

COVID-19 Workforce Survey

Research Report

8 September 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 26 August 2020. The overall response rate was 55 per cent and covered over a third of the total workforce.

Key findings

- Some 26 per cent of councils reported recruiting additional staff (of any type including casual, agency, contingent, etc) in the week ending 21 August 2020. In total 1,225 additional staff had been recruited in responding authorities: the median number of staff per authority was three and the mean was 29.
- More than a third of councils (101) recorded deaths in service since lockdown. A total of 215 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 full time. In total responding authorities reported there were 4,854 staff furloughed – full time in the week ending 21 August 2020, which was one per cent of the current workforce.
- In addition, 21 per cent of councils reported that they had furloughed at least one member of staff part-time. In total respondents reported there were 2,666 staff furloughed part time in the week ending 21 August 2020, which was 0.5 per cent of the current workforce.
- The main reason given for furloughing staff was that the service had stopped (85 per cent) or that funding had stopped (49 per cent).
- Some 63 per cent of councils had redeployed staff. In total in the responding authorities there were 6,090 staff redeployed in the week ending 21 August 2020, which was one per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff redeployed was 4 and the mean was 34.
- Just over eight out of ten councils (83 per cent) reported that they had at least one member of staff unavailable for work. In total, respondents reported there were 22,028 staff unavailable for work in the week ending 21 August

2020, four per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff unavailable for work was 27 and the mean was 116.

- Fifteen per cent of staff were unavailable through 'self-isolation (other)' and 52 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 21 August was schools: seven per cent of councils reported they were operating with severe disruption due to staffing numbers. Also badly affected were adults and children's services, with 28 per cent and 22 per cent of councils respectively reporting moderate disruption.
- When asked to assess the council overall, in terms of whether there are enough staff to run services normally or not, 43 per cent of councils report minor or moderate disruption a further 43 per cent were operating normally.
- Councils that had gone through a local lockdown in the week ending 21 August were asked about the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 testing for staff. Eighty per cent reported they had about the right amount of PPE they needed; whilst five per cent had less than they needed. Seventy per cent said all the staff who need testing can access it, whilst 30 per cent said most of the staff can access it.
- Looking ahead, councils were asked if they were experiencing significant difficulties recruiting for some posts, 186 (91 per cent) said they were. Councils were subsequently asked to choose from a list of specialist occupations where they were experiencing difficulties, 55 per cent of councils are having difficulties recruiting Children's social workers and 420 per cent were having difficulties recruiting Planning officers and 40 per cent were having difficulties recruiting legal professionals.
- Councils were asked to choose the five occupations or roles where recruitment difficulties were most acute. Sixty per cent of councils who answered the question had acute difficulties recruiting Children's social workers
- Out of the thirty-five councils who had said they had acute difficulties in recruiting Children's social workers, 43 per cent said they had both difficulty recruiting generally and difficulty recruiting the required expertise, experience or qualification.

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 26 August, 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 204 councils responded, which is a response rate of 55 per cent.

Table 1 and **Table 2** provide a breakdown of responses by authority type and region. Whilst these results should strictly be taken as a snapshot of the views of this group of respondents, rather than representative of all heads of human resources, this level of response means that the results are likely to provide a good indication of the position of the sector more widely.

| Type of authority | Total number | Number of responses | Response rate % |
|---------------------------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| District | 188 | 105 | 56 |
| County | 25 | 18 | 72 |
| London borough | 33 | 19 | 58 |
| Metropolitan district | 36 | 16 | 44 |
| Unitary | 57 | 38 | 67 |
| Welsh unitary | 22 | 8 | 36 |
| Local government districts (NI) | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| All | 372 | 204 | 55 |

Table 2: Response rate by region

| Region | Total number | Number of responses | Response rate % |
|----------------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Eastern | 50 | 41 | 82 |
| East Midlands | 45 | 29 | 64 |
| London | 33 | 19 | 58 |
| North East | 12 | 8 | 67 |
| North West | 41 | 21 | 51 |
| South East | 70 | 37 | 53 |
| South West | 33 | 13 | 39 |
| Wales | 22 | 8 | 36 |
| West Midlands | 33 | 10 | 30 |
| Yorkshire and Humber | 22 | 18 | 82 |
| Northern Ireland | 11 | 0 | 0 |

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 21 August 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 536,942 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 99 councils that responded to the survey and had responsibility for schools, 19 (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 21 August 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 21 August 2020.

