

Human Resources Committee

Agenda

**Thursday, 7 March 2024 at 6.30 p.m.
Committee Room - Tower Hamlets Town Hall,
160 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1BJ**

Members:

Chair: Councillor Bellal Uddin

Vice Chair: Councillor Maium Talukdar

Councillor Kabir Ahmed, Councillor Saied Ahmed, Councillor Sabina Khan, Councillor Abdal Ullah and Councillor Ayas Miah

Substitutes: Councillor Rachel Blake

[The quorum for this body is 3 voting Members]

Contact for further enquiries:

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020 7364 4854

<https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/>



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A Guide to Human Resources Committee

The Committee is responsible non-executive human resources (HR) and personnel issues such as recruitment of chief officers and employee appeals against dismissal.

Public Engagement

Meetings of the committee are open to the public to attend, and a timetable for meeting dates and deadlines can be found on the council's website.

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Human Resources Committee

Thursday, 7 March 2024

6.30 p.m.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (PAGES 7 - 8)

Members are reminded to consider the categories of interest in the Code of Conduct for Members to determine whether they have an interest in any agenda item and any action they should take. For further details, please see the attached note from the Monitoring Officer.

Members are reminded to declare the nature of the interest and the agenda item it relates to. Please note that ultimately it's the Members' responsibility to declare any interests and to update their register of interest form as required by the Code.

If in doubt as to the nature of your interest, you are advised to seek advice prior to the meeting by contacting the Monitoring Officer or Democratic Services

2. MINUTES (PAGES 9 - 12)

To agree the unrestricted minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 28 November 2024.

3. WORK PLAN (PAGES 13 - 20)

To review the Committee's work plan for the current municipal year.

4. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

4.1 Employee Relations Casework Policy Update 23/24 Q2 (Pages 21 - 28)

4.2 Update on Senior Recruitment (To Follow)

TO FOLLOW

4.3 Update on Disciplinary Action Process for Statutory Officers (To Follow)

TO FOLLOW



4.4 Pay Policy 2024/25 (To Follow)

TO FOLLOW

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

In view of the contents of the remaining items on the agenda the Committee is recommended to adopt the following motion:

“That, under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for the consideration of the Section Two business on the grounds that it contains information defined as Exempt in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972.”

EXEMPT SECTION (Pink Papers)

The exempt committee papers in the agenda will contain information, which is commercially, legally or personally sensitive and should not be divulged to third parties. If you do not wish to retain these papers after the meeting, please hand them to the Committee Officer present.



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Agenda Item 1

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AT MEETINGS– NOTE FROM THE MONITORING OFFICER

This note is for guidance only. For further details please consult the Code of Conduct for Members at Part C, Section 31 of the Council's Constitution

(i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)

You have a DPI in any item of business on the agenda where it relates to the categories listed in **Appendix A** to this guidance. Please note that a DPI includes: (i) Your own relevant interests; (ii) Those of your spouse or civil partner; (iii) A person with whom the Member is living as husband/wife/civil partners. Other individuals, e.g. Children, siblings and flatmates do not need to be considered. Failure to disclose or register a DPI (within 28 days) is a criminal offence.

Members with a DPI, (unless granted a dispensation) must not seek to improperly influence the decision, must declare the nature of the interest and leave the meeting room (including the public gallery) during the consideration and decision on the item – unless exercising their right to address the Committee.

DPI Dispensations and Sensitive Interests. In certain circumstances, Members may make a request to the Monitoring Officer for a dispensation or for an interest to be treated as sensitive.

(ii) Non - DPI Interests that the Council has decided should be registered – (Non - DPIs)

You will have 'Non DPI Interest' in any item on the agenda, where it relates to (i) the offer of gifts or hospitality, (with an estimated value of at least £25) (ii) Council Appointments or nominations to bodies (iii) Membership of any body exercising a function of a public nature, a charitable purpose or aimed at influencing public opinion.

Members must declare the nature of the interest, but may stay in the meeting room and participate in the consideration of the matter and vote on it **unless:**

- A reasonable person would think that your interest is so significant that it would be likely to impair your judgement of the public interest. **If so, you must withdraw and take no part in the consideration or discussion of the matter.**

(iii) Declarations of Interests not included in the Register of Members' Interest.

