

**Corporate Workforce Equality & Diversity  
Annual Report 2019**

Prepared by:  
People Management

<b>Contents:</b>	<b>Page</b>
Introduction	3
Context	4
General Workforce Information	7
Equalities Data by:	
Sex/Gender	9
Age	10
Race	11
Disability	11
Pregnancy & Maternity	11
Gender Reassignment	12
Religion or Belief	12
Sexual Orientation	14
Marriage & Civil Partnership	14
Carers Information	15
Recruitment	17
Leavers	21
Conclusion	21

## Section 1 – Introduction

From 5<sup>th</sup> April 2011, the public sector Equality Duty, at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, has required public bodies to consider all individuals when carrying out our day to day work, in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to our own employees.

The council has employment policies, procedures and initiatives in place which support the **3 aims of the Equality Duty**, which are to:

- 1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- 2) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 3) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Our Corporate Workforce Equality and Diversity Report forms part of the equality information we collect, analyse and publish to comply with the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty to: eliminate discrimination and harassment, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups. The information in this report helps us to ensure equality considerations are embedded in our employment related policies, practices and decision-making. The report is informed by collecting employee equality information as it helps us to monitor the equality profile of our employees. Analysis of the information also helps us see whether we are achieving our commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all staff. Doing this helps us to better understand our employees, ensure they are supported, and create a better workplace. The majority of the information included in this report has been taken from the council's SAP HCM HR/Payroll system. The information collected is confidential and stored securely. It would never be used in a way that could identify individuals. Collecting, monitoring and reporting the information is in line with the Council's Equality Scheme and it helps us to meet our obligation under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

During the next year the Council will introduce a phased roll-out of Employee Self Service to employees. This will enable employees to view and update some of their own information which is held on the council SAP HCM HR/Payroll system. This will hopefully improve the gaps in our information which are “not known”.

This workforce diversity report is aligned to our Equality Scheme and helps to inform our Equality Objective activity. Central to the design of our Equality Scheme is the belief that by addressing inequalities and helping to remove barriers to opportunities, individuals will flourish and be the best they can be. This must start in our workplaces in order for it to positively impact on the services we provide and the communities we serve. Through improved data collection and analysis, we can use our workforce diversity monitoring to understand difference in our workplaces and in turn to ensure everyone can achieve their full potential.

The council is an equal opportunities employer and is determined to ensure that no applicant or employee receives unfavourable treatment or is disadvantaged in any way on the grounds of, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or pregnancy and maternity. We do not tolerate discrimination, bullying or harassment. All the council's employment policies are interpreted and applied in line with our commitment to equality and diversity.

In the same way that we recognise and value the diversity of people living in the city, we also understand the benefits that having a diverse workforce can bring, and we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all employees. We understand that having a workforce with a wider range of skills, backgrounds, ages, experiences and attitudes means we will have an organisation that is more responsive to our community, more adaptable to change and more flexible. As part of this commitment, we collect and publish equality information on our workforce, and use this as part of our workforce planning process, and to inform our equality objectives. This helps us to better understand our staff, identify any issues, and take action where required, in order to ensure that our employees are supported, and to create a better workplace.

This report shows our equality monitoring information as at 31 March 2019. Data period is 1 April 2018 - 31 March 2019.

It provides a profile of the council's workforce, and sets out information by the 9 'protected characteristics' set out in the Equality Act 2010: age, race, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership; as well as by caring responsibilities.

Please note the following when interpreting the data presented in this report:

- Information is published in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation's and Data Protection Act 2018 and does not identify individuals
- Information about groups of fewer than 10 employees is not published, to protect anonymity.

## **Context**

The Corporate Workforce Diversity Report is aligned with and complimented by a range of work corporately.

- **Equality Scheme**  
This sets out what the council is doing to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people. The Equality Scheme goes beyond the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 and includes consideration of wider equality issues such as income and caring responsibilities. The Equality Scheme includes on how the council promote equality in employment and includes planned workforce activity to progress our equality objective.

- Equality Objective and Planned actions  
The council's equality objective is published in the [Equality Scheme](#). The objective for 2017-21 is to "Maximise the collection and use of quality data and intelligence to support effective equality policy and practice". This equality objective has associated activity regarding increasing employee monitoring declaration rates, improving understanding of equality in employment and determining perceptions of fairness in the workplace. Each year we review the progress against our objective and publish this on our website.

In addition to this we publish our Pay Policy Statement to support the remuneration of the workforce in a fair and transparent way, and Gender Pay Gap reporting to comply with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

That data, in conjunction with the analysis in this report informs our workforce planning and informs our equality objectives.

- Pay Policy Statement  
The council's [Pay Policy Statement](#) is aimed at supporting the remuneration of the workforce in a fair and transparent way. It is subject to annual review and approved by full Council for each financial year. It sets out the methods by which salaries of all employees are determined, the detail and level of remuneration of the council's most senior staff, the remuneration of the lowest paid employees, and the relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and of employees who are not Chief Officers. The Pay Policy Statement reinforces our commitment to be an equal opportunity employer, and forms part of our policies to promote equality in pay practices. As such it links directly with the Equality Scheme. By ensuring transparency of senior pay and the relationship with pay of other employees, it helps to ensure a fair approach which meets our equality objectives.
- Equal pay audits of the workforce  
The Council supports the principle of equal pay for work of equal value and recognises that we should operate a pay system that is based on objective criteria. As part of our commitment to putting equal pay principles into practice, we carry out regular monitoring of the impact of our pay practices. This enables us to monitor the effect of our HR practices and activities to see if they are helping to narrow pay differences, and to check that any gaps found are justifiable and not due to discriminatory pay practices, to eliminate bias and ensure fairness in pay. During 2016 the council implemented a wide-ranging pay review via a Workforce Transformation Project, which reviewed and set the relative pay levels for every post in the council. That exercise was the subject of a very detailed equality impact assessment when it was implemented, which demonstrated how the review had reduced pay gaps.