Of the councils that responded 54 (26 per cent) reported recruiting additional staff, in total 1225 additional staff were recruited during the week ending 21 August 2020. The median number of staff per council was 3 and the mean was 29.

Table 3: Has the council recruited additional staff (of any type including casual, agency, contingent, etc during week ending 21 August 2020)?

| | Yes | % | Total | Median | Mean |
|----------------------|-----|----|-------|--------|------|
| County | 6 | 33 | 20 | 5 | 5 |
| District | 13 | 12 | 386 | 2 | 32 |
| London borough | 10 | 53 | 631 | 7 | 9 |
| Metropolitan borough | 8 | 50 | 69 | 4 | 12 |
| Unitary | 13 | 34 | 26 | 3 | 3 |
| Welsh unitary | 4 | 50 | 93 | 5 | 23 |
| English single tier | 31 | 42 | 726 | 3 | 33 |
| All councils | 54 | 26 | 1225 | 3 | 29 |

Base: all respondents (204 councils – 18 counties, 104 districts, 19 London boroughs, 16 metropolitan boroughs, 38 unitary, 8 Welsh unitary, 73 English single tier)

Current headcount as at 21 August 2020

Total headcount for those councils that responded has increased by 0.5 per cent since the 1 March 2020 and now stands at 493,672 on the week ending 21 August 2020.

Table 4: Change in headcount from 1 March – 21 August 2020

| | At 1 March | At 12 June | % change |
|----------------------|------------|------------|----------|
| County | 122929 | 124743 | 1.5 |
| District | 48798 | 49223 | 0.9 |
| London borough | 62224 | 62844 | 1.0 |
| Metropolitan borough | 91832 | 91372 | -0.5 |
| Unitary | 122738 | 122829 | 0.1 |
| Welsh unitary | 42709 | 42661 | -0.1 |
| English single tier | 276794 | 277045 | 0.1 |
| All councils | 491230 | 493672 | 0.5 |

Base: all respondents (204 councils – 18 counties, 105 districts, 19 London boroughs, 16 metropolitan boroughs, 38 unitary, 8 Welsh unitary, 73 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 200 councils that answered this question 101 (51 per cent) recorded a total of 215 deaths in service as of 21 August 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 | 46 | 16 |
| District | 30 | 25 |
| London borough | 28 | 14 |
| Metropolitan borough | 39 | 11 |
| Unitary | 57 | 30 |
| Welsh unitary | 15 | 5 |
| English single tier | 124 | 55 |
| All councils | 215 | 101 |

Base: all responding to question (200 councils – 18 counties, 104 districts, 19 London boroughs, 13 metropolitan boroughs, 38 unitary, 8 Welsh unitary, 70 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 21 August 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 4,854 staff furloughed full time in responding councils in the week ending 21 August, one per cent of their current workforce. Of those councils that had furloughed staff full time, the median number was 46 and the mean was 106; but this varied considerably across different types of authority.

| Table 6: No. of staff furloughed full time (week ending 21 August) | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|--|-------------|
| | | | | Of those councils with furloughed staff | |
| | No. of councils | % of councils | Total no. staff | Median | Mean |
| County | 7 | 47 | 1224 | 73 | 175 |
| District | 18 | 17 | 1116 | 32 | 62 |
| London borough | 4 | 22 | 133 | 13 | 33 |
| Metropolitan borough | 4 | 33 | 332 | 40 | 83 |
| Unitary | 8 | 23 | 1054 | 62 | 132 |
| Welsh unitary | 5 | 71 | 995 | 155 | 199 |
| English single tier | 16 | 25 | 1519 | 40 | 95 |
| All councils | 46 | 24 | 4854 | 46 | 106 |

Base: all responding to question (190 councils – 13 counties, 103 districts, 18 London boroughs, 12 metropolitan boroughs, 35 unitary, 7 Welsh unitary, 65 English single tier)

Of councils that answered the question about part time furloughing 40 (21 per cent) reported that they had furloughed at least one member of staff on this basis.