Occasions may arise where a matter under consideration would, or would be likely to, **affect the wellbeing of you, your family, or close associate(s) more than it would anyone else living in the local area** but which is not required to be included in the Register of Members' Interests. In such matters, Members must consider the information set out in paragraph (ii) above regarding Non DPI - interests and apply the test, set out in this paragraph.

Guidance on Predetermination and Bias

Member's attention is drawn to the guidance on predetermination and bias, particularly the need to consider the merits of the case with an open mind, as set out in the Planning and Licensing Codes of Conduct, (Part C, Section 34 and 35 of the Constitution). For further advice on the possibility of bias or predetermination, you are advised to seek advice prior to the meeting.

Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992 - Declarations which restrict Members in Council Tax arrears, for at least a two months from voting

In such circumstances the member may not vote on any reports and motions with respect to the matter.

Further Advice contact: Janet Fasan, Monitoring Officer, Tel: 0207 364 4800.

APPENDIX A: Definition of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

(Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, Reg 2 and Schedule)

Subject	Prescribed description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vacation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by the Member in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of the Member. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority— (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the Member's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the relevant authority; and (b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where— (a) that body (to the Member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.34 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2023

**COMMITTEE ROOM - TOWER HAMLETS TOWN HALL, 160 WHITECHAPEL
ROAD, LONDON E1 1BJ**

Members Present in Person:

Councillor Maium Talukdar	-(Vice-Chair)
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	-(Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Inclusive Development and Housebuilding)
Councillor Saied Ahmed	-(Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living)
Councillor Abdal Ullah	
Councillor Iqbal Hossain	-(Substitute)

Members In Attendance Virtually:

Councillor Sabina Khan

Officers Present in Person:

Pat Chen	- (Interim Director, Workforce, OD and Business Support Services)
Justina Bridgeman	-(Democratic Services Officer, Committees)

Officers in Attendance Virtually:

Carole S. Bowes	-(Employment Lawyer, Legal Services, Directorate Law, Probity and Governance)
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Apologies:

Councillor Ayas Miah

Councillor Bellal Uddin

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests, however; Councillor Maium Talukdar disclosed that he is a member of the Appointment sub-committee and a senior recruitment panellist. Councillor Kabir Ahmed disclosed that he is a senior recruitment panellist. Councillor Abdal Ullah disclosed that he is a senior recruitment panellist. Councillor Iqbal Hossain disclosed that he is a member of the Appointment sub-committee and also a senior recruitment panellist. Councillor Saied Ahmed disclosed that he is a member of the Appeals Committee.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 14 September 2023 were approved and signed as a correct record of proceedings

3. WORK PLAN

RESOLVED:

1. That the work plan be noted.

4. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

4.1 Employee Relations Casework Policy Update 23/24 Q2

Pat Chen, Interim Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support Services, gave the Committee an overview of the employee relations casework from 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023.

Further to questions from the committee, Pat Chen;

- Clarified that the report includes the crossover period when the Place directorate was still in existence during July and August 2023. The next quarterly report will reflect the new structure.
- Confirmed action is being taken to resolve all customer service issues at the earliest opportunity. A mediation service has been implemented to de-escalate grievances and attendance management cases are being effectively resolved within frontline service areas.
- Explained that work is currently taking place to manage performance concerns more swiftly. The five cases are ones progressed to the formal stages.
- Noted that performance complaints differ, in that some relate to a service area, whilst others are individual performance issues. The data presented in this report relates to the latter.

RESOLVED that:

1. The report be noted.

4.2 Update on Senior Recruitment

Pat Chen, Interim Director, Workforce, OD and Business Support Services, introduced the report which provided the current senior recruitment positions to senior management vacancies and the interim arrangements in place.

Further to questions from the committee, Pat Chen;

- Confirmed that executive agencies chosen are required to ensure the candidates selected increase representation and reflect the community. An equalities breakdown with costs will be submitted to the committee for review at the next meeting.

Following the report, Committee members suggested officers consider widening the search for candidates with transferable skills from other industries, such as health or law to tackle diversity. Members also reiterated that staff within the organisation be encouraged to apply for senior posts.

RESOLVED that:

1. An equalities breakdown with costs to be submitted to the Committee for review at the next meeting.
2. The report on the current position on the recruitment to senior management vacancies be noted.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

Pat Chen informed Committee members that Denise Radley, Corporate Director for Health and Adult Social Care, has been formally designated as the Deputy Chief Executive. The Committee congratulated Ms Radley on her appointment.

