Governance and Human Resources Service Plan

2024 – 2025

Dumfries and Galloway

The principal purpose of the Service is to deliver the following services:

- Business Support
- Business Intelligence
- Communications and Graphics
- Democratic Services (Committee and Member Services; Elections; Information Governance)
- Human Resources, Pensions and Health and Safety
- Internal Audit;
- Legal Services, Licensing Services and Risk Management;

And in doing so:

- To provide legal, governance and human resources early intervention and prevention support across all Council functions;
- To promote high standards of governance and compliance across our Council;
- To support the Council with the provision of business intelligence, encouraging evidence based decision making and forecasting.
- To enhance democracy and sound decision-making, by providing advice, guidance and support to the Council, Committees and Elected Members.
- To audit and scrutinise services across the Council to ensure compliance and encourage improvements and best practice;

- To provide professional and technical health and safety support to the Council and its Officers in managing health and safety legislative responsibilities.
- To provide effective and efficient business support to all Council Services focussing on enabling, process improvement and development of staff;

The Governance and Human Resources Service plays a key role in enabling a wide range of activity which delivers on the Council's Strategic Outcomes.

The service supports projects within the following Council Plan Strategic Outcomes:

Our workforce and their skills base are growing through:

- Improvements and management of the Council's Human Resources Policies and Procedures.

People have access to services that are modern, efficient and responsive

- By implementing the improvements and investment in Governance and Human Resources Service to build capacity, improve efficiency and strengthen governance.
- By updating our Licensing Board arrangements in order to deliver a more effective and efficient consideration of applications.

The service demonstrates the Council's Principles by:

Support our Citizens

Working to put customers at the heart of services through:

- Improved communication methods, eg website, social media and public information.

- Enabling participation and engagement in the democratic processes.

- Ensuring the public have access to information and their data is handled appropriately.

- Ensuring that through the governance and human resources early intervention and prevention processes, the Council is able to deliver the best support and outcomes for our citizens.

Supporting the most vulnerable and in need through:

- The advice, support, guidance, and court representation we provide in relation to Child Protection, Permanence, Adult Support and Protection and Adults with Incapacity.

Address Inequalities through:

- The ongoing assessment and support to our workforce to address any potential inequalities.

Support our communities

Empowering communities and individuals through:

- Providing access for the public to decision making and information to enable them to take a participative role in decisions which impact their lives and the environment.

- Work in partnership with Local, Regional and National Partners: across a range of functions to ensure our communities and our critical services are safe, protected and compliant.

Be a responsive Council
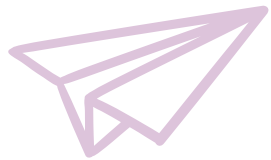
Communicate openly through:

- Information Governance and Complaints Handling processes which ensure that the Council is a listening, responsive organisation that welcomes feedback from its customers and takes steps to address any issues at the earliest opportunity.

- Public reporting of performance in line with the Council Plan and the Strategic Objectives and linking to Best Value Reports.

- Issuing press releases following Committee meetings, ensuring open and transparent messaging to the citizens of Dumfries and Galloway.

- Communication channels we support include web, social media, newsletters and other public information methods.

Be a responsive Council
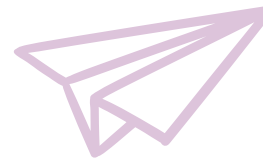
Maintain high standards through:

- Good governance, evidence led decision making, corporate risk management, business continuity processes, internal audits, best value audits, Public Service Improvement Framework and Local Government Benchmarking Framework, open and transparent communications and compliance.

Make best use of resources through:

- Early intervention and prevention supports to Council services, ensuring best value and cost avoidance.

Be organised to deliver through;

- A solution focussed and enabled Governance and Human Resources Services, providing advice to Council services, recognising their needs and priorities as well as our obligations.

- Horizon scanning, early intervention and prevention and evidence led decision making.