In total there were 2,666 staff partially furloughed in responding councils in the week ending 21 August, 0.5 cent of their current workforce. Of those councils that had furloughed staff part time, the median number was 13 and the mean was 67 but this varied considerably across different types of authority.

Table 7: No. of staff furloughed part time (week ending 21 August)

| | No. of councils | % of councils | Total no. staff | Of those councils with furloughed staff | |
|----------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---|------|
| | | | | Median | Mean |
| County | 6 | 40 | 978 | 92 | 163 |
| District | 21 | 20 | 711 | 8 | 34 |
| London borough | 1 | 6 | 65 | 65 | 35 |
| Metropolitan borough | 3 | 25 | 391 | 70 | 130 |
| Unitary | 7 | 20 | 409 | 24 | 58 |
| Welsh unitary | 2 | 29 | 112 | 56 | 56 |
| English single tier | 11 | 17 | 865 | 33 | 79 |
| All councils | 40 | 21 | 2666 | 13 | 67 |

Base: all responding to question (190 councils – 13 counties, 103 districts, 18 London boroughs, 12 metropolitan boroughs, 35 unitary, 7 Welsh unitary, 65 English single tier)

Reason staff were furloughed

The councils that had furloughed staff in the week ending 21 August 2020 were subsequently asked to indicate the reason the member of staff had been furloughed, and 50 were able to provide the reason or reasons.

In the week ending 21 August 2020, 85 per cent of staff were furloughed because the 'Service has been stopped' and 49 per cent of staff furloughed as 'Funding has stopped'. The pattern varied across authority types, in districts 75 per cent of staff were furloughed due to 'Services has been stopped', while in London Boroughs 64 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 | 81 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 7 |
| District | 8 | 1 | 0 | 75 | 15 |
| London borough | 64 | 0 | 0 | 36 | 0 |
| Metropolitan borough | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 | 0 |
| Unitary | 34 | 1 | 0 | 62 | 3 |
| Welsh unitary | 0 | 5 | 0 | 94 | 0 |
| English single tier | 26 | 1 | 0 | 71 | 2 |
| All councils | 49 | 2 | 0 | 85 | 3 |

Base: all responding to question (50 councils – 7 counties, 25 districts, 3 London boroughs, 3 metropolitan boroughs, 7 unitary, 5 Welsh unitary, 13 English single tier)

Redeployed staff

Councils were asked to indicate the number of staff that had been redeployed in the week ending 21 August 2020. Of councils that answered the question, 112 (63 per cent) reported that they had redeployed at least one member of staff.

In total there were 6,090 staff redeployed in the week ending 21 August, one per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff redeployed was 4 and the mean was 34.

| | No. of councils | % of councils | Total no. staff | Median | Mean |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| County | 9 | 82 | 1154 | 84 | 105 |
| District | 50 | 51 | 737 | 1 | 7 |
| London borough | 15 | 79 | 915 | 21 | 48 |
| Metropolitan borough | 11 | 85 | 1568 | 43 | 121 |
| Unitary | 20 | 67 | 1142 | 13 | 38 |
| Welsh unitary | 7 | 100 | 574 | 71 | 82 |
| English single tier | 46 | 74 | 3625 | 20 | 58 |
| All councils | 112 | 63 | 6090 | 4 | 34 |

Base: all responding to question (179 councils – 11 counties, 99 districts, 19 London boroughs, 13 metropolitan boroughs, 30 unitary, 7 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 21 August 2020. Of councils that answered the question, 157 (83 per cent) reported that they had at least one member of staff unavailable.

