

# COVID-19 Workforce Survey

Research Report

Relating to the week ending 11 December 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 and Wales 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 16 December 2020 and covers the week ending 11 December 2020. The overall response rate was 49 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 11 December 2020. In total 1,142 additional staff had been recruited in responding authorities: the median number of staff per authority was four and the mean was 24.
- More than half of respondent councils (111) have recorded deaths in service since lockdown. A total of 384 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 furloughed at least one member of staff. In total, responding authorities reported there were 3,150 staff furloughed in the week ending 11 December 2020, which was 0.7 per cent of the current workforce.
- The main reason given for furloughing staff was that the funding had stopped (55 per cent) or that service had stopped (39 per cent).
- Some 60 per cent of councils had redeployed staff. In total, in the responding authorities there were 3,233 staff redeployed in the week ending 11 December 2020, which was one per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff redeployed was four and the mean was 20.
- Just under nine in ten councils (86 per cent) reported that they had at least one member of staff unavailable for work. In total, respondents reported there were 24,439 staff unavailable for work in the week ending 11 December 2020, five per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff unavailable for work was 35 and the mean was 145.
- Twenty per cent of staff were unavailable through 'self-isolation (other)' and 53 per cent were unavailable due to 'non-COVID sickness'.

- When asked whether individual services had enough staff to run them normally or not, the worst affected services were schools and public health: 11 per cent and 10 per cent of single tier and county councils, respectively, reported these services were operating with severe disruption due to staffing numbers. A further 34 per cent of single tier and county councils reported that schools were operating with moderate disruption. Also badly affected was adult social care, with 30 per cent reporting moderate disruption.
- When asked to assess the council overall, in terms of whether there are enough staff to run services normally or not, 57 per cent reported they were not operating normally.
- Councils were asked about the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 testing for staff. Ninety per cent reported they had about the right amount of PPE; whilst one per cent had less than they needed. Eighty two 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: 64 (36 per cent) said they were. Councils were subsequently asked to choose from a list of specialist occupations where they were experiencing difficulties: 56 per cent of councils were having difficulties recruiting children's social workers, 39 per cent were having difficulties recruiting adult social workers.
- Councils were asked to choose the five occupations or roles where recruitment difficulties were most acute. Fifty six per cent of the councils who answered the question had acute difficulties recruiting children's social workers.
- Out of the thirty four councils who had said they had acute difficulties in recruiting children's social workers, 50 per cent said they had both difficulty recruiting generally and difficulty recruiting the required expertise, experience or qualification.
- Councils were asked if they are likely to recruit additional staff specifically to COVID-19 and/or the EU transition or not: 33 per cent said they were not likely recruit additional staff and a further 25 per cent said they did not know. Seventy five (42 per cent) councils said yes, they were likely to be recruiting additional staff. Of these, 39 per cent said it was 'in response to COVID-19', two per cent said it was 'in response to both' and one per cent said it was 'in response to EU transition'.

## Introduction

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

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

## Methodology

On 16 December 2020, the LGA's Research and Information Team sent an online survey to all heads of human resources in England and Wales (a total of 361 councils). The survey was in the field for one week. A total of 178 councils responded, which is a response rate of 49 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	188	82	44
County	25	16	64
London borough	33	21	64
Metropolitan district	36	21	58
Unitary	57	32	56
Welsh unitary	22	6	27
All	361	178	49

**Table 2: Response rate by region**

Region	Total number	Number of responses	Response rate %
Eastern	50	33	66
East Midlands	45	19	42
London	33	21	64
North East	12	10	83
North West	41	21	51
South East	70	26	37
South West	33	10	30
Wales	22	6	27
West Midlands	33	13	39
Yorkshire and Humber	22	19	86

**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 11 December 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 460,558 staff or approximately a third of the total local government workforce.

173 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 96 councils that responded to the survey and had responsibility for schools, 16 (nine 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 11 December 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 11 December 2020.

Of the councils that responded 52 (29 per cent) reported recruiting additional staff. In total 1,142 additional staff were recruited during the week ending 11 December 2020. The median number of staff per council was four and the mean was 24.



**Table 3: Has the council recruited additional staff (of any type including casual, agency, contingent, etc during week ending 11 December 2020)?**

	Yes	%	Total	Median	Mean
County	6	38	31	6	6
District	11	13	33	1	3
London borough	13	62	594	10	16
Metropolitan borough	8	38	269	2	45
Unitary	11	34	95	4	15
Welsh unitary	3	50	120	3	3
English single tier	30	41	951	9	40
All councils	52	29	1,142	4	24

Base: all respondents (178 councils – 16 counties, 82 districts, 21 London boroughs, 21 metropolitan borough, 32 unitary, 6 Welsh unitary, 74 English single tier)

### Current headcount as at 11 December 2020

The total headcount for those councils that responded had increased by 0.5 per cent since the 1 March 2020 and now stands at 463,026 on the 11 December 2020.