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

1. That in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the remaining agenda item contained information defined as exempt or confidential in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

7. EXEMPT MINUTES

There were no exempt minutes.

The meeting ended at 6.57 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Bellal Uddin

Human Resources Committee



HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN and ACTION LIST 2023/24

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Agenda Item 3

Contact Officer:	Joel West Democratic Services
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Website:	www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/committee

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2023/24

ACTIONS LIST

Action number	Title	Action Owner	Originating Meeting/Item	Due Date / Comment
1.	Interim and Acting Up Arrangements	Musrat Zaman, Dir-Workforce, OD and Business Support	GPC February 2023	From General Purposes Committee 22-23 work plan. To report on all interim and acting up arrangements in senior officer roles.
2.	Establishment of Appointments Sub-Committee	Janet Fasan, Director of Legal & Monitoring Officer	Item 4.2 June 2023	The Committee requested an additional line in the last paragraph within item 4.2 of the minutes to now read:- "Agree the terms of reference and procedure rules for the Employee Appeal Sub-Committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2023/24 as set out in the tabled papers, subject to an additional clause to specify that the membership be politically balanced, based on proportionality and group leaders to appoint members to the committee".
3.	Employee Relations Casework and Policy Quarterly Review	Pat Chen, Interim Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	Item 4.1 September 2023 meeting	Full details of all stages of complaint resolution and grievance decisions including a trend line of numbers and a comparison of the previous quarter be submitted to the Committee. Due 28 November meeting
4.	Update on Senior Recruitment	Pat Chen, Interim Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	Item 4.2 November 2023 meeting	An equalities breakdown with costs to be submitted to the Committee for review at the next meeting. Due: 20 February 2024 meeting.

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2023/24

Action number	Title	Action Owner	Originating Meeting/Item	Due Date / Comment
5.	Update on Disciplinary Action Process Against Statutory Officers	Pat Chen, Interim Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	Email 06.02.24 from Mayors Office	Report to be submitted to the Committee for review at the next meeting. Due: 20 February 2024 meeting.

N.B. once concluded - actions should remain on the list marked 'complete' for the remainder of the municipal year.

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2023/24

12 JUNE 2023

REPORT TITLE	BRIEF SUMMARY	LEAD OFFICER	OTHER CTTEE MEETINGS
1. Employee Relations Casework Policy Annual Report 22/23	An update on the Employee Relations Casework Policy Annual Report	Musrat Zaman Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	
2. Annual Employee Relations Casework report Quarter 4	An update on the Employee Relations Casework Policy Annual Report	Musrat Zaman Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	
3. Update on Senior Recruitment (including acting up and interim arrangements).	An update on Tower Hamlet Senior Recruitment	Musrat Zaman Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	
4. Annual administrative reports	Including noting terms of reference, membership and establishment of appointments sub committee.	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services	

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HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2023/24

14 SEPTEMBER 2023			
REPORT TITLE	BRIEF SUMMARY	LEAD OFFICER	OTHER CTTEE MEETINGS
1. Employee Relations Casework and Policy Quarterly Review	An update on the Employee Relations Casework Policy Quarterly Report	Musrat Zaman, Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	
2. Update on Senior Recruitment	An update on Tower Hamlet Senior Recruitment	Musrat Zaman, Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2023/24

28 NOVEMBER 2023			
REPORT TITLE	BRIEF SUMMARY	LEAD OFFICER	OTHER CTTEE MEETINGS
1. Employee Relations Casework and Policy Quarterly Review	An update on the Employee Relations Casework Policy Quarterly Report	Pat Chen, Interim Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	
2. Update on senior recruitment	To note recruitment activity for senior officer posts.	Pat Chen, Interim Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	


HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2023/24

20 FEBRUARY 2024			
REPORT TITLE	BRIEF SUMMARY	LEAD OFFICER	OTHER CTTEE MEETINGS
1. Update on senior recruitment	To note recruitment activity for senior officer posts.	Pat Chen, Interim Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	
2. Employee Relations Casework and Policy Quarterly Review	An update on the Employee Relations Casework Policy Quarterly Report	Pat Chen, Interim Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	

MEETING POSTPONED!
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HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2023/24

07 MARCH 2024			
REPORT TITLE	BRIEF SUMMARY	LEAD OFFICER	OTHER CTTEE MEETINGS
1. Update on senior recruitment	To note recruitment activity for senior officer posts.	Pat Chen, Interim Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	
2. Employee Relations Casework and Policy Quarterly Review	An update on the Employee Relations Casework Policy Quarterly Report	Pat Chen, Interim Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	
3. Update on Disciplinary Action Process Against Statutory Officers	An update on the Disciplinary Action Process Against Statutory Officers	Pat Chen, Interim Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support	