In total there were 22,028 staff unavailable for work in responding authorities in the week ending 21 August, six per cent of the current workforce. The median number of staff unavailable for work was 27 and the mean was 116.

| | No. of councils | % of councils | Total no. staff | Median | Mean |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| County | 16 | 100 | 4935 | 197 | 308 |
| District | 73 | 72 | 2384 | 8 | 23 |
| London borough | 18 | 95 | 2378 | 61 | 125 |
| Metropolitan borough | 14 | 100 | 4412 | 314 | 315 |
| Unitary | 31 | 91 | 6549 | 109 | 193 |
| Welsh unitary | 5 | 100 | 1370 | 165 | 274 |
| English single tier | 63 | 94 | 13339 | 118 | 199 |
| All councils | 157 | 83 | 22028 | 27 | 116 |

Base: all responding to question (190 councils – 19 counties, 102 districts, 19 London boroughs, 14 metropolitan boroughs, 34 unitary, 5 Welsh unitary, 67 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 21 August 2020 were subsequently asked to indicate the reason for them being unavailable, 155 were able to provide the reason.

In the week ending 21 August 2020, 52 per cent of staff were unavailable because of 'Non-COVID sickness' and 15 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 counties five 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 | 63 | 5 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 19 |
| District | 48 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 2 | 40 |
| London borough | 63 | 4 | 0 | 25 | 4 | 4 |
| Metropolitan borough | 49 | 2 | 0 | 21 | 3 | 26 |
| Unitary | 45 | 2 | 3 | 13 | 2 | 35 |
| Welsh unitary | 57 | 2 | 0 | 15 | 20 | 6 |
| English single tier | 49 | 2 | 2 | 17 | 3 | 28 |
| All councils | 52 | 2 | 1 | 15 | 4 | 26 |

Base: all responding to question (155 councils – 16 counties, 71 districts, 18 London boroughs, 14 metropolitan boroughs, 31 unitary, 5 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: seven per cent of single tier and county councils reported they were operating with severe disruption due to staffing numbers. Also badly affected were adults and children's services, with 28 per cent and 22 per cent of councils respectively reporting moderate disruption.

When asked to assess the council overall, in terms of whether there are enough staff to run services normally or not, 43 per cent of councils reported minor disruption.

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) | 97 | 36 | 35 | 28 | 1 |
| Bereavement services | 136 | 66 | 24 | 9 | 1 |
| Children's services | 95 | 45 | 31 | 22 | 2 |
| Environment health | 181 | 49 | 33 | 15 | 3 |
| Household waste (doorstep collection) | 164 | 71 | 21 | 8 | 0 |
| Housing and homelessness services | 183 | 61 | 25 | 12 | 2 |
| Planning | 193 | 62 | 29 | 8 | 1 |
| Public Health | 123 | 48 | 30 | 15 | 7 |
| Revenue and Benefits | 176 | 62 | 26 | 10 | 2 |
| Schools | 69 | 36 | 32 | 25 | 7 |
| Trading standards | 91 | 55 | 33 | 10 | 2 |
| Overall council | 198 | 43 | 43 | 14 | 0 |

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

Availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Only councils that had gone through a local lockdown in the weekend ending 21 August were asked to indicate whether they had enough of the correct type of PPE for those staff that needed it. A total of 20 (ten per cent) answered the question, of which 80 per cent reported they had about the right amount of PPE; whilst five 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 | - | - | - | - |
| District | 0 | 67 | 0 | 17 |
| London borough | 0 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| Metropolitan borough | 0 | 86 | 14 | 0 |
| Unitary | 25 | 75 | 0 | 0 |
| Welsh unitary | - | - | - | - |
| English single tier | 7 | 86 | 7 | 0 |
| All councils | 5 | 80 | 5 | 5 |

