

# The future of the Local Government Workforce

**Mo Baines,  
APSE Chief Executive**

## Painting the picture by numbers

- NHS, Education, Police and Fire, Local Government employ around **5.6M**
- Estimated that local government employs just over **2M** people.
- Local Government up by just 3,000 people (**0.1%**)
- Growth of **0.3%** in the NHS and **0.1%** in the Civil Service.
- But the 'Covid year' numbers suggest NHS employment grew by **3.5%** , the Civil Service by **3.9%** and local government growth just **0.2%**
- During the years of austerity, it is estimated that councils lost around **27%** of their spending power and around **25%** of the overall workforce.

## Impact ?

- Early retirement and redundancy
- Job freezes and internal back-filling of posts
- Redeployment measures
- Less opportunity for progression
- If we were a dating App we would get a massive swipe to the ....?



## The crisis in recruitment and retention

- 170,000 – 190,000 care workers, and Care workers vacancies running at between **17%** and **20%** - **including in Scotland**.
- 100,000 shortage for HGV driver jobs and over **50%** of APSE member councils report moderate or severe shortages in non-HGV driver roles
- Near to a quarter (**24.3%**) report severe shortages in building and construction services and **51%** report moderate shortages
- Over **66%** report moderate or severe shortages in Parks and Grounds Services
- **64%** Highways, near to **74%** in vehicle maintenance **65%** in catering and cleaning (Soft FM) services

## What issues in which services?

- HGV drivers impacting on Refuse Collection
- Uptick in demand for hospitality industry jobs is stripping out labour supply for public sector catering and cleaning
- Loss of revenue budgets, impact on planning for longer term in parks and environmental services has limited apprenticeships, replacing staff
- Decline of local authorities as apprentice providers in construction
- Finance, legal and executives – now competing against other public sector employers – not just private sector

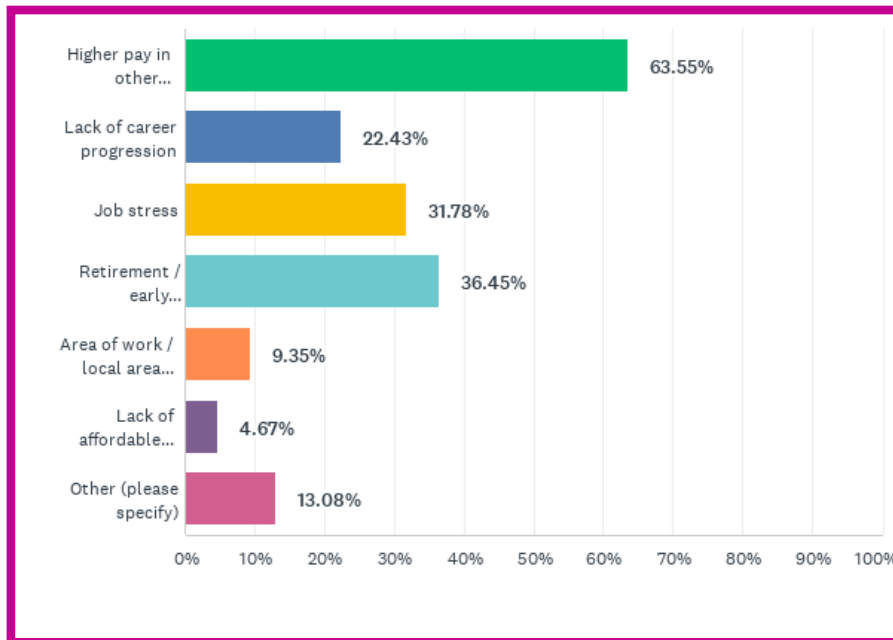
## A word on social care

- Capacity now a major issue of risk to local councils
- Loss of training capacity
- Impact on health care provision / NHS pressures will be exacerbated if we don't address social care
- And social care will continue to draw on resources from other services
- We still fail to integrate all other frontline services into the plans for social care (planning, public realm, refuse and recycling, housing, walking and cycling routes).....and yes even the impact of climate change.

