

**2021 Benchmarking report for the  
Voluntary Sector HR Network and CCPS  
Executive Summary April 2022**

# 2021 Benchmarking report for the Voluntary Sector HR Network and CCPS

## Background

For over 10 years, the HR Voluntary Sector Forum (HRVSF) and Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) have commissioned the HR Benchmarking Survey and analysis for member organisations.

These annual reports provide key sector comparison information on topics such as staff turnover, absence, recruitment and pay. They are a source of evidence of what is happening in the voluntary social care sector at a particular time. The individual organisations use the data as a basis for their organisational decisions.

The reports have always been valued by the Scottish Government, who are keen to ensure that social care policies and processes are relevant and forward looking, understand the voluntary sector, and make the best use of Scotland's resources.

Professor Ian Cunningham and his team from Strathclyde University have worked in longstanding collaboration with CCPS in carrying out this work, which has led to significant changes to sector change over the years.

The survey was postponed in March 2020 due to the Covid19 pandemic, which resulted in two-year pause. The impact of the regulations around Covid on organisations, employees and the people who are supported by the voluntary sectors organisations was immense. However, the pause provided an opportunity for a thorough review of the survey questionnaire, targeting it more closely to the current needs and priorities of the sector, while ensuring that key areas of comparison were maintained to enable ongoing trend analysis of workforce issues.

The 2021 responses give us the opportunity to analysis the effects of Covid on recruitment, retention and absence, use of technology, and particularly the impact on service delivery for front line workers. The evidence provided by this report will be invaluable going forward to support Scottish Government workforce planning and give organisations the data they need to set HR policy and develop the workforce.

To maintain the integrity of data, all participating organisations normally pay an equal share of the cost to collate the questionnaires. This year, in the context of the pandemic, we are delighted that OCSWA have funded the cost of commissioning the work and we are very grateful for their support.

We would also like to thank the 34 organisations who participated in what has been a difficult year for them. These 34 organisations had an annual turnover of £623m with a pay bill of £486m (78% of turnover). Their resilience in protecting vulnerable people and ensuring the wellbeing of their employees over this time has been remarkable.

## Executive Summary

### *Organisational turnover*

1. Thirty-four organisations participated in the 2021 Benchmarking exercise. The combined annual turnover of participants for the period between April 2020 and March 2021 is £623m, while their annual pay bill sits at £486m, representing 78% of turnover.
2. Local authorities are reported as the largest government source of funding – on average, they account for 75% of it. For 73% of participants, local authorities provided over two-thirds of their income, with half of those reporting that ninety per cent or more of their income came from local authorities.

### *Workforce numbers and staff turnover*

3. In total, their organisations employ 19,895 staff and 15,531 FTEs, representing over a third of the voluntary sector workforce. The average workforce size across providers was 622, with numbers ranging between 42 and 2946.
4. The workforce remained highly gendered. Women formed the majority in both the full-time and part-time groups. Nonetheless, while, on average, there were 2.1 women working full-time for every man, the number grew to 3.9 for part-time roles.
5. The total percentage of the workforce employed for up to one year was 25.8%. Ten percent of the workforce have been employed for less than six months.
6. The majority of organisations (59%) reported that their staff turnover has increased over the last year, 25% said that it decreased, while 16% reported that turnover remained stable.
7. The average staff turnover figure was 19.5% with reported numbers ranging from 4.4% to 61%. The average staff turnover represents a decrease of 3 percentage points compared to the 2018-2019 Benchmarking Report figure of 22.5%.
8. Sixty-five percent of the organisations reported they had made redundancies in the last twelve months (N=32). This figure represents an increase (seven percentage points) from the 2019 Benchmarking Report.

### *Reasons for leaving*

9. Resignation was the most commonly cited reason for staff leaving organisations. 'Other' reasons, included retirement, death in service, failure to start, suitability for duties, working relationships, settlement agreement, further education, family responsibilities, termination of relief contracts, absence without authorization, unavailability for shifts, career development, better work life balance, not being registered with SSSC, not returning from maternity leave, pay and benefits, switching from permanent to relief, switching from relief to permanent, and relocation.

