

## **Commons Executive Board**

### **Annual Report of HR Information: High Level Analysis 2017/18**

*Paper by the Head of HR Shared Services and Director of People  
For the meeting on 27 July 2018*

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 This paper provides the annual high-level analysis of key HR efficiency and effectiveness statistics for the financial year 2017/18.

#### **2. Action for the Board**

- 2.1 The Board are invited to take note of the composition of the workforce and recent HR trends. If any members of the Board would like to investigate any of these areas in more detail, please discuss this with your HR Business Partner in the first instance.

#### **3. Consultation**

- 3.1 This paper will be reviewed following any feedback from the Board and published on the intranet. It will be published on the external website in due course as part of the House's proactive publication scheme.

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1 This report provides a year on year comparison of the workforce and some longer-term trends. It relates to staff at the House of Commons including the Parliamentary Digital Service (PDS), unless stated otherwise.
- 4.2 Over the past year, we have also been providing HR data to the board monthly through the People Scorecard.
- 4.3 Diversity monitoring information is reported separately in the annual diversity monitoring report from the D&I team.

#### **5. Overall summary**

- 5.1 There has been an increase in headcount and FTE over the year across most teams, particularly in the A and B pay bands. The increased demands in Strategic Estates and R&R do not fully explain this increase. Turnover and recruitment activity have reduced.
- 5.2 Sickness absence, including the proportion of long term sickness absence has increased, and the number of employee relations cases has increased. This partly reflects the changes in the workforce that resulted in the creation of the Parliamentary Security Department.
- 5.3 There has also been an increase in wellbeing appointments providing support for mental health issues, including in response to the terrorist attack in March

2017. However, improved reporting using the new COHORT system makes comparisons in this area with previous years difficult.

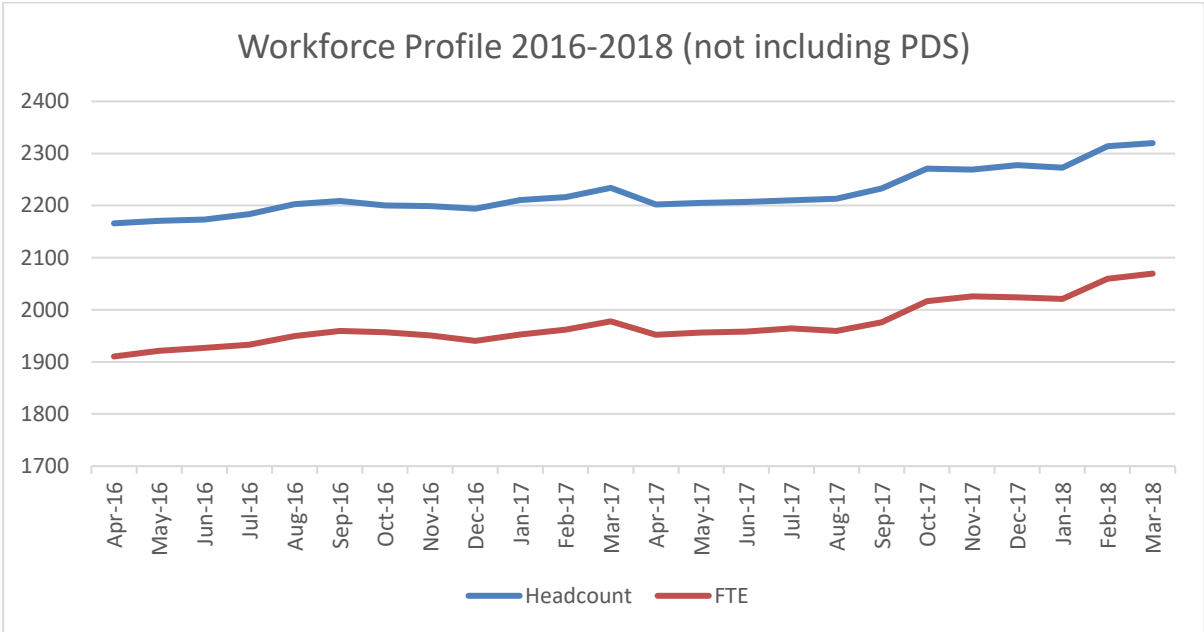
## 6. Size of the workforce

### *Changes in FTE by team*

- 6.1 There has been an overall increase in FTE across almost all teams and most noticeable in Chamber and Committees (25.2), Parliamentary Security (24.6) and Strategic Estates (19.0). This represents an increase in FTE of 91.5 excluding PDS, which equates to an 118 increase in headcount.
- 6.2 It should also be noted that Strategic Estates including the Restoration & Renewal Programme team also includes a number of interims not included in these figures. However, the rapid expansion in Strategic Estates is not primarily responsible for the increases in the workforce detailed here.