- **Gender Pay Gap**  
The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 introduce new requirements for organisations with more than 250 employees to publish annually certain, specific information about the pay of their male and female employees. The report is available [here](#)
- **Apprenticeships**  
The council continues to be active in its promotion of apprenticeships. The Council directly employed 8 apprentices (7 recruited as Apprentices and 1 existing employee accessing an apprenticeship through the Apprenticeship LEVY) during the period of this report.
- **Work placements**  
72 people were accommodated on work experience in the period including a small number of volunteering and internships.
- **Health & Wellbeing Programme**  
The council continues to proactively roll out its Health & Wellbeing programme, promoting and enabling healthy living within the council and within the City. The Council continues to support the North East Better Health at Work Award. This regional award recognises employers who assist their employees in improving their health and wellbeing.

We are now at the Maintaining Excellence level of the BHAWA and, through engagement work, have had over 4,800 attendances to SCC sessions and over 4,100 to sessions with over 50 external workplaces across the City.

There are a number of free activity sessions available across the City; details can be obtained from the Employee Wellness Programme. In addition to this the Employee Wellness Programme works closely with HR&OD colleagues to help identify sickness patterns and trends within teams and devise interventions to help reduce sickness absence. Work can be completed generically with teams or tailored specifically for individuals. This assistance is available to both those employees who are at work but may be having health issues and also those employees who are absent from work to aid an earlier return.

- **Time to Change**  
The council have become a Time to Change Employer, meaning there is a commitment to change the way mental health is thought about and there is a commitment to supporting employees who experience mental health problems. The Time to Change action plan compliments existing workplace support and extends activity to ensure there is visible leadership on the issue.

- **Occupational Health Service**  
The Council's Occupational Health Service provides a comprehensive range of proactive services to support and maintain the health, safety and welfare of employees in the workplace.

The functions of the Occupational Health Service include:

- attendance management
  - health surveillance
  - health screening
  - health promotion
  - immunisation
  - counselling
  - physiotherapy
- **Listening to Our Employees**  
Our Supporting Equality Network (an employee network) has been running in its current form since 2014. We continually work to build membership of the group who are shape policy and practice within the organisation. Some of our members have undergone training to enable them to be an Equality Adviser contact for other employees with equality concerns.

The council take any equality concerns seriously and address these through the appropriate channels. We would usually become aware of these through direct approaches from employees or trade union representatives, through our joint consultation arrangements and groups, or through practical implementation of our relevant policies.

### **General Workforce Information**

The workforce data and findings have been separated into all the protected characteristics. There are additional sections regarding recruitment and leavers.

- **People in post**  
On 31 March 2019, Sunderland City Council had a total workforce of **4,475** of whom **2793 (62.41%)** are employed centrally, and **1682 (37.59%)** are employed directly by maintained schools, including **23** who have jobs across both areas (schools and 'non schools'). There continues to be a reduction on the headcount figures compared to previous years. Reductions in government funding, the council's on-going transformation agenda, school to academy conversions, the outsourcing of some services into alternative service delivery models and the need for efficiency savings have all led to a reduction in the council's workforce.
- **Employees/Jobholders:**  
The above headcount figure relates to 4,921 Jobholders. The number of jobs (and contracts) is higher than the headcount figure as some employees have more than one job with the council.

**391** employees, or **8.74%** of the workforce, had more than one job within the council or one of its schools.

- **Part time working**

**1,939** employees (43.33 %) work on a part-time basis, (i.e. less than a standard 37 hours working week), and 2,536 (**56.67 %**) work full-time.

The incidence of part-time working across the organisational structure shows a predominance of part-time working in lower paid roles, and this pattern is similar across the UK.

- **Permanent Variable Hours (PVH) Working**

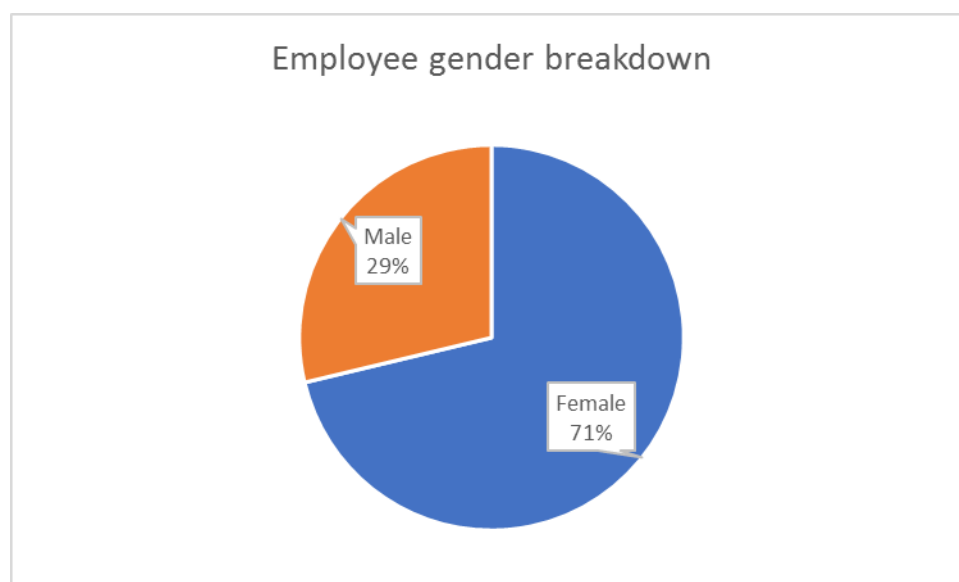
A Permanent Variable Hours contract (PVH) provides the contract holder with the same employment rights and terms and conditions of employment as all Council employees including annual leave and sick pay.

However, a PVH contract does not stipulate a set number of contracted working hours per week, month or year and enables the Council to have a flexible workforce available to meet temporary or changeable staffing requirements.

The Council supports the establishment of posts with contracted hours of work wherever possible. 154 employees work on a PVH basis.

### **Sex/gender**

Overall, female employees make up 71.26% of Sunderland City Council staff, which has remained very similar to last year. The population of Sunderland is 275,506 and 51.38% of residents are female.





Gender	SCC Workforce	Sunderland Population
Female	71.26%	51.38%
Male	28.74%	48.62%
<b>Grand Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%

The majority of employees working part time are female.