- The provision of support on the development and writing of strategies, plans and policies to ensure a co-ordinated approach across the Council to the delivery of the Council Plan.
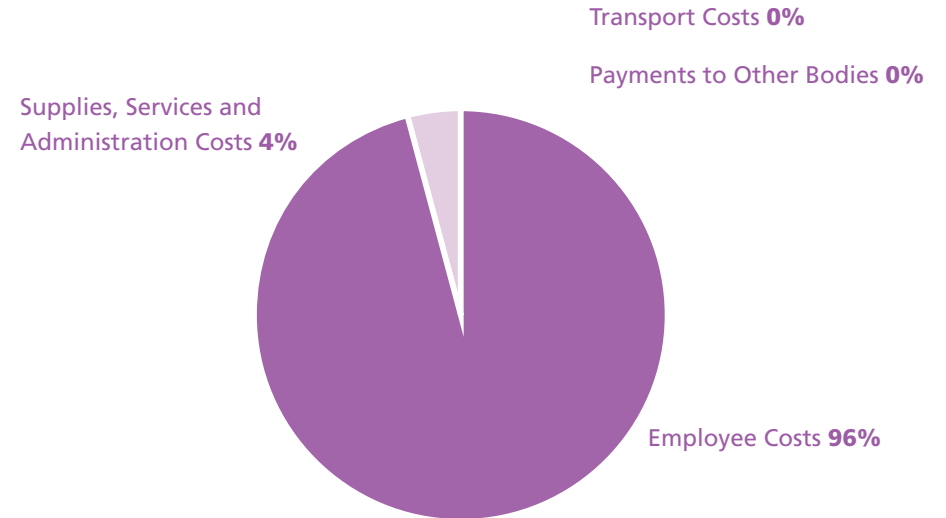
Resource Plan

The following resources underpin the delivery of the Service Plan:
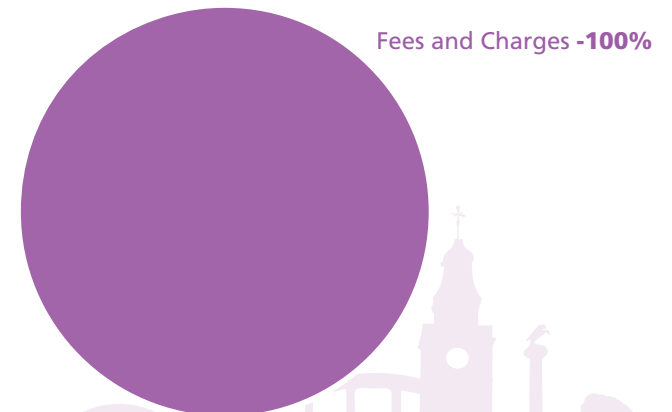
Budget:

Governance and Human Resources Budget Estimates Summary Service Analysis	Budget Estimates Governance and Human Resources £
Expense	
Employee Costs	10,377,566
Property Costs	0
Transport Costs	50,462
Supplies, Services and Administration Costs	425,132
Payments to Other Bodies	750
Transfer Payments	0
Expense Total	**10,853,910**
Income	
Fees and Charges	(455,710)
Government Grants	0
Other Grants	0
Client Contributions	0
Other Contributions/Donations	0
External Recharges	0
Other Income	0
Internal Recharge Income	0
Income Total	**(455,710)**
Grand Total	**10,398,200**

Expenses

Transport Costs **0%**

Payments to Other Bodies **0%**

Supplies, Services and Administration Costs **4%**

Employee Costs **96%**

Income

Fees and Charges **-100%**

Workforce:
Our people, our posts

Average length of service
11 years 3 month

Our People as at 1 April 2024

Number of people
247

Number of posts
248

Gender

Male **55** (22.27%)
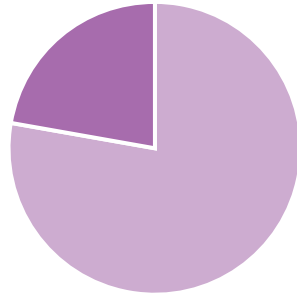
Female **192** (77.73%)

Age range

Average age
45

Age	Count
16-24	9
25-34	50
35-44	54
45-54	63
55-64	67
65+	4
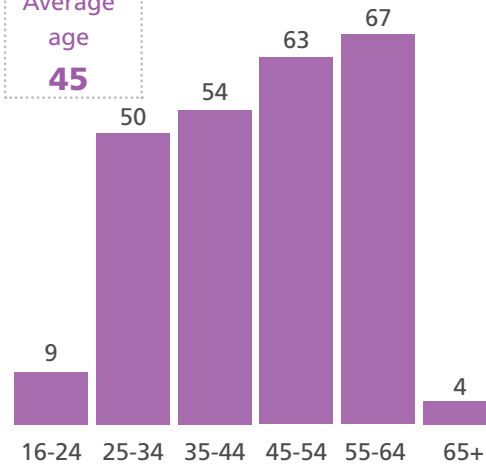
Years

