

## **Cheshire West and Chester Council**

### **Workforce Diversity Report – April 2021**

The Equality Act 2010 requires Public Bodies to publish sufficient data to show how they are meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty – which includes workforce profile and other information.

The broad purpose of the equality duty legislation is to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the day-to-day business of public authorities. Therefore the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have ‘due regard’ to the need to:

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

The legislation states advancing equality of opportunity involves, in particular, having due regard to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Having due regard to the aims of the general equality duty requires the Council to have an adequate evidence base for its decision-making. Collecting and using equality information should enable it to develop a sound evidence base and to understand the impact of its proposals and decisions on people with protected characteristics.

The quality of diversity data of Council staff has been a concern now for a number of years. Individual employees can choose not to declare information about their ethnicity or other protected characteristics. In many cases the data was never requested and there is therefore have a particularly high proportion of “Undeclared / Prefer Not To Say” responses against the various diversity categories recorded on the personnel system (Oracle).

Several separate initiatives have been launched to try to improve the data, with varying success. It is hoped that the new Unit 4 ERP system which launched for HR and Payroll in November 2021 will provide an opportunity to revisit this again and that wider self-service will enable and empower more staff to enter their data.

### **Analysis by protected characteristic**

High level summary:

- Analysis has taken place of the workforce make-up based on various protected groups, using data from a fixed date (31 March 2021), e.g. percentage of the workforce by ethnicity, age, sexual orientation and so on; with a view to understanding if the Council’s workforce truly reflects the community it serves
- Other analysis looks at equality data based on the year up to 31 March 2021 e.g. recruitment, casework and performance data; with a view to understanding if there are any inherent biases towards or against any protected characteristics, suggested by the data
- Due to self-declaration and a history of not proactively seeking employee diversity data, there is a significant amount of missing / undeclared equality data which makes it hard to draw conclusions about any anomalies– they may be evidence of conscious or unconscious bias; alternatively there may not be enough data on which to draw a meaningful conclusion.
- Bearing the above in mind, there may be a concern over data relating to the percentage of the workforce who are non-white, especially at senior levels; also over the performance ratings of staff who have declared their religion as any other than Christianity or None.

A full analysis is provided below.

## Ethnic origin

84% of employees declared they belonged to white ethnicities, this is slightly lower than previous years however the difference appears to be where data is either unrecorded or that the employee has preferred not to declare (nearly 15% compared to 11% in 2020). 1.3% of employees were from a non-white background, down 0.1% from 2020; compared to 2.5% of residents in the borough. No grade group has a particularly higher or lower non-white population than others; though it is interesting that employees in the lowest and highest grade groups are more likely to choose to withhold their data. Still no roles above grade 12 were filled by staff declaring themselves to be of an ethnicity other than White.

	<b>White</b>	<b>Not white / mixed</b>	<b>Undisclosed</b>
<b>Grade 1 - 3</b>	76.7%	1.7%	21.7%
<b>Grade 4 - 7</b>	82.7%	1.3%	16.1%
<b>Grade 8 - 10</b>	85.4%	1.5%	13.1%
<b>Grade 11 - 12</b>	90.9%	1.2%	7.9%
<b>Grade 13 - 15</b>	92.7%	0.0%	7.3%
<b>Grade 16 - 18</b>	62.5%	0.0%	37.5%
<b>Senior Leadership Team</b>	64.7%	0.0%	35.3%
<b>Grand Total</b>	84.1%	1.3%	14.6%

## Sex

The Council's workforce remains predominantly female at 71.2% - no change on last year. There is some variation of gender split based on grade. For instance, there are slightly more males in the lowest grade group – this is perhaps explained by the fact that there are relatively few employees in this group, and a greater proportion are more traditionally filled by men e.g. StreetCare operatives. Less easy to explain is the much more unequal gender split once the

very highest grades are reached. However the percentage of females in both the highest grades groups has increased:

- Grade 16-18: 58.3% compared to 52.3% in 2020
- SLT: 58.8% compared to 52.6% in 2020

	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>Grade 1 - 3</b>	65.0%	35.0%
<b>Grade 4 - 7</b>	72.1%	27.9%
<b>Grade 8 - 10</b>	70.9%	29.1%
<b>Grade 11 - 12</b>	71.9%	28.1%
<b>Grade 13 - 15</b>	69.5%	30.5%
<b>Grade 16 - 18</b>	58.3%	41.7%
<b>Senior Leadership Team</b>	58.8%	41.2%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>71.21%</b>	<b>28.79%</b>

## **Disability**

The definition here of disability is again based on self-declaration. Employees with disabilities represent 2.9% of the Council's workforce, down very slightly from last year's 3.1%. This is lower than the proportion of disabled people aged 16-65 in the borough as a whole at 12.6%. There are still no declared disabled employees at the most senior levels.

	<b>Declared Disabled</b>
<b>Grade 1 - 3</b>	5.0%
<b>Grade 4 - 7</b>	2.7%
<b>Grade 8 - 10</b>	2.9%
<b>Grade 11 - 12</b>	4.2%
<b>Grade 13 - 15</b>	0.0%

<b>Grade 16 - 18</b>	0.0%
<b>Senior Leadership Team</b>	0.0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	2.9%

### **Sexual orientation**

1% of employees declared themselves as gay or bisexual, compared to national estimates of 6%. However, there is likely to be significant under-reporting, as the sexual orientation of half the workforce is unknown. NB Due to the small numbers, this data is not broken down by grade.

<b>Bisexual</b>	0.2%
<b>Gay</b>	0.8%
<b>Heterosexual</b>	36.9%
<b>Undisclosed</b>	62.2%

### **Religion and belief**

High numbers of staff either have not answered this question or selected that they prefer not to answer and figures were similar to previous years. 1% declared a non-Christian religion, compared to 1.4% of the borough's population. NB Due to the small numbers, again this data is not broken down by grade.

<b>Christian</b>	25.4%
<b>No Religion</b>	10.9%
<b>Other Religion</b>	1.0%
<b>Undisclosed</b>	62.7%

### **Age**

The workforce profile remains older in comparison to the community. Though it should of course be remembered that by definition a working population won't include anyone under 16 and

fewer at the higher and lower age ranges; which means there will be proportionally more in the age groups in between. Interestingly the rate of employment of those aged 60-64 is higher in the Council than the rate of general population which indicates an inclusive employment environment for older workers.

<b>Age range</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>Population</b>
<b>16-19</b>	0.10%	6.00%
<b>20-24</b>	3.03%	7.00%
<b>25-29</b>	6.75%	6.50%
<b>30-34</b>	8.93%	6.50%
<b>35-39</b>	11.41%	8.00%
<b>40-44</b>	11.22%	9.00%
<b>45-49</b>	13.40%	9.50%
<b>50-54</b>	16.07%	8.00%
<b>55-59</b>	15.88%	7.00%
<b>60-64</b>	9.55%	8.00%
<b>65+</b>	3.65%	22.00%

## **Recruitment**

An audit of recruitment activity from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 has been undertaken. A summary is attached below.

The data does not highlight any great concerns - female candidates are almost twice as likely to be appointed as male candidates but the Council's workforce is made up of mostly women. In terms of ethnicity, there does seem to be a slight disparity in the % of applicants appointed – 7.8% of White candidates appointed compared to 5.7% of candidates self-declaring as Other than White. However it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions because a high number of candidates have chosen not to disclose equality data.

	Applicants		Appointed		% In Workforce
	Total	%	Total	%	01/04/2021
<b>SEX</b>					
Male	1586	34.3%	77	4.9%	28.8%
Female	2953	63.8%	271	9.2%	71.2%
Trans / Other	8	0.2%	0	0.0%	
Prefer Not To Say	82	1.8%	19	23.2%	
<i>Total</i>	<i>4629</i>				
<b>ETHNIC ORIGIN</b>					
White	4170	90.1%	327	7.8%	84.1%
Other than White	351	7.6%	20	5.7%	1.3%
Prefer Not To Say	108	2.3%	20	18.5%	14.6%
<i>Total</i>	<i>4629</i>				
<b>AGE</b>					
16-19	27	0.6%	0	0.0%	0.1%
20-24	385	8.3%	23	6.0%	3.0%
25-29	550	11.9%	39	7.1%	6.7%
30-34	383	8.3%	39	10.2%	8.9%
35-39	340	7.3%	35	10.3%	11.4%
40-44	289	6.2%	20	6.9%	11.2%
45-49	261	5.6%	28	10.7%	13.4%
50-54	238	5.1%	24	10.1%	16.1%
55-59	126	2.7%	9	7.1%	15.9%
60-64	41	0.9%	2	4.9%	9.6%
65+	7	0.2%	1	14.3%	3.7%

Prefer Not To Say	1982	42.8%	147	7.4%	
<i>Total</i>	<i>4629</i>				

Going forward it is important for the Council's ambition to be recognised as an inclusive employer and an employer of choice that there is a greater understanding of the diversity of people applying for vacancies. This will enable corrective action to be taken if there are any disparities caused by recruitment processes, or the way jobs are advertised or the language used. HR and the Recruitment team will continue to look at how candidates can be encouraged to disclose this information at application stage.

## Leavers

Leavers throughout the year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 have been analysed by protected characteristic, and the findings are below. No particular concerns are indicated based on the diversity data of leavers.

	<b>Resig- nations</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>Retire- ments</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>% In Work- force</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>01/04/2021</b>
<b>GENDER</b>							
Female	87	73.1%	37	86.0%	43	82.7%	71.2%
Male	32	26.9%	6	14.0%	9	17.3%	28.8%
<i>Total</i>	<i>119</i>		<i>43</i>		<i>52</i>		
<b>ETHNIC ORIGIN</b>							
Other than White	3	2.5%	1	2.3%	0	0.0%	1.3%
White	77	64.7%	39	90.7%	37	71.2%	84.1%
Undisclosed	39	32.8%	3	7.0%	15	28.8%	14.6%
<i>Total</i>	<i>119</i>		<i>43</i>		<i>52</i>		
<b>DISABILITY</b>							



Disabled	2	1.7%	1	2.3%	3	5.8%	2.9%
Not Disabled	27	22.7%	22	51.2%	11	21.2%	36.4%
Not Declared	90	75.6%	20	46.5%	38	73.1%	60.7%
<i>Total</i>	<i>119</i>		<i>43</i>		<i>52</i>		
<b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>							
Heterosexual	23	19.3%	22	51.2%	12	23.1%	36.9%
Gay	2	1.7%	0	0.0%	1	1.9%	0.8%
Bisexual	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.2%
Undisclosed	94	79.0%	21	48.8%	39	75.0%	62.2%
<i>Total</i>	<i>119</i>		<i>43</i>		<i>52</i>		
<b>RELIGION / BELIEF</b>							
Christian	17	14.3%	20	46.5%	11	21.2%	25.4%
None	9	7.6%	2	4.7%	2	3.8%	10.9%
Other	0	0.0%	1	2.3%	0	0.0%	1.0%
Undisclosed	93	78.2%	20	46.5%	39	75.0%	62.7%
<i>Total</i>	<i>119</i>		<i>43</i>		<i>52</i>		
<b>AGE</b>							
16-19	2	1.7%	0	0.0%	1	1.9%	0.1%
20-24	8	6.7%	0	0.0%	2	3.8%	3.0%
25-29	14	11.8%	0	0.0%	1	1.9%	6.7%
30-34	22	18.5%	0	0.0%	1	1.9%	8.9%
35-39	13	10.9%	0	0.0%	4	7.7%	11.4%
40-44	12	10.1%	0	0.0%	1	1.9%	11.2%
45-49	17	14.3%	0	0.0%	8	15.4%	13.4%
50-54	15	12.6%	1	2.3%	6	11.5%	16.1%

55-59	11	9.2%	7	16.3%	12	23.1%	15.9%
60-64	3	2.5%	27	62.8%	9	17.3%	9.6%
65+	2	1.7%	8	18.6%	7	13.5%	3.7%
<i>Total</i>	<i>119</i>		<i>43</i>		<i>52</i>		

### Maternity/Paternity/Adoption leave

109 employees took maternity/paternity/adoption leave during at least part of the year. Encouragingly take up of paternity leave (9 employees) and shared parental leave (1 employee) continues, in addition to maternity leave.

### Absence

Total absence by protected characteristic shows that absence is broadly in line with the gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation and religion / belief split of the organisation. The trend which has in the past been noted of disabled employees accounting for a significantly higher proportion of absence has again not continued this year and they accounted for 2.9% of all absence (slightly down from 3.1% last year and 3.8% the previous year). In previous years a trend has been observed of older workers taking up proportionately more absence. However this year that is not the case – workers over 50 make up about 45% of the workforce and account for 45% of all absences.

	Absence days	1705	% In Workforce
	Number	%	01/04/2021
<b>GENDER</b>			
Female	1244	73.0%	71.2%
Male	461	27.0%	28.8%
<i>Total</i>	<i>1705</i>		
<b>ETHNIC ORIGIN</b>			

Other than White	25	1.5%	1.3%
White	1477	86.6%	84.1%
Undisclosed	203	11.9%	14.6%
<i>Total</i>	<i>1705</i>		
<b>DISABILITY</b>			
Disabled	57	3.3%	2.9%
Not Disabled	610	35.8%	36.4%
Not Declared	1038	60.9%	60.7%
<i>Total</i>	<i>1705</i>		
<b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>			
Heterosexual	574	33.7%	36.9%
Gay	15	0.9%	0.8%
Bisexual	6	0.4%	0.2%
Undisclosed	1110	65.1%	62.2%
<i>Total</i>	<i>1705</i>		
<b>RELIGION / BELIEF</b>			
Christian	413	24.2%	25.4%
None	187	11.0%	10.9%
Other	11	0.6%	1.0%
Undisclosed	1094	64.2%	62.7%
<i>Total</i>	<i>1705</i>		
<b>AGE</b>			
16-19	1	0.1%	0.1%
20-24	50	2.9%	3.0%
25-29	97	5.7%	6.7%
30-34	168	9.9%	8.9%

35-39	193	11.3%	11.4%
40-44	186	10.9%	11.2%
45-49	242	14.2%	13.4%
50-54	306	17.9%	16.1%
55-59	283	16.6%	15.9%
60-64	141	8.3%	9.6%
65+	38	2.2%	3.7%
<i>Total</i>	<i>1705</i>		

### **Next steps**

Although self-service functionality to enable staff to update their equality information was launched at the end of 2016 and several communication exercises have been undertaken to promote this, it has not resulted in significant further uptake and there are still significant gaps in the Council's knowledge of the diversity make-up of its workforce, especially around sexual orientation and religion and belief. It is therefore recommended that further work is undertaken to encourage more staff to provide their information. The delay in the launch of Unit 4 ERP until November 2021 has meant this exercise has been delayed; however now that HR and Payroll functionality has been rolled out and the first payrolls run, further work can take place on identifying how the system can be used to improve data quality.

Some aspects of diversity, especially at senior levels, have changed little since monitoring began. Following the successful Women Into Leadership programme, which has resulted in many more women at senior levels, it is recommended that similar positive action is undertaken for other under-represented groups including Black and Minority Ethnic Staff, Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Staff and Disabled Staff. The Disability Friends Group is actively looking at increasing representation of disabled staff at all levels, following successful accreditation at Disability Confident Leader Level in January 2019 and again in November 2021.