Gender	Full-time	Part-time
Female	57.45%	89.32%
Male	42.55%	10.68%
<b>Grand Total</b>	100.00%	100.00%

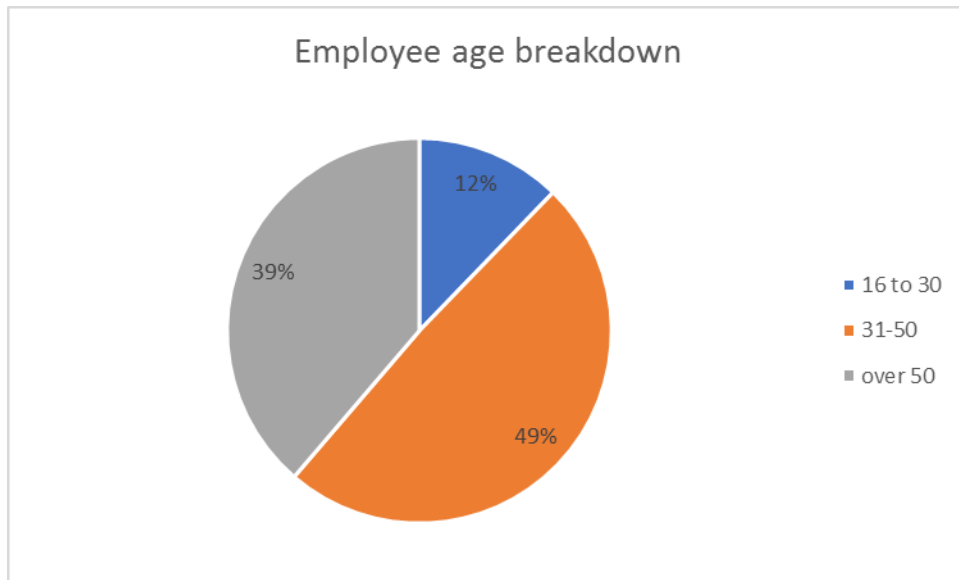
The council has a range of family-friendly policies and flexible working arrangements, which contribute to making the council an attractive place to work. The council's gender profile suggests that such arrangements are a contributory factor in attracting women in particular to work for the council. It is also the case the many of the occupations in the council's workforce are typically made up of women in the UK, for example school support staff roles.

Although pay differentials are not based on gender, the impact of part-time working can have a major influence on the gender pay gap. **89.3%** of all part time roles in the council work are occupied by women, compared to **10.7%** by men.

There are a number of contributory factors involved (sociological, cultural or attitudinal, historical and economic). An obvious example is that women have traditionally been, and continue to be, the primary carers (both childcare, and caring for family/friends). Their working patterns, for example working term-time only, often reflect this. We will continue to look at our practices around part-time and flexible working, in line with our employment policies, to ensure that they are fair.

## Age

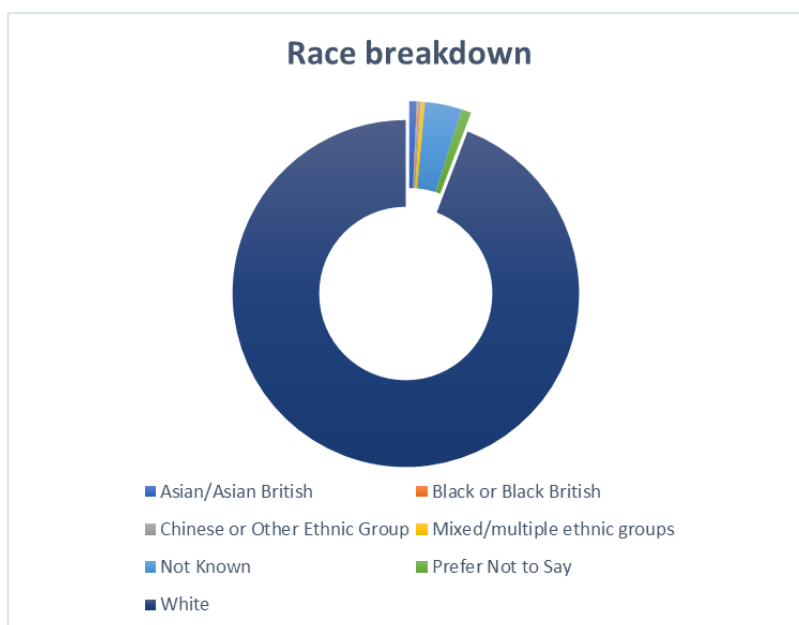
The age range profile of the council's workforce shows the biggest age band group is the **41-60** years group, with nearly **57.4%** of employees within this age bracket.



Age Range	SCC Workforce	Sunderland Population
16 to 30	12.25%	23.99%
31-50	49.05%	32.73%
over 50	38.70%	43.78%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%

## Race

The proportion of workers from a BAME background has not changed significantly from last year.



## **Disability**

The council had **124** employees (2.77%) declare themselves disabled. 25.6% of people in Sunderland aged 16-64 declare themselves disabled (Information sourced from the ONS Annual Population Survey, latest figures at December 2012). This suggests that there is either some under-representation of disabled employees in comparison to the local community, and/or under-reporting.

## **Pregnancy & Maternity**

A snapshot figure at the end of March 2019 shows **58** employees on maternity leave.

**143** employees were on maternity leave between April 2018 and March 2019. **99.3%** of employees whose maternity leave finished in this 12-month period returned to work, which is a significantly high proportion and is a positive reflection of the council's employment policies to support working parents, e.g. flexible working options.

120 employees were recorded as participants in the Childcare Voucher Scheme at the end of March 2019. This scheme provides an easy way for working parents to save on the cost of childcare, through the exchange of a portion of their salary into vouchers, to pay for registered and approved childcare, thereby making savings on tax and national insurance. This directly helps to encourage parents with young children back to work.

Our staff census asked employees to advise whether they have parental responsibility for a child under the age of 18. The information provided helps us to understand our workforce profile, and to ensure that our policies and practices best support employees with childcare responsibilities. That census showed that **13.72%** of the Council's workforce had parental responsibility for a child under the age of 18, although the number is likely to be a lot higher, as information is currently not known for this category for some of the workforce.

## **Gender Reassignment**

In 2015 a policy was developed, in consultation with a transgender employee and the employee network, and introduced in order to support Trans, Non-binary and Transitioning Employees. It has since been reviewed based on guidance from Stonewall. Information on employees who are or have transitioned is still not widely held. Of course, employees have the opportunity not to disclose information on an equality aspect if they so wish.