<p>Cover Report to:</p> <p>Human Resources Committee</p> <p>7th March 2024</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Pat Chen, Interim Director of Workforce, OD and Business Support Services</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Quarterly report on Employee Relations Casework and Policy Update</p>	

Originating Officer(s)	Gail Simpson, Head of HR
Wards affected	None

Summary

The attached report is to update Human Resources Committee on the level and management of employee relations casework within the Council, highlighting progress made.

Recommendations:

The Human Resources Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the report.

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Employee Relations Quarterly Report on Casework and Policy Development

Q3 2023/24 (1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023)

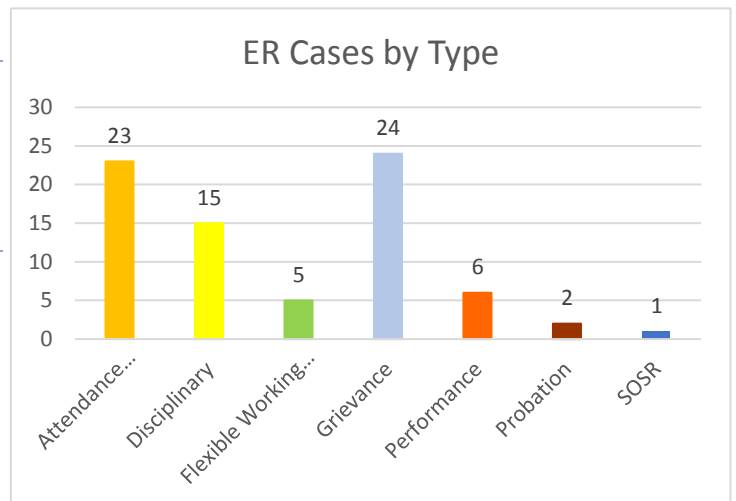
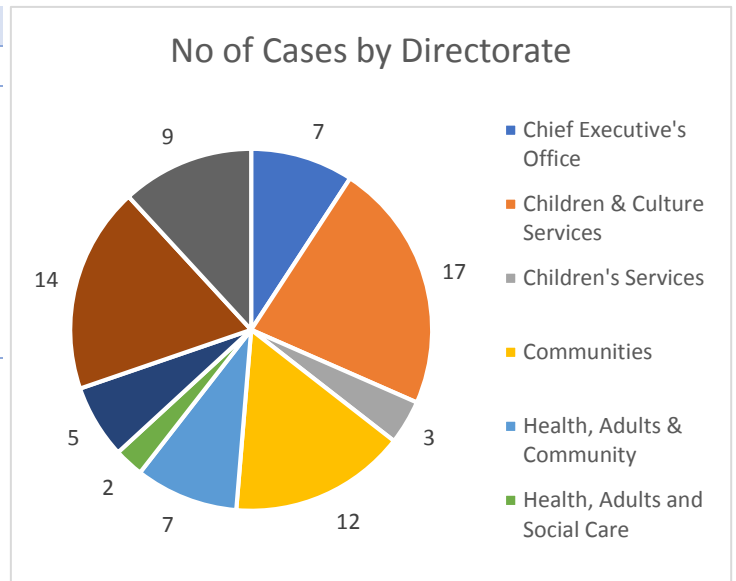
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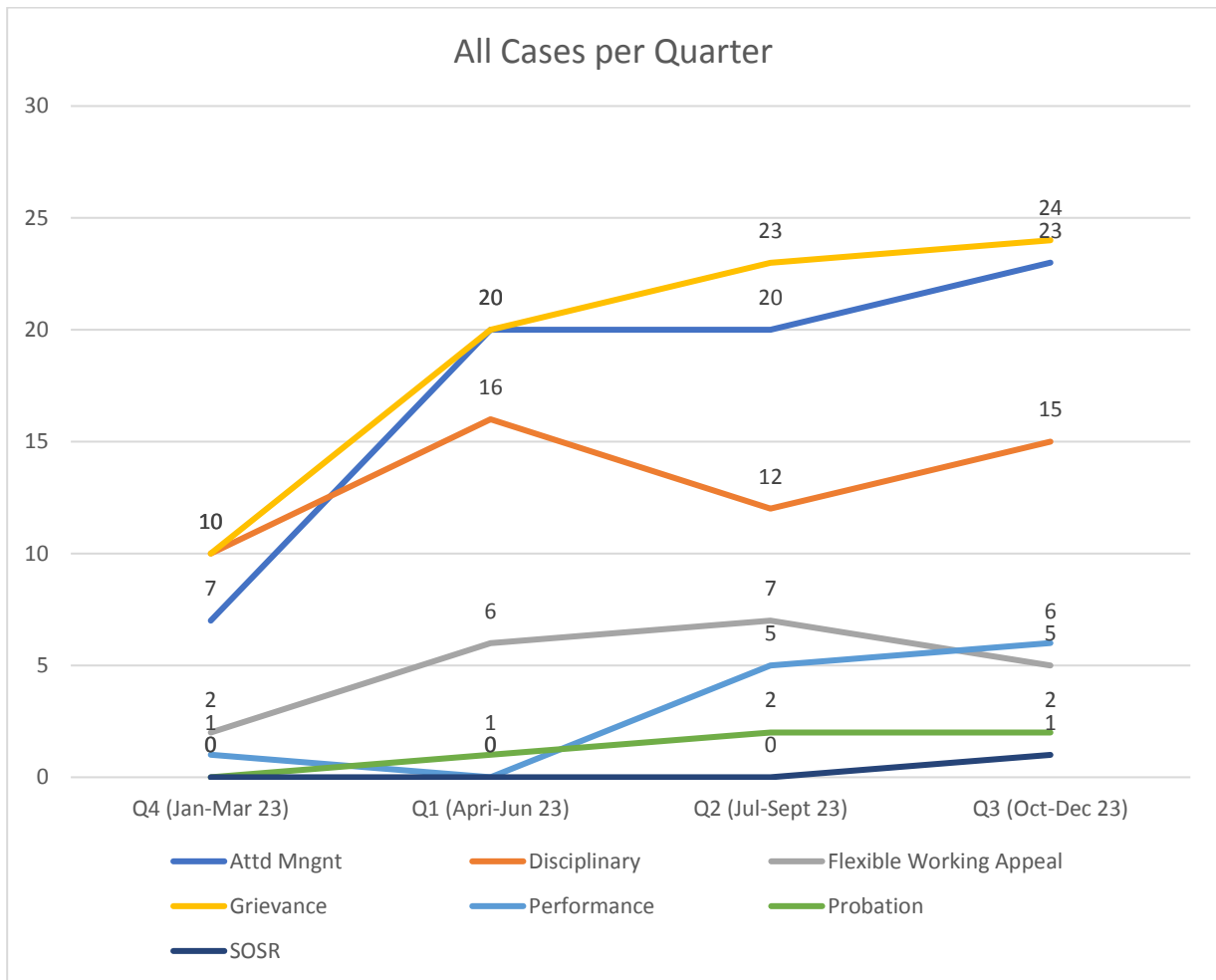
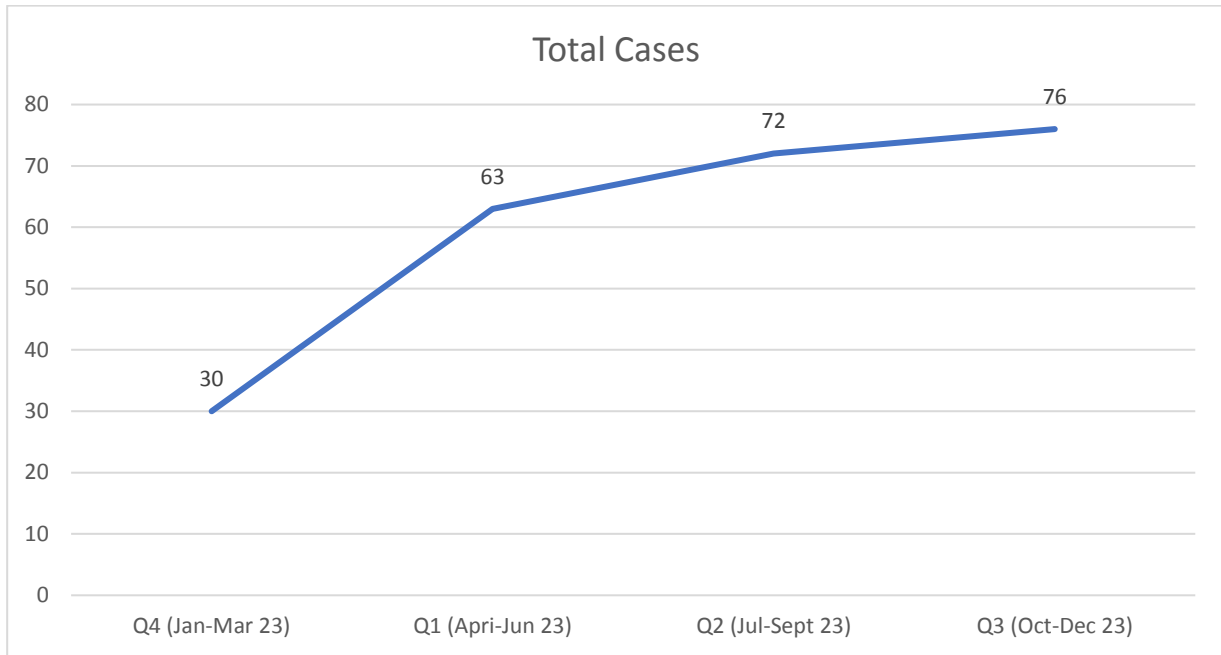
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3. Policy Development	5

