

ESSEX POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



Meeting	ECFRS Performance & Resources Board	Agenda Item	
Meeting Date	28 February 2020	Report Number	
Report Authors:	Martin Jones, Workforce Information Officer Natalie Quickenden, Assistant Director of Human Resources		
Presented By	Karl Edwards, Director of Corporate Services		
Subject	Quarterly People Report – Q3 2019/20		
Type of Report:	Information and Feedback		

RECOMMENDATIONS

The P&R Board are asked to consider the latest Quarterly People Report and provide feedback to enable continued improvement.

INTRODUCTION

This is the second quarterly report produced in the new style that was first shared in October 2019 and which mirrors the format of the two monthly one-page People and Learning & Development “dashboards”.

This is the latest step on our journey of continuing improvement to provide information that will help the Service to identify the interventions needed to deliver our People Strategy; and to mitigate the risk of failing to maintain adequate capacity and capability to deliver our Service priorities.

The report is renamed from the “Quarterly HR Report”.

PROPOSED APPROACH

The Quarterly People report attached is more clearly signposted to enable the reader to navigate more readily through the different types of information, and a better articulation of the trends and likely causes.

It would be very valuable to continue to receive feedback on the new style, format and content so that we can continue to provide information which will help to improve our people approaches and organisational performance.

BENEFITS AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

The benefits of the new style report are described above. There are no material risks associated with the report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no equality and diversity implications.

WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

Workforce engagement in relation to our People Strategy and mechanisms for measuring outcomes approaches will be through existing forums; more specifically the People, Culture and Values workstreams and regular meetings with Trade Union representatives.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with the report.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

There are no health and safety implications associated with the report.



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

Quarterly People Report

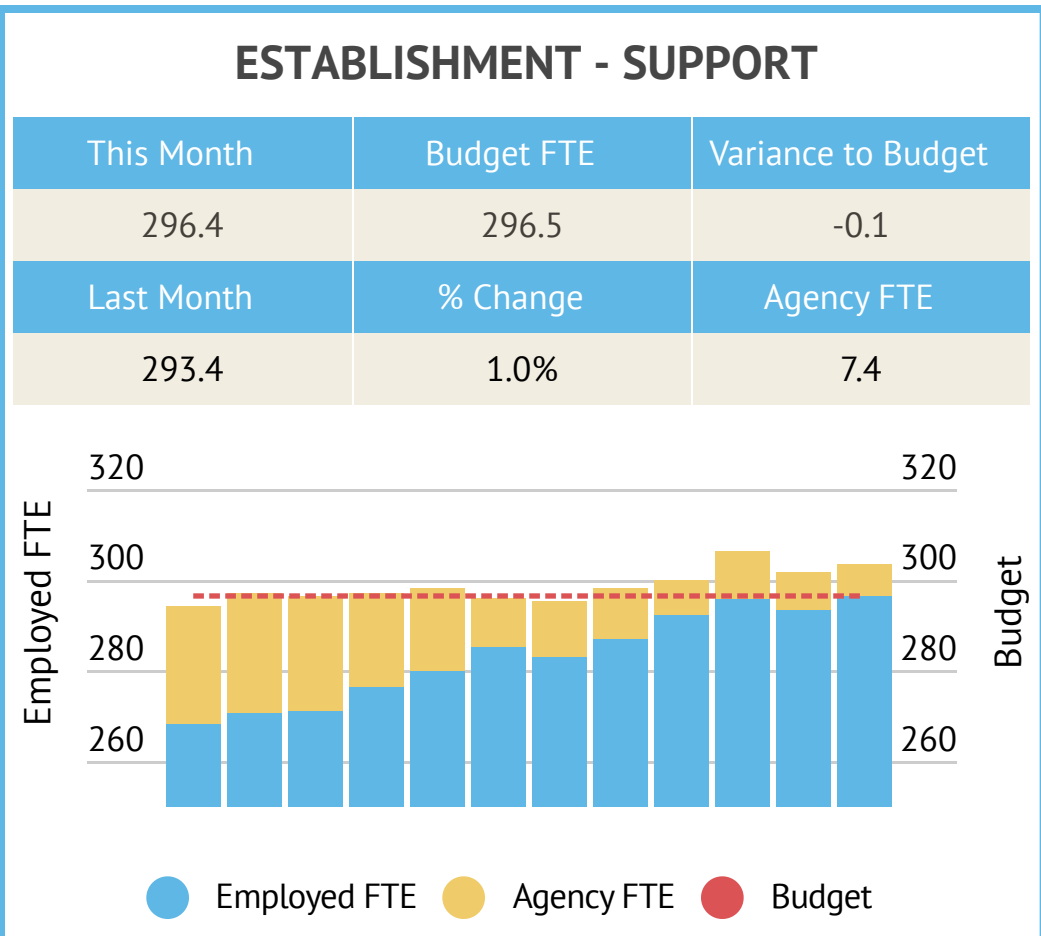
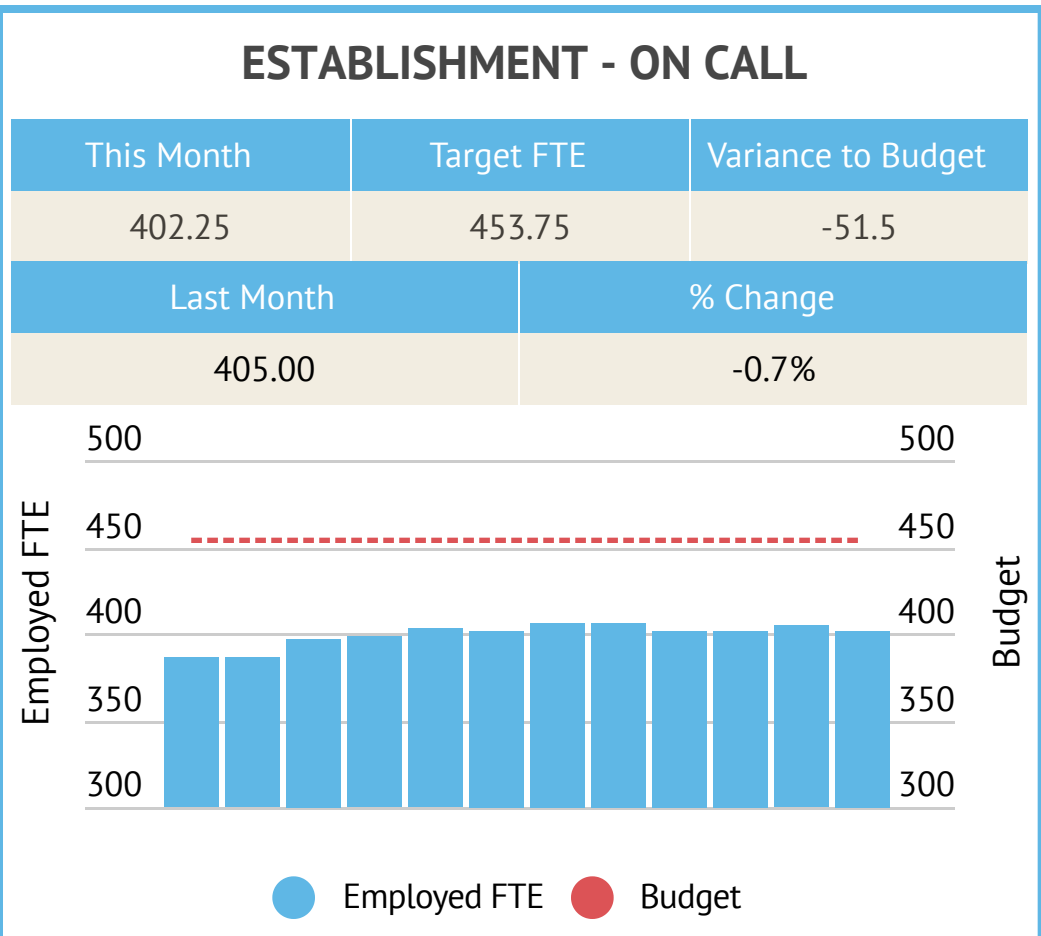
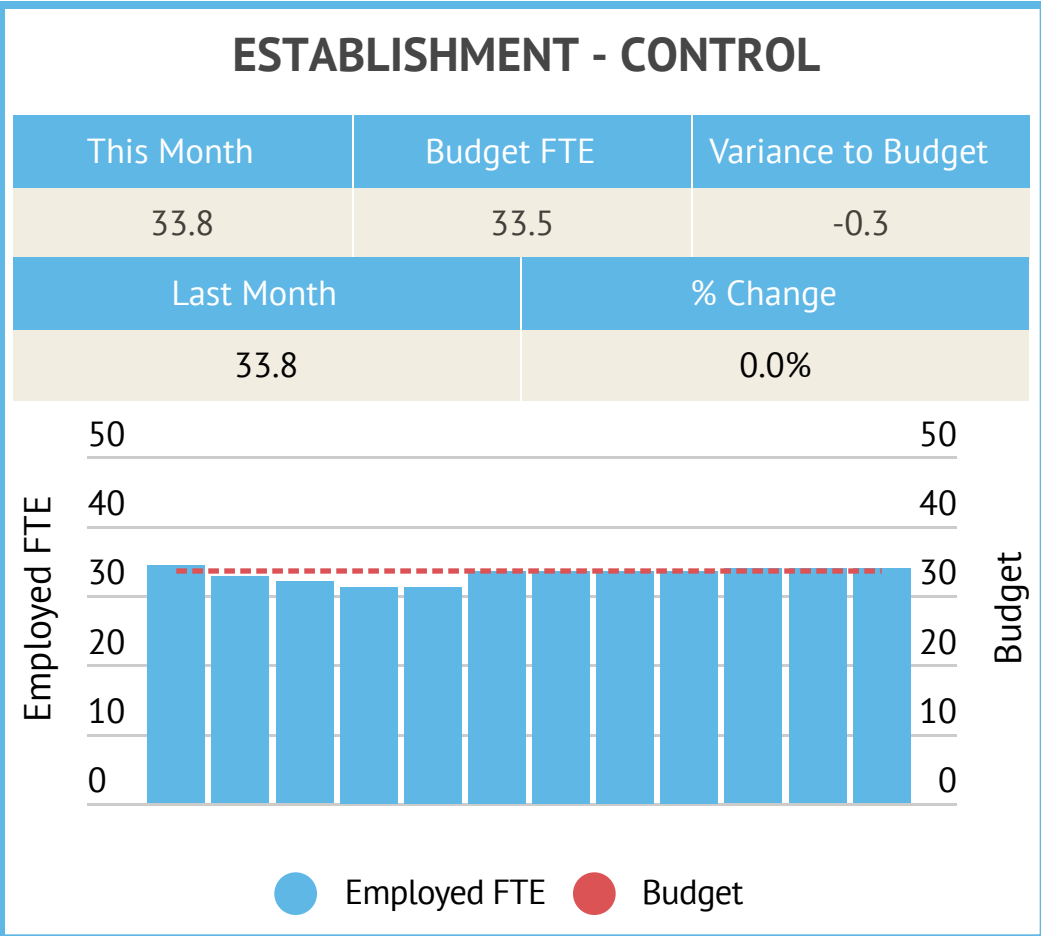
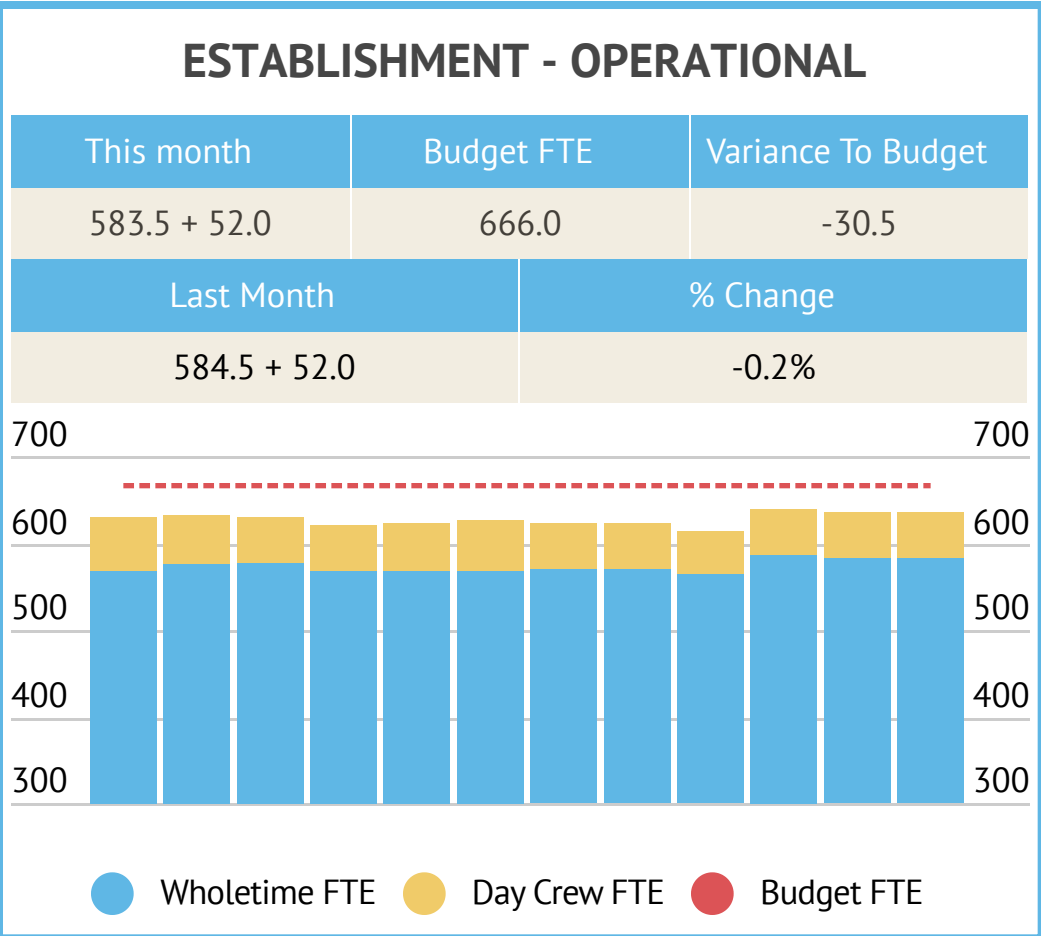
workforceinfo@essex-fire.gov.uk