Length of service

Years	Count
0-5	90
6-10	34
11-15	17
16-20	40
21-25	28
25+	38

Years

Pay Band of Employees

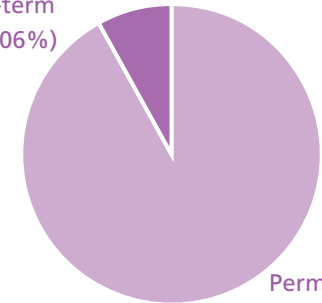| Band	Count
Band 1-9	194
Band 10-12	40
Band 13-15	11
Band 16+ Head of Service	1
D&GC Other	2
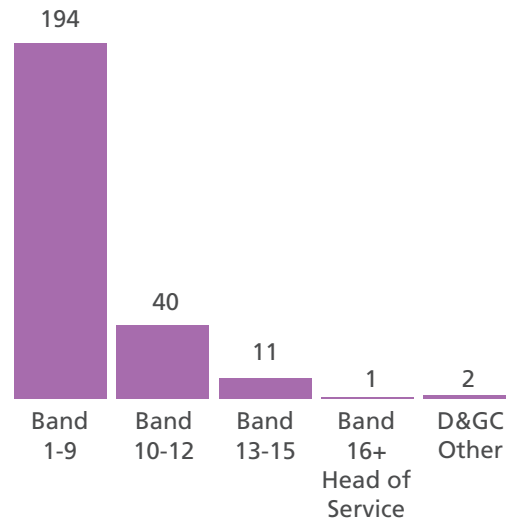
Employment Basis

Part-time **86** (34.68%)
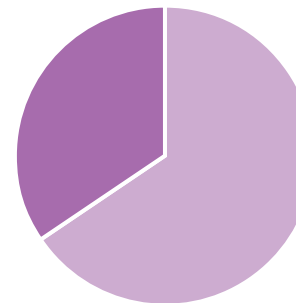
Full-time **162** (65.32%)

Employment Type

Fixed-term **20** (8.06%)

Permanent **228** (91.94%)

Please note that the above workforce metrics includes the Contact Centre which is in transition and will move to Customer and Digital Services.

Highlights of workforce engagement and planning in 2024/25:

As a team we actively promote the People Strategy Outcomes whereby we strive to

- Provide a positive experience

- Develop our people

- Engage our people

- Support our people

- Recognise good performance

The Service is committed to excellence with regards to workforce engagement and planning and undertakes comprehensive staff engagement through a range of approaches including staff development days, team meetings and 1:1s. The Service also has a staff communications team with representatives from every part of the Service.

Additionally, service leadership and officers engage and plan more broadly through a wide range of internal and external partnership and project working groups, leading to the development of our staff, including CPD opportunities and promotion of employee successes via appropriate awards.

Governance and Human Resources Service Plan 2024/25

– all data will be recorded and reported through Pentana

Council Plan Delivery 2024/25

Strategic Outcome 11: People have access to services that are modern, efficient and responsive.

Delivery Plan Action	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
NEXT PHASE - Implement the improvements and investment in Governance and Assurance Service to build capacity, improve efficiency and strengthen governance.	Legal and Democratic Services	Legal and Democratic Services Review

Service Delivery 2024/25

What are we planning to do?	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
Implementation of Licensing Equality Actions 2021-2025	Licensing	Equality Outcomes
Establishment of Curator Ad Litem Scheme	Legal/SWS	Council's Principles
Physical Record Consolidation	Information Governance	Records Management Plan Information Strategy
Refresh the Council's lobbying approach	Business Intelligence	Council's Principles
Develop and implement a programme of service level self-assessments	Business Intelligence	Council's Principles
Research the current depopulation challenge across Dumfries and Galloway and identify the best interventions	Business Intelligence	Council's Principles
Delivery of a risk based internal audit plan as reported to Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee in April 2024.	Internal Audit	Internal Audit Plan for 2024/25
Support to the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) exercise for 2024/25	Internal Audit	Corporate Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy
Support the development of the Council's response to fraud and corruption through the Integrity Group	Internal Audit	Corporate Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy
Re-procure the Committee Management System	Democratic Services	Digital and ICT Strategy Procurement Strategy
Complete delivery of the new Information Strategy	Democratic Services	Information Strategy

Change and Improvement Activities 2024/25

What are we planning to do and what is the intended outcome?	What team will do it?	Linked Strategy / Plan
Review of Legal Fees and Basis of Charges Planning & Property	Legal Service	Financial Strategy
Review of Taxi Provision	Licensing	Council's Principles
Move to a unitary Licensing Board	Licensing	Council's Principles
Phase 2 Information Strategy Programme	Information Governance	Digital Transformation Programme 2023/26
Review of Licensing Fees	Licensing	Council's Principles
Human Resource Policy Development and Refresh including: Maximising Attendance Policy; Disciplinary Policy; Redeployment Policy; Redundancy Policy; Carers Policy; Gifts and Hospitality Policy: Job Evaluation Policy.	Human Resources	Council's Principles
Development and implementation of health and safety incident and accident recording and reporting portal	Health and Safety	Council's Principles
Digitisation of Pension processes	Pensions Team	Council's Principles
Digitisation of grants process including automation	Business Support	Council's Principles
Appllication in development stage to allow customers to request finance tasks online. Requests will be linked to automation for customers to self serve and follow request through process.	Business Support	Council's Principles
Process redesign and automation of information to Pentana for additional support requests	Business Support	Council's Principles
Engagement model is being developed to ensure that services have regular meetings at all levels with Business Support Services. This will enable Business Support to focus on being reactive to providing support	Business Support	Council's Principles