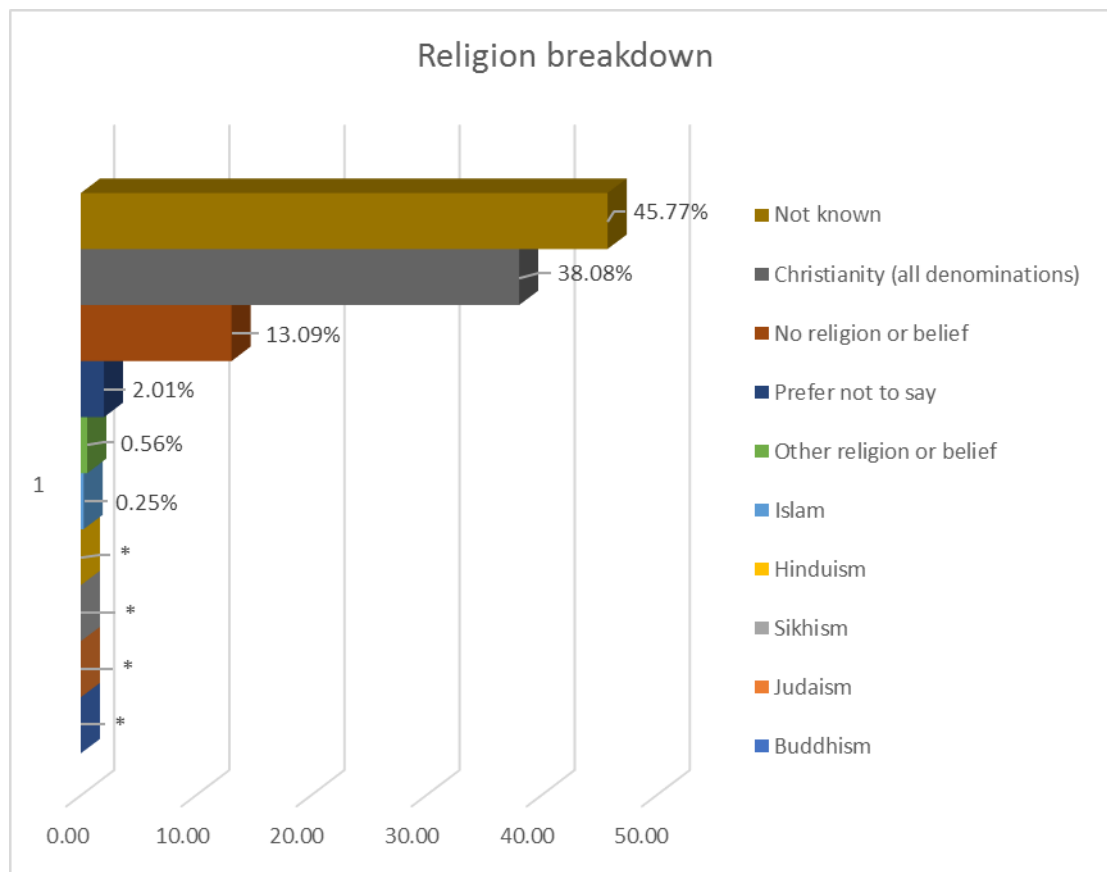
This data has not been included in this report because this could lead to identification of individuals.

## **Religion or Belief**

Our employees provided information, on a voluntary basis, on their religion or belief, to provide a baseline of employee information to help to gain a better understanding of equalities across the council and

inform our policies and practices where they impact on religion or belief. As mentioned, employees can choose not to disclose information on an equality aspect if they so wish.

39.13% of employees have declared their religion or belief and a further 2.01% declare “prefer not to say.”



Religion	SCC Workforce	Sunderland Population
Buddhism	*	0.20%
Hinduism	*	0.20%
Judaism	*	0.00%*
Sikhism	*	0.30%
Islam	0.25%	1.30%
Other religion or belief	0.56%	0.20%
Prefer not to say	2.01%	5.6%
No religion or belief	13.09%	21.90%
Christianity (all denominations)	38.08%	70.30%
Not known	45.77%	0.00%
Grand Total	100%	100%

The Council’s employment policies and procedures in place for supporting employees in respect of religion or belief include for example:

- ❖ Specific flexibility available in our Leave of Absence Policy for religious or cultural observance.
- ❖ The allocation of faith rooms for use during lunch break periods.
- ❖ “Religion/belief” as a named category on our Harassment Formal Complaints Form, which asks for the nature of harassment complaints.
- ❖ The Council has established an Equality Champion to lead on Religion and Belief issues.

### **Sexual Orientation**

Information on the percentage of our employees who are Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual (LGB) does not provide a complete picture. We still don't have information on employees' sexual orientation for 49.90 % of employees, although this gap reduces significantly when schools are excluded.

In total, 0.65% of our employee's report being LGB, indicating that we need to do some work to ensure people feel comfortable declaring their sexual orientation on a monitoring form.

Our participation in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and use of the Stonewall Top 100 Employer 2019 Logo is a clear demonstration of our commitment to sexual orientation equality in the workplace, and we will continue to use the feedback from the Workforce Equality Index to make improvements where appropriate.