| <b>FTE by Team</b>                | <b>31<br/>March<br/>2017</b> | <b>31<br/>March<br/>2018</b> | <b>Variance<br/>2017/8</b> |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Chamber and Committees            | 441.0                        | 466.2                        | 25.2                       |
| Communications                    | 15.0                         | 14.9                         | -0.1                       |
| Corporate Services                | 138.0                        | 152.6                        | 14.6                       |
| Governance Office                 | 38.2                         | 39.2                         | 1.0                        |
| In-House Services                 | 519.8                        | 522.1                        | 2.3                        |
| Parliamentary Security Department | 369.1                        | 393.7                        | 24.6                       |
| Participation                     | 167.4                        | 167.5                        | 0.1                        |
| Research and Information          | 181.9                        | 188.8                        | 6.89                       |
| Speaker's Office                  | 8.3                          | 6.5                          | -1.8                       |
| Strategic Estates                 | 98.99                        | 118.0                        | 19.0                       |
|                                   | <b>1978.0</b>                | <b>2069.5</b>                | <b>91.5</b>                |
| Parliamentary Digital Service     | 362.2                        | 419.2                        | 57.0                       |

6.3 CEB may wish to consider whether they have a view about the overall size of the House Service. This has been a continuing trend which was highlighted for further monitoring in last year’s report.



**Vacancy rates**

6.4 Since last year we have worked with Business Managers Directors to implement complement reporting. The result of this work is that we are now able to report on vacancy rates. The overall position as at 31 March 2018 is depicted below. This provides a baseline for future reporting which will be able to support more accurate staff costs budgeting.

| Teams                    | Headcount   | Vacant positions | Authorised complement 2018 | Vacancy rate |
|--------------------------|-------------|------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| Chamber and Committees   | 493         | 41               | 534                        | 7.7%         |
| Communications           | 15          | 5                | 20                         | 25.0%        |
| Corporate Services       | 164         | 24               | 188                        | 12.8%        |
| Governance Office        | 41          | 3                | 44                         | 6.8%         |
| In House Services        | 586         | 67               | 653                        | 10.3%        |
| Parliamentary Security   | 406         | 43               | 449                        | 9.6%         |
| Participation            | 276         | 51               | 327                        | 15.6%        |
| Research and Information | 211         | 16               | 227                        | 7.0%         |
| Speaker's Office         | 9           | 0                | 9                          | 0.0%         |
| Strategic Estates        | 119         | 47               | 166                        | 28.3%        |
|                          | <b>2320</b> | <b>297</b>       | <b>2617</b>                | <b>11.3%</b> |
| PDS                      | 432         | 104              | 536                        | 19.4%        |

6.5 The proportion of staff recorded on HAIS as having flexible working patterns – i.e. part-time and compressed hours – has decrease from to 22.3% to 19.3%. The reason is a reduction of part-time workers despite the increase in headcount, 468 employees in 2017 compared with 405 employees in 2018.

When staff on guaranteed minimum hours contracts are included the proportion of those working flexibly rises to 23.2%. Flexible working remains high on the agenda to achieve a more diverse workforce.