*'We have normalised misery'*



# Pay, rewards, recruitment and retention



63.5% suggest pay the main issue for both recruitment and retention

36.4% suggest early retirement impacting on retention

31.7% Job stress – strong correlation to APSE findings during ‘Covid’ survey work

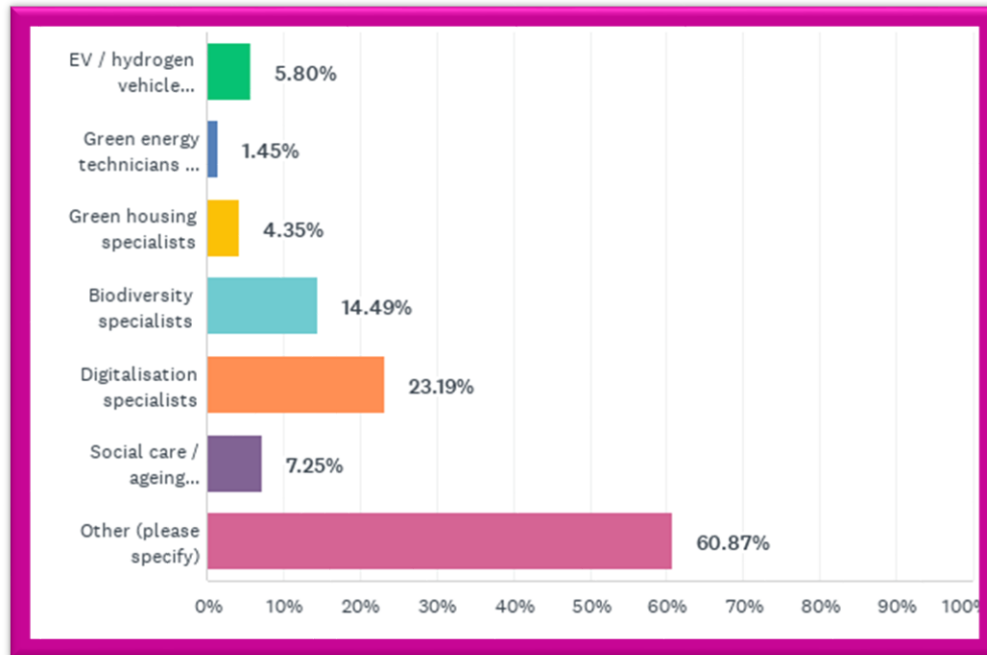
Competition for workers is not just between local councils but other public agencies and public services



## Not the same everywhere.....

- South / South East ..... Pressure on 'professionals' hard to recruit accountants, legal staff, chief executives, senior managers..
- London .... High demand jobs such as refuse drivers, and lots of flipping between councils.....interim demand appears to be higher
- Impact of Brexit uneven.....more pronounced in the economic hot-spots
- Scotland, Wales, North and Central areas... non HGV drivers, social care and competition with hospitality and retail sector for FM based jobs

# Green economy.....



# What needs to change to plan for the workforce of the future?

- Where are we now?
- Comprehensive assessment of future skills and workforce numbers?
- What do we need for the future? Skills in green technology and the interface with digital platforms
- Workforce planning that spans councils and local areas areas
- What does the future of work look like?



## Findings of the APSE Local Government Commission: Workforce

- The Commission calls for the creation of a **national linked system of pay and conditions across the public sector**, removing pay gaps between equivalent jobs in local government and other public services, in line with the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.
- The Commission calls for the establishment of **new skills and capability career pathways into local government, training and career development** for existing employees, and workforce planning to counter the ageing workforce.
- **The Commission recognises the particular urgency for career pathways in the environment and climate change** mitigation, digitalisation, and the care economy in the post-Covid recovery.

## Supporting local economies

- Having a workforce that reflects the communities that they seek to serve

*‘The Commission supports the introduction of a duty for the local government workforce to be representative of the communities it serves, with an annual reporting mechanism on progress’*

- Councils should look to the long-term impacts of their decisions and work with young people to ensure positive outcomes for current and future generations.
- The Public Sector Equality Duty?

## The Future Delivery Model?

*‘An integrated set of services directly, that are democratically accountable but flexible and adaptable to local people’s needs, should be the default option for local services where they are best able to provide high quality, effective and socially just outcomes for local communities and local economies’*



# **NEW MUNICIPALISM**

Delivering for local people and local economies

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