

Audit Committee Presentation

14 October 2021

Workforce and skills – update to Corporate Risk: RM029

NCC may not have the employees (or a sufficient number of employees) with critical skills that will be required for the organisation to operate effectively in the next 2-5 years and longer term)

Presented by Sarah Shirtcliff, Director for People

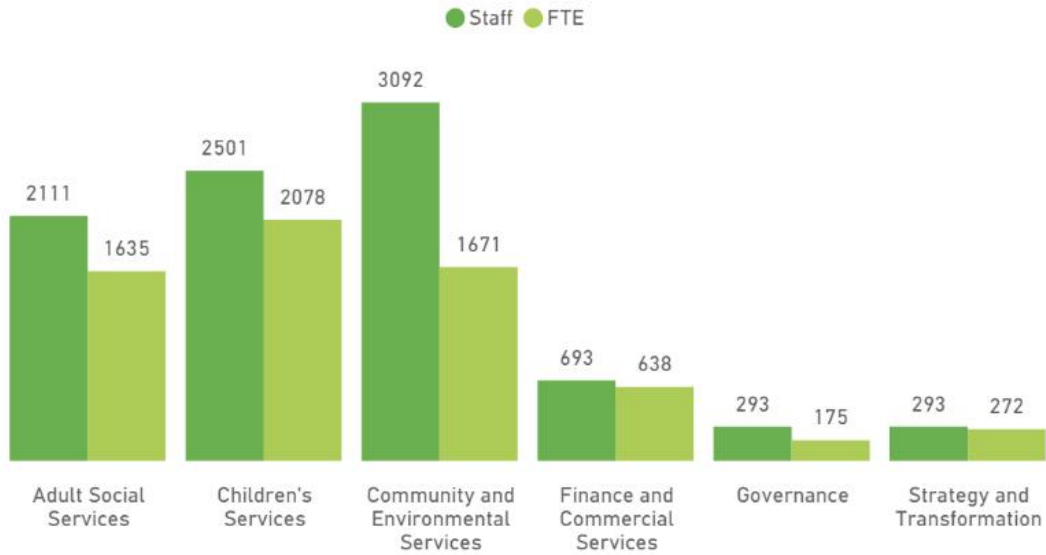
Purpose of Presentation

1. To provide an overview of our workforce metrics to understand risk
2. Overview of external factors
3. Particular themes and challenges for NCC
4. Current focussed actions being taken
5. Specific actions to support social work recruitment and retention
6. Longer-term strategies to support workforce development and retention
7. Q&A

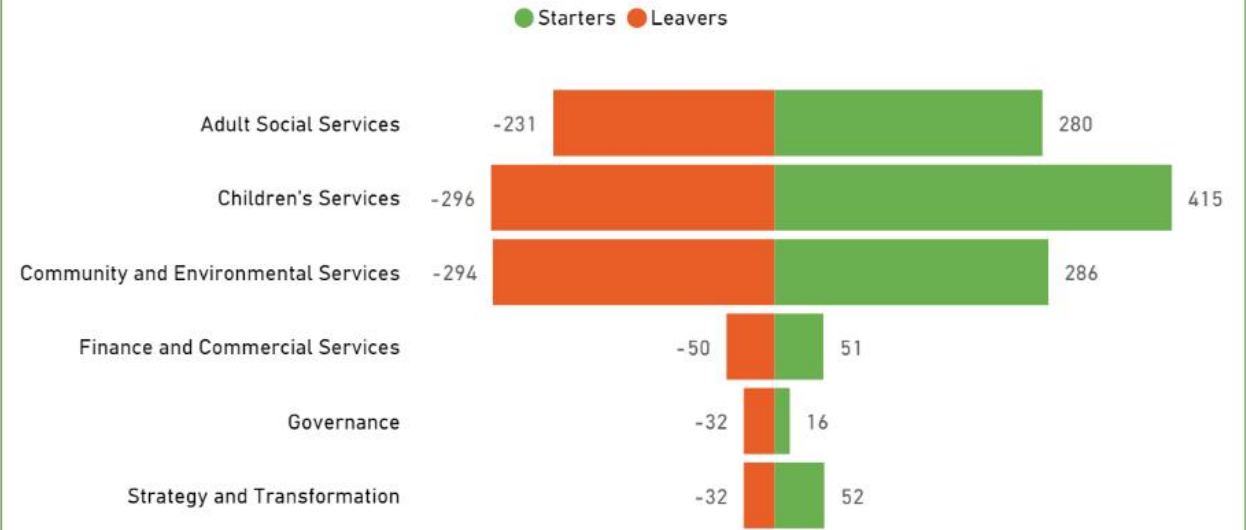
NCC Workforce Overview

Workforce at September 2021; Starters and Leavers at year to August 2021; Apprenticeships at October 2021