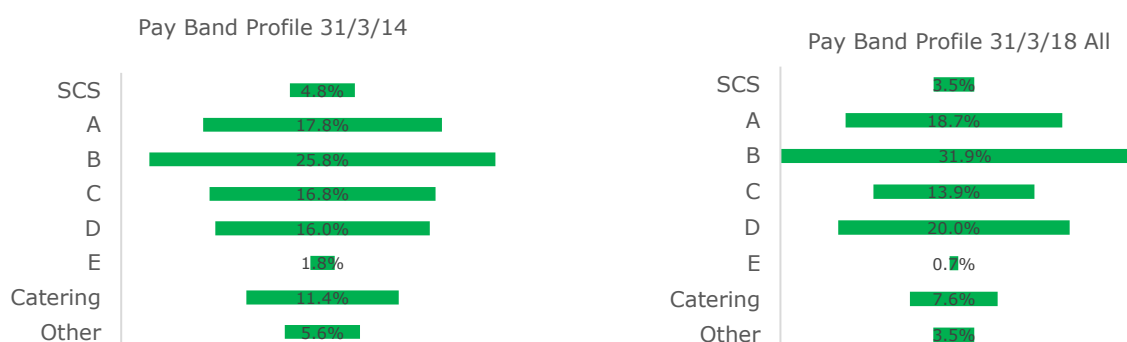
## 7. Changes in workforce distribution

### *Changes in pay band distribution (FTE)*

7.1 There has been a notable increase in FTE occurred at pay bands A and B, in particular the pay band B with an increase of 31.9%. These increases suggest that the total increase in FTE was predominantly filled by pay band A and B roles. Increases in the “feeder grades” to SCS may assist in the longer-term in supporting the House’s commitment to greater diversity in senior posts.

| Pay Band | March 2017    | March 2018    | Change FTE 2017/18 | % of total |
|----------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|------------|
| SCS      | 85.5          | 87.3          | 1.8                | 3.5%       |
| A        | 417.6         | 466.4         | 48.7               | 18.7%      |
| B        | 682.5         | 794.8         | 112.2              | 31.9%      |
| C        | 317.3         | 346.6         | 29.4               | 13.9%      |
| D        | 281.0         | 498.4         | 217.4              | 20.0%      |
| E        | 22.4          | 18.5          | -3.9               | 0.7%       |
| Catering | 182.3         | 188.6         | 6.3                | 7.6%       |
| Other    | 351.4         | 88.2          | -263.1             | 3.5%       |
|          | <b>2340.1</b> | <b>2488.8</b> | <b>148.7</b>       | 100.0%     |

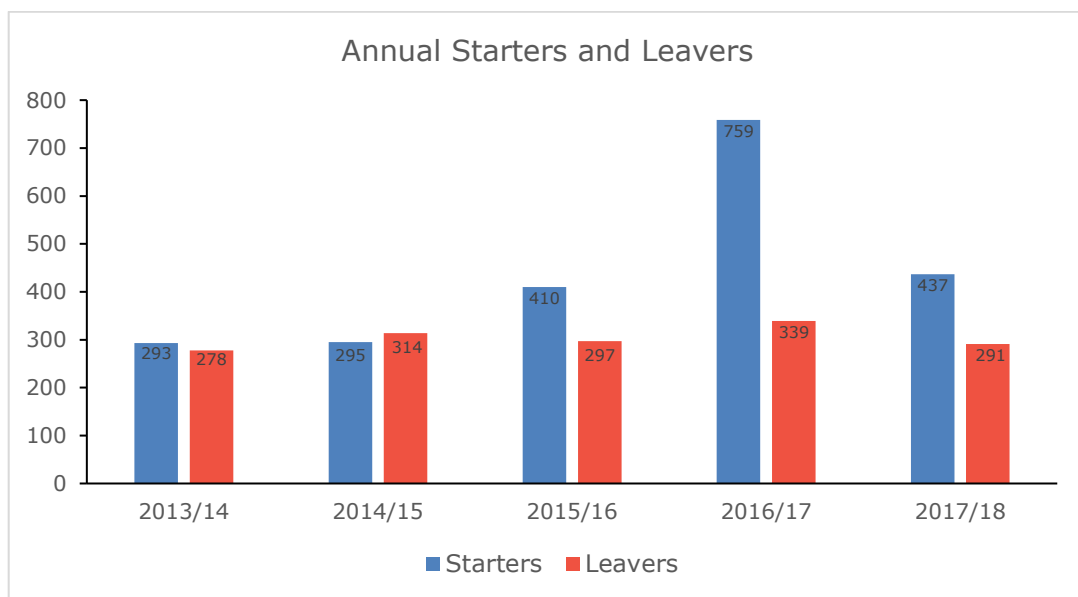
7.2 As was the case last year, this annual report provides an opportunity to see how the pay band distribution has developed over a five year time frame, which is demonstrated in the charts below.