10. Of those who moved to a new job, 19% stayed in the sector, while about 14% moved to a different sector.

### *Type of contract, insecurity and fragmentation of shifts*

11. The average length of service for those who left the organisation was 3 years and 5 months among the responding organisations (N=32). This suggests a loss in the investment in training and skills with the departure of these more experienced staff.
12. As in prior reports, permanent contracts (both for full-time or part-time workers) remain the most common type of contract with 97% of organisations reporting usage of a full-time contract or part-time contract over sixteen hours.
13. Fewer respondents had staff employed on full-time fixed term (73%) followed by part-time fixed term contracts (67%), compared to the 2019 figures of full-time fixed term (92%) and part-time fixed term contracts (92%).
14. Permanent relief bank/sessional zero hours contracts have risen to 67% usage across the providers (50% in 2018-2019; 50% in 2017-2018; 42% in 2016-2017), pointing to an increased high level of insecurity amongst the benchmarking group workforce.
15. The highest proportion of staff in the benchmarking organisations was employed on full-time permanent contracts (39.7% on average), followed by part-time permanent contracts over 16 hours (30.9% on average).
16. Overall the report finds mixed evidence of fragmentation of shifts compared to previous years studies, such as split shifts.
17. An average of 15% of working hours in an average month was covered by relief/bank staff/sessional staff. An average ten percent of the overall pay budget was spent on these staff, an increase upon six percent of the pay budget in the 2018-2019 Benchmarking Report.
18. Eighty-five percent of responding (N=33) organisations reported offering additional hours above the contracted hours to staff.
19. Nearly half (45%) of respondents (N=31) reported an increase in the amount of agency workers in the last twelve months; whereas 26% reported a decrease in the amount of agency worker usage.

### *New forms of working since the pandemic*

20. In terms of policies for different ways of working, the most introduced policies since the pandemic were 1) hybrid working, (76%), 2) agile working (49%) and 3) remote working (42%). Only 21% of respondents reported giving staff a choice of permanently working from home or being office based.

21. The availability of these new forms of working to front-line staff was limited with hybrid working more likely to be offered to managers and non-operational support staff.
22. Only 8% of frontline staff of the respondent organisations were able to take up hybrid working and agile working with none taking up remote working.
23. Going forward 80% of organisations intend to keep hybrid working, compared to 58% retaining agile working.
24. Retention of these forms of working was largely focused on management and non-operational support staff.
25. Thirty-one percent of responding organisations plan to keep the policy of giving staff the choice of permanently working from home or being office based, while two organisations plan to revoke this and return to normal working.

### *Use of government furlough scheme*

26. Overall, 82% of respondents used the government's furlough scheme in the previous year.
27. Among those able to provide figures (N=27), the average number of total staff that had been on furlough was 39. The average percentage of workers on furlough among the organisations providing figures was 9.9%. In terms of the total front-line support workers in organisations placed on furlough, altogether there were 842 (90.4% of the total).
28. Eighty-three percent of respondents reported that they made up the wages in full of those workers on furlough, while the remainder did not.
29. Thirty per cent of organisations paid additional supplements in their salaries to workers during the pandemic.

### *Pay and Conditions*

30. Overall 55% reported that they were accredited Living Wage Employers.
31. In a similar vein to the 2018 Benchmarking study, none of our organisations reported that paying the Scottish Living Wage was a risk to the viability of the organisation. In addition, 42% (n=14) of respondents said that the SLW had no impact on their organisation.
32. In line with previous benchmarking reports, the most common reported impact of the SLW was on pay differentials (51%, N=17).

33. Only 9% of the overall total, and 15% of those that reported an impact indicated an improvement in recruitment as a result of paying the SLW. Only one organisation reported an improvement in both recruitment and retention. One respondent specifically cited the low level of the SLW as a reason for the lack of impact.
34. The vast majority (91%) of organisations reviewed their salaries on an annual basis for all of those employed. Changes in the SLW (91%) and Affordability (88%) are the most common factors determining respondents' considerations when reviewing pay.
35. The regulatory reach and influence of local authority pay bargaining on providers pay determination had virtually disappeared with only 9% of respondents reporting they noted it but were not influenced by it.
36. 36% of organisations reported negotiating over pay with a trade union.

### *Continuing pay differentials*

37. It is interesting to note that several respondents (AAA3, GGG2, EEE3, OOO3, NNN3, PPP) indicate no differential between front-line, catering, or domestic grades of staff across the minimum, maximum or mid-level salary bands.
38. A minority of organisations reported persistent problems with sustaining differentials between first-line support staff, senior support staff and front-line managers.

