

Workforce Equality Report 2022-2023

March 2024

Contents

Terminology	2-3	Employees Leaving the Council	22-24
Introduction	4-6	Top 5% Earners	25-26
Background	4	Disciplinary and Grievances	27-28
Data Reporting and Interpretation	5	Training	29-30
Local information	6	Pay Gap Analysis	31-40
Policies and Initiatives	7-8	Achievements	41
Our Workforce	9-14	Actions	42-44
Recruitment	15-21	Appendix A: Personnel Services Policies	45-46

Terminology

This glossary explains what we mean in this report when we use certain words or phrases.

Age	Protected characteristic of age (S.5 Equality Act 2010). Refers to employees who share this characteristic. It includes employees belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or a range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds)
Casual Workers	Casual workers are engaged without 'mutuality of obligation' and are therefore not employees, but workers with statutory rights only.
Disability	Refers to employees who share this characteristic. An employee has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. (S.6 Equality Act 2010).
Employees	An employee works to the terms within a contract of employment and has contractual entitlements.
Ethnic Minority	All ethnic groups except the white British group. Ethnic minorities include white minorities, such as Gypsy, Roma, and Irish Traveller groups.
Ethnicity	Relates to the protected characteristic of race in reference to the ethnic origin of employees.
Full-time Equivalent (FTE)	A Full-time Equivalent of 1 is equivalent to a full-time employee. Hours worked by part-time employees are pro-rated accordingly.
Gender Reassignment	Refers to the process of transitioning from one sex to another. An employee has this protected characteristic if they are undergoing or proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. (S.7 Equality Act 2010).
Gender	Relates to employees who are men or women and to the protected characteristics of sex. Although the Equality Act 2010 protects because of 'sex' some equality legislation refers to gender and so gender and sex, and their associated attributes (male, female, men, and women) are often used interchangeably.
GPG	Gender Pay Gap
Headcount	The number of Council employees regardless of full or part-time hours, this includes fixed contracts, relief, and casual workers

Known Data	Information reported by employees on their protected characteristics and recorded on the Council's information systems.
LGBTQ+	Refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer/questioning and more.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership (S.8 Equality Act 2010). Refers to employees who share this characteristic. Relates to an employee who is married or is a civil partner.
Protected Characteristic	The nine different characteristics recognised and protected by the Equality Act 2010 (S.4 Equality Act 2010). It is unlawful to discriminate against or treat less favourably employees, or applicants for employment, because of a protected characteristic.
Race	Protected characteristic of race (S.9 Equality Act 2010). Refers to employees who share this characteristic. Relates to an employee of a particular racial group; also includes colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.
Relief Workers	Relief workers are individuals engaged on zero hours contracts, but with employee status and contractual entitlements.
Religion and Belief	Protected characteristic of religion and belief (S.10 Equality Act 2010). Refers to employees who share this characteristic. It includes employees who hold a religious or philosophical belief and those who do not.
Sex	Protected characteristic of sex (S.11 Equality Act 2010). Refers to employees who share this characteristic. Refers to employees who are men or women or male and female employees (EHRC guidance).
Sexual Orientation	Protected characteristic of sexual orientation (S.12 Equality Act 2010). Refers to employees who share this characteristic. Relates to whether an employees' sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.
Unknown Data	Employee information not recorded on the Council's information systems. This includes instances where employees have actively chosen not to self-report information on their protected characteristics by selecting 'prefer not to say'.
Working Age Population	The Office for National Statistics defines the working-age population as those aged 16-64 years. It is the same for both men and women to reflect the increasing age at which women will be eligible for the State Pension. This report considers working age population to be 16-74 year olds. This age range has been set to allow for the inclusion of apprentices under 18 years who are in compulsory education and employment. The maximum age range is 74 years because this is the maximum age for joining the workplace pension.

Introduction

Background

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duty) and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, the Council is required to publish equality information to show our compliance with the general equality duty. The Council must also publish information on pay for employees. This Workforce Equality Report forms part of our response to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Bedford Borough Council is proud of the diversity of its staff. We seek to achieve equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment. Our workforce monitoring data is collected, monitored, and published to help us understand who our workforce is; and to show the impact of our employment policies and practices and how we are meeting our responsibilities as an employer in regard to equality.¹ Our information on pay is analysed to help us understand any pay differences between men and women working for the Council.

¹ The report does not include school-based staff even where the Council is the employer, nor does it include any agency workers.

This report covers the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Chart 1: Unknown Data for Staff