7.3 The significant increase in the SCS pay bands reported last year has not continued, and other changes means that proportion of SCS has reduced overall since 2014, partly due to the increase in headcount. The increase in the higher pay bands is a continuing trend, with pay bands SCS, A and B now represent 54.2% of the FTE workforce, compared to 48.4% in March 2014.

## 8. Starters, leavers and internal transfers

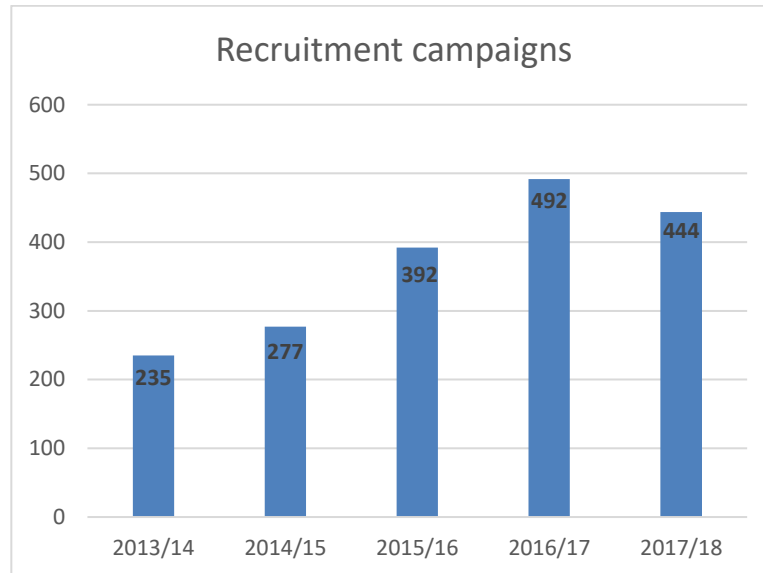
- 8.1 Overall, turnover, including PDS, has been reducing over the past three years to 11.9% in March 2018. However, there were no voluntary exit schemes in 2017/18, and unplanned turnover (also excluding the expiry of fixed term contracts and secondments) increased slightly to 9.7% from 9.2% in March 2017.
- 8.2 Not surprisingly given the increase in headcount, the number of new starters at the House has also increased compared to recent years, as demonstrated in the chart below.



