



Employee Relations Quarterly Report on Casework and Policy Development

Q1 2023/24 (1 April 2023 to 30 June 2023)



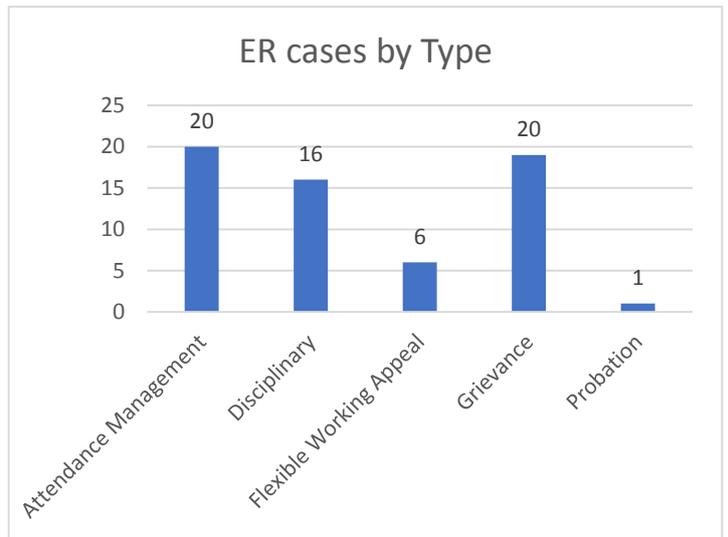
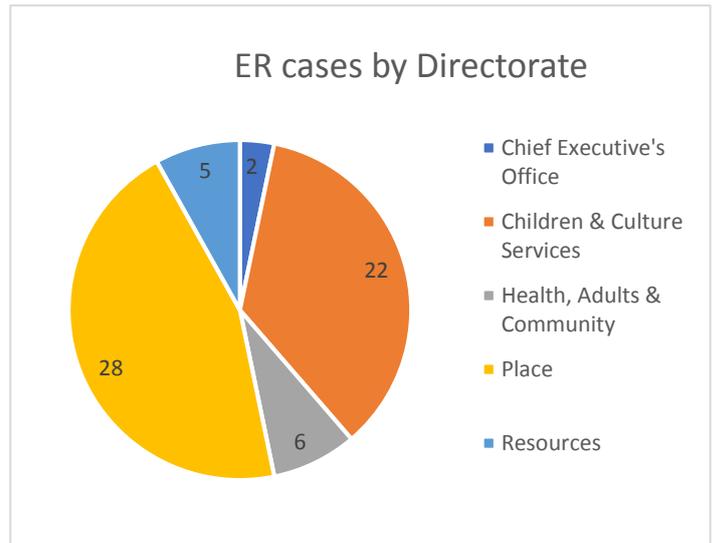
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Employee Relations

1. Dashboard

Row Labels	Count of Case Type
Chief Executive's Office	2
Disciplinary	1
Grievance	1
Children & Culture Services	22
Attendance Management	9
Disciplinary	3
Flexible Working Appeal	5
Grievance	5
Health, Adults & Community	6
Attendance Management	2
Disciplinary	1
Grievance	3
Place	28
Attendance Management	8
Disciplinary	8
Flexible Working Appeal	1
Grievance	10
Probation	1
Resources	5
Attendance Management	1
Disciplinary	3
Grievance	1
Grand Total	63



2. Summary of Key Quarter 1 Casework Data (1 Apr 2023 to 30 Jun 2023)

- 2.1. There were 63 cases handled in total in this period (20 more than the total for quarter 4), which is a significant increase. At the end of the period 59 cases were open and 10 had been closed by 30 June 2023.
- 2.2. Looking overall at cases by type, attendance management and grievances were the highest (20 attendance management and 20 grievances). We also had 16 disciplinaries, 6 flexible working appeals, and 1 probation case. The attendance management cases account for the greatest increase since the last quarter, having doubled in number.
- 2.3. Of the 20 grievances (1 collective and 19 individual), 5 grievances relate to concerns about line managers, 6 relate to complaints about other colleagues, 5 relate to terms and conditions, 3 relate to verbal abuse/inappropriate behaviour and 1 relates to sexual harassment. Of the 20 grievances, 15 were opened before Q1 (1 April 2023).
- 2.4. Of the 16 disciplinaries, 2 were alleged misconduct cases and 14 were gross misconduct cases. 8 cases were in Place and the rest spread across other Directorates. 13 disciplinaries were still open at the end of the reporting period. 3 disciplinaries cases were closed. Of those 3 closed there was 1 dismissal, and 2 cases were not upheld.
- 2.5. 50% of the cases were closed well within the target benchmark of 120 days to close a case from its receipt to a final outcome. 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. 10 cases were closed in this period, and the average length of time to resolve the cases was 347 calendar days. The excessive average length of time to resolve has been skewed by one case in particular which was linked to a Police enquiry, but which is now closed. One further matter which does have an impact on all cases resolution times is the availability of the investigators to undertake this duty in addition to their substantive posts. The onus is being placed upon deciding managers to seek management agreement to release staff to investigate.
- 2.6. 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.
- 2.7. A revised HR structure was implemented in February 2023, and this provides dedicated HR Business Partners and HR Advisors to each Directorate to better support casework and provide dedicated advice to the service on case matters, including attendance management. Place (the Directorate in the organisation structure in this period), which had the highest number of cases, and has been provided with added support, with 2 HR Business Partners and 2 HR Advisors supporting the service. With this change it was envisaged that this dedicated support to each Directorate will have a positive impact in helping managers manage casework.
- 2.8. Equalities data is reported annually.

3. Policy Development

- 3.1. The Job Evaluation Policy is now currently under review with the trade unions, with its revision reflecting the use of a new automated job evaluation system, called Compensate, which is approved by the GLPC. The new process involves a joint panel (a HRBP and a trade union representative) evaluating job descriptions with the assistance of the automated Job Evaluation form, which takes the panel through a series of questions about each factor to assess the level and produce a final grade based on the Tower Hamlets grading system. Managers submitting a post for evaluation will be expected to make themselves available to answer any questions the panel may have to enable the panel to give informed answers for each factor. Having a centralised system of job evaluation data will enable the Council to build a body of data that can be monitored, reported on and give oversight on the consistency of evaluations for each grade.
- 3.2. The Sexual Harassment Policy, a new Managers Guide and, to complement our published documentation, a short new e learning module on sexual harassment, are now available.
- 3.3. People and Reorganisation Board forms, FAQs and process maps have been developed and published.