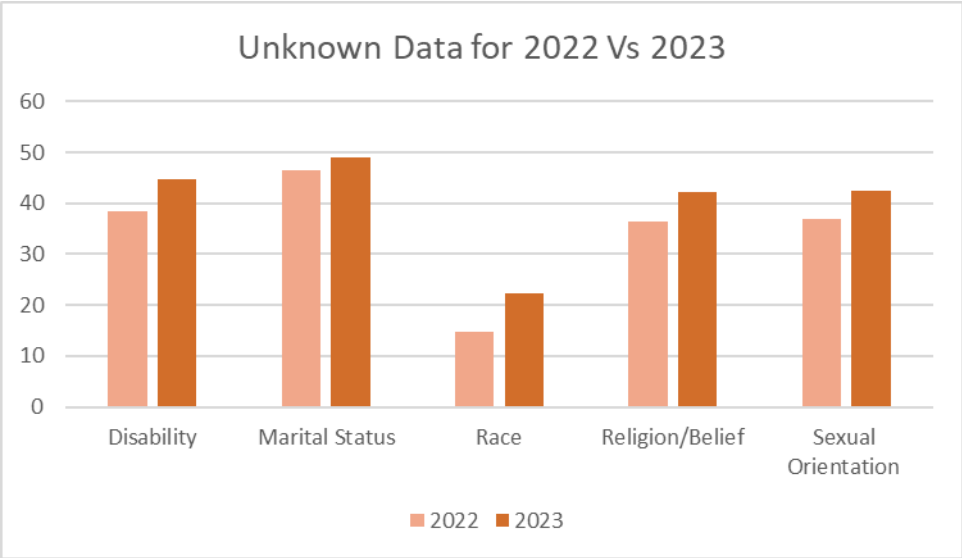


Table 1: Known Data for Staff

Protected Characteristic	Head Count		Percentage	
	Known	Unknown	Known	Unknown
Age	1955	0	100.00	0.00
Disability	1082	873	55.35	44.65
Gender Reassignment	0	1955	0.00	100.00
Marital Status	997	958	51.00	49.00
Pregnancy & Maternity	1955	0	100.00	0.00
Race (Ethnicity)	1519	436	77.70	22.30
Religion & Belief	1132	823	57.90	42.10
Sex	1955	0	100.00	0.00
Sexual Orientation	1123	832	57.44	42.56

Data Reporting and Interpretation

Much of the information in this report relies on employees self-reporting and providing their information through the Council’s ‘My View’ system - an integrated Personnel Services and Payroll system that is used to collect and record data on protected characteristics.

Unless otherwise stated, analysis presented in this report are based on ‘known data’. This means only data that employees have self-disclosed and therefore is held on the Council’s integrated information system is included. Chart 1 compares unknown data for 2023 with 2022, illustrating how unknown data for disability, marital status, race, religion/ belief, and sexual orientation has increased. Table 1 shows the percentage of total employees for which equality data is known and recorded.

Data on gender reassignment was not available.

Local Information

To understand the impact of employment policies and practices, our workforce data is compared with the local 2021 census data.² Comparing the local census data for Bedford Borough in 2021 with 2011 has shown the following changes:

- The working age population has increased by 9.08%.
- Limited long-term illness, health problems and disability for aged 16-74 years has increased by 3.88%.
- The working age percentage of the population from a Black, Asian, Ethnic Minority (non-White British) community increased by 6.67%.
- The number of unpaid carers decreased by 1.7%.
- Residents declaring having a religion or belief decreased by 6.91%.

Bedford Borough

- An estimated working age (those aged 16-74 years) population is 133,828 people.
- 15.28% of residents aged 16-74 have a limiting long-term illness, health problem or disability that affects their day-to-day activities.
- 35.67% of the working age (16-74 years) population is from a Black, Asian, Ethnic Minority (non-White British) community.
- 8.5% are providing unpaid care to someone on a weekly basis.
- 62.89% of Bedford Borough residents consider themselves to have a religion or belief.

According to the 2021 census, local known data shows that 2.6% of people living in Bedford are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual (LGB). Local known data on gender identity (trans women, trans men, gender identity different from sex registered at birth, all other gender identities) is 0.62%.

² Further information about Bedford Borough is on the Council's [statistics and census](#) website pages.

Policies and Initiatives

Disability Confident Employer

The Council is a certified Disability Confident Employer under the Government's Disability Confident Scheme. The scheme is designed to help employers recruit and retain disabled people and people with health conditions for their skills and talent.

The scheme supports the Council in making the most of the talents that disabled people can bring to the workplace. Through Disability Confident, the Council challenges attitudes towards disability, increases understanding of disability and removes barriers to disabled people and those with long-term health conditions, ensuring that disabled people can fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.

Personnel Services Policies and Guidelines Addressing Equality Issues

The Council has various Personnel Services policies providing support and covering all aspects of employment law, employee relations and recruitment. The following policies and guidelines explicitly address issues relevant to the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty responsibilities (Appendix A):

- Sickness Absence Policy and Manager's Guide
- Recruitment Guidelines
- Flexible Working Guidelines
- Maternity/Adoption Leave and Maternity/Adoption Support Leave Policies
- Paternity and Parental Leave Policies
- Redundancy Procedure and Guidelines
- Domestic Abuse Support Guidelines
- Agile Working Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Guidance
- Shared Parental Leave Policy
- Time Off for Dependants Guidance

Equality and Diversity Training

The Council regards training as a key component in supporting equality, diversity, and inclusion. All new starters undertake mandatory Equality and Diversity training as part of their induction with the aim to ensure a better understanding of what equality legislation means for service planning and delivery, to increase awareness of equality in the workplace and to identify expectations in terms of behaviour. The Council's e-learning portal BBOLT enables staff to complete this and other equality, diversity, and inclusion training at any time and from any location. Individuals have more control over the duration of training undertaken at one time and can take regular breaks, for example, to accommodate the needs of an individual with a disability that makes it difficult to concentrate for lengthy periods.

Staff Networks

Staff networks offer a place for individuals to come together, share experiences and facilitate learning and development. They assist in the shaping and delivery of areas of organisational strategy and policy relating to each network. The Council currently has the following active staff network groups:

- African, Caribbean, and Asian (ACA) Employee Network open to all Council employees who identify as Black, Brown, Asian and mixed or multi heritage.
- Christian Network includes Christians from across the Council (and other organisations working in Borough Hall) of different denominations.
- Menopause Network for women who are experiencing the perimenopause or menopause, including trans and non-binary staff who are biologically experiencing the menopause.
- LGBTQIA + Network for anyone who identifies as part of the LGBTQIA+ community.
- Early Careers Network for employees who are starting out in their local government careers.

The Big Conversation

Established 'The Big Conversation' which will take place three times per year to help create opportunities for collaboration, discussion, and reflection across the Council. The first Big Conversation on Neurodiversity in the Workplace was held in March 2023 and successfully contributed to raising awareness around this important topic.

Our Workforce

Overview of our Total Workforce

The data presented in this chapter is based on a snapshot date of 31 March 2023.

On 31 March 2023, the Council employed 1955 members of staff. Of the total workforce, 1,808 were on fixed hours contracts, 64.60% of the staff worked on a full-time basis. These figures have remained relatively the same over the last two years.