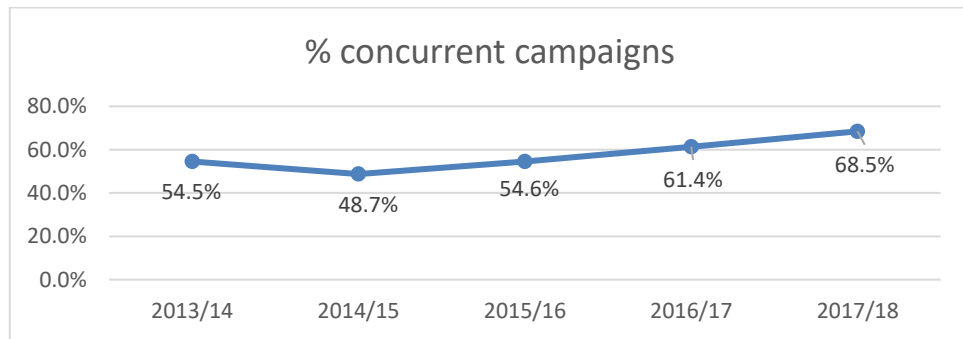
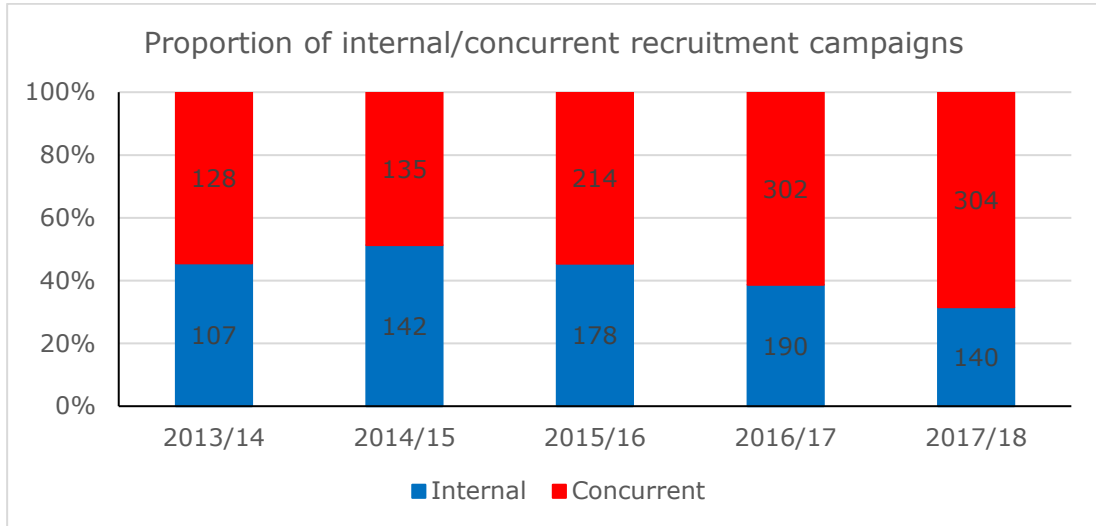
- 8.3 An on-line exit survey took place in 2017/8 and 22% of leavers completed the survey. The single most cited reason for leaving was career path change (20.31%) followed by professional development (18.75%). Promotion, end of Fixed Term Contract, management and work-life balance all had the same response rate at 7.81%.
- 8.4 23.4% were dissatisfied with career development opportunities and 5% of respondents were dissatisfied with the efficiency of our processes. Both of these are areas where further work has been undertaken following the 2017 staff survey and the People Programme and should be monitored further.
- 8.5 In 2016/17 more than 16% of leavers that completed the survey listed work-life-balance as a reason for leaving, therefore this has more than halved for 2017/18 (7.81%). Although this is a relatively small sample, this reflects the increasing move towards more flexible and mobile ways of working.
- 8.6 A further analysis of the leavers data indicates that 197 leavers for 2017/18 year had a permanent position (67.7% of leavers compared to 88.4% of the workforce overall). Out of those 20.3% left within their first year of employment and a further 25.4% left within their 2<sup>nd</sup> year of employment. More work is needed to understand these trends better, alongside engagement figures from the staff survey.

## **Recruitment Campaigns**

- 8.7 The reports for the past three years have commented on an increase in recruitment. This year there has been a reduction of 48 recruitment campaigns over the course of the year when compared to 2016/17.



- 8.8 The volume of concurrent recruitment campaigns has had a steady increase (%) in the last three years. The higher proportion of concurrent campaigns this year continues to be expected given the increased volume of recruitment undertaken alongside the increase in headcount seen over the year and the introduction of an increasing number of specialist roles.
- 8.9 The number of internal-only campaigns accounts for the majority of the reduction in recruitment campaigns this year. This remains a source of friction with the Trade Union Side but reflects the commitment in the Vision for People to 'welcoming people from outside'.
- 8.10 This approach is echoed in an increasing understanding of talent management as aiming to enable internal candidates to compete successfully in concurrent campaigns, for example, in the Diversifying Senior Leadership work. Making recruiting managers aware that they are able to hold a concurrent campaign even if they know of one internal person who they think could the job also helps to combat wider unconscious bias.



**Transfers**

8.11 We were not able to report meaningfully on number of transfers between teams last year because of the Director General Review. We are now presenting the figure for 2017/18.