**Table 4: Change in headcount from 1 March – 11 December 2020**

	At 1 March	At 11 December	% change
County	111,205	113,473	2.0
District	35,307	35,377	0.2
London borough	69,079	71,227	3.1
Metropolitan borough	109,076	107,270	-1.7
Unitary	105,189	105,273	0.1
Welsh unitary	30,702	30,406	-1.0
English single tier	264,945	265,504	0.2
All councils	460,558	463,026	0.5

Base: all respondents (178 councils – 6 counties, 82 districts, 21 London boroughs, 21 metropolitan boroughs, 32 unitary, 6 Welsh unitary, 74 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 175 councils that answered this question 111 (63 per cent) recorded deaths in service as of 11 December 2020, totalling 384 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 1 or more deaths</b>
County	65	15
District	34	29
London borough	63	19
Metropolitan borough	112	19
Unitary	89	24
Welsh unitary	21	5
English single tier	249	62
All councils	384	111

Base: all respondents (175 councils – 16 counties, 82 districts, 21 London boroughs, 20 metropolitan boroughs, 30 unitary, 6 Welsh unitary, 71 English single tier)

## Furloughed staff

Councils were asked to provide details of staff that were furloughed in the week ending 11 December 2020. Of councils that answered the question, 41 (24 per cent) reported that they had furloughed at least one member of staff.

In total there were 3,150 staff furloughed in responding councils in the week ending 11 December, 0.7 per cent of their current workforce. Of those councils that had furloughed staff, the median number was 36 and the mean was 79; but this varied considerably across different types of authority.

	No. of councils	% of councils	Total no. staff	Of those councils with furloughed staff	
				Median	Mean
County	5	31	1,209	207	242
District	13	16	473	27	36
London borough	3	15	44	15	15
Metropolitan borough	6	30	244	18	41
Unitary	10	32	1,043	108	102
Welsh unitary	4	67	137	35	73
English single tier	19	27	1,331	23	70
All councils	41	24	3,150	36	79

Base: all respondents (173 councils – 16 counties, 80 districts, 20 London boroughs, 20 metropolitan boroughs, 31 unitary, six Welsh unitary, 71 English single tier)

### Reason staff were furloughed

The councils that had furloughed staff in the week ending 11 December 2020 were subsequently asked to indicate the reason the member of staff had been furloughed, and 41 were able to provide the reason or reasons.

In the week ending 11 December 2020, 55 per cent of staff furloughed as 'Funding has stopped' and 39 per cent of staff were furloughed because the 'Service has been stopped' and. The pattern varied across authority types: in metropolitan boroughs 94 per cent of staff were furloughed due to 'Service has been stopped', while in counties 87 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	87	0	0	0	13
District	40	0	0	58	2
London borough	52	0	0	48	0
Metropolitan borough	6	0	0	94	0
Unitary	45	0	0	52	2
Welsh unitary	0	0	0	100	0
English single tier	36	0	0	63	2
All councils	55	0	0	39	6

Base: respondents with furloughed staff (41 councils – five counties, 13 districts, three London boroughs, six metropolitan boroughs, 10 unitary, four Welsh unitary, 19 English single tier)

## Redeployed staff

Councils were asked to indicate the number of staff that had been redeployed in the week ending 11 December 2020. Of councils that answered the question, 94 (60 per cent) reported that they had redeployed at least one member of staff.

In total there were 3,233 staff redeployed in the week ending 11 December, one per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff redeployed was four and the mean was 20.

**Table 8: No. of staff redeployed (week ending 11 December)**

	No. of councils	% of councils	Total no. staff	Median	Mean
County	8	67	430	8	36
District	33	43	427	0	6
London borough	11	58	396	7	21
Metropolitan borough	16	94	875	24	51
Unitary	20	77	754	16	29
Welsh unitary	6	100	351	0	59
English single tier	47	76	2,025	18	33
All councils	94	60	3,233	4	20

Base: all respondents (157 councils – 12 counties, 77 districts, 19 London boroughs, 17 metropolitan boroughs, 26 unitary, six Welsh unitary, 62 English single tier)

## Unavailable for work

Councils were asked to indicate the number of staff that were unavailable for work in the week ending 11 December 2020. Of councils that answered the question, 144 (86 per cent) reported that they had at least one member of staff unavailable.

In total there were 24,439 staff unavailable for work in responding authorities in the week ending 11 December, five per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff unavailable for work was 35 and the mean was 145.