Since the last report (based on 31 March 2022)

- 267 people have been offered a job with the Council.
- 259 people left Council employment.

Table 2: Overview, Full / Part Time Employees, Leavers / Starters

Overview	Headcount		Percentage	
	2022	2023	2022	2023
Fixed Hours contracts	1807	1808	92.57	92.48
Relief Workers	77	78	3.95	3.99
Casual Workers	68	69	3.48	3.53
Total	1,952	1,955	100	100

Fixed Hours Full / Part time	Headcount		Percentage	
	2022	2023	2022	2023
Full Time Fixed Hours	1173	1168	64.91	64.60
Part Time Fixed Hours	634	640	35.09	35.40
Total Fixed Hour Contracts	1,807	1,808	100	100

Leavers/Starters	2021/22	2022/23
Headcount	1,952	1,955
Leavers	313	259
Starters/Offer	229	267

Table 3: Workforce by Age

Age Range	Bedford Borough 16-74 years		Bedford Borough Council Workforce	
	Number	%	Number	%
16-19	8,090	6.05	16	0.82
20-24	9,997	7.47	38	1.94
25-29	11,884	8.88	94	4.81
30-34	13,548	10.12	146	7.47
35-39	13,313	9.95	196	10.03
40-44	12,954	9.68	245	12.53
45-49	12,267	9.17	247	12.63
50-54	13,033	9.74	308	15.75
55-59	12,036	8.99	311	15.91
60-64	9,971	7.45	225	11.51
65-69	8,379	6.26	96	4.91
70-74	8,339	6.23	17	0.87
75+	-	-	16	0.82
Total	133,811	100**	1,955	100

*Source: 2021 Census **Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Table 4: Workforce by Disability

Disability	Bedford Borough 16-74 Years		Bedford Borough Council Workforce	
	Number	%	Number	%
No	113,358	84.72	1016	93.90
Yes	20,446	15.28	66	6.10
Prefer not to say			1	
Unknown			872	
Total (known data)	133,804	100	1,955	100

*Source: 2021 Census

Our Workforce by Age

The age profile of employees is presented in Table 3. As in previous reports, employees aged under 30 years are under-represented within the workforce in comparison to the working age population of Bedford Borough; this is particularly the case for younger employees aged 16-24 years.

Similarly, employees aged over 65 years remain under-represented in the workforce. However, this is in line with economic activity trends for this and older age groups. Employees aged 50-64 years old are overrepresented.

Our Workforce by Disability

The disability profile of employees is presented in Table 4. Data on employees' disability status is known for 66.30% of our workforce, an increase from the last year. Based on known data, 6.10% of our workforce has declared a disability; this has increased by 0.10% from the last year (6%).

The number of employees who declared a disability remains lower than the percentage of residents of Bedford Borough, where 15.28% of the Borough population aged 16-74 has 'a long-term health problem or disability which affects their day-to-day activities'. This indicates that disabled employees are under-represented in the workforce.

The Council's Apprenticeship Strategy 2022-2026 places focus on attracting disabled applicants and aims to offer accessible apprenticeship opportunities to learners with SEND. The Council already offers a guaranteed interview to disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a post.

Table 5: Workforce by Ethnic Group

Our Workforce by Ethnicity

The ethnicity profile of employees is presented in Table 5. Ethnicity data is known for 77.70%% of the workforce, this is a decrease from the last year, which was 85.30%.

The employee ethnicity profile remains unchanged from the last year. Almost one quarter of our workforce is from an ethnic minority background (25.40%) and three-quarters are White British (74.60%).

Employees from an ethnic minority background remain underrepresented in the workforce in comparison to the local working age population (36.57%). This is particularly the case for White Non-British employees.

Ethnic Group	Bedford Borough 16-74 Years		Bedford Borough Council Workforce	
	Number	%	Number	%
White British	86,085	64.33	1,133	74.60
White Non-British	17,018	12.72	90	5.92
Mixed/Multiple ethnic	4,152	3.10	28	1.84
Asian or Asian British	16,883	12.62	143	9.41
Black or Black British	7,196	5.38	110	7.24
Arab or Other Ethnic Group	2,494	1.86	15	0.99
Prefer not to say	-	-	366	
Unknown	-	-	70	
Total (known data)	133,828	100**	1,955	100

**Source: 2021 Census ** Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.*

Table 6: Workforce by Marital Status

Our Workforce by Marital Status

The profile of our workforce by marital status is presented in Table 6. Marital status data is known for 51.1 % of the workforce, a decrease of 56.9% compared to 2021 (no data is available for 2022). The data indicates the percentage of staff who are married or in a registered civil partnership is greater than that represented in the Borough.

Marital Status	Bedford Borough 16-74 Years		Bedford Borough Council Workforce	
	Number	%	Number	%
Married or in a registered civil partnership	61,724	46.13	667	69.84
Divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	12,720	9.51	47	4.92
Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a same-sex civil partnership)	3,482	2.60	8	0.84
Single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership)	52,572	39.29	225	23.56
Widowed or surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership	3,312	2.48	8	0.84
Prefer not to say	-	-	185	-
Unknown	-	-	815	-
Total (known data)	133,810*	100**	1,955	100

**Source: 2021 Census ** Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.*

Table 7: Workforce by Religion and Belief

Our Workforce by Religion and Belief

The profile of our workforce by religion and belief is presented in Table 7. Data on religion and belief is held for 57.90 % of the workforce which is a decrease from 63.50% in the previous year.

The religion and belief profile of employees remains largely unchanged from the previous year. Almost two thirds of employees (65.90%) hold a religion or belief. Of these over half the force (53.53%) self-reported as Christian.