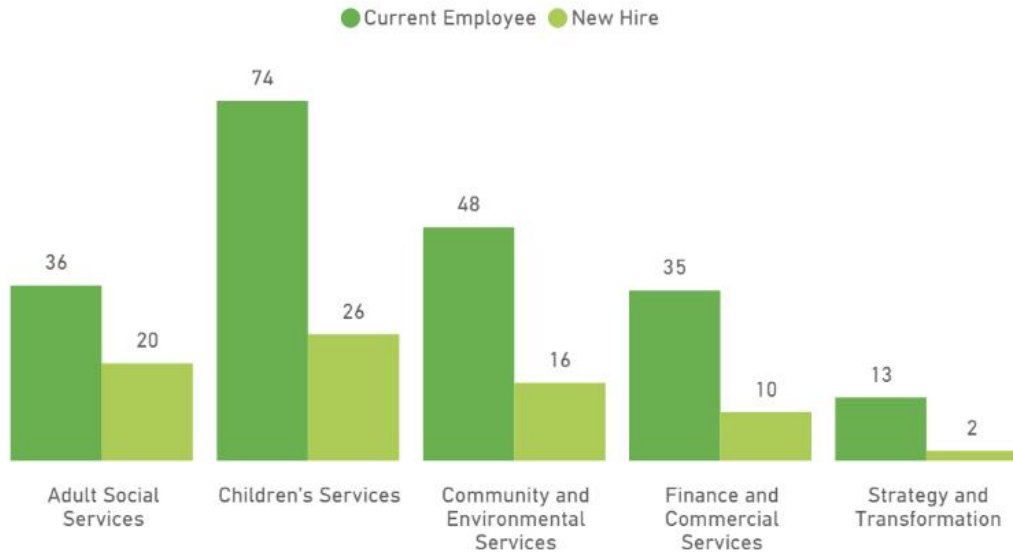
Staff and FTE by Department



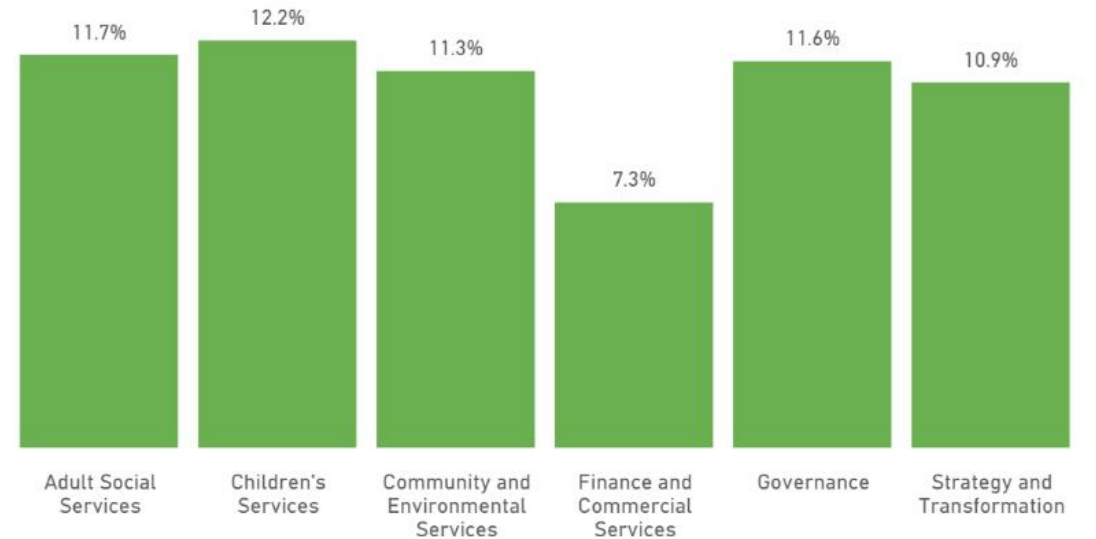
Starters and Leavers by Department



Live Apprentices Origin by Department



Turnover by Department



External workforce data:

1. National vacancies 1.1m up 68k on previous quarter (ONS)
2. Second rolling quarter of vacancies over 1m
3. Labour market returning to pre-pandemic state with employment increasing and unemployment fallen to pre-pandemic levels in last quarter (4.5%)
4. Caution that increase is mostly temporary roles – up 34% since start of pandemic
5. Growth in contract working due to uncertain business environment and self isolation adversely affecting women – account for majority of involuntary temporary employment
6. Competition for skills growing and salaries increasing where shortages exist
7. Gartner research indicates
 1. 32% candidates looking at multiple offers
 2. 52% learning new skills
 3. 50% applying for new career move
8. Evidence growing to indicate post-pandemic review of work/life balance could lose more from labour market

Summary themes and challenges:

1. Diverse professional organisation – different levels of risk exist
2. NCC successfully fills most roles – there are key professional group challenges and a need to be more diverse
3. The pandemic/Covid funding required additional temporary skills
4. Some recruitment paused and now in catch up
5. Selection processes moved on line successfully
6. We have good levels of internal moves and promotions
7. We have a growing and embedding apprenticeship strategy and development offer
8. Our “employment deal” evidenced through staff survey continues to improve, post-pandemic managing change creates some uncertainty
9. We can do more to strategically plan and identify our internal future talent
10. Relationships with local education providers are effective
11. Smarter working provides huge opportunity to attract talent (like most employers!)