| YTD           | Transfer to |           |          |      |     |    |     |                  |     |      |      |       |
|---------------|-------------|-----------|----------|------|-----|----|-----|------------------|-----|------|------|-------|
|               | CCT         | STRAT-EST | CORP-SER | DHRC | DIS | GO | PSD | Speaker's Office | PDS | COMs | I-HS | TOTAL |
| Transfer from | CCT         |           |          |      |     |    |     |                  |     |      |      | 5     |
|               | STRAT-EST   |           |          |      |     |    |     |                  |     |      |      |       |
|               | CORP-SER    |           |          |      |     |    |     |                  |     |      |      | 9     |
|               | R&I         |           |          |      |     |    |     |                  |     |      |      | 5     |
|               | PAR         |           |          |      |     |    |     |                  |     |      |      | 12    |
|               | GO          |           |          |      |     |    |     |                  |     |      |      | 8     |
|               | SEC         |           |          |      |     |    |     |                  |     |      |      |       |
|               | Speaker's   |           |          |      |     |    |     |                  |     |      |      |       |
|               | PDS         |           |          |      |     |    |     |                  |     |      |      |       |
|               | COMs        |           |          |      |     |    |     |                  |     |      |      |       |
|               | I-HS        |           |          |      |     |    |     |                  |     |      |      |       |
|               | TOTAL       | 10        |          | 6    | 6   |    | 8   | 6                |     |      |      | 46    |

**9. Sickness Absence and Occupational Health Referrals**

**Short and long-term sickness levels (all staff)**

|   | <b>March<br/>2014</b> | <b>March<br/>2015</b> | <b>March<br/>2016</b> | <b>March<br/>2017</b> | <b>March<br/>2018</b> |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Average working days lost per person        | 5.4                   | 5.7                   | 5.2                   | 6.1                   | 6.6                   |
| % of long term sickness (28+ calendar days) | 52.9%                 | 49.5%                 | 49.9%                 | 48.8%                 | 56.7%                 |

- 9.1 The number of working days lost to sickness absence has increased by 0.5 days per person. This includes a higher level of absence in the Parliamentary Security Department and In-House Services compared to other areas. To some extent higher absence levels can be expected from areas with a higher proportion of manual roles, where individuals are more likely to be unable to work as a result of sickness and are less able to work from home.
- 9.2 Further work is needed to better understand the increase in sickness absence, although a notable proportion of this relates to an increase in longer term sickness absence. The increase in long term sickness absence is linked to an increase in applications for ill health retirement, where the usual including a period during the transition to a new third-party supplier when the Civil Service suspended the agreed timeframes for responding to applications.

### ***Sickness Absence Reasons***

- 9.3 Minor illnesses, i.e. cold/flu and stomach disorders, continue to be by far the most commonly cited reasons for sickness absence, accounting for 47% of all absences recorded in 2016/17. However, these absences are generally short-lived and accounted for only 21% of working days lost due to sickness absence. In contrast, only 5.7% of absences were recorded as being due to "depression" but account for over 18% of working days lost.
- 9.4 Mental health continues to be the predominant reason for referral to the Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service, partly as an absence of any length connected to work-related stress is an automatic reason for a management referral. There has been a good improvement on recording resulting from PHWS using the COHORT IT system, which means that a comparison between the 2017 and 2018 figures is limited.

### ***Occupational Health Referrals***

- 9.5 There has been a significant increase on the number of employees' appointments with PHWS. PHWS' advice is most frequently sought for staff with an existing health condition, seeking some form of intervention or review of their work. The table below shows the main reason for health referrals.