Employee Relations

1. Dashboard

Cases by Directorate	No of Case Status
Attendance Management	23
Chief Executive's Office	1
Children & Culture Services	7
Communities	5
Housing and Regeneration	1
Place	6
Resources	3
Disciplinary	15
Chief Executive's Office	3
Children & Culture Services	1
Children's Services	1
Communities	3
Health, Adults & Community	1
Place	3
Resources	3
Flexible Working Appeal	5
Children & Culture Services	3
Health, Adults and Social Care	1
Housing and Regeneration	1
Grievance	24
Chief Executive's Office	3
Children & Culture Services	5
Children's Services	1
Communities	3
Health, Adults & Community	4
Housing and Regeneration	1
Place	5
Resources	2
Performance	6
Children & Culture Services	1
Health, Adults & Community	2
Health, Adults and Social Care	1
Housing and Regeneration	1
Resources	1
Probation	2
Children's Services	1
Housing and Regeneration	1
SOSR	1
Communities	1
Grand Total	76





2. Summary of Key Quarter 3 Casework Data (1 Oct 23 to 31 Dec 23)

- 2.1. At the end of the period, 40 cases were open and 36 had been closed by 31st December 2023. There were 76 cases handled in total in this period (7 more than the total for quarter 2).
- 2.2. Looking overall at cases by type, attendance management and grievances were the highest (24 grievances and 23 attendance management). There were also 15 disciplinaries, 6 performance cases, 5 flexible working appeals, 2 probation cases and 1 SOSR (some other substantial reasons).
- 2.3. Of the 23 grievances (1 collective and 23 individual), 4 grievances relate to concerns about line managers, 15 relate to complaints about other colleagues, 2 relate to verbal abuse/inappropriate behaviour, 2 relate to terms and conditions, and 1 relates to sexual harassment. Of the 24 grievances, 16 were opened before Q3 (1 October 2023). **(8 opened in Q3)**
- 2.4. Of the 15 disciplinaries, 8 were alleged misconduct cases, 7 were gross misconduct cases. 7 cases were in Community (5 Public Realm, 2 Community Safety) and the rest spread across other Directorates. **13 disciplinaries** were still open at the end of the reporting period. **2 disciplinaries cases were closed.** Of those 2 closed there was 1 final written warning and 1 case was resolved informally.
- 2.5. The benchmark of 120 days is a reasonable and realistic timeframe for a council, where complex cases are the norm and thorough investigations undertaken by independent in-house investigators are time consuming. 36 cases were closed in this period, and the average length of time to resolve the cases was 221 calendar days.
- 2.6. 3 cases involved suspension, related to potential gross misconduct.
- 2.7. In addition to support for formal cases the HR team also deal with informal queries that come through the corporate in boxes and many cases are handled informally with the guidance of HR.
- 2.8. For this period, there were 24 live ET cases. The legal department report on this separately.
- 2.9. Equalities data is reported annually.

3. Policy Development

- 3.1. The Flexible Working Policy and a new Council policy on Filming Staff at Work is currently under review and in consultation with the Trade Unions.

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