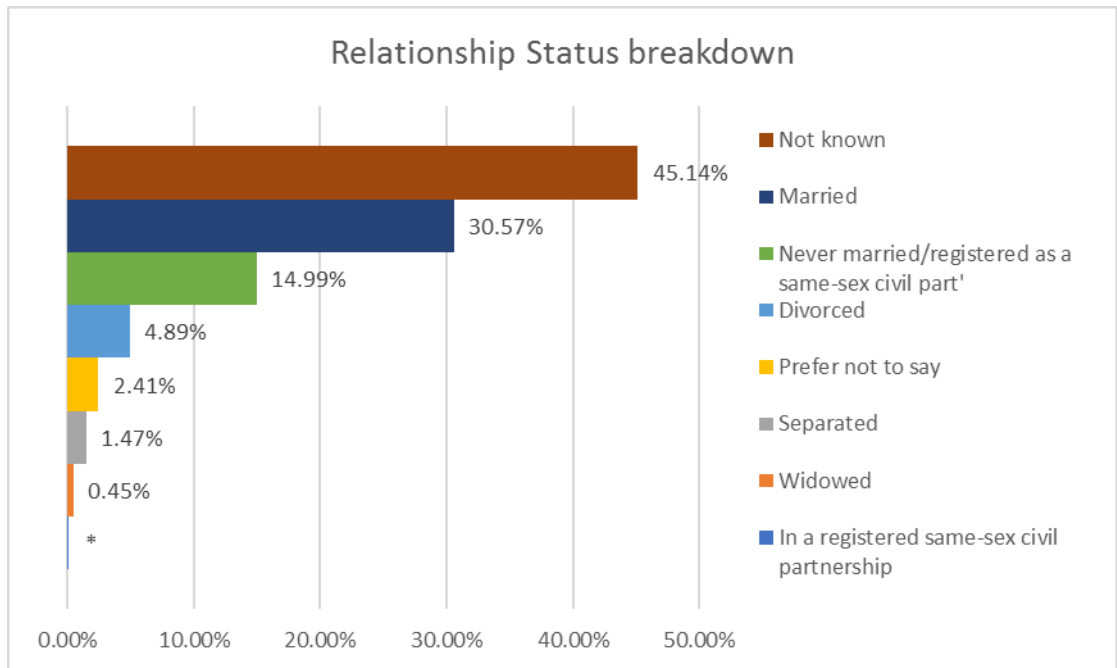
Our employment policies and benefits are explicit and apply to everyone in the council and all relevant benefits will be paid to both same sex and opposite sex couples.

Flying the Rainbow flag annually to promote International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia and promoting Sunderland Pride also sends a message out of the council's commitment to sexual orientation equality in the workplace.

### **Marriage & Civil Partnership**

52.44% of employees have disclosed their marital status

Again, gaps in the information require us to go back out to employees to request them to share this information with us, in order to provide a baseline of information to gain a better understanding of equalities across the council and inform our policies and practices where they impact on marriage and civil partnership.



Relationship status	SCC Workforce	Sunderland Population
In a registered same-sex civil partnership	*	0.10%
Widowed	0.45%	7.90%
Separated	1.47%	2.40%
Divorced	4.89%	9.20%
Prefer not to say	2.41%	0.00%
Never married/registered as a same-sex civil part'	14.99%	35.30%
Married	30.57%	45.10%
Not known	45.14%	0.00%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%

### Carers Information

The national statistics on Carers are significant. 70% of the UK's 6.5 million carers are aged between 25-64. In Sunderland there are 32.5 thousand carers, of whom 72% falls into this age bracket. (Information sourced from the 2011 Census and Carers UK).

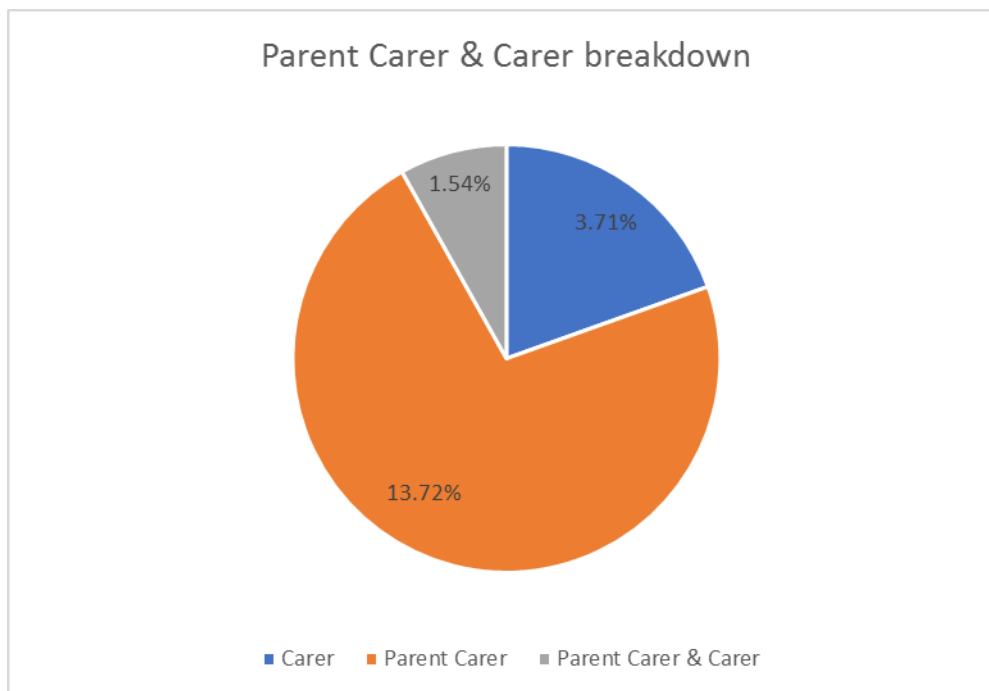
The 2011 Census figures for the UK show an 11% rise in the number of carers over 10 years, and it is predicted that there will be 9 million carers in the UK by 2037.

3 million carers combine work and care. Every year, over 2.1 million people become carers, so that there is a new population of carers in the workforce every day, and a high turnover in people affected, because almost as many people find their caring responsibilities coming to an end.

3 in 5 people will become carers at some point in their lives, and 1 in 5 people will give up work to care for somebody. Former carers of working age remain significantly less likely to be in work than non-carers of working age.

The council census asked employees to advise whether they are a Carer, so that we can understand our workforce profile and the demands on our employees in respect of caring responsibilities. The definition used is:

“A carer is someone who, without payment, provides help and support to a friend, neighbour, relative or partner (opposite or same sex) who could not manage without this help because of frailty, illness or disability.”



Information is missing for a large section of the workforce, and so the numbers are likely to be a lot higher.

As a supportive and flexible employer, balancing service needs with Individual employee needs, we recognise that offering supportive practices can help us to manage attendance levels. We have developed a package of support for employees with caring responsibilities. These include:

- **Flexible Working:**  
In fact, the council strongly encourages all employees to consider working flexibly, either on a permanent or temporary basis. A range of options are available (including flexi time, career breaks, the purchase of additional annual leave, compressed working hours, job share, part year working etc). Not only does this make the council an attractive place to work, it achieves financial efficiencies while protecting jobs. The level of flexibility assists employees in achieving a better work life balance and enables us to provide choice and respond to employees' changing circumstances. This is particularly relevant when supporting our employees who have caring responsibilities.