Religion	Bedford Borough 16-74 Years		Bedford Borough Council Workforce	
	Number	%	Number	%
Christian	62,998	49.92	606	53.53
Buddhist	534	0.42	5	0.44
Hindu	2,295	1.82	21	1.85
Jewish	168	0.13	4	0.35
Muslim	8,565	6.79	39	3.45
Sikh	3,146	2.49	39	3.45
Other Religion	1,659	1.31	32	2.83
No Religion	46,831	37.11	386	34.10
Prefer not to say	-	-	428	
Unknown	-	-	395	
Total (known data)	126,196	100**	1,955	100

**Source: 2021 Census ** Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.*

Our Workforce by Sex

The profile of our workforce by sex is presented in Table 8. Compared to the previous year, the workforce split by sex has stayed similar, with a little over two thirds (66.70) of the workforce being female and a little under one third (33.30%) being male.

In comparison to the working age population, male employees are under-represented within the workforce; however, this sex split is typical for upper tier local authorities.

Table 8: Workforce by Sex

Sex	Bedford Borough 16-74 Years		Bedford Borough Council Workforce	
	Number	%	Number	%
Female	67,896	50.74	1304	66.70
Male	65,915	49.26	651	33.30
Total	133,811	100	1,955	100

**Source: 2021 Census*

Our Workforce by Sexual Orientation

The profile of our workforce by sexual orientation is presented in Table 9. Data on sexual orientation is held for 57.45% of our workforce, a decrease from the previous year (63.20%).

The vast majority (97.60%) of our workforce self-disclose as 'heterosexual'. There has been a slight decrease in the percentage of employees self-reporting as LGB (2.40%) in comparison to the last year (2.70%). Our workforce self-reporting as LGB (2.70%) is slightly lower than what is reported by the Office for National Statistics, which is estimated at 3.20%.

Table 9: Workforce by Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation	Bedford Borough 16-74 Years		Bedford Borough Council Workforce	
	Number	%	Number	%
Heterosexual	120,424	97.19	1096	97.60
LGB	3,483	2.81	27	2.40
Prefer not to say	-	-	425	
Unknown	-	-	407	
Total (known data)	123,907	100	1,955	100

**Source: 2021 Census*

Summary

The Council's workforce data shows that:

- **6.10% of employees have a disability.**
- **Almost one quarter of employees are from an ethnic minority background and three quarters of employees are White British.**
- **A little over two thirds of the Council's workforce are female.**
- **Two thirds of the Council's workforce have a religion or belief; almost one third do not.**
- **2.40% of the Council's workforce identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual.**
- **Younger people, people with disabilities, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and male employees continue to be under-represented within the workforce.**

Recruitment

The recruitment analysis has focussed on the likelihood of applicants who share a protected characteristic, being offered a position of employment. For each protected characteristic the recruitment analysis has considered the percentage of applicants for that protected characteristic who have applied, been shortlisted, and subsequently offered a post.

Between April 2022 and March 2023, the Council received 2204 job applications; 602 of these applicants were shortlisted for interview. Following the interview process, 225 applicants were offered a job.

Table 10: Recruitment by Age

Age Range	Total Applications	% of known data	Total Interviewed	% of known data	Total Appointed	% of known data
>25	387	17.56	71	11.79	26	11.56
25-29	367	16.65	67	11.13	20	8.89
30-34	352	15.97	84	13.95	30	13.33
35-39	274	12.43	76	12.62	30	13.33
40-44	235	10.66	67	11.13	29	12.89
45-49	188	8.53	68	11.30	25	11.11
50-54	203	9.21	78	12.96	29	12.89
55-59	116	5.26	55	9.14	20	8.89
60-64	70	3.18	29	4.82	12	5.33
65 plus	12	0.54	7	1.16	4	1.78
Subtotal (known data)	2204		602		225	
Subtotal (unknown data)	0		0		0	0.00
TOTAL	2204		602		225	

Please note: the data used is for all applications received between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023. Some of the applications may have led to start dates outside of the financial year 2022/23, which is why the number of starters shown in the tables below may differ from data elsewhere. Applicants in the lower age brackets (under 34 years) were well represented at the application stage (over 50% of all applications), but less so at the interview and appointment stages. The age brackets between 35 and 44 showed a higher proportion at the appointment stage compared to the number of applications.

Table 11: Recruitment by Disability

Disability	Total Applications	% of known data	Total Shortlisted	% of known data	Total Appointed	% of known data
Yes	118	5.51	39	6.91	11	5.45
No	2024	94.49	525	93.09	191	94.55
Subtotal (known data)	2142		564		202	
Subtotal (unknown data)	62	2.81	38	6.31	23	10.22
TOTAL	2204		602		225	

Based on known data applicants with disabilities were underrepresented in the number of applications received by the Council (5.51%), and throughout the recruitment process, in comparison to the percentage of residents in Bedford Borough (15.28%). This has decreased from the previous year (6.04%).

33% of applicants with a disability were successful in being shortlisted for interview, compared to 25.9% of applicants without a disability. 9.3% of applicants with a disability were appointed to a role, compared to 9.4% of applicants without a disability. Although the number of applicants with a disability appointed is slightly lower than applicants without a disability, the Council will work towards encouraging applicants with disabilities to apply for jobs.