Q3 2019/20

Data as at 31 December 2019

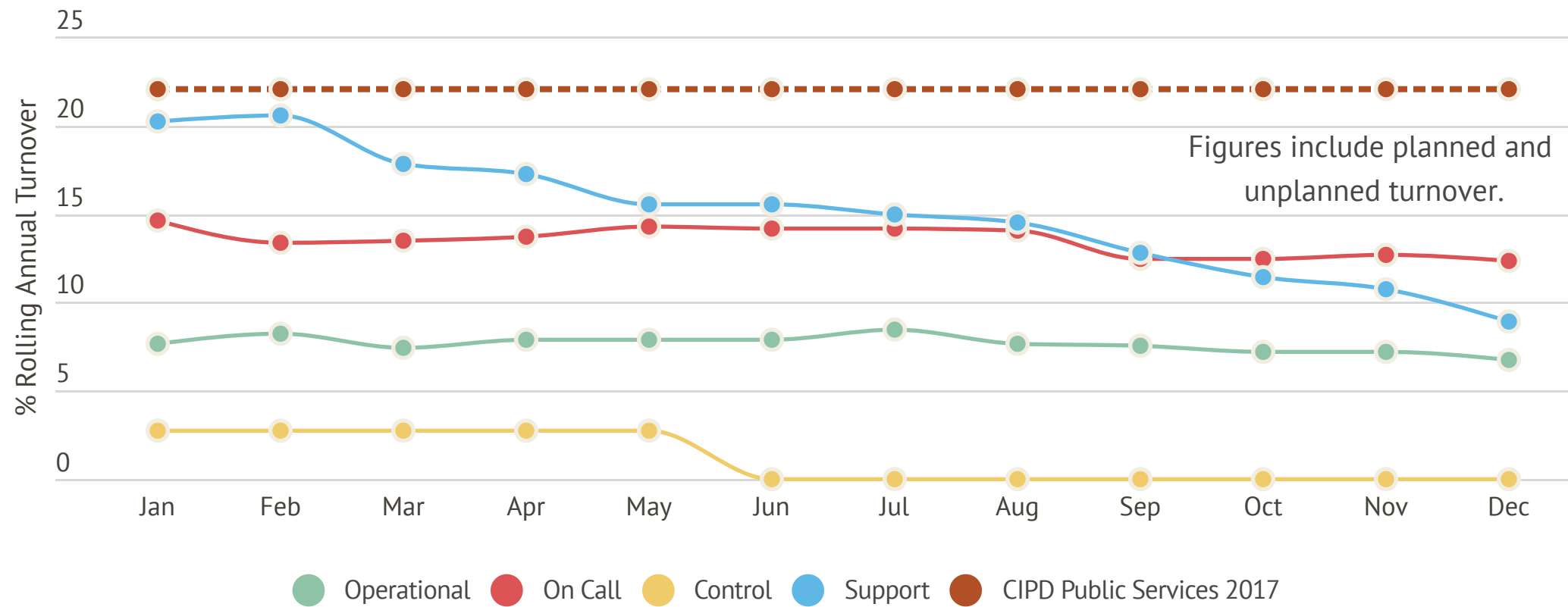
Insights

- The graphs reflect the progress being made with the day crewing project and the current position in terms of FTE reductions. The Wholetime new recruits are still on track to join us in Q4 and will continue to close the gap between establishment budget and actuals.
- The On Call programme is progressing with good outcomes from the recruitment campaigns held during the period. On Call resource levels have increased by 4.2% overall during the last 12 months and we will continue to monitor our capacity to recruit, onboard and train throughout 2020.
- Support staff budgeted establishment has been exceeded by 2.5%, however this is through the use of agency supplied workers to support critical areas.
- Our strategic workforce plans are being developed which will enable us to ensure that our establishment requirements are met and the appropriate interventions are put in place.
- As part of a recent collaboration with the Police, the Service has put in place a contract with Randstad, a single agency supplier to manage future agency worker requirements. We will engage with hiring managers during the implementation process. The new, single, provider will enable managers to access agency workers in a smarter way, with less processing required.



ACTION: Work is underway to develop strategic workforce plans and recommendations

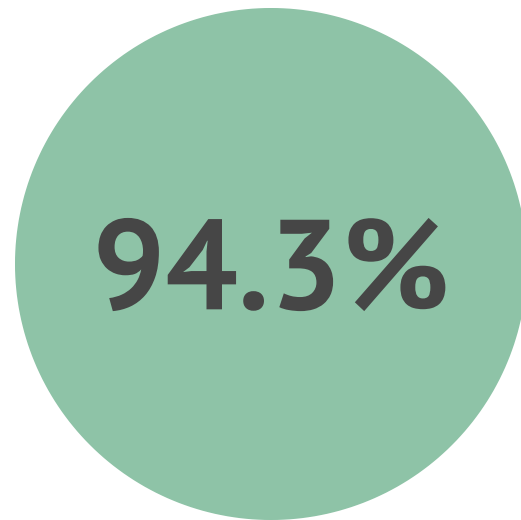
WORKFORCE ANNUAL TURNOVER - ROLLING 12 MONTH AVERAGE



Insights

- Whilst the retention rate for the Service is high overall, more work needs to be undertaken in conjunction between the On Call liaison team and HR to understand the reasons for On Call firefighter turnover. This will be addressed in the strategic workforce planning exercise in the next couple of months.
- Notably Control room turnover remains low; this will be considered as part of our strategic workforce plans, to provide opportunities for refreshment, development and growth.
- Support staff turnover continues to reduce, but is still considered a healthy turnover based on public sector trends.

ONE YEAR RETENTION



UK PUBLIC SECTOR: 84%

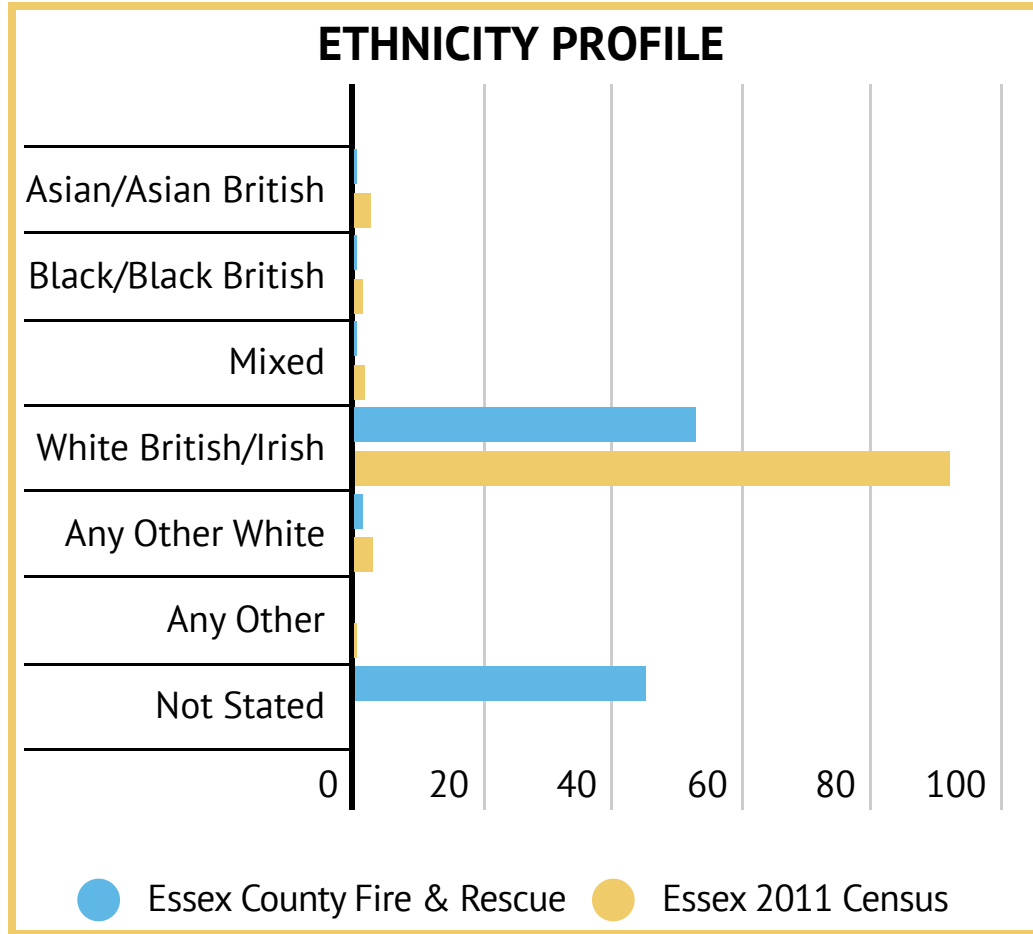
UK WHOLE WORKFORCE: 83%

Source: Office for National Statistics - "Is staff retention an issue in the public sector?" - June 2019

JOINERS AND LEAVERS IN Q3 2019/20

EE Group	Joiners	Leavers
Operational	25	4
On Call	22	17
Control	0	0
Support	9	7

ACTION: Development of strategic workforce plans will take into account planned attrition and unplanned turnover for all employee groups



GENDER PROFILE

EE Group	Female	Male	Other	Essex %	National %
Operational	40	547	9	6.7%	6.8%
On Call	7	440	1	1.6%	5.6%
Control	30	6	0	83.3%	77.0%
Support	153	141	2	51.7%	53.2%

Notes:
 The "Other" grouping includes employees that identify as Non-Binary, Other or Prefer Not to Say.
 Essex % and National % compare the ECFRS % female employees with national fire service % female staff levels.

DIVERSITY SELF-CLASSIFICATION

Characteristic	Number undeclared	% of workforce
Gender	120	8.0%
Sexual Orientation	944	63.1%
Ethnicity	672	44.9%
Religion	1108	74.0%

Notes:
 These figures represent the number of Service employees that have not yet actively self-classified themselves in the above protected characteristics.

GENDER PAY GAP 2018/19

Mean Gender Pay Gap %	Median Gender Pay Gap %
12.2%	13.1%

Pay Quartile	Males	Females
Upper Quartile	22.8%	2.3%
Upper Middle Quartile	22.1%	2.9%
Lower Middle Quartile	22.3%	2.7%
Lower Quartile	17.3%	7.6%

Insights

- The 2018/19 Gender Pay Gap has increased from 2017/18 although is still lower than 2016/17. Initial analysis suggest that the "average hourly rate" has increased by 16% for men and 6% for women; we have nationally agreed pay rates that are applied equally and so this is likely to relate to operational allowances, which opens up a possibility of disproportionate outcomes for men and women due to the low representation of women in operational roles.
- It is important to understand that diversity of our existing workforce. We know from HMICFRS that self-classification is lower in Essex than other Services. We will again promote self-classification in Q1 2020/21.
- People Impact Assessments (PIA) help us to make evidence-based decisions. We hosted a regional awareness/education event to promote use of PIAs. We will roll this out across the Service in Q1 2020/21.
- We know that we increase diversity of perspective when we understand and value neurodiversity. In Q3 we delivered a managers' briefing and followed up with further information. We funded 3 dyslexia assessments in Q3, consistent with previous quarters and have four awareness sessions planned through the rest of the calendar year.
- Dignity in our Workplace sessions are designed around interactive discussion about behaviour in our workplaces and the natural roles that we all tend to adopt that enable unacceptable behaviour to occur, continue and thrive. We held 26 in Q3 and have a further 25 planned for Q4. It is our intention to reach every employee.
- We continue to enable 50 Dignity at Work Champions to act as agents for change. They supported 7 individuals to resolve informal enquiries in Q3, which is a slight increase upon previous quarters. This is a direct consequence of rolling out Dignity in our Workplace training across our Service.

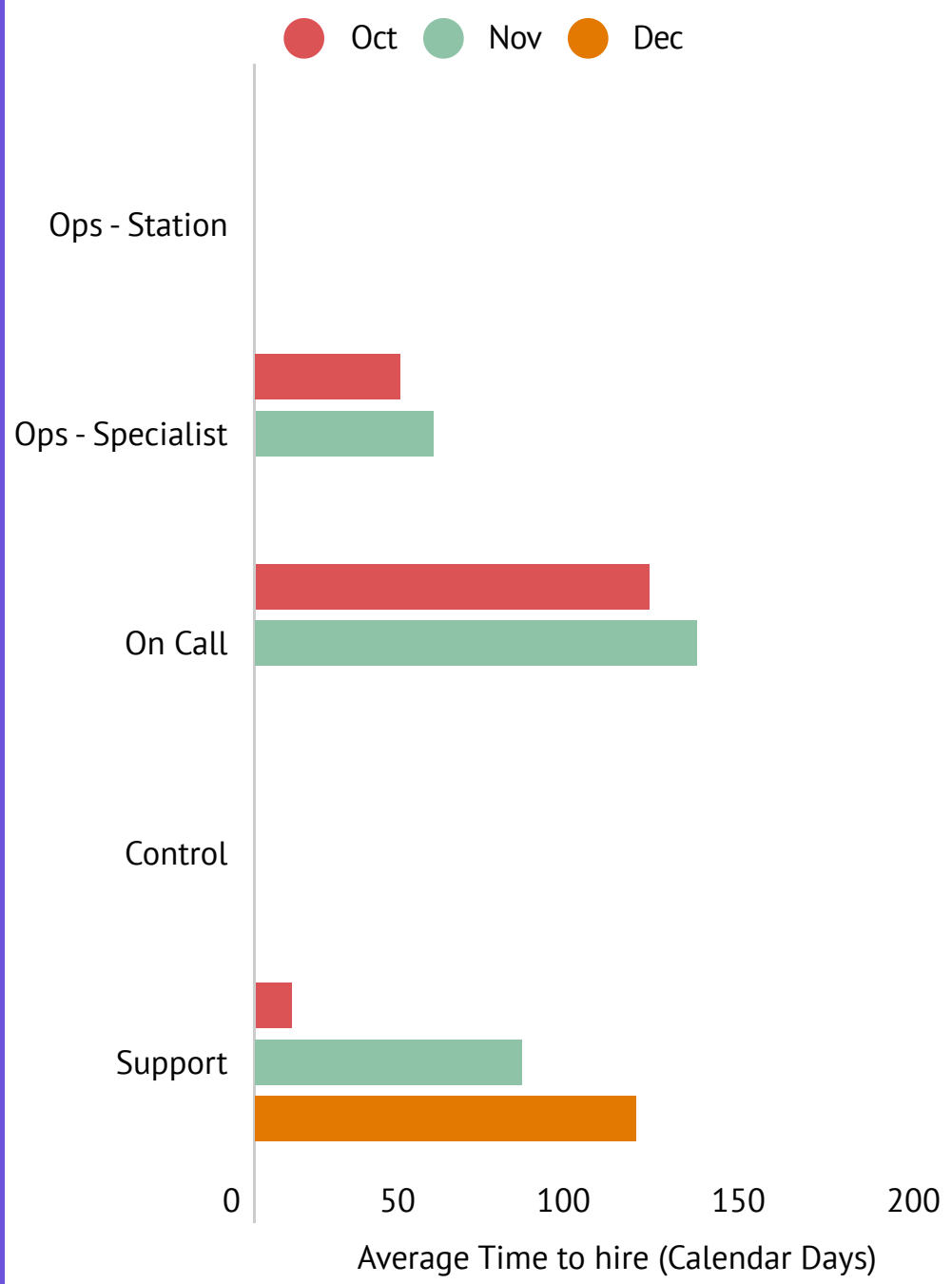
ACTION: Please continue to encourage employees to complete their Equal Opportunities data in Civica

Insights

- Q3 kicked off with On Call recruitment in the spotlight. Linking with the On Call Development Programme, we saw a week of focused activity at each of the converting Day Crew stations.
- There was a week of focused recruitment activity in Canvey Island, which was our priority station for the quarter.
- Several On Call assessment days have led to full squads of On Call recruits starting in October and December, with more to come in Q4.
- October also saw us welcome the first squad from the 2019 Wholetime recruitment campaign, with 18 new recruits starting at the Fire Service College.
- The HMICFRS focus on Technical Fire Safety led to intensive recruitment activity as we recruited 10 new Inspecting Officers, employing a mix of Grey and Green Book personnel.
- In Q3 we concluded the Group Manager promotion process, with two internal candidates and one external candidate successful, all to start their new roles in Q4.
- We consequently commenced a Station Manager Talent Pool and recruitment process that will conclude in Q4, in time for the March postings board.
- Due to wanting to engage better with our key stakeholders, our SLT Workforce Planning paper has been delayed until Q4.

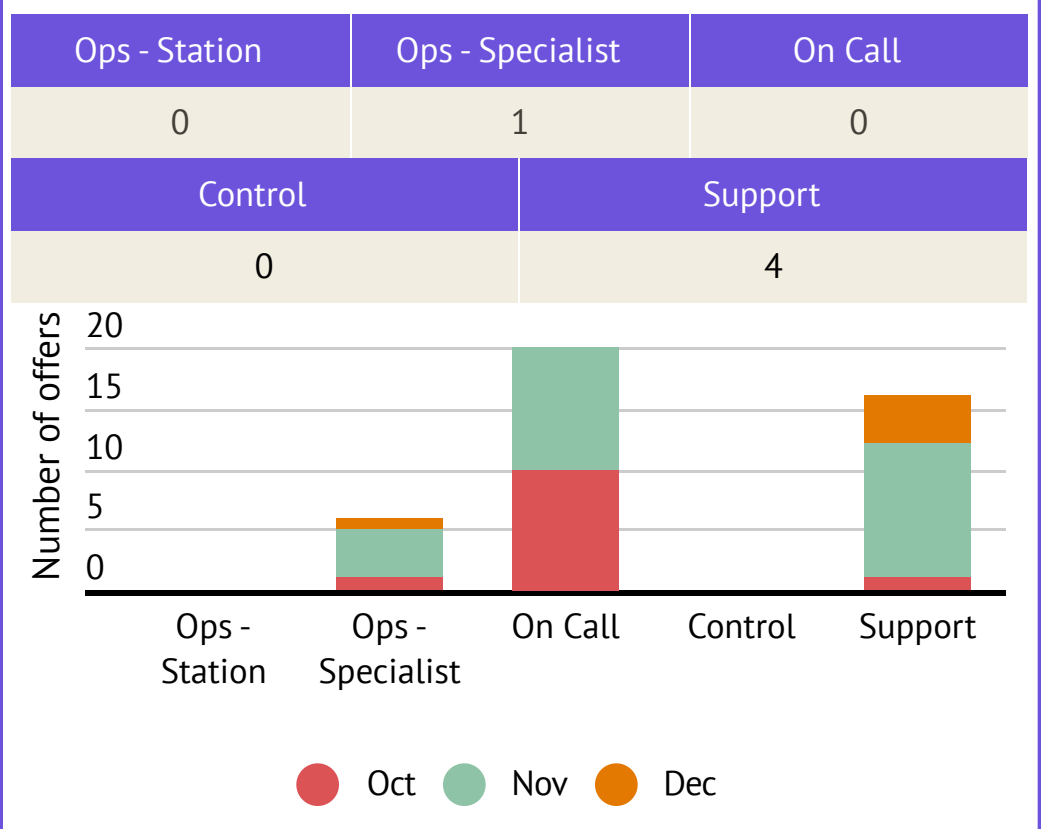
TIME TO HIRE - Q3 2019/20

Measured as the number of calendar days between recruitment authorisation and offer acceptance by candidate.



NIL
There were no direct costs associated with hiring Support employees in December.

OFFERS ACCEPTED - Q3 2019/20



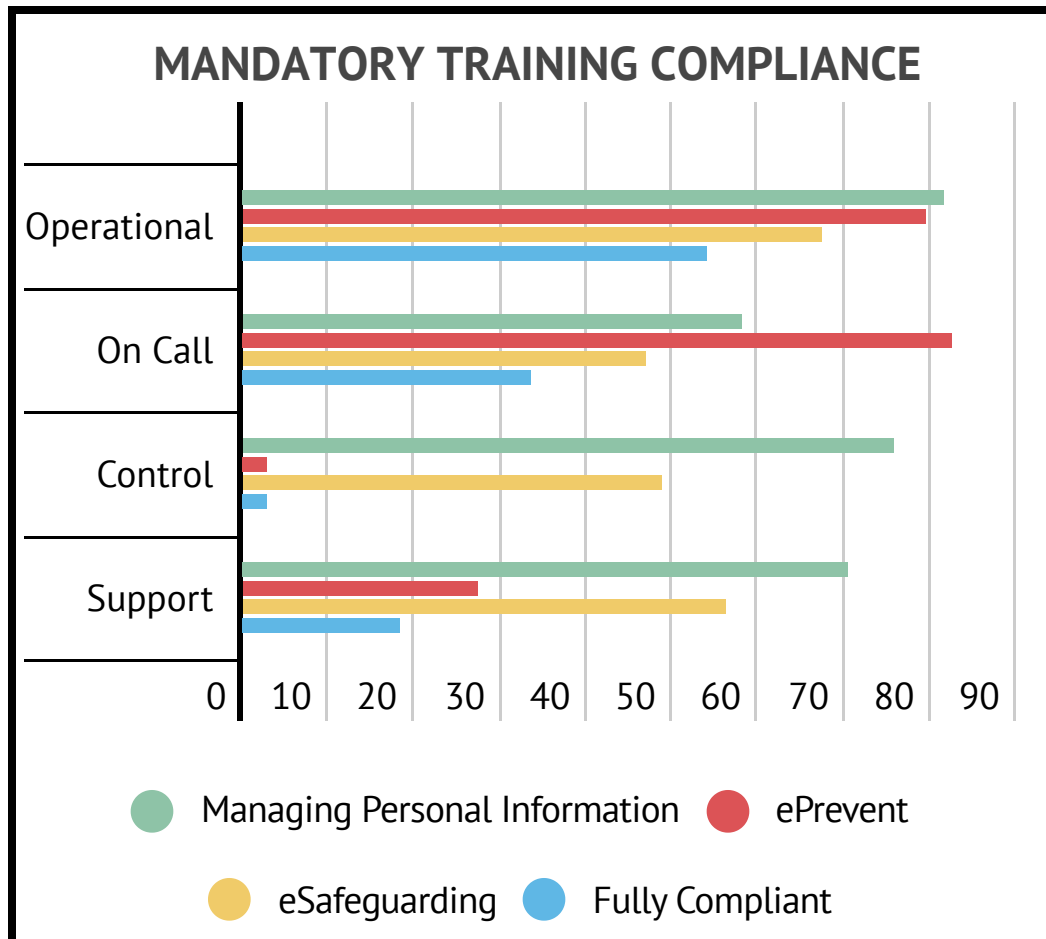
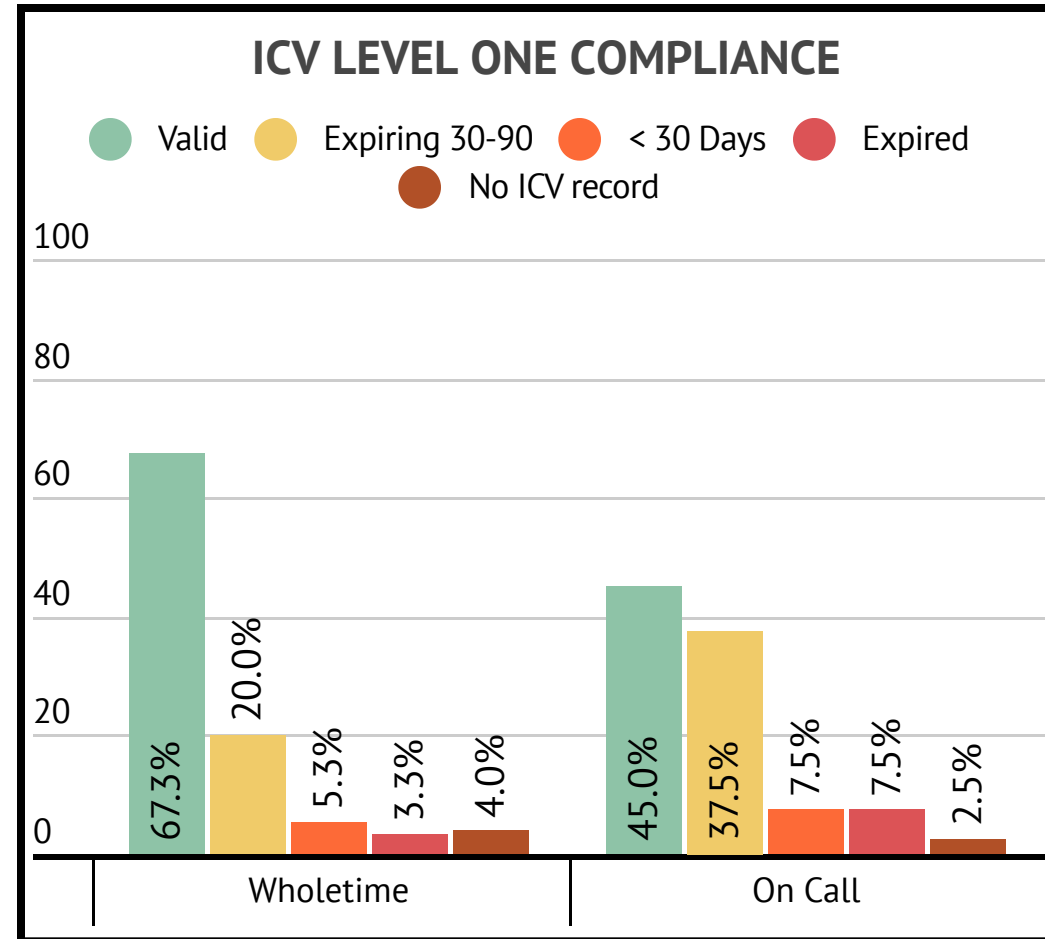
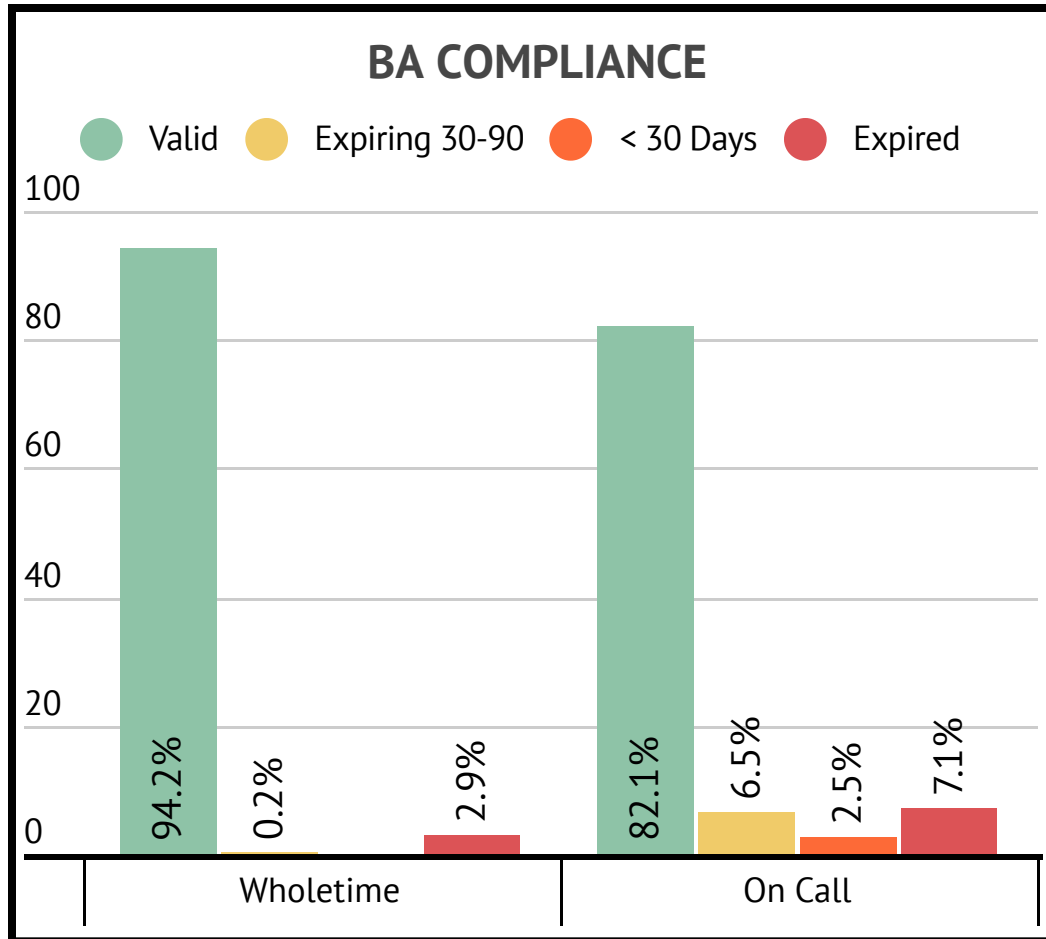
TALENT POOLS

EE Group	Supervisory	Middle Mgr	Strategic
Operational	36	10	1
On Call	12	1	0
Control	2	2	0
Support	3	5	0



9
Number of people substantively promoted through Talent Pool process in Q3 2019/20

ACTION: We will continue to review and improve the quality of the recruitment data that we record for all employee groups, not just Support



100%

December 2019 training satisfaction survey respondents that said they were "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with their training course.



3.2%

Only 21 delegates (out of 662 attendees) responded to the training satisfaction survey in December.

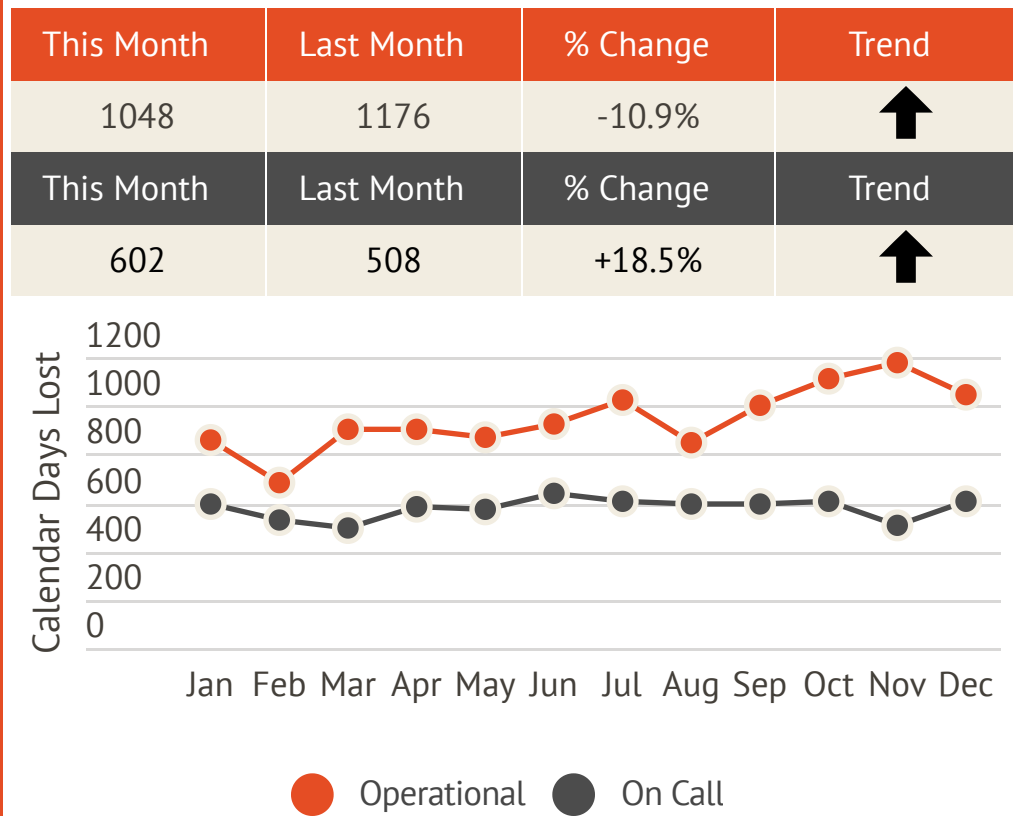
Insights

- Our Operational Training Strategy has been approved. This reshapes our offer to enable the majority of training to be maintained via local station-based training, to deliver core acquisition and specialist training centrally, with Group Trainers supporting and enabling local station-based training.
- BA and ICV training – It is important that our firefighter have the essential skills to complete their roles. We report monthly on BA and other compliance to ensure that every firefighter has the training they need.
- We have a significant focus on completion of mandatory training and it is on an upwards trajectory.
- The Strategic Board has approved funding of £1,993,240 to refurbish BA and Safe Working at Heights facilities. This work has begun.
- Phase 1 of our Core Skills Assurance Programme has completed and provided some initial assurance. We have entered into Phase 2. The session plan, overview, assessment workbook, can be found our intranet.
- We had 18 new firefighters in Q3. These are the first group of firefighters to be trained through the Fire Service College. This is being fully evaluated and initial feedback is positive. The second cohort of 18 firefighters join in Q4 and will also be trained through the College.
- Training library – 12 online resources have been developed and are being released; they are one version of quality assured truth aligned to our policy and National Operational Guidance (NOG).

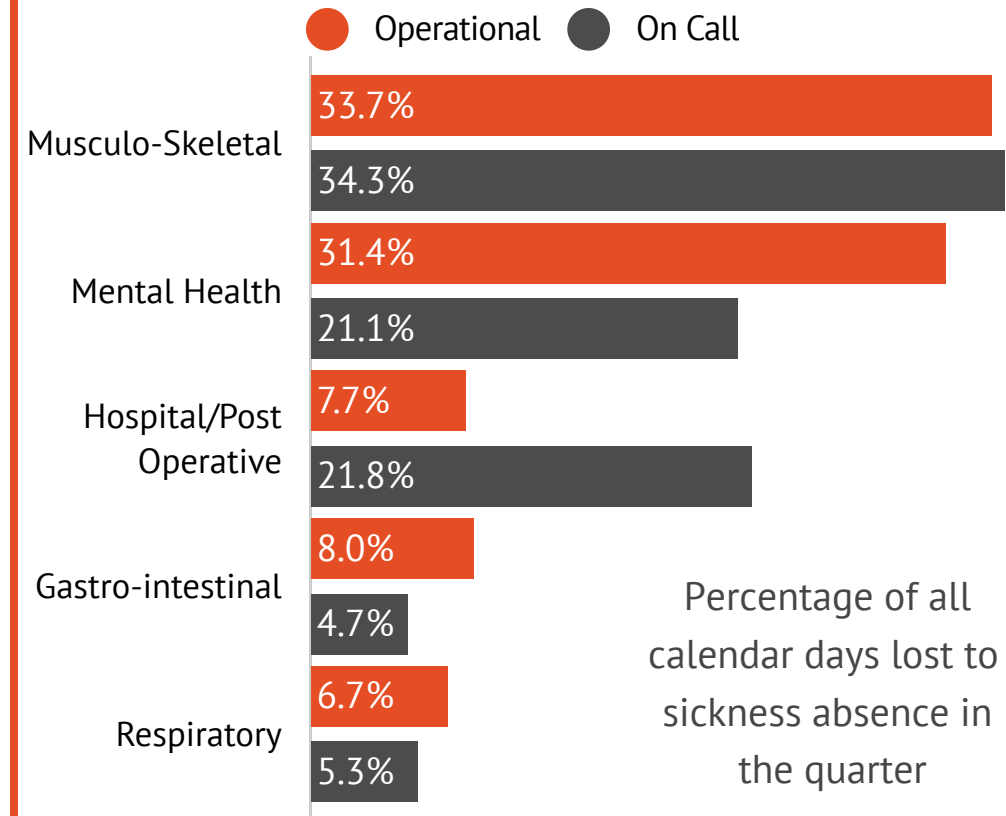
ACTIONS: Continue with ongoing actions to improve the rate of completion of Mandatory Training items

Insights

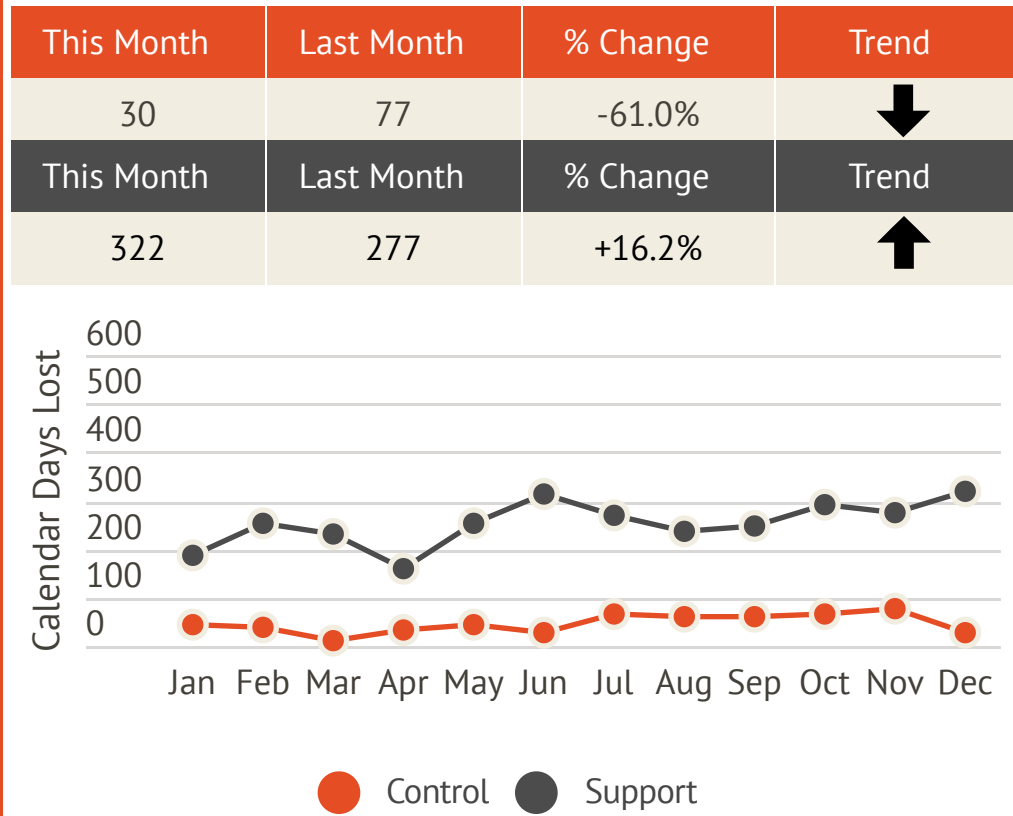
DAYS LOST TO SICKNESS - GREY BOOK



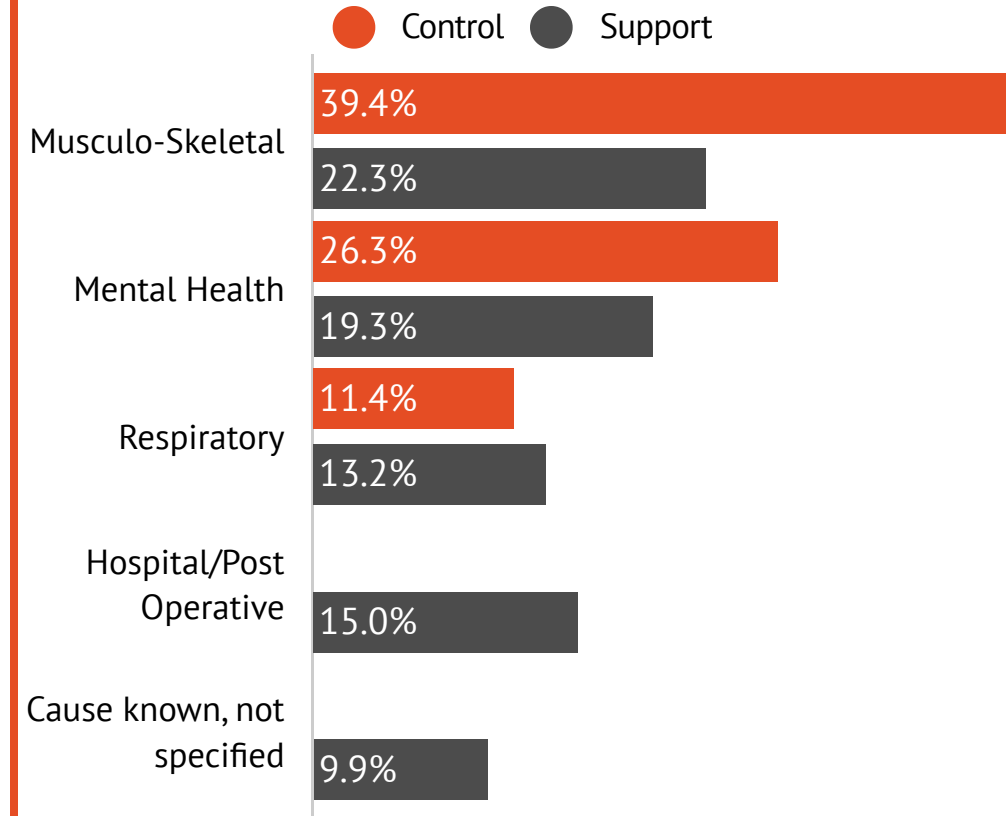
TOP ABSENCE REASONS Q3 - GREY BOOK



DAYS LOST TO SICKNESS - CONTROL/SUPPORT



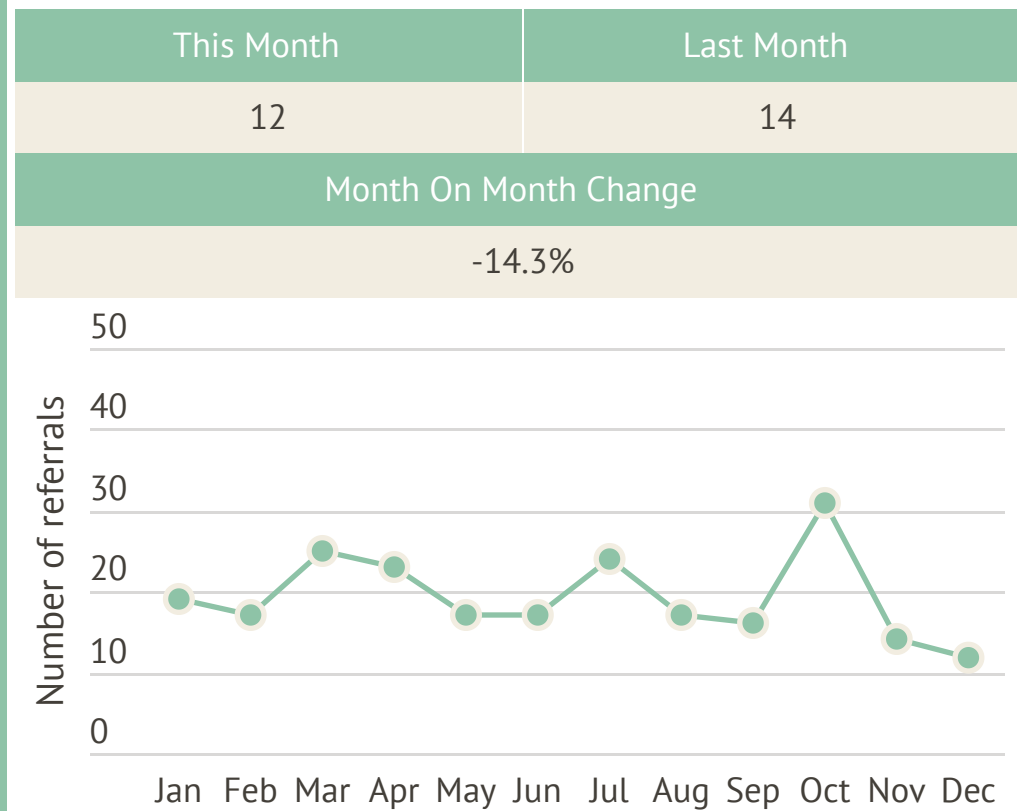
TOP ABSENCE REASONS Q3 - CONTROL/SUPPORT



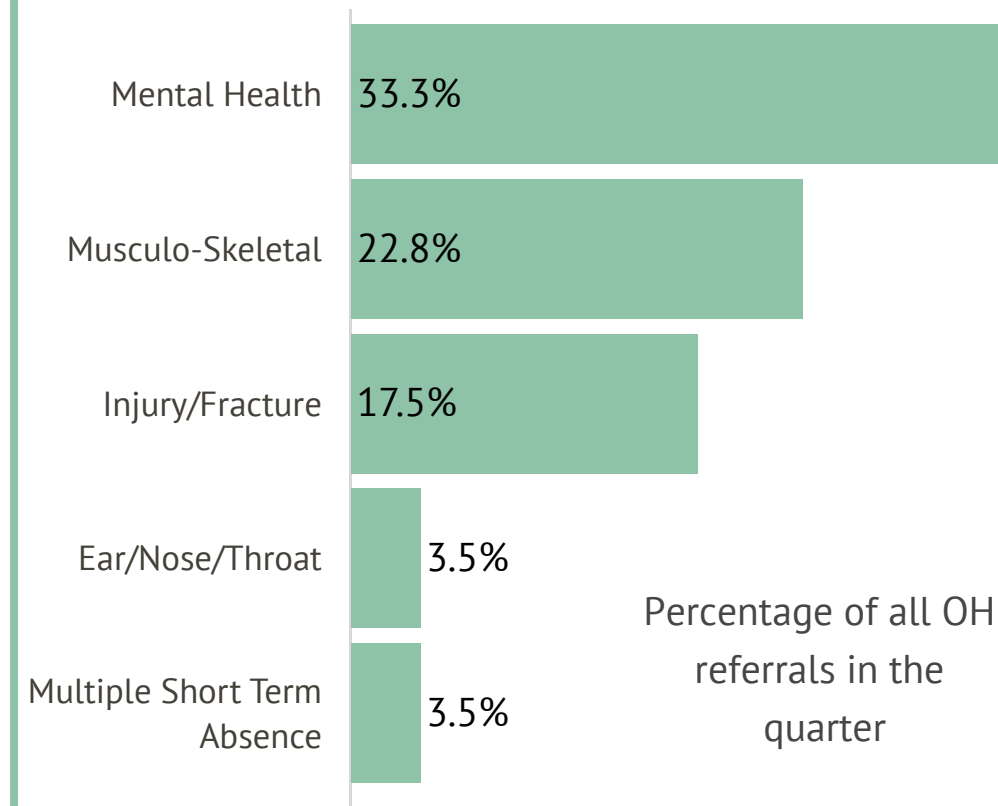
- Nationally, 38% of all 2018/19 Wholetime sickness absence was attributed to Musculo-Skeletal conditions. For On Call, the figure was 45%. This is broadly comparable to, although slightly in excess of, our reported figures. (Source: National Fire & Rescue Service OH Performance Report 2018/19, prepared by Cleveland Fire Brigade).
- Nationally, 13% of all 2018/19 Control sickness absence was attributed to Musculo-Skeletal conditions. Our figure of 39.4% is significantly in excess of this. For Support staff, the figure was 19%. This is broadly comparable to our reported levels. (Source: National Fire & Rescue Service OH Performance Report 2018/19, prepared by Cleveland Fire Brigade).
- There were 10 periods of absence with "Cause known, but not specified" recorded in the quarter.
- Of 147 periods of absence in excess of 7 days, only 22 cases (15%) have a recorded fit note.
- Of 401 periods of absence with an end date prior to 31 December, only 180 (44.9%) have the employee marked as having returned to work.

ACTION: We will identify a method for establishing a sickness rate / time lost to sickness measure

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH REFERRALS



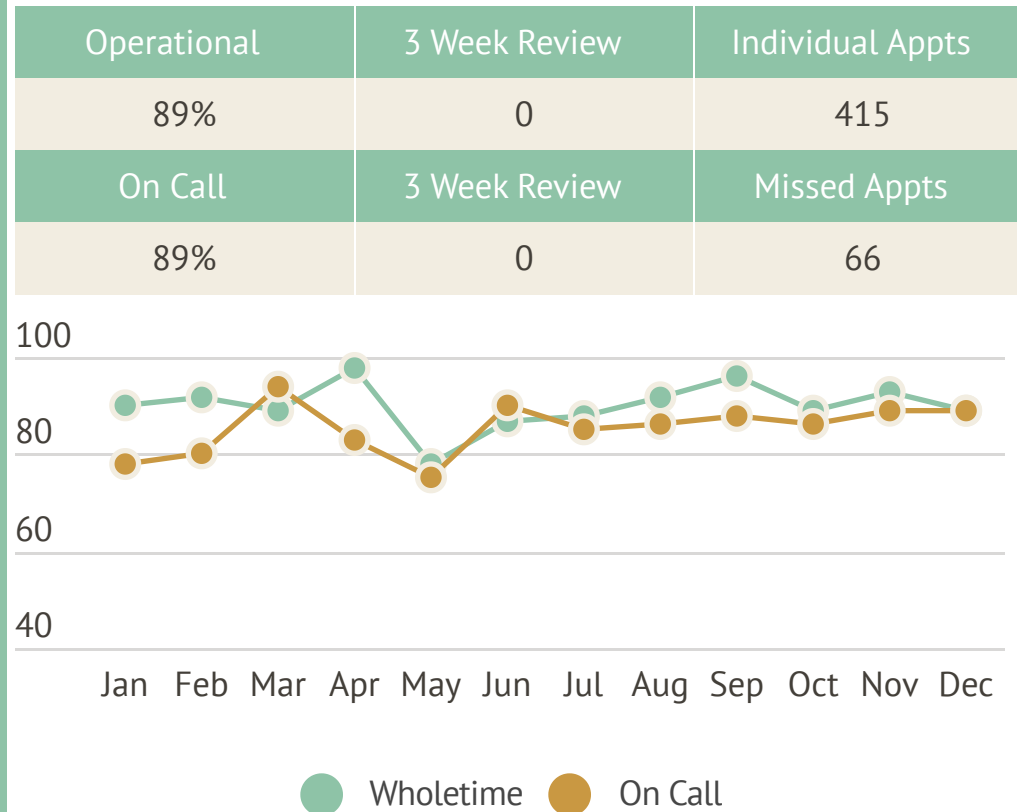
TOP REASONS FOR REFERRAL - Q3 2019/20



Insights

- Data continues to suggest a correlation between sickness absence reasons and referrals to Occupational Health during Q2. Further work to identify any link between employee absence passing the 28 day mark and timescales of subsequent referrals is underway.
- Timely referrals to Occupational Health are improving for mental health cases and instances of injury/fracture/surgery, but at times there is still significant delay and last minute referral still occurs. Work will be continued with the senior HR team to pass on to managers in their respective groups the need for prompt referral – which has both business and personal needs.
- Station Managers continue to be made aware of missed or cancelled Fitech and Fitness Review appointments and have been tasked with identifying reasons for non-attendance.
- Fitness Review figures reflects the position at 31 December 2019 and numbers will have changed since that point in time.
- We have now established a method by which OH referrals can be linked to Civica sickness records, which will allow us to analyse the timeliness of the referral process. Once a full quarter's data is available, we will report on this at the end of Q4.
- The impact of the new Fitness Policy upon Fitech testing and Fitness Reviews will be explored in the next report.

FITECH TESTING - PASS RATES



FITNESS REVIEWS



59
Active Fitness Reviews
as at 31 Dec 2019

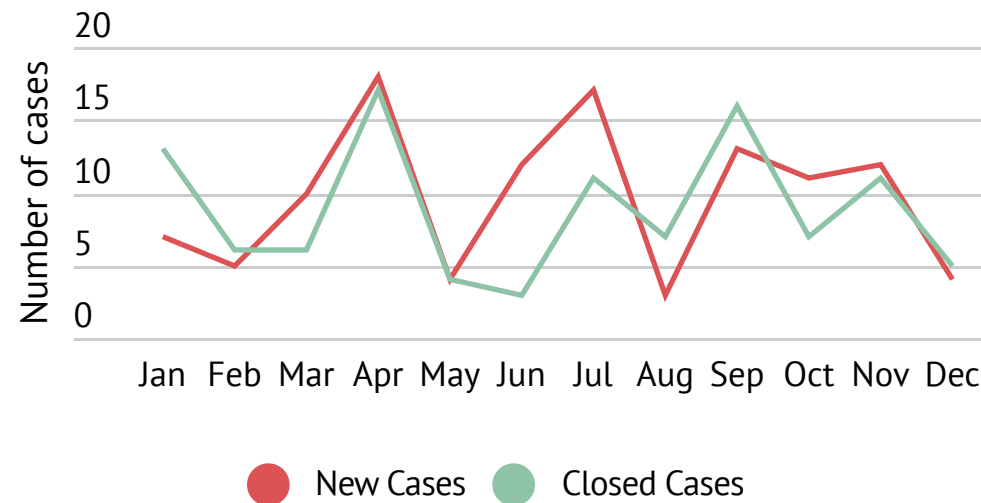


30
Number without
review appointments
booked

ACTION: We will cross reference referral and sickness data to confirm that OH referrals are being received in a timely basis

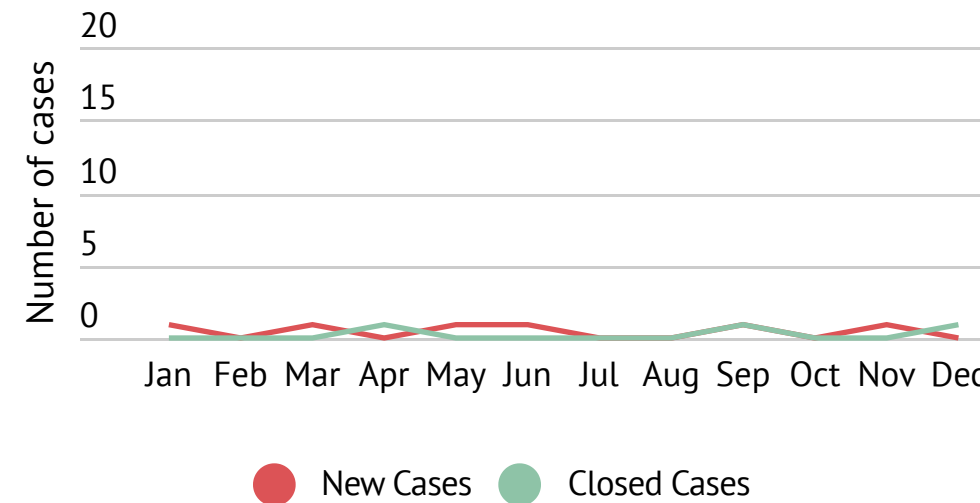
ATTENDANCE

New Cases	Closed Cases	Ongoing Cases
4	5	38
Last Month	Avg Time to Close	Oldest Case
12	179 days	538 days



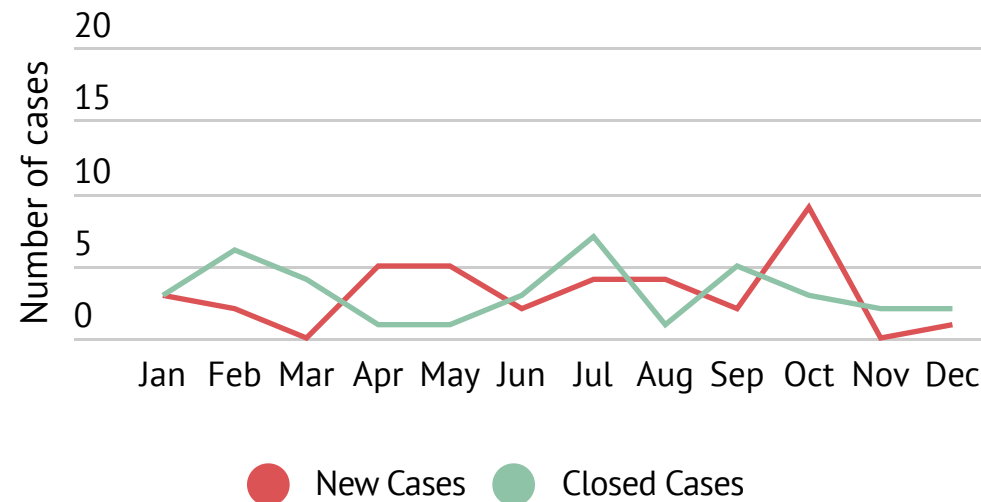
DISCIPLINARY

New Cases	Closed Cases	Ongoing Cases
0	1	3
Last Month	Avg Time to Close	Oldest Case
1	31 days	356 days



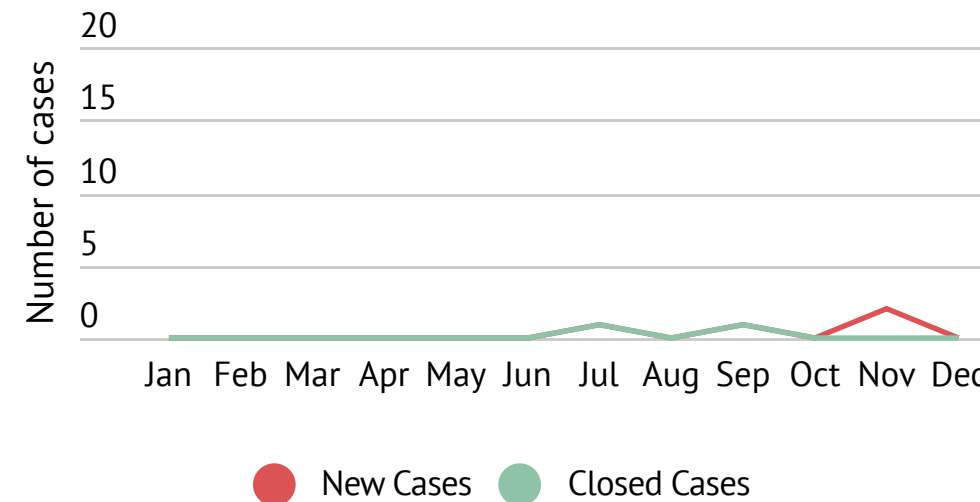
PERFORMANCE

New Cases	Closed Cases	Ongoing Cases
1	2	11
Last Month	Avg Time To Close	Oldest Case
0	81 days	154 days



GRIEVANCE

New Cases	Closed Cases	Ongoing Cases
0	0	3
Last Month	Avg Time To Close	Oldest Case
2	n/a	217 days



Insights

- The number of cases remains high but all now have focus and are being actively managed and supported. We will be putting in place improved arrangements for digitally capturing casework consistently and regularly across all areas. This will enable us to track and monitor our progress; and identify opportunities to reduce the number of formal cases and manage issues at the lowest practical level.

ACTION: We will work to ensure that all cases are recorded in Cherwell, regardless of their status