- Carers Leave/Emergency Time Off to Care for Dependents: Managers can use their discretion to grant employees paid leave of up to 5 days per leave year to support emergency caring responsibilities.
- Counselling Services: All employees, including those who are carers, have access to confidential employee counselling services.
- A dedicated intranet site for carers has been developed. This “signposts” employee to the current support available to carers.
- The council has established an Equality Champion to lead on Carers issues.

## **Recruitment**

The Council is committed to recruiting a high-quality workforce with appropriate expertise, skills and experience. Equality of opportunity is a core value of the Council and recruitment and selection procedures have been designed to provide ways to assess and appoint the most capable and effective employees while ensuring that all individuals are treated fairly. It is our policy to recruit the most appropriate person for each approved vacancy.

Wherever possible the Council remains committed to maximising the opportunities for redeployment and career development and to utilising the skills and expertise of existing employees, including apprentices. The Council is committed to ensuring that all recruitment is free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The Council encourages disabled people to apply for advertised vacancies.

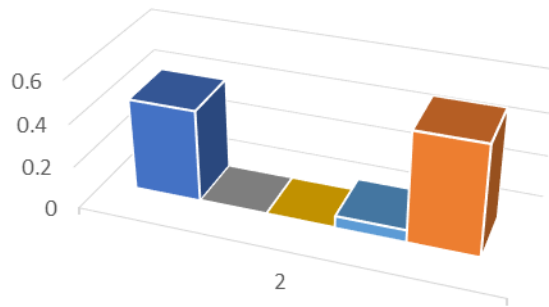
Reasonable adjustments for disabled people are made at all stages of the recruitment process, if required. We guarantee to interview and consider all disabled applicants who meet the criteria of a job vacancy.

The application form contains an equal opportunity monitoring form. This information is used for monitoring purposes and compiling performance information but is removed before shortlisting.

During the period of this report the Council advertised 170 jobs. We received 1995 applications for the vacancies

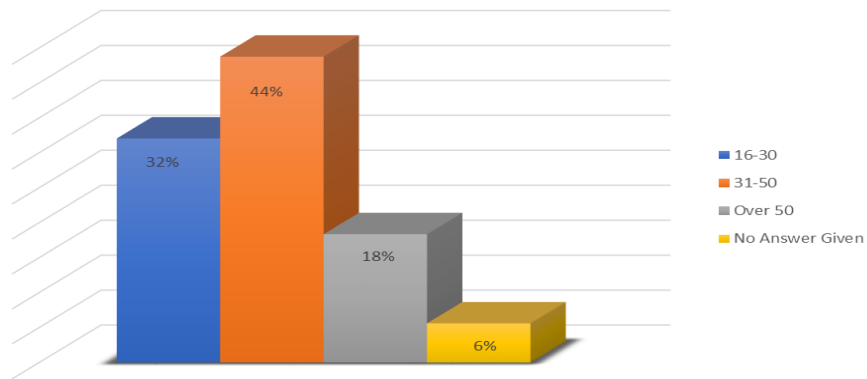


### Recruitment breakdown by Gender

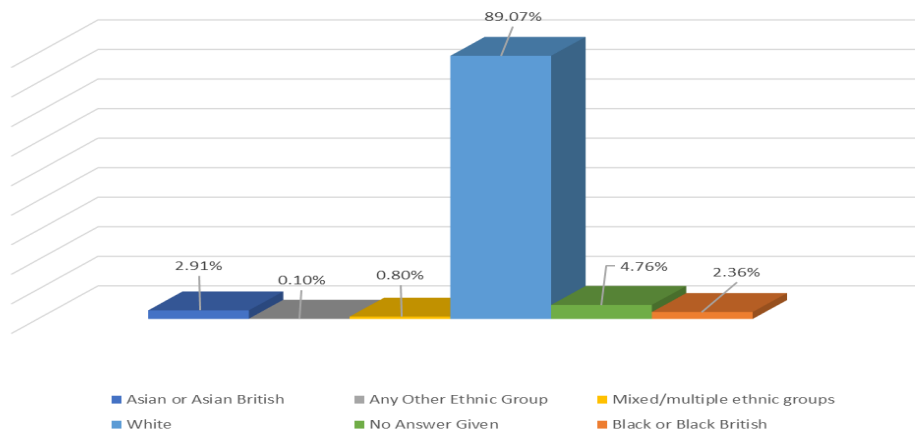


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■ Female	42.86%
■ Transgender	0.15%
■ Prefer not to say	0.10%
■ No Answer Given	5.66%
■ Male	51.23%