Base: all responding to question (20 councils – 0 counties, 6 districts, 3 London boroughs, 7 metropolitan boroughs, 4 unitary, 0 Welsh unitary, 14 English single tier)

Availability of testing

Only councils that had gone through a local lockdown in the weekend ending 21 August were also asked to indicate whether staff who needed it were able to access testing or not. A total of 20 (ten per cent) answered the question, of which 30 per cent said most 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 | - | - | - | - | - |
| District | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| London borough | 0 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Metropolitan borough | 57 | 43 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Unitary | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Welsh unitary | - | - | - | - | - |
| English single tier | 57 | 43 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| All councils | 70 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Base: all responding to question (20 councils – 0 counties, 6 districts, 3 London boroughs, 7 metropolitan boroughs, 4 unitary, 0 Welsh unitary, 14 English single tier)

Planning ahead

Recruitment difficulties

Councils were asked if they were experiencing significant difficulties recruiting for some occupations and roles, 186 (91 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 15 shows, 55 per cent of councils are having difficulties recruiting Children's social workers and 40 per cent were having difficulties recruiting Planning officers. Other occupations and roles councils said they were having difficulties in recruiting included, support workers, cooks, adult care assistants, school crossing patrol and learning disability nurses.

From the specialist occupations and roles councils had ticked they were having difficulties recruiting, council 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. Sixty per cent of councils who answered the question had acute difficulties recruiting Children's social workers, this can be seen in Table 16.

Table 15: 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 | 15 | 14 | 25 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 11 |
| Adult's social workers | 62 | 0 | 75 | 0 | 56 | 50 | 46 | 34 |
| Building control officers | 0 | 29 | 50 | 0 | 6 | 50 | 12 | 16 |
| Chartered surveyors | 15 | 24 | 75 | 33 | 13 | 0 | 27 | 23 |
| Children's social workers | 92 | 0 | 75 | 83 | 81 | 50 | 81 | 55 |
| Economic development officers | 23 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Educational psychologists | 46 | 0 | 75 | 17 | 25 | 0 | 31 | 23 |
| Engineers | 31 | 5 | 50 | 33 | 19 | 0 | 27 | 19 |
| Environmental health officers | 0 | 48 | 75 | 33 | 19 | 50 | 31 | 31 |
| Health visitors | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Homelessness officers | 0 | 24 | 0 | 17 | 6 | 0 | 8 | 11 |
| ICT professionals | 15 | 19 | 75 | 17 | 19 | 50 | 27 | 23 |
| Legal professionals | 46 | 33 | 100 | 67 | 25 | 0 | 46 | 40 |
| Mental health social workers | 54 | 0 | 50 | 17 | 31 | 50 | 31 | 26 |
| Occupational therapists (adults') | 54 | 0 | 50 | 17 | 31 | 0 | 31 | 24 |
| Occupational therapists (children's) | 31 | 0 | 50 | 0 | 25 | 0 | 23 | 16 |
| Regulatory services officers | 0 | 0 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 3 |
| Planning officers | 38 | 67 | 75 | 17 | 13 | 0 | 23 | 40 |
| Public health officers | 15 | 0 | 25 | 17 | 13 | 50 | 15 | 11 |
| School nurses | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Test and trace team leaders | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Test and trace officers (clinical case officers) | 0 | 0 | 25 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 3 |
| Trading standards officers | 31 | 0 | 50 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 12 | 11 |
| Youth workers | 0 | 0 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 |
| Other | 31 | 5 | 0 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 10 |

Base: all responding to question (62 councils – 13 counties, 21 districts, 4 London boroughs, 6 metropolitan boroughs, 16 unitary, 2 Welsh unitary, 26 English single tier)