Communications governance (The Way, Brand Guidelines, Website and Application Guidelines): launch, roll out and socialise new communications governance for council. (This includes roll-out of evolved logo.)	Comms Unit	N/A
Intranet/Connect: develop, explore new functionality, implement new governance surrounding internal comms, switch internal-comms focus from GovDelivery to Connect	Comms Unit	N/A
Digital Experience Project: progress and complete migration from GOSS to Drupal by May 2025	Comms Unit/BTS	Mentioned in strategic outcome S011.4
Design and launch new three-year 2025-2028 Comms Strategy	Comms Unit	N/A
Refresh of the Council's Consultation Portal	Business Intelligence	Council's Principles
Alignment of strategies and policies	Business Intelligence	Council's Principles
Council Plan Measurement Framework	Business Intelligence	Council's Principles and Council Plan
Chief Executive Restructure evaluation of impact	Business Intelligence	Council's Principles
Review of the Internal Audit function	Internal Audit	Council's Principles

Governance and Human Resources Success Measures 2024/25

Measures

Success Measure	Target	Timescale / Frequency	Benchmark
Percentage of internal audit outputs complete in a year.	85%	Annual	Internal
Percentage of Member satisfied with service as measured through Member satisfaction survey	85%	Annual	Internal
Customer Satisfaction levels within Legal Services	80%	Annual	Internal
Satisfactory quality assurance feedback received for completed internal audits	80%	Annual	Internal
Number of people purchasing annual leave	200	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of people on flexible working arrangements	4,250	Six Monthly	Internal
Council Turnover rate (HR Business Partner to review data and make recommendations to services if above target)	10%	Monthly	Internal
Performance monitoring reports delivered to schedule	9	Quarterly	Internal
Internal Customer Satisfaction with business support provided	85%	Quarterly	Internal
Total subscriber profiles on GovDelivery	80,600	Monthly	Internal
Facebook followers of corporate Facebook page	33,900	Monthly	Internal
Twitter (X) followers to corporate Twitter page	12,600	Monthly	Internal
Website page views (to corporate website)	2,000,000	Monthly	Internal

Council Wide Indicators

Success Measure	Target	Timescale / Frequency	Benchmark
People			
The average number of days lost per all other (non-teacher) local government employees through sickness absence	9 days	Monthly	Internal / External: LGBF
Percentage of days lost per employee through sickness absence as a percentage of total possible attendances	4%	Monthly	Internal
Percentage of staff who have completed an appraisal in the last 12 months - Updated	95%	Monthly	Internal
Enquiries / Complaints			
Percentage of Elected Member enquiries dealt with through the Elected Members Enquiry Service within the agreed timescales	85%	Quarterly	Internal / External: Local Authority Complaint Handling Network
Percentage of Community Council enquiries dealt with through the Community Council Enquiry Service within the agreed timescale.	85%	Quarterly	Internal
Percentage of MP/MSP enquiries dealt with through the Enquiry Service within agreed timescale	85%	Quarterly	Internal
Percentage of Youth Councillor enquiries dealt with through the Enquiry Service within the agreed timescale	85%	Quarterly	Internal
Percentage of Stage 1 complaint responses issued within statutory timescales	80%	Monthly	Internal / External: Local Authority Complaint Handling Network
Percentage of Stage 1 complaint responses where extension was authorised	Data only	Monthly	Internal / External: Local Authority Complaint Handling Network