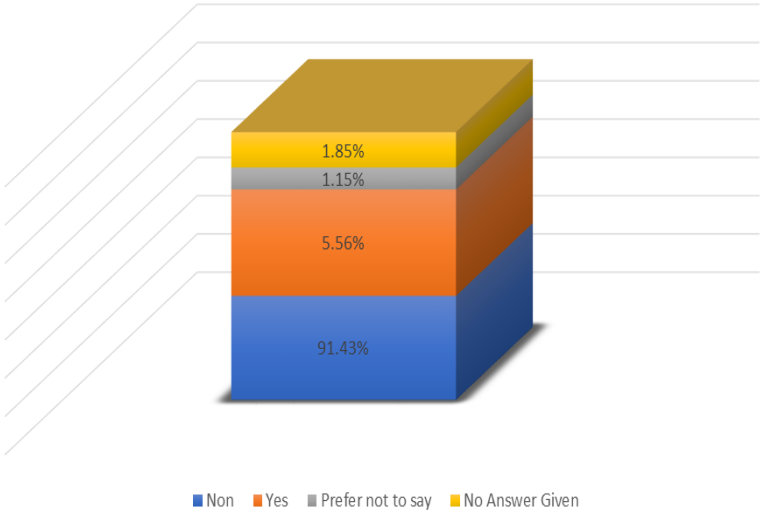
### Recruitment breakdown by Age



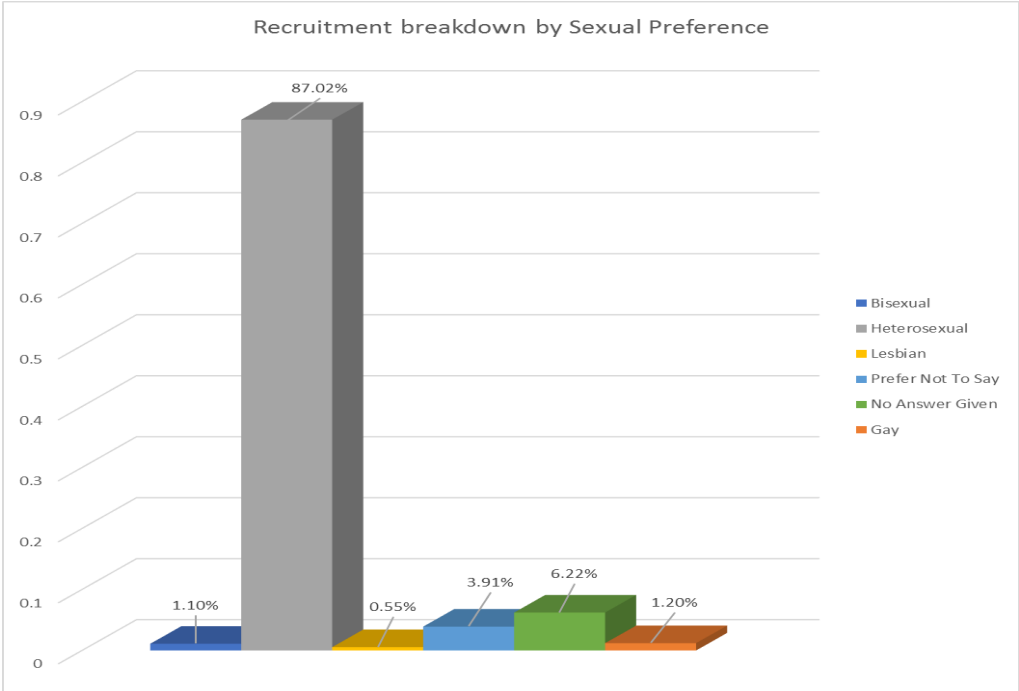
### Recruitment breakdown by Ethnicity

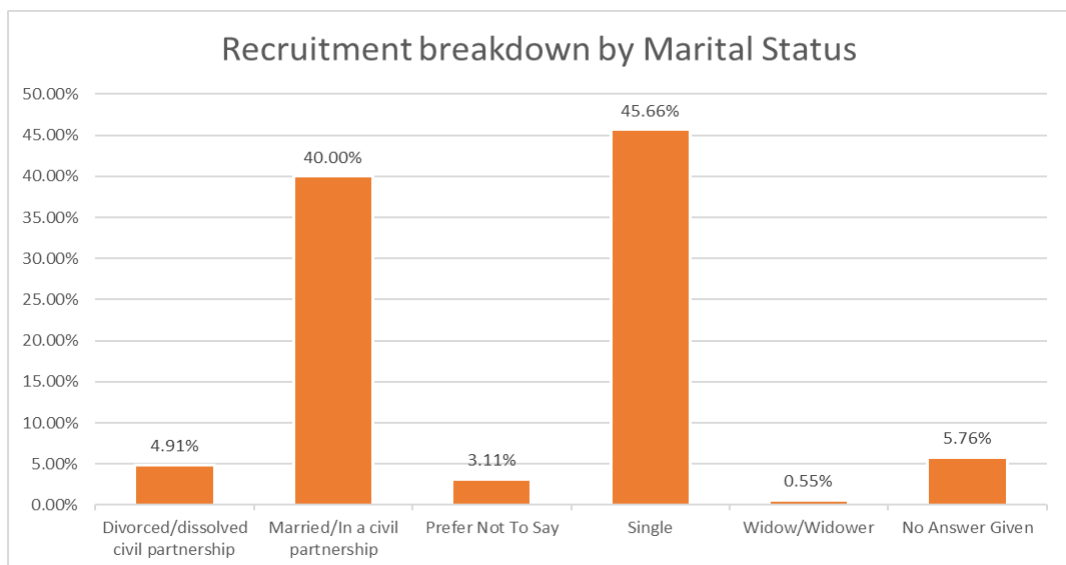
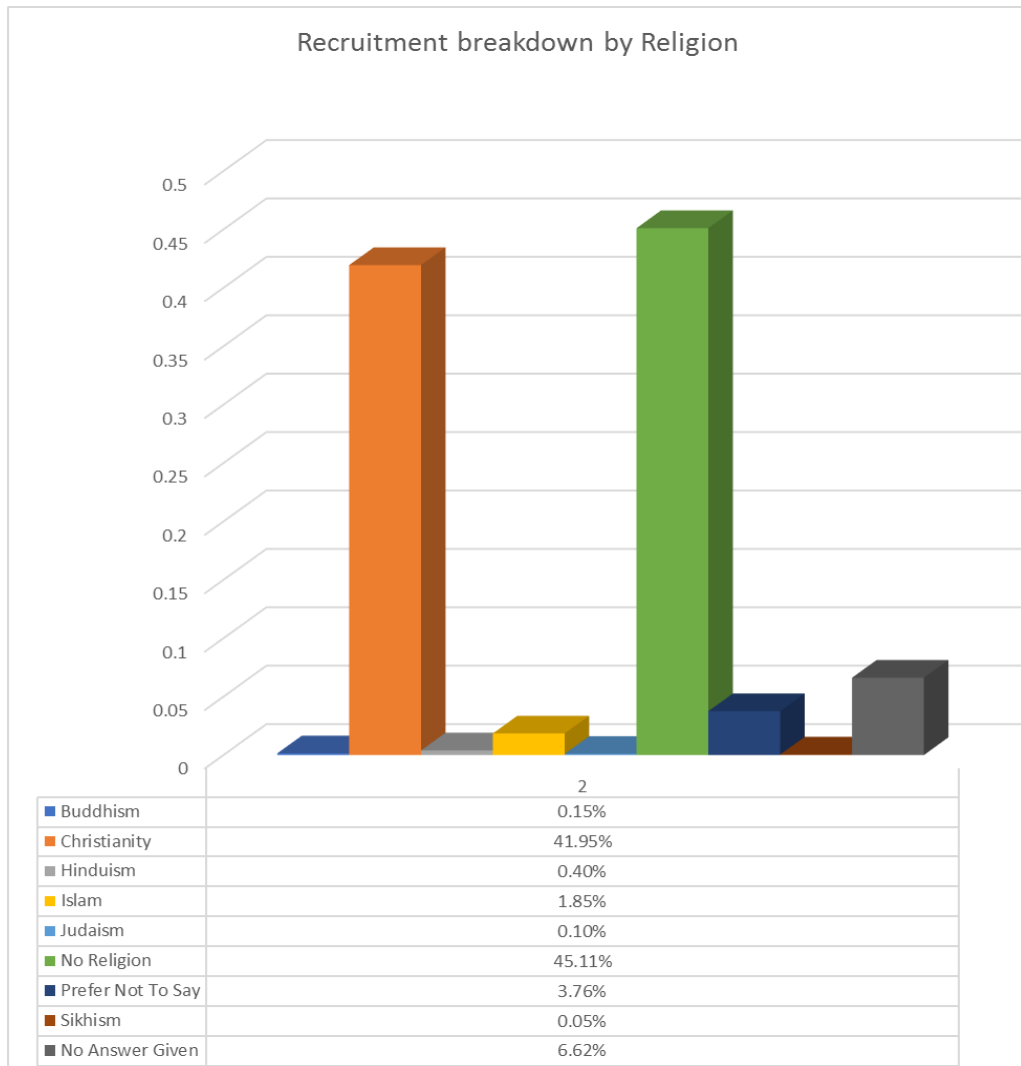