	<b>No. of councils</b>	<b>% of councils</b>	<b>Total no. staff</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mean</b>
County	15	100	6,762	270	451
District	60	76	997	10	13
London borough	18	95	2,952	79	155
Metropolitan borough	20	100	6,182	315	309
Unitary	26	87	5,818	112	194
Welsh unitary	5	100	1,728	261	346
English single tier	64	93	14,952	132	217
All councils	144	86	24,439	35	145

Base: all respondents (168 councils – 15 counties, 79 districts, 19 London boroughs, 20 metropolitan boroughs, 30 unitary, five Welsh unitary, 69 English single tier)

### Reason staff were unavailable for work

The 144 councils that reported they had one or more member of staff unavailable for work in the week ending 11 December 2020 were subsequently asked to indicate the reason for them being unavailable, and 142 were able to provide the reason.

In the week ending 11 December 2020, 53 per cent of staff were unavailable because of 'Non-COVID sickness' and 20 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.

**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	8	1	37	1	5
District	61	6	4	11	1	16
London borough	45	5	1	7	1	41
Metropolitan borough	53	13	1	19	0	14
Unitary	58	7	2	12	1	22
Welsh unitary	63	14	7	8	2	5
English single tier	53	9	1	13	0	23
All councils	53	9	2	20	1	16

Base: respondents with unavailable staff (142 councils – 15 counties, 60 districts, 18 London boroughs, 18 metropolitan boroughs, 26 unitary, five Welsh unitary, 62 English single tier)

## Service disruption

When asked whether individual services had enough staff to run them normally or not, the worst affected services were environmental health, public health and schools: between six and 11 per cent of councils with these services reported they were operating with severe disruption due to staffing numbers. A further 34 per cent of single tier and county councils reported that schools were operating with moderate disruption. Also badly affected was adult social care (directly employed, with 30 per cent reporting moderate disruption).

When asked to assess the council overall, in terms of whether there are enough staff to run services normally or not, 57 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)	92	38	26	30	5
Bereavement services	121	69	22	8	0
Children's services	91	43	31	24	2
Environment health	155	44	30	19	6
Household waste (doorstep collection)	139	70	19	10	1
Housing and homelessness services	152	59	27	12	2
Planning	165	64	28	8	0
Public Health	105	44	29	17	10
Revenue and Benefits	143	58	24	15	2
Schools	70	39	16	34	11
Trading standards	87	47	37	13	3
Overall council	173	43	36	20	1

Base: all respondents dependent on category applicable to the council; categories presented 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 164 (92 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 one per cent had less than they needed.

**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	6	89	0	6
London borough	10	85	5	0
Metropolitan borough	11	89	0	0
Unitary	3	97	0	0
Welsh unitary	0	100	0	0
English single tier	7	91	1	0
All councils	5	90	1	2

Base: all respondents (164 councils – 16 counties, 72 districts, 20 London boroughs, 19 metropolitan boroughs, 31 unitaries, six Welsh unitaries, 70 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 167 (94 per cent of councils who responded to the survey) answered the question, of which 15 per cent said most of the staff that need testing can access it, with one per cent saying only some 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	69	31	0	0	0
District	89	8	1	0	1
London borough	63	32	5	0	0
Metropolitan borough	90	10	0	0	0
Unitary	84	16	0	0	0
Welsh unitary	83	17	0	0	0
English single tier	80	19	1	0	0
All councils	82	15	1	0	1

Base: all respondents (167 councils – 16 counties, 75 districts, 19 London boroughs, 20 metropolitan boroughs, 31 unitaries, six Welsh unitaries, 70 English single tier)

## Planning ahead

### **Recruitment difficulties**

Councils were asked if they were experiencing significant difficulties recruiting for some occupations and roles: 64 (36 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 56 per cent of English single tier councils were having difficulties recruiting children's social workers. In district councils 64 per cent of those that responded to the question said there were have problems recruiting planning officers. Eighty five per cent of single tier councils said they were having problems recruiting children's social workers.

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

**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	20	13	7	0	11	13
Adult's social workers	71	0	40	38	71	0	56	39
Building control officers	0	27	40	0	21	0	19	17
Chartered surveyors	14	18	40	13	21	0	22	19
Children's social workers	93	0	80	100	79	0	85	56
Economic development officers	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Educational psychologists	43	0	80	0	36	0	33	23
Engineers	50	5	20	25	21	0	22	22
Environmental health officers	0	55	60	50	36	0	44	38
Health visitors	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Homelessness officers	0	5	0	0	14	0	7	5
ICT professionals	21	0	60	0	21	0	22	14
Legal professionals	36	36	80	50	14	0	37	36
Mental health social workers	43	0	60	13	36	0	33	23
Occupational therapists (adults')	50	0	60	13	43	0	37	27
Occupational therapists (children's)	21	0	40	0	14	0	15	11
Regulatory services officers	0	0	20	0	14	0	11	5
Planning officers	29	64	40	25	14	0	22	38
Public health officers	14	0	60	25	21	0	30	16
School nurses	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Test and trace team leaders	0	0	20	13	7	0	11	5
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)	0	0	20	25	14	0	19	8
Trading standards officers	21	0	40	0	7	0	11	9
Youth workers	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Other	29	0	0	13	7	100	7	11