Percentage of Stage 2 complaint responses issued within statutory timescales	80%	Monthly	Internal / External: Local Authority Complaint Handling Network
Percentage of Stage 2 complaint responses where extension was authorised	Data only	Monthly	Internal / External: Local Authority Complaint Handling Network
Percentage of Freedom of Information and Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations requests received that have been responded to within 20 working days of receipt	90%	Monthly	Internal/External
Percentage of requests for subject access requests completed within one month	85%	Monthly	Internal
Finance			
Revenue Budget Outturn - Projected Outturn as a % of Budget	100%	Quarterly	Internal
Health and Safety			
Number of Head of Service Safety Visits	2	Six Monthly	Internal
Total Number Significant Health and Safety Risk Priorities with Actions Overdue	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Total Number HSE/SFRS Interfaces resulting in legal enforcement action	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of HSE/SFRS Interfaces with actions overdue	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of RIDDOR reportable incidents outside of HSE legal reporting timescales	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of Serious Incident Investigation Reports Overdue	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Total Number of Serious Incident Reports with actions overdue	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of RIDDOR Reportable Dangerous Occurrences, Employee Injuries and Diseases	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of 3rd Party RIDDOR incidents	0	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of Reported Near Misses	Data only	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of Employee Reported Accidents	Data only	Six Monthly	Internal
Number of Reported Violent Incidents to Employees	Data only	Six Monthly	Internal

Local Government Benchmarking Framework Indicators

Success Measure	Target	Timescale / Frequency	Benchmark
The percentage employees in the highest paid 5% of earners among council employees that are women (excludes teachers)	50%	Quarterly	Internal / External – Scottish Local Authorities and LGBF
Gender Pay Gap	5%	Quarterly	Internal / External: LGBF
The average number of days lost per teacher through sickness absence	7.5 days	Monthly	Internal / External LGBF
The average number of days lost per all other (non teacher) local government employees through sickness absence	9 days	Monthly	Internal / External: LGBF

Governance and Human Resources Risk Register

Risk	Risk Factors	Mitigation / Contingency
Failing to ensure the Council complies with statutory responsibility or regulations	Complying with significant range of legislation that has both general and specific application across the Council, affecting reputation; resulting in legal challenge; compensation or fines; complaints or inspections.	**Internal Controls** • Specialist officers are available and support Council services to comply with the wide range of regulation and legislation the Council is required to comply with. • Clear Standing orders and Schemes of Delegation set out the extent of decision making and the framework in which decisions can be taken. • Policies and procedures are developed and available for a wide range of routine and non-routine matters to assist Members and Officers to proceed with decision making in compliance with legislation. • Internal control processes are reviewed by managers and assessed by Internal Audit to ensure they are adequate. • Staff training and developments on essential aspects of compliance are in place and delivered to staff who require this. • Effective complaints procedures are available and internal review procedures help us learn • Powers of Monitoring Officer are exercised and approach to this is elaborated for officers and Elected Members. • Corporate Services professional advisers participate in important project boards to ensure early advice is available and taken account of.

Risk	Risk Factors	Mitigation / Contingency
Not ensuring our information security and data protection processes are adequate	• Processing of personal data securely using appropriate technical and organisational measures. • Implementation of records management plan. • Compliance with new general data protection regulations. • Ensuring partners and suppliers comply with GDPR in relation to their work and activity with the Council. • Awareness, recognition and responsiveness to requests from data subjects seeking to exercise their new rights under GDPR.	**Internal Controls** • Development and improvement of software and processes to comply with GDPR and RMP. • Formulation and implementation of GDPR Action Plan. • Review and implementation of updated Records Management Plan. • Record retention procedures and schedules in place and adhered to. • Regular update and review with ICO guidance and requirements. • Appointment of Data Protection Officer for Council to advise on processes and development and navigate complex regulations and requirements. • Training and education of staff and other ICT users to raise awareness and improve skills. • Open approach to procedures and reporting of breaches – including detecting, reporting and investigation. • Review of existing contracts and agreements with partners and contractors to meet GDPR requirements. • Development of standard clauses for future contracts and agreements to ensure compliance is embedded on data protection and information security.

Risk	Risk Factors	Mitigation / Contingency

Failure to deliver Critical/ Essential Services	• Disruption to the Governance and Human Resources functions, beyond the identified maximum tolerable period of disruption;
	
	• Disruption may lead to;
	
	  • Loss of life, property, infrastructure & environment
	
	  • Interruption to service provision
	
	  • Disruption to daily life of wider community
	
	  • Increase in complaints from public and Elected Members
	
	  • Possible loss of reputation
	
	  • Possible negative media coverage
	
	  • Possible Legal impacts
	
	  • Potential Inquiries
		Mitigation Plan – All constituent elements of the Service have undertaken a Business Impact Assessment and a Vulnerability Assessment in order to identify existing mitigations embedded within normal business practices, as well as any further mitigations which may benefit- from being developed. This will include procedures and action cards as identified by respective service areas,
		
		Contingency Plan – Dumfries and Galloway Council has adopted a single Incident Management Plan, which provides the model of response for all Service or Organisational level disruption.
		
		Any significant Business Continuity interruption may also be in parallel with a Major Incident response, managed through D&G LRP