### *Senior Salaries*

39. Overall, respondents reported 118 employees on salaries of £60k or more. The biggest proportion of these employees were in the £60k, but less than £70k. The highest paid employee was reported as one individual earning £120k. Overall, 5 organisations pay five individuals over £100,000 but less than £110K. These higher paid salaries are mainly awarded to those employed as CEO.

### *Absence Management*

40. Sickness absence rates ranged from just over one to 17%, while average days lost varied between less than one to 20. Similar variations are apparent regarding the percentages of working days lost to long term absences, with these varying between 2.9 percent and 88 percent.
41. The most important sources of absence are in order of importance: mental ill health (23%), 'other' (22%), Covid isolating (13%), MSDs (9.5%), gastro-intestinal issues (7%), and Covid infection (7%). In contrast, cold/flu accounted for an unusually low percentage (4%), presumably reflecting the effect of lockdowns and other Covid restrictions in reducing transmission.
42. Respondent organisations were asked whether there had been absences of either 1-7 days or more than 7 days stemming from a workplace accident. Slightly under a half,

15, reported the occurrence of such absences, eight having experienced absences of between 1-7 days and 13 having had ones of more than seven days.

43. Covid infections and self-isolating accounted for around 20 percent of the working days lost by those organisations who reported the proportionate importance of various specified reasons for absence.
44. Sixty-five percent of (N=22) organisations reported making changes to absence management policies/pay because of the pandemic. Policy changes mentioned primarily related to three types of issues 1) Expanding access to sick pay, such as to probationers or staff who normally would not qualify given their lengths of service. 2) The provision of full (or improved sick) pay to those absent due to Covid. 3) The exclusion in various ways of Covid related absences from the systems in place to monitoring/measuring/penalising absences.

### *Employee Assistance and Counselling*

45. All but one organisation reported that they provided some form of employee Assistance and Counselling Services.

### *Recruitment Trends*

46. Seventy-five percent of respondents reported that their recruitment needs were higher than the previous year. This figure represents a considerable increase from fifty-eight percent in the 2018-2019 Benchmarking Report.
47. A similar proportion (79%) reported that from the 26 April 2021, i.e. the date of the first substantial easing of lockdown measures in Scotland, respondents indicated their recruitment needs are now higher.
48. These findings are confirmed by responses to anticipated future recruitment needs, where 60% reported that hiring staff will involve more difficulty, 36% projected the same difficulty and 3% less difficulty.
49. Sixty-two percent of respondents (N= 32) reported they had increased their expenditure allocated to recruitment since the end of lockdown and 31% reported their expenditure had remained the same.
50. Of those respondents indicating the percentage increase in expenditure on recruitment following the ending of lockdown, responses ranged from 10% to 300% increase.
51. Sixty-six percent of the providers (N=32) noted that recruitment of either front-line support staff was 'Very Difficult', a sharp increase on the 2018-2019 Benchmarking Report figures of 39%.

52. Front-line support staff still constitutes the group that the most respondents found 'Very Difficult' to recruit for (53%), with an additional (34%) finding the recruitment of front-line support staff 'Quite Difficult'.
53. Ninety percent of respondents face difficulty recruiting these operations staff, as seen in Table 5.4. These were followed by managers (56%), supervisors (43%).
54. Reasons for recruitment difficulties for front-line workers were stated as: too few applicants was cited by (72%); local competitors (56%) pay levels (53%); working time preferences (38%); and too few skilled applicants (28%).
55. The average total forecasted recruitment budget was £33,557.

### *Engagement, Communication, and industrial relations*

56. Ninety-four percent (N=31) of organisations reported undertaking engagement surveys. Of these, 39% did so on an annual basis, 32% bi-annually one and 19% on an ad-hoc basis.
57. Many of the responding organisations had revised their communication methods since the commencement of the pandemic. In particular, increased usage was reported of newsletters, written methods more generally, email and, most strikingly, video conferencing.
58. Seventy-nine percent of respondents had introduced strategies to improve engagement/communication with staff/users during the pandemic. These were largely through new technology such as Microsoft Teams or Yammer.
59. Union membership density figures varied from 0.2 percent, through to 2, 8, 10, 10.48, 19, and 25, to somewhere in the range of between 30 and 40 percent.
60. Responses suggested that in three organisations recognised unions did not negotiate over pay awards and that in a further one they only did so 'in part'.
61. Only two organisations stated that they had worked with a union to apply for government fundings to help them financially over the period of the pandemic.