Base: all authorities experiencing recruitment difficulties (64 councils – 14 counties, 22 districts, five London boroughs, eight metropolitan boroughs, 14 unitary, one Welsh unitary, 27 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	7	18	20	13	7	0	11	13
Adult's social workers	71	0	40	38	71	0	56	39
Building control officers	0	27	40	0	21	0	19	17
Chartered surveyors	14	18	40	13	21	0	22	19
Children's social workers	93	0	80	100	79	0	85	56
Economic development officers	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Educational psychologists	43	0	80	0	36	0	33	23
Engineers	50	5	20	25	21	0	22	22
Environmental health officers	0	55	60	50	36	0	44	38
Health visitors	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Homelessness officers	0	5	0	0	14	0	7	5
ICT professionals	21	0	60	0	21	0	22	14
Legal professionals	36	36	80	50	14	0	37	36
Mental health social workers	43	0	60	13	36	0	33	23
Occupational therapists (adults')	50	0	60	13	43	0	37	27
Occupational therapists (children's)	21	0	40	0	14	0	15	11
Regulatory services officers	0	0	20	0	14	0	11	5
Planning officers	29	64	40	25	14	0	22	38
Public health officers	14	0	60	25	21	0	30	16
School nurses	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Test and trace team leaders	0	0	20	13	7	0	11	5
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)	0	0	20	25	14	0	19	8
Trading standards officers	21	0	40	0	7	0	11	9
Youth workers	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Other	29	0	0	13	7	100	7	11

Base: authorities experiencing recruitment difficulties (64 councils – 14 counties, 22 districts, five London boroughs, eight metropolitan boroughs, 14 unitary, one Welsh unitary, 27 English single tier)

**Table 16: For each of these roles where you have acute difficulties, please indicate whether the recruitment difficulty is in recruiting generally, or recruiting at the required level of expertise/experience/qualification?**

	Base	Difficulty recruiting generally	Difficulty recruiting required expertise, experience or qualification	Both	Don't know
	No. councils	% councils	% councils	% councils	% councils
Accountants	5	0	40	60	0
Adult's social workers	16	19	44	38	0
Building control officers	6	33	0	67	0
Chartered surveyors	4	50	0	50	0
Children's social workers	34	26	24	50	0
Economic development officers	0	-	-	-	-
Educational psychologists	8	50	25	25	0
Engineers	6	67	0	33	0
Environmental health officers	20	15	30	55	0
Health visitors	1	0	100	0	0
Homelessness officers	1	0	0	100	0
ICT professionals	3	33	0	67	0
Legal professionals	12	25	17	58	0
Mental health social workers	9	22	11	67	0
Occupational therapists (adults')	9	22	22	56	0
Occupational therapists (children's)	3	33	33	33	0
Regulatory services officers	18	28	17	56	0
Planning officers	5	40	0	60	0
Public health officers	1	0	100	0	0
School nurses	1	0	100	0	0
Test and trace team leaders	1	100	0	0	0
Test and trace officers (clinical case officers)	3	33	0	67	0
Trading standards officers	2	0	0	100	0
Youth workers	0	-	-	-	-
Other	5	20	40	40	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 34 councils who had said they had acute difficulties in recruiting Children's social workers, 50 per cent said they had both difficulty recruiting generally and difficulty recruiting the required expertise, experience or qualification.

## 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 177 councils who responded to the question, 33 per cent said they were not likely recruit additional staff and a further 25 per cent said they did not know. Seventy five (42 per cent) council said they would be likely to recruit additional staff. Of these, 39 per cent of councils said it was 'in response to COVID-19', two per cent said it was 'in response to both' and one per cent said it was 'in response to EU transition'.

**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	44	6	6	19	25
District	24	0	1	49	26
London borough	55	0	0	5	40
Metropolitan borough	67	10	0	14	10
Unitary	41	3	0	31	25
Welsh unitary	67	0	0	17	17
English single tier	52	4	0	19	25
All councils	39	2	1	33	25

Base: all respondents (177 councils – 16 counties, 82 districts, 20 London boroughs, 21 metropolitan boroughs, 32 unitary, six Welsh unitary, 73 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 11 December 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 11 December 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 11 December?

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 11 December	

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 11 December 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 11 December 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 11 December 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)				

**Q8.6 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

Q8.7 Can you please tell us what job roles these are?

\_\_\_\_\_

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

- Name \_\_\_\_\_
- Authority \_\_\_\_\_
- Job title \_\_\_\_\_
- Email address \_\_\_\_\_

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

- Name \_\_\_\_\_
- Authority \_\_\_\_\_
- Job title \_\_\_\_\_
- Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Q10.1

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

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



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