	24

Base: authorities with staff at risk (58 councils – 12 counties, 16 districts, 8 London boroughs, 4 metropolitan boroughs, 14 unitary, 4 Welsh unitary, 26 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 roopal.shah@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 16 October 2020

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 16 October 2020	

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 16 October?

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 16 October	

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 16 October 2020) 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 16 October 2020. 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 16 October 2020.

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 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 _____

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 always contact us to have the information changed or deleted. You can find our full privacy policy here: [click here to see our privacy policy](#)



Local Government Association

Local Government House
Smith Square
London SW1P 3HZ

Telephone 020 7664 3000

Fax 020 7664 3030

Email info@local.gov.uk

www.local.gov.uk

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