Table 12: Recruitment by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Total Applications	% of known data	Total Shortlisted	% of known data	Total Appointed	% of known data
Asian British Bangladeshi	78	3.61	13	2.24	2	0.97
Asian British Chinese	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Asian British Indian	216	10.00	40	6.90	12	5.80

Asian British Other	45	2.08	6	1.03	4	1.93
Asian British Pakistani	144	6.67	27	4.66	4	1.93
Asian Chinese Other	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Subtotal	483	22.37	86	14.83	22	10.63
Black British African	240	11.12	31	5.34	12	5.80
Black British Caribbean	69	3.20	18	3.10	7	3.38
Other Black/African/Carib	13	0.60	3	0.52	0	0.00
Subtotal	322	14.91	52	8.97	19	9.18
Mixed White & Asian	20	0.93	4	0.69	1	0.48
Mixed White & Black African	10	0.46	2	0.34	1	0.48
Mixed White & Black Carib	48	2.22	8	1.38	2	0.97
Mixed Other	23	1.07	5	0.86	0	0.00
Subtotal	101	4.68	19	3.28	4	1.93
Other Ethnic Group	33	1.53	5	0.86	1	0.48
Arab Other	8	0.37	2	0.34	1	0.48
Subtotal	41	1.90	7	1.21	2	0.97
White Irish/ Gypsy or Irish Traveller	17	0.79	7	1.21	1	0.48
White Other	207	9.59	45	7.76	14	6.76
Subtotal	224	10.38	52	8.97	15	7.25
White British	988	45.76	364	62.76	145	70.05
Subtotal	988	45.76	364	62.76	145	70.05
Subtotal (known)	2159	100.00	580	100.00	207	100.00

data)						
White British	988	45.76	364	62.76	145	70.05
Non-White British	1171	54.24	216	37.24	62	29.95
Prefer not to say	45	2.04	22		18	
Undisclosed	0	0.00	0		0	
Unknown/Undisclosed	0	0.00	0		0	
Subtotal (unknown data)	45	2.04	22	3.65	18	8.70
TOTAL	2204		602		225	

In comparison to the ethnic minority working age population of Bedford Borough 35.68%, applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds were over-represented in the number of applications received by the Council (54.24%). While the percentage drops at the interview (37.24%), and again at the appointment stage (29.95%) these remain below the percentage of the working age population from ethnic minority backgrounds (35.68%).

Equality Diversity and Inclusion training is mandatory for all staff to complete. To ensure fairness during the recruitment process, all staff undertaking interviews must complete BBOLT unconscious bias training.

Table 13: Recruitment by Sex

Sex	Total Applications	% of known data	Total Shortlisted	% of known data	Total Appointed	% of known data
Female	1365	62.22	384	64.00	149	66.82
Male	819	37.33	213	35.50	73	32.74
Non-Binary	9	0.41	2	0.33	1	0.45
Transgender	1	0.05	1	0.17	0	0.00
Subtotal (known data)	2194		600		223	

Subtotal (unknown data) prefer not to say	10	0.45	2	0.33	2	0.89
TOTAL	2204		602		225	

62.22% of all applicants and 66.82% of all appointments were women; 10.91% of female applicants were appointed compared to 8.9% of male applicants. Whilst an overrepresentation of female applicants and appointments reflects the wider national trend for local authorities having a predominantly female workforce, our data also shows that male applicants were underrepresented in the Council's recruitment process. It continues to be the case that the roles advertised during 2022/23 included a high number of part-time roles in residential homes which historically have a significantly higher proportion of female applicants.

Table 14: Recruitment by Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation	Total Applications	% of known data	Total Shortlisted	% of known data	Total Appointed	% of known data
Heterosexual	1846	93.47	501	93.82	176	93.62
Bisexual	74	3.75	14	2.62	3	1.60
Gay Man	31	1.57	6	1.12	5	2.66
Lesbian/Gay Woman	24	1.22	13	2.43	4	2.13
LGB	129	6.53	33	6.18	12	6.38
Subtotal (known data)	1975		534		188	
Prefer not to say	229		68		37	16.44
Unknown	0		0		0	
Subtotal (unknown data)	229	10.39	68	11.30	37	16.44
Total	2204		602		225	

Based on known data, 6.53% of applicants and 6.38% of applicants appointed were LGB, which is a slight increase from the previous year (5.86% of applicants and 4.76% of applicants appointed). Again, there was a significant number of applicants that did not provide

information on their sexual orientation as part of the recruitment process, although a higher proportion did provide details than the previous year (10.39% unknown data in 2022/23 compared to 11.12% unknown data in 2021/22).

Table 15: Recruitment by Religion and Belief

Religion and Belief	Total Applications	% of known data	Total Shortlisted	% of known data	Total Appointed	% of known data
Christian	862	41.99	230	42.83	78	41.71
Buddhist	17	0.83	4	0.74	2	1.07
Hindu	102	4.97	19	3.54	5	2.67
Jewish	3	0.15	0	0.00	0	0.00
Muslim	280	13.64	45	8.38	10	5.35
No religion	674	32.83	215	40.04	82	43.85
Sikh	61	2.97	10	1.86	4	2.14
Other	54	2.63	14	2.61	6	3.21
Subtotal (known data)	2053	100	537	100	187	100
Prefer not to say	151		65		38	
Unknown	0		0		0	
Subtotal (unknown data)	151	6.85	65	10.80	38	16.89
Total	2204		602		225	

There remains a high percentage of applicants not declaring their religion and belief at the application stage, increasing at both shortlist and appointment stage. The percentage of unknown data has decreased from the previous year (6.85% unknown data in 2022/23 compared to 8.54% unknown data in 2021/22) but remain similar for the other two stages.

In comparison to the local population, 35.00% applicants who hold no religion were slightly underrepresented throughout the recruitment process. Applicants and appointments of candidates who were Christian (41.71%) were underrepresented in comparison to the local

population (47.08%). Previous data held in the 2021/22 report on local population who were Christians was 59.30%, which is a decrease of 12.22%.

The Council's known recruitment data indicates that:

- **Males continue to be underrepresented at each stage of the recruitment process. However, the roles advertised in 2022/23 had a high proportion of part-time roles in residential homes which are generally more likely to have female applicants.**
- **Applicants with disabilities are underrepresented throughout the recruitment process in terms of numbers, but the percentage of applicants with a disability that are appointed to a role is similar to the percentage of applicants not declaring a disability that are appointed.**
- **The percentage of LGB applicants increased from the previous year (6.38% compared to 5.85%), while the number of applications rose (6.53 % compared to 5.86%).**
- **Applicants are least likely to disclose sexual orientation (10.39%) and religion (6.85%), but these categories have seen a reduction in unknown data since the last year.**
- **The working age local population for ethnic minority background has increased by 7.98%. However, the percentages of applications received, shortlisted, and appointed continue to be underrepresented.**

Employees Leaving the Council

Table 16: Reasons for Leaving Employment.

Leaving Reason	No.	%
Death In Service	3	1.16
Dismissal	8	3.09
Fixed Term Contract End	7	2.70
Redundancy Compulsory	5	1.93
Redundancy Voluntary	3	1.16
Resignation Not returning from Maternity Leave	2	0.77
Resignation New Job	107	41.31
Resignation New Position in Local Government	0	0.00
Resignation - Personal Reasons	60	23.17
Resignation Re Location	8	3.09
Resignation Undisclosed	14	5.41
Retirement Early	0	0.00
Retirement Early due to ill health	2	0.77
Retirement Standard	31	11.97
Settlement Agreement	9	3.47
Total	259	100

Table 17: Leavers by Age

Age Range	No.	%
Under 25	21	8.11
25-29	24	9.27
30-34	25	9.65
35-39	28	10.81
40-44	23	8.88
45-49	31	11.97
50-54	21	8.11
55-59	28	10.81
60-64	37	14.28
65 +	21	8.11
Total	259	100*

Table 18: Leavers by Disability

Disability	No.	%
Yes	8	5.16
No	140	94.59
Prefer not to say	0	-
Unknown	111	-
Total (known data)	259	99.75

Table 19: Leavers by Ethnicity

Ethnic Group	No.	%
Asian / Asian British	19	10.11
Black / Black British	20	10.64
Mixed	5	2.66
Other	0	0.00
White British	131	69.68
White Non-British	13	6.91
Prefer not to say	63	
Unknown	8	
Total (known data)	259	100

Table 21: Leavers by Sex

Sex	No.	%
Female	179	69.11
Male	80	30.89
Total	259	100

Table 20: Leavers by Religion and Belief

Religion	No.	%
Christian	64	43.24
Buddhist	1	0.68
Hindu	3	2.03
Jewish	0	0.00
Muslim	11	7.43
Sikh	1	0.68
Other Religion	13	8.78
No Religion	55	37.16
Prefer not to say	70	-
Unknown	41	-
Total (known data)	259	100

Table 22: Leavers by Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation	No.	%
Heterosexual	143	95.97
LGB	6	4.03
Prefer not to say	68	-
Unknown	42	-
Total (known Data)	259	100

Summary Data on Employees Leaving the Council




- **259 employees left Council employment in the twelve months from 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022, compared to the previous year 313 of employees.**
- **The main reason for leaving the Council continues to be for a new job (41.31% compared to the previous year of 35.80%) and then for personal reasons (23.17%, compared to the previous year of 19.80%).**
- **Statistically the numbers involved are too small to draw meaningful conclusions on the protected characteristics. However, the highest increase in the number of employees leaving was in the age group 25-29, (9.27% compared to 4.50% in the previous year). Compared to the previous year, the highest increase in leavers by ethnicity were Asian/Asian British (increase of 3.71%) and Black/Black British (increase of 4.94%). The percentage for White British leavers decreased (from 75.30% to 69.68%).**

Top 5% Earners

The Council reports quarterly in the Key Performance Business Support Report on:

- BV11a - the percentage of top 5% of earners that are female.
- BV11bi - the percentage of top 5% of earners from an ethnic minority background.⁶
- BV11c - the percentage of top 5% of earners who have a disability.³

Table 23: Year-End 2022-23 Targets and Outturn:⁴

Indicator	BV11a Female	BV11bi Ethnic Minority	BV11c Disability
Target	50.0%	15.0%	5.0%
Outturn	55.6%	17.3%	4.7%
RAG / DOT 2022-23	 G	 G	 A

The RAG (red, amber, green) rating is against the target and the DOT (direction of travel) is compared against the previous outturn. Based on known data, the outturn reported shows that the top 5% targets in regard to female and ethnic minority were above and in-line with previous performance respectively. The disability indicator was slightly lower (i.e. just below target) compared to the last year. The mainstream disability and ethnic minority indicators were slightly below target but above the previous outturn.

The Council has not been able to meet its target for disability.

³ The definition of top 5% earners is in keeping with guidance on benchmarking by taking the top 5% identified by ranking staff according to their gross full-time equivalent pay and including any individuals on an identical salary at the bottom end of the 5% threshold.

⁴ The Council has Personnel Services' targets in regards, to disability, ethnicity, and gender as part of the Best Value Performance Indicators (BV11). Caution is required in interpreting the BV11 percentages (outturn) as this involves low numbers.

⁶ The top 5% and mainstream local authority employees from minority ethnic communities are in-line with the Equalities Duty Classifications Monitoring Scheme (i.e. this includes White Irish and White Other in the numerator for White).

Table 24: Targets for 2023/24

	BV11a Female	BV11bi Ethnic Minority	BV11c Disability
Target	50.0%	15.0%	5.0%

Disciplinary and Grievance

Between April 2022 and March 2023, the Council dealt with 42 disciplinary cases and 10 grievances. This data relates to employees who have been subject to formal disciplinary procedures and employees who raised a grievance under the Council's formal grievance procedure.

Disciplinary

The 42 cases in this reporting year is an increase of 68% compared to the 25 cases reported in 2021/22.

Sex

Male employees made up 64.3% of all disciplinary cases and only 33.3% of the workforce. As seen in previous years, this disproportionate high figure is due to the majority of disciplinary cases taking place within a directorate which is male dominated.

Age

Employees aged 55-59 years made up 26.2% of disciplinary cases, yet this age range makes up only 15.91% of the overall workforce.