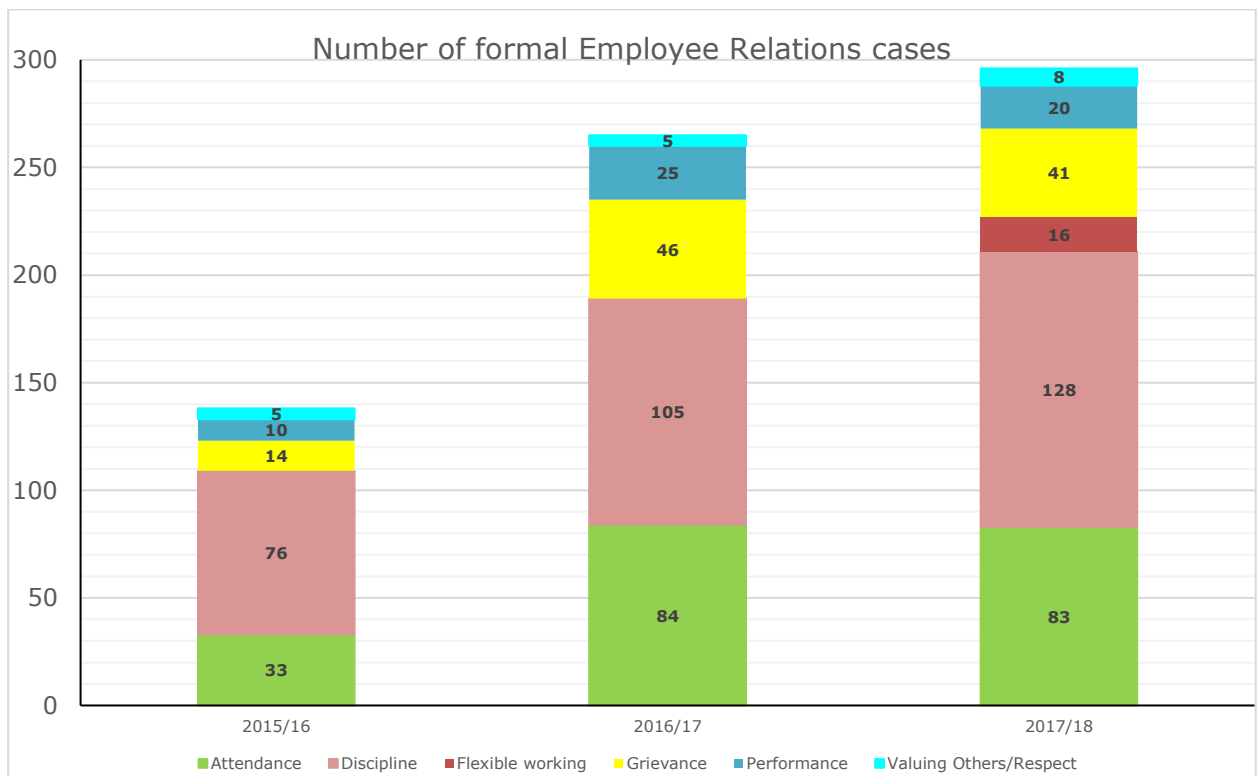
9.6

| Referral Type             | Number of Appointments 2017 | Number of Appointments 2018 |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Existing Health Condition | 160                         | 720                         |
| Musculoskeletal           | 66                          | 281                         |
| Mental Health             | 511                         | 1146                        |
| Rehab and phased returns  | 138                         | 201                         |
| <b>Totals</b>             | <b>875</b>                  | <b>2348</b>                 |

9.7 The increase on number of appointments is partly due to the increase in presenting cases from Parliamentary Security mainly associates with musculoskeletal and mental health issues. There was a significant increase in mental health cases following the terrorist incident when staff were encouraged to self-refer as well as through management referrals.

## 10. Management and Leadership

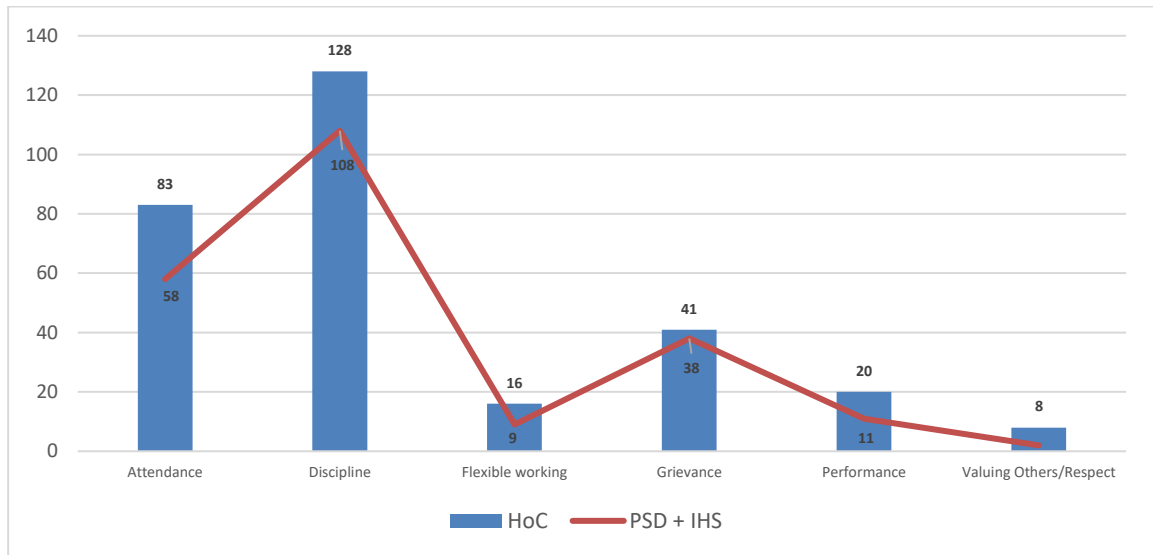
10.1 There has been a proportional increase on the number of employee relations cases managed by the HR Advice Services (12% since March 2017 compared to a 4.5% increase in headcount).