Summary themes and challenges (2):

1. Most significant recruitment and retention challenge is social workers (informed higher level corporate risk)
 - National challenge
 - Demanding work, increased workloads
 - Competitive market
 - Vacancy levels match national problem – risk for service delivery
2. Other professional challenges (regional and national trend) include:
 - Social Care (includes broad range of roles and skills)
 - Education – psychologists and headteachers
 - Lawyers
 - Planners/engineers
 - Trading standards
 - Qualified accountants
 - Public health and health and safety
 - Need to compete with private sector and NHS

Strategies to address:

1. **Strengthened the resourcing team**, building capability of 3 experienced recruitment partners working closely with all services to define requirements, develop plans and new initiatives – moving from transactional service to professionally led
2. **Dashboards** available for all services to provide improved insight on workforce for planning and action
3. **Active improvement of external presence and reputation physically and digitally: (examples below)**
 - Community Care Live attendance with Heads of Service (Social Work)
 - UEA Relationship - Virtual Careers Event attendance, internships, Social work faculty partner
 - Expanding reach to universities, colleges, job centres and schools (working with education) and as Cornerstone employer
 - Broadland Jobs Fair aimed at promoting careers and opportunities for young people and job seekers in Norfolk
 - Engagement with armed forces (RAF Marham) - Social Work attraction and other professions (links to our Armed Forces covenant)
 - Engagement with the Employment Skills Advisor in the People from Abroad Team (NCC) to support refugees into employment
 - Engagement with LEP on youth employment
 - Increased overseas recruitment activity
 - Digital marketing and direct search – Linked in
 - Improve our employer brand and campaign work to match our employee experience and aspiration
 - Positive action to attract diverse workforce (eg firefighters)

Plans for Children's Services Social Workers

Actions in our plan include:

- Developing our approach to **recruitment of international social workers** and the support needed to thrive in Norfolk - noting investment requirement to deliver
- Further developing our approach to **recruitment campaigns and content marketing**, building on the success of our “Who Cares? We Do” campaign to establish Norfolk’s brand as a social work employer
- **Increasing the strength of our branding** through reviewing our internal and external webpages, focusing on our recruitment webpages. Work will also be done with trade press to share success stories build Norfolk’s social work brand.
- Local social work brand will be underpinned by developing a NCC employer brand and tools
- Developing our **workforce strategy and associated data tools** to give clear direction and visibility of our approaches
- **Diagnostic work on retention** to understand the root causes of any recruitment and retention in our FAST teams and seek to address them in parallel with work on our financial remuneration package
- Additional **development for managers** to ensure they are prepared to lead their teams to outstanding
- Ensuring **car parking for social work staff at key buildings** to reduce the stress of parking and free up additional time for staff to spend directly with families as part of the Smarter Working programme
- **Freeing social workers to undertake more direct work with families** by reducing unnecessary bureaucracy
- Policy changes for reward and retention to be presented to the Employment committee



Plans for ASSD Social Workers

Actions in our plan include:

- **Short Term** - County wide campaign prior to full refresh has seen an uplift in applications, including Level 2 Social Workers
- **Longer Term** - Three-month campaign **September to December 2021** search marketing including full media live from 23 September. Key updated messaging to attract social workers to apply to Norfolk underpinned by the **Living Well, Changing Lives** approach
- **Careers site** refreshed and updated by www.promotingindependencenorfolk.co.uk
- **Social Worker Apprenticeship programme** – to help support longer term requirement. On target for Jan 2022 intake (third cohort). Currently in progress of procuring additional cohorts (intake date Jan 2023)
- **Newly qualified social workers** –working on a more strategic view to recruiting NQSW's by advertising earlier and planning. Target intake **20** per year.
- **International Social Workers** - Collaborating with the Suffolk and Norfolk Partnership to explore funding opportunities to support with onboarding and induction
- **Temporary Bank Staff** – Reaching out to previous employees (including retirees) to determine whether would consider joining the temporary bank
- **Dedicated Social Worker Resourcing Adviser** Proactively source candidates and build talent pipelines and support with international onboarding and line manager support
- **Community Care Live** – two day event on 12 and 13 October
- Building on relationships with **UEA, Colleges and Schools** - to build interest in social work as a profession.
- **Retention** - working with system HR colleagues on wider projects to aid retention and career development - proposal for legacy social Worker has been agreed

Longer-term strategies:

1. Refreshing our workforce strategy – focus on skills, careers, inclusion, well-being, our employment brand
2. Commission work to review and refresh our NCC employment brand including values to create compelling reason to work for us in competitive market
3. Embed new Apprenticeship strategy and future strategies of skills to employment
4. Improve diversity of workforce including promotions
5. Career families which communicate career paths and development
6. Understand external market and reward to compete
7. Scope international recruitment as a key route to fill roles
8. Smarter working – will change how and where we work and must meet aspirations of future workforce
9. Work in partnership with NHS and Care partners to understand Norfolk wide challenges and ICS led workforce planning

Q&A: