

Personnel Committee

17 July 2025



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	RBC Part Time Workforce Analysis
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Request from Personnel Committee – November 2024
Report author	Kathryn Cook – Assistant Director HR&OD
Lead Councillor	Councillor Ellie Emberson
Council priority	Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future
Recommendations	1. That Personnel Committee notes the analysis of RBCs part time workforce

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. At its meeting on 13 March 2025, Personnel Committee requested an analysis of RBCs part time workforce and for a report to be brought back to Personnel Committee at its meeting on 17th July 2025.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. RBC has a workforce of over 1800 staff (excluding schools and BFfC) and is an important employer in the town. Overall, 85% of RBC employees live in an RG postcode. More employees at RG5 or below (94%) live in an RG postcode than those on higher grades (70%). For part time staff, 92% live in an RG postcode. 96% of staff who are part time and RG5 or under live in an RG postcode.
- 2.2. As an employer it is important that we ascribe to good employment practices and that we understand not only the composition of our workforce but that actively use our analyses to inform all aspects of the employee lifecycle, particularly where these relate to 'protected characteristics'.
- 2.3. The analysis in the report looks at our part time workforce with the intention of providing the Committee with the greater insight requested, including through the lens of Inclusion and Diversity.
- 2.4. Please note that the definition of 'part time' work incorporates all work that is less than 'full time' ie fewer than 37 hours a week – there is a considerable variation in hours worked by part time employees of the Council.

3. Analysis of RBCs Part Time Workforce

3.1 Headline summary:

- **Gender Disparity** – A significantly higher proportion of women work part-time compared to men (88% vs. 12%), reflecting national trends.

- **Job Grade Distribution** – Part-time employees are more likely to be in lower-graded roles, with 76% in RG5 or lower, compared to 57% of full-time employees.
- **Length of Service** – Part-time employees tend to have longer tenure at the council, with 52% having worked for over 10 years, compared to 35% of full-time staff.
- **Age Variations** – The proportion of full-time vs. part-time employees is relatively even across most age groups, except for employees aged 60+ and those under 29, who show a stronger preference for part-time work.
- **Minimal Ethnic Disparity** – The likelihood of working part-time does not appear to vary significantly by ethnic group.
- **Disability Representation** – Employees who have declared a disability work part-time at a similar rate to those who haven't, indicating no substantial difference in employment patterns related to disability.

These trends suggest that part-time employment is influenced most strongly by gender, job type, and career stage rather than ethnicity or disability status.

- 3.2 Nationally the latest [UK Labour Market Statistics](#) show that approximately 24% of people are employed on a part time basis. Many employees opt for part-time jobs for personal and professional reasons. One common factor is flexibility, part-time roles allow individuals to balance work with other commitments such as education, caregiving, or personal interests. It can be particularly beneficial for parents managing childcare responsibilities, students seeking to fund their studies, or retirees who still wish to remain active in the workforce without the demands of full-time employment.
- 3.3 Economic considerations can also play a role. In uncertain job markets, part-time work can provide an income source while allowing individuals to explore multiple opportunities, freelance, or run a personal business. Moreover, organisations can benefit from hiring part-time staff by managing costs and staffing needs efficiently, creating a mutually beneficial arrangement.
- 3.4 The proportion of council employees working part time is broadly in line with the national picture and has been consistent over the last three years.

Year	Part time Employees
2023	23%
2024	22%
2025	22%

- 3.5 Both nationally and within the council's workforce more women work part time than men, 71% nationally and 88% at the council. Research from the [TUC](#) shows that women are three times as likely to work part time than men.
- 3.6 By policy the council is committed to the promotion of flexible working practices in order to realise accommodation efficiencies and to enable employees to balance their home and working lives.
- 3.7 The table below shows distribution of the part time workforce by service area.

Directorate	Service Area	Full time	Part time
DCASC	Safeguarding, Quality and Practice	47%	53%
DEGNS	Culture	50%	50%
DCASC	Business Support	55%	45%
DEGNS	Infrastructure, Economy and Capital Projects	60%	40%
DEGNS	REDA	63%	38%
DEGNS	Property & Asset Management	72%	28%
DoR	Policy, Change & Customer Services	73%	27%
DoR	Public Health and Wellbeing	76%	24%

DCASC	Operations	79%	21%
DoR	Human Resources & Organisational Development	82%	18%
DEGNS	Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services	83%	17%
DCASC	Commissioning, Transformation and Performance	84%	16%
DoR	Legal and Democratic Services	85%	15%
DoR	Finance	86%	14%
DoR	Communications	88%	13%
DCASC	Housing and Communities	89%	11%
DoR	Digital, Technology and Change	95%	5%
DEGNS	Environmental & Commercial Services	97%	3%

The top ten job roles with the highest number of part time employees are:

Job Role	Employees
Intermediate Care Assistant	40
Library Assistant	22
Cleaning Operative	17
Independent Living Assistant	9
Customer Fulfilment Advisor	8
Social Care Co-ordinator	7
Business Support Officer	7
Support Worker	6
Senior Occupational Therapist	6
Customer Fulfilment Centre Advisor	6

3.8 The table below shows distribution by ethnic group. In broad terms proportions are comparable between each group

Status	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Mixed	Not Known	Other Ethnic Groups	White	Overall
Full time	80%	80%	74%	83%	70%	77%	78%
Part time	20%	20%	26%	17%	30%	23%	22%

3.9 The table below shows distribution by whether the employee has disclosed that they consider themselves to have a disability. The same percentage of those who have declared a disability work part time as those that haven't.

Status	Yes	No	Not Known	Grand Total
Full time	76%	76%	83%	78%
Part time	24%	24%	17%	22%

3.10 The table below shows distribution by sex. Considerably more females work part time than men.

Status	Female	Male
Full time	61%	39%
Part time	88%	12%

3.11 The table below shows distribution by grade, please note that for simplicity the data reflects NJC and JNC contracts only, which account for the majority of employees. Higher proportions of part time employees are found in the lower grades.

Grade	Full time	Part time	Overall
RG2	2%	7%	3%

RG3	6%	22%	10%
RG4	27%	35%	29%
RG5	22%	12%	20%
RG6	11%	6%	10%
RG7	12%	9%	12%
RG8	8%	4%	7%
RG9	6%	3%	5%
RG10	2%	0%	2%
RSMD	1%	0%	1%
RSMC	1%	0%	1%
RSMB	0%	0%	0%
RSMA	1%	1%	1%
CDIR	0%	0%	0%

3.12 The table below shows distribution by length of service. Part time employees tend to have worked at the Council for longer.

Status	Full time	Part time	Overall
0-4 years	47%	30%	44%
5-9 Years	17%	17%	17%
10-14 Years	7%	11%	8%
15-19 Years	9%	14%	10%
20-30 Years	14%	21%	16%
31 Years+	5%	7%	5%

3.13 The table below shows distribution by age. Proportions of full or part time employees in most age ranges are broadly equal, with the exception those employees aged 60+ or those aged 29 or under.

Status	Full time	Part time	Overall
16-19	0%	0%	0%
20-24	3%	2%	3%
25-29	9%	4%	8%
30-34	12%	8%	11%
35-39	12%	13%	12%
40-44	14%	13%	13%
45-49	12%	12%	12%
50-54	13%	11%	12%
55-59	14%	13%	14%
60-64	10%	14%	11%
65+	3%	9%	4%

4 Summary

4.2 The Council's part-time workforce reflects both national employment trends and internal organisational priorities, with a steady proportion of employees choosing reduced hours over the past three years.

4.3 While flexibility remains a key driver for part-time work, particularly among women, the data highlights broader patterns regarding role distribution, length of service, and pay grades. The findings reinforce the importance of maintaining inclusive and adaptable employment policies that support staff in balancing work with personal responsibilities.

5 Contribution to Strategic Aims

5.1 Our staff are responsible for delivering high quality services to residents and it is important that every member of staff, including part time employees, feels able to

deliver their best work – offering flexible working opportunities, including options to work part time are important aspects of this. It is an important aspect of the 'Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future' theme within the Corporate Plan. Being able to align hours worked with business needs is also part of this strategic aim.

6 Environmental and Climate Implications

6.1 Not applicable.

7 Community Engagement

7.1 Not applicable.

8 Equality Implications

None

9 Other Relevant Considerations

9.1 None.

10 Legal Implications

10.1 None.

11 Financial Implications

11.1 Not applicable

12 Timetable for Implementation

12.1 Not applicable.

13 Background Papers

13.1 There are none.