10.2 The number of discipline during 2017/18 increased by 22%, 105 cases in 2016/17 compared to 128 cases in 2017/18. There has been also a 60% increase on the number of Valuing Others and Respect cases with 5 cases 2016/17 and 8 cases 2017/18, although the numbers remain small compared

to the experiences of bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct and discrimination reported in the 2018 staff survey.

10.3 The total number of cases for both In-House Services and Parliamentary Security Department represents 76.4% of the total casework for the year and almost all grievances are in these areas. A high proportion of cases can be expected in areas with high levels of operational roles, but further work is also underway with PSD to understand these issues further.



## 11. Learning and Development

11.1 The delivery of core L&D classroom sessions has increased slightly compared to 2016/17, particularly in areas associated with the introduction of a coaching approach to people development (management and leadership and professional and personal development). There was also an increase in the average number of delegates at each event, from 12 to 14 per session.

| Core L&D catalogue           | 2016/17        |                        | 2017/18        |                        |
|------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
|                              | No of Sessions | Individual Completions | No of Sessions | Individual Completions |
| Diversity & Inclusion        | 51             | 631                    | 55             | 789                    |
| Health & Safety              | 52             | 843                    | 42             | 750                    |
| Leadership & Management      | 36             | 284                    | 65             | 775                    |
| Parliamentary Kn. & Skills   | 53             | 1037                   | 51             | 1228                   |
| Prof. & Personal Development | 39             | 287                    | 43             | 416                    |
| Programme & Project Mgmt     | 32             | 262                    | 39             | 400                    |
| Technical & Digital Skills   | 44             | 425                    | 46             | 477                    |
| <b>Totals</b>                | <b>307</b>     | <b>3769</b>            | <b>341</b>     | <b>4835</b>            |

- 11.2 The Learning & Development team also provide a range of training events for Members' staff based in Westminster and in regional centres around the UK serving staff based in constituency offices. This illustrates the increasing services delivered to Members and their staff by Corporate Services, a trend which is expected to continue in and to expand the areas reported on for 2018/19.

| REGIONS   | 2017           |                 | 2018           |                 |
|---|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
|   | Total Sessions | Total Attendees | Total Sessions | Total Attendees |
| London  | 36             | 347             | 68             | 683             |
| South West (Bristol)                            | 1              | 8               | 1              | 12              |
| Yorkshire and Humber (Leeds/Sheffield)          | 3              | 34              | 3              | 27              |
| North West (Manchester/Liverpool)               | 14             | 124             | 10             | 51              |
| North East (Newcastle)                          | 8              | 75              |                |                 |
| Wales (Cardiff)                                 | 4              | 41              | 2              | 24              |
| West Midlands (Birmingham)                      | 3              | 40              |                |                 |
| Scotland (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Perth & Stirling) | 12             | 143             | 12             | 80              |
| Northern Ireland (Belfast)                      | 5              | 45              |                |                 |
| <b>Total</b>                                    | <b>86</b>      | <b>857</b>      | <b>96</b>      | <b>877</b>      |

- 11.3 We would like to acknowledge the contribution of a number of individuals who contributed to the information and analysis contained in this report. These include the HR Systems Analyst, Workforce Information Officer, the Head of the HR Advisory Service, the Senior L&D Coordinator and the Head of the Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service.

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**Corporate Services**  
**24 July 2018**