Ethnicity

Based on known data for ethnicity, 34.5% of disciplinary cases concerned ethnic minority employees compared to 25.41% ethnic minority employees in the overall workforce. This trend has been noted in previous years.

Religion and Belief

In percentage terms, employees who are Christian are disproportionally involved in disciplinary cases at 59.10%% compared to 53.53% Christian employees in the overall workforce.

Table 25: Disciplinary Cases

Sex	No.	%	Ethnicity	No.	%
Male	27	64.3	White British	19	65.5
Female	15	35.7	Non-White British	10	34.5
			Prefer Not to Say	11	-
			Unknown	2	-
Age	No.	%	Disability	No.	%
Under 25	2	4.8	Yes	0	0
25 - 29	4	9.5	No	27	100
30 - 34	5	12.0	Unknown	15	-
35 - 39	1	2.4			
40 - 44	6	14.3			
45 - 49	6	14.3			
50 - 54	3	7.1			
55 - 59	11	26.2			
60 +	4	9.5			

Grievances

During the period 2022/23 a total of 10 grievances were submitted by employees through the formal grievance procedure, however as with previous years, it is expected that a number of grievances would have been resolved informally prior to employing the Council's formal procedure.

As the total number of grievances is low, it is not considered statistically significant as the percentages can vary considerably without implying significant differences. However, it is noted that 100% of grievances were submitted by heterosexual employees. A noted change from previous years is that grievances were split equally with 50% submitted by male employees and 50% submitted by female employees.

The Council's data on disciplinary action shows that:

- **Although there is an increase of 68% of disciplinary cases (42 cases) in 2022/23, it must be noted that prior to the Covid19 Pandemic this number of disciplinary cases per year was the norm.**
- **Employees aged 55-59 years old, and male employees are more likely to be subject to the Council's disciplinary process.**
- **Ethnic minority employees make up 25.41% of the overall workforce, however 34.50% of employees involved in disciplinary cases were from an ethnic minority background.**
- **Caution should be taken in interpreting this data due to the relatively small numbers involved, it may not yield meaningful findings.**

Training

During 2022/23, 1354 employees accessed 241 different training courses managed through Workforce Development. The main course categories accessed include corporate induction, wellbeing, personal development, and social care training. The majority of the training undertaken was e-learning courses via the Council's Online Learning and Training Portal BBOLT, additionally with some virtual and in-person training. Service specific training organised by and recorded within individual Council directorates is not included in this data.

Table 26: Training Accessed by Age, Disability, Ethnicity and Sex

Age	Headcount	%	Disability	Headcount	%	Ethnic Group	Headcount	%
Under 25	47	3.5	No	695	94.7	White British	781	73.3
25-29	63	4.7	Yes	39	5.3	White Non-British	69	6.5
30-34	100	7.4	Total (known data)	734	100	Asian or Asian British	103	9.7
35-39	150	11.1				Black or Black British	78	7.3
40-44	186	13.7	Sex	Headcount	%	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	20	1.9
45-49	173	12.8	Female	997	73.6	Arab or other ethnic group	14	1.3
50-54	214	15.8	Male	357	26.4	Total (known data)	1065	100
55-59	216	15.9	Total	1354	100			
60+	205	15.1						
Total	1354	100						

Table 27: Training Accessed by Religion and Sexual Orientation

Religion/belief	Headcount	%	Sexual orientation	Headcount	%
Christian	437	55.4	Heterosexual	763	97.7
Buddhist	4	0.5	LGB	18	2.3
Hindu	16	2.0	Total (known data)	781	100
Jewish	1	0.1			
Muslim	26	3.3			
Sikh	29	3.8			
Other religion	20	2.5			
No religion	256	32.4			
Total (known data)	789	100			

Age, disability, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation data for employees accessing training is relative to the workforce profile in percentage terms. There are no concerns highlighted from the data.

There is a significant difference in the percentage of men in the overall workforce (33.3%) compared to the percentage of men accessing training opportunities (26.4%). This can possibly be explained by men within the Environment Directorate working in manual roles that may limit their access to training opportunities, especially as the majority of courses are offered online via e-learning. Manual roles may require employees to be physically present at their workplace away from a computer, limiting their flexibility to access e-learning during working hours. Care homes with a predominantly female manual workforce have worked with Workforce Development to optimise the use of e-learning in more creative ways such as undertaking this training within a group setup.

Pay Gap

Introduction

All public, private, and voluntary sector organisations with 250 or more employees⁵ are required to calculate and publish six specific measures regarding the pay gap between men and women in their organisation. Relevant public sector organisations are required to annually collect data on a snapshot date of 31 March and publish the metrics before 30 March of the next year. The six metrics required by the regulations are:

1. The difference in the mean hourly rate of pay.
2. The difference in the median hourly rate of pay.
3. The difference in the mean bonus pay.
4. The difference in the median bonus pay.
5. The proportion of male and female employees who were paid bonus pay.
6. The proportion of male and female employees according to quartile pay bands

As the Council has more than 250 employees, it is a relevant organisation covered by the regulations and as such data was collected on the snapshot date of 31 March 2023. This identified 1955 employees in scope of the Gender Pay Gap analysis, 110 employees were not 'full pay' employees and were removed from the analysis making a total of 1845 employees used in the calculation of the metrics of which 1220 (66.12%) were female and 625 (33.88%) were male.

The gender pay gap shows the difference in average pay between all males and females in the workforce. If a workforce has a particularly high gender pay gap, this can indicate there may be several issues to deal with; the individual calculations may help identify what those issues are. The gender pay gap is different from equal pay which deals with the pay differences between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs, or work of equal value. It is unlawful to pay people unequally because they are a man or a woman.