### *Induction and Training and Development*

62. Overall, all organisations indicated that they deliver some kind of induction programme across all types of role. 70% provided inductions for volunteers, 88% for sessional/bank/relief staff, 85% for temporary staff, 36% for agency staff, and 85% for management/board.
63. The most common elements included in induction programmes were values and attitudes, health and safety, risk assessment and organisational procedures. Some organisations specified some additional areas which are addressed in their induction

process, including equality and diversity, data protection, cyber security, organisational history and individual site facilities.

64. 42% of organisations rated their induction programme as being of a high standard, 36% as adequate, and 21% noted that their induction programme needs to be reviewed.

65. A core training programme beyond induction was present in 88% of organisations for front line workers, 76% for operational managers, 70% for administrators, support staff, and non-operational managers, and 61% for senior managers and executives.

66. Only 27% of organisations reported that training evaluation has become more difficult since the covid-19 pandemic, and 61% reported that it had not.

67. 76% of respondents reported that SVQ or other equivalent qualification were required for professional recognition among their workforce.

68. SVQs were delivered through a variety of methods, with the most common being via external providers (79%).

### *Information Technology*

69. Overall, 97% reported an increase use of technology in the delivery of their services since the pandemic.

70. 70% of respondents introduced one or more types of software since the pandemic. Of these organisations, the most common was MS Teams (65%), followed by Zoom (52%).

71. Overall 52% of organisations revealed they had introduced one or more new type of device to their workforce during the pandemic. The most common one was the use of laptops (82%), Tablets (65%) phones 59%. Several respondents also introduced improvements in connectivity.

72. Ninety-six per cent and eighty-nine percent said that they had increased spending on hardware and software respectively since the pandemic.

73. A third of respondents reported increases in spending on social media, while two-thirds reported it had stayed the same. In terms of video conferencing and webinars etc, 79% of respondents respectively reported increases, while the remainder reported it had stayed the same.

74. Among all those that recorded an increase in hardware expenditure, 61% reported it was considerable. For expenditure on software, video conferencing and webinars over

half respondents (52%, 50% and 55% respectively) reported considerable increases, while 40% of those spending on social media said it was considerable.

75. Transformation to online only service provision appears quite limited. Overall, out of the 22 organisations providing data, 46% reported there was no such provision in their services. Of those that reported some online only provision, the highest was at 50%, but the majority of those providing this type of service was in the main less than 10% of their work.

76. Overall, three quarters of respondents reported a level of confidence in the skills of their workforce when handling technology, with 71% of these organisations stating they were 'Confident'. Of those who were not confident, the majority were 'Not Very Confident' with only 1 organisation reporting they were 'Not at all Confident'.

## About CCPS

CCPS is the Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland. It exists to identify, represent, promote and safeguard the interests of third sector and not-for-profit social care and support providers in Scotland, so that they can maximise the impact they have on meeting social need.

CCPS aims to:

- Champion quality care and support provided by the third sector
- Challenge policy and practice that inhibits or undermines the sector's ability to provide quality care and support
- Prepare providers for future challenges and opportunities
- Support providers to understand, negotiate and influence the complex policy and practice environment in which they operate.

CCPS hosts the Workforce Development Network, funded by the Scottish Government to assist voluntary sector social services providers to fully contribute to the national workforce development agenda.

CCPS  
Norton Park  
57 Albion Road Edinburgh EH7 5QY T. 0131 475 2676  
[www.ccpScotland.org](http://www.ccpScotland.org)

CCPS is a company limited by guarantee registered in Scotland No. 279913, registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator as Charity No.SCO29199. The company's registered office is at Norton Park, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh. EH7 5QY. CCPS is a registered Scottish charity: No. SC029199.

©April 2022. This document is copyright protected and may not be reproduced, in part or in whole, without the permission of CCPS

The CCPS Workforce Development Network is funded by Scottish Government



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

# CCPS

COALITION OF CARE  
AND SUPPORT PROVIDERS  
IN SCOTLAND

CCPS, Norton Park, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh EH7 5QY  
t: 0131 475 2676 e: [info@ccpscotland](mailto:info@ccpscotland) [www.ccpscotland.org](http://www.ccpscotland.org)

*CCPS is a Company limited by guarantee registered in Scotland No. 279913  
Recognised by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator No. SC029199*