Recruitment breakdown by Disability



Recruitment breakdown by Sexual Preference

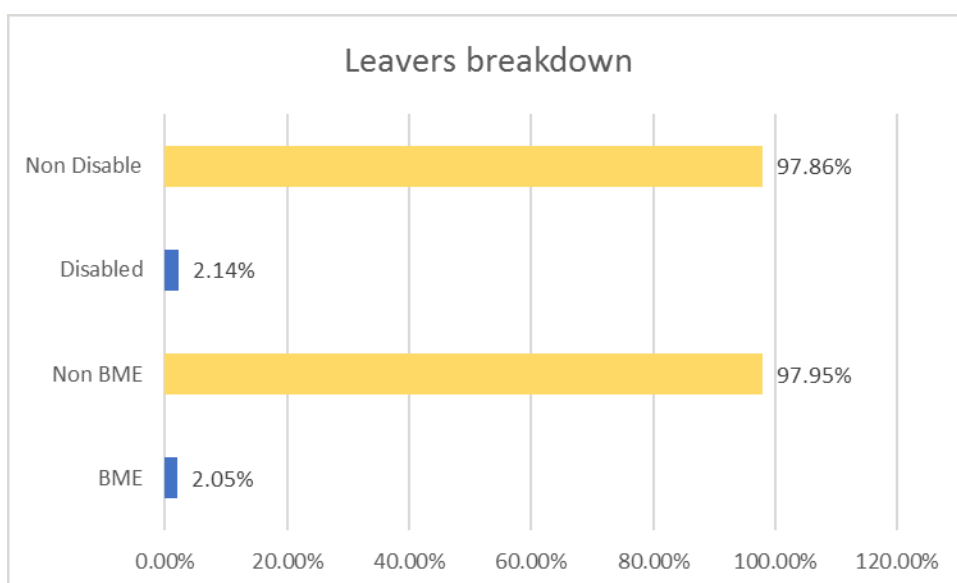
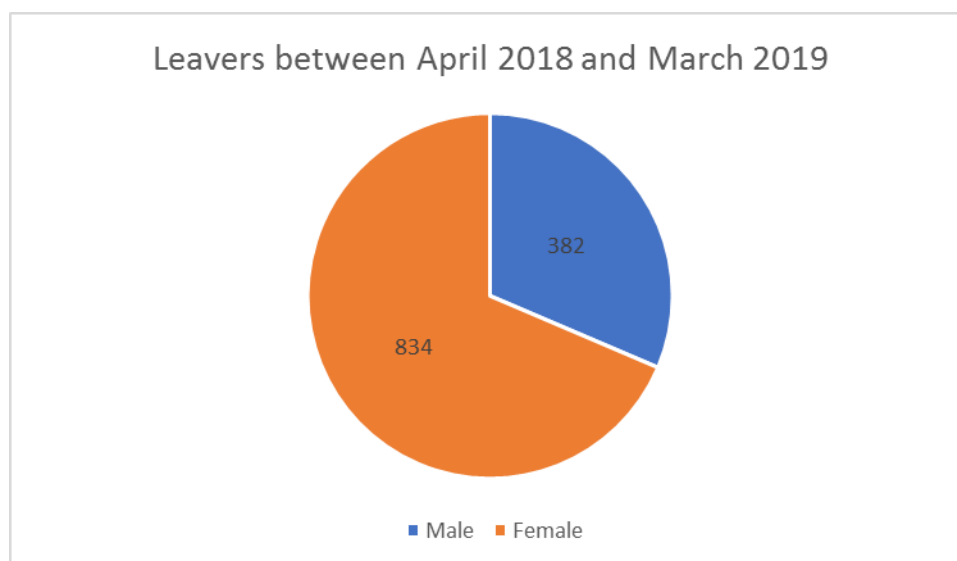




The combination of internal equality measures, complemented by an outward facing approach which engages our community across a range of diversity areas, will enable us to continue to make progress.

## Leavers

1,216 employees left the Council for a range of reasons, this included 25 BME and 26 employees who had declared as being disabled.



## Conclusion

Collecting, monitoring and reporting the information is in line with the council's Equality Scheme, and we have a legal duty to monitor the council's workforce and publish the results of this monitoring. We will continue to develop an equality profile of staff, and publish this on an annual basis, in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty. We will also use the findings from this report to inform future action planning to help us meet our equality objectives.

There continues to be a reduction on the headcount figures compared to previous years. Reductions in government funding, the council's on-going transformation agenda, school to academy conversions, outsourcing of

services into alternative service delivery models (ASDM's) and the need for efficiency savings have all led to a reduction in the council's workforce.

Hopefully, as we continue to record and report on our workforce equalities information, levels of confidence will increase, and we will start to get more meaningful data which we can use to gain a better understanding of equalities across the council, and to inform our policies and practices where they impact on the equality strands.

We will continue to monitor our practices and seek to embed equalities, as part of our commitment to move towards an inclusive, diverse workforce in which employees achieve their potential and best equip us to achieve our objectives as a council, moving forward.