The Council is committed to fairness. Promoting equality of opportunity for all and a culture that values differences. As an employer, it is important to ensure our workforce is representative of the community it serves, and that the Council attracts and retains talented

⁵ The definition used for 'employee(s)' is the wider definition under S.83 of the Equality Act 2010 and includes casual workers.

employees from a wide range of backgrounds and with diverse skills and experience. The Council regularly carries out an equal pay audit to ensure that our systems and processes are fair, equitable and robust. The last equal pay audit was completed in June 2018.

All data included in this section of the report has been calculated in accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 – Specific Duties and Public Authorities Regulations 2017. Overtime hours (hours worked in excess of the standard 37 hour working week) and additional hours over and above contracted hours where part-time workers have worked this subject to a maximum of 37 hours per week have not been included in the calculation. For workers who carry out ‘sleep in’ duties an additional 9 hours per occasion has been included in the calculation for the number of hours worked.

Gender Pay Gap Reporting 2023

The six metrics required by the 2017 Regulations are shown in the following tables and charts. Additional narrative has been provided to explain the context and the Council’s results.

Table 28: Mean and Median (Metrics 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Difference between males and females	Mean (Average)		Median (Middle)	
	2022	2023	2022	2023
Gender Pay Gap	3.1%	2.32%	0.68%	3.48%
Gender Bonus Gap	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Table 28 shows that the mean gender pay gap improved by 0.78%, whereas the median gender pay gap has widened by 2.80%, compared to 2022.

The mean (average) is calculated by adding employees’ basic pay plus, where relevant, defined allowances and then dividing it by the number of employees. The overall mean gender pay gap for the Council is 2.32% which means that male employees received, on average, 2.32% more pay than female employees. Further analysis shows the mean hourly rate female employees were paid was £17.23 per hour and male employees were paid on average £17.64 per hour.

The Office for National Statistics prefers to use the median hourly earnings because the median is not affected by extreme values, such as changes in the earnings of small numbers of very high earners. The median is the pay rate received by the employee in the middle of the pay distribution and is not affected by extreme values.

The Council’s median gender pay gap is 3.48% which means that the middle paid male employee received 3.48% more than the middle-paid female employee. Further analysis has shown that female employees were paid a median hourly rate of £14.43 and male employees were paid a median hourly rate £14.95.

Bedford Borough Council’s gender pay gap is significantly below the national public sector scores of 11.5% for the mean and 14.00% for the median, as published by the Office of National Statistics in their Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.⁶

The difference between the mean and median gender pay gap in 2022 was 2.42%. In 2023 this difference decreased to 1.16% as although the median pay gap increased by 2.80%, the mean pay gap decreased by 0.78%.

As the mean gender pay gap is lower than the median gender pay gap (2.32% < 3.48%), the data set is skewed to the left indicating that the workforce consists of a very large middle pay band with no extreme pay differentials and minority differentials of lower paid workers.

The pay gaps do not indicate that male and female employees are being paid differently for equal work. The Council operates a robust grading structure based on a non-discriminatory job evaluation scheme to ensure that it complies with equality legislation and provide equal pay for work of equal value.

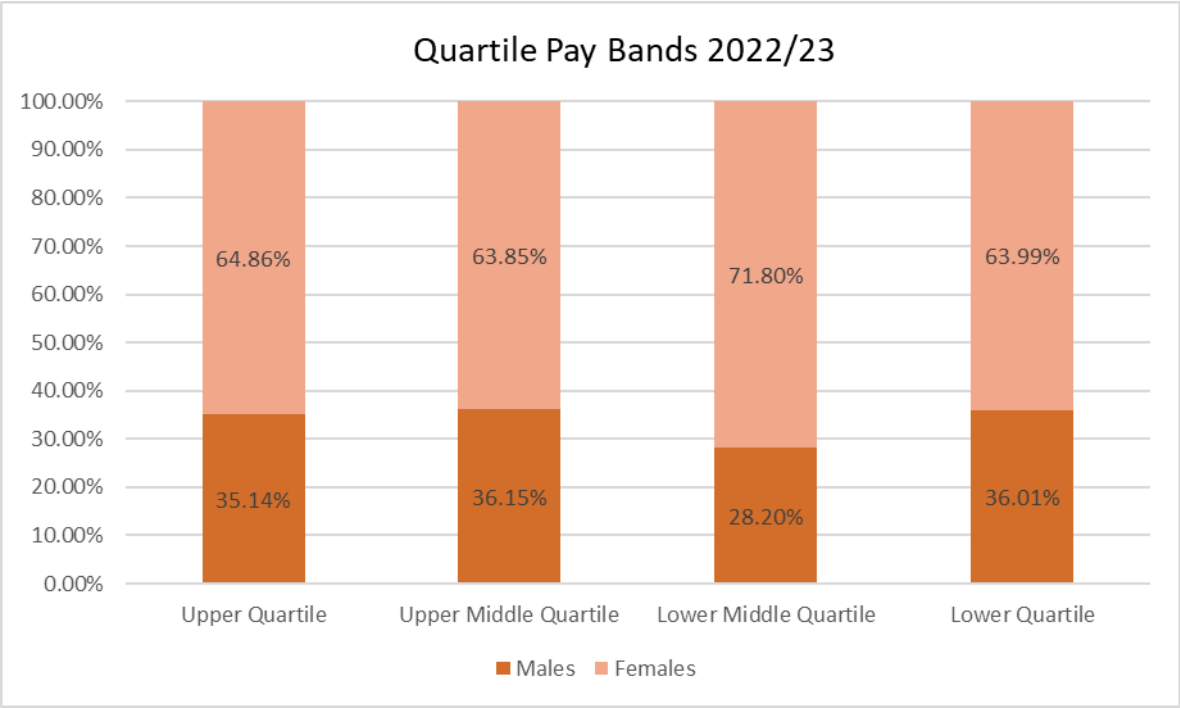
Table 29: Bonus (Metric 5)

Proportion of employees receiving Bonus	Female		Male	
	2022	2023	2022	2023
Receiving Bonus	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Not receiving Bonus	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

⁶ [ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