Table 16: 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 | 17 | 16 | 25 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 12 |
| Adult's social workers | 67 | 0 | 75 | 0 | 64 | 50 | 50 | 37 |
| Building control officers | 0 | 32 | 50 | 0 | 7 | 50 | 13 | 18 |
| Chartered surveyors | 17 | 26 | 75 | 33 | 14 | 0 | 29 | 25 |
| Children's social workers | 100 | 0 | 75 | 83 | 93 | 50 | 88 | 60 |
| Economic development officers | 25 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Educational psychologists | 50 | 0 | 75 | 17 | 29 | 0 | 33 | 25 |
| Engineers | 33 | 5 | 50 | 33 | 21 | 0 | 29 | 21 |
| Environmental health officers | 0 | 53 | 75 | 33 | 21 | 50 | 33 | 33 |
| Health visitors | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Homelessness officers | 0 | 26 | 0 | 17 | 7 | 0 | 8 | 12 |
| ICT professionals | 17 | 21 | 75 | 17 | 21 | 50 | 29 | 25 |
| Legal professionals | 50 | 37 | 100 | 67 | 29 | 0 | 50 | 44 |
| Mental health social workers | 58 | 0 | 50 | 17 | 36 | 50 | 33 | 28 |
| Occupational therapists (adults') | 58 | 0 | 50 | 17 | 36 | 0 | 33 | 26 |
| Occupational therapists (children's) | 33 | 0 | 50 | 0 | 29 | 0 | 25 | 18 |
| Regulatory services officers | 0 | 0 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 4 |
| Planning officers | 42 | 74 | 75 | 17 | 14 | 0 | 25 | 44 |
| Public health officers | 17 | 0 | 25 | 17 | 14 | 50 | 17 | 12 |
| School nurses | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Test and trace team leaders | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Test and trace officers (clinical case officers) | 0 | 0 | 25 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 4 |
| Trading standards officers | 33 | 0 | 50 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 13 | 12 |
| Youth workers | 0 | 0 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 |
| Other | 33 | 5 | 0 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 11 |

Base: all responding to question (56 councils – 12 counties, 19 districts, 4 London boroughs, 6 metropolitan boroughs, 14 unitary, 2 Welsh unitary, 24 English single tier)

Table 17: 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 | 2 | 50 | 0 | 50 | 0 |
| Adult's social workers | 15 | 40 | 20 | 40 | 0 |
| Building control officers | 7 | 14 | 57 | 29 | 0 |
| Chartered surveyors | 7 | 43 | 29 | 29 | 0 |
| Children's social workers | 30 | 27 | 30 | 43 | 0 |
| Economic development officers | 2 | 0 | 50 | 50 | 0 |
| Educational psychologists | 8 | 50 | 25 | 13 | 13 |
| Engineers | 5 | 40 | 40 | 20 | 0 |
| Environmental health officers | 12 | 25 | 42 | 33 | 0 |
| Health visitors | 0 | - | - | - | - |
| Homelessness officers | 3 | 33 | 33 | 33 | 0 |
| ICT professionals | 9 | 44 | 44 | 11 | 0 |
| Legal professionals | 16 | 38 | 31 | 31 | 0 |
| Mental health social workers | 11 | 18 | 27 | 55 | 0 |
| Occupational therapists (adults') | 7 | 29 | 0 | 57 | 14 |
| Occupational therapists (children's) | 4 | 25 | 25 | 50 | 0 |
| Regulatory services officers | 17 | 24 | 35 | 41 | 0 |
| Planning officers | 2 | 50 | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| Public health officers | 0 | - | - | - | - |
| School nurses | 1 | 0 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| Test and trace team leaders | 0 | - | - | - | - |
| Test and trace officers (clinical case officers) | 0 | - | - | - | - |
| Trading standards officers | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Youth workers | 0 | - | - | - | - |
| Other | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 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 recruitment difficulty is in recruiting generally or recruiting at the required level of expertise/experience/qualification. Out of the thirty councils who had said they had acute difficulties in recruiting Children's social workers, 43 per cent said they had both difficulty recruiting generally and difficulty recruiting the required expertise, experience or qualification.

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 21 August 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 21 August 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 21 August?

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 21 August | |

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 21 August 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 21 August 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 21 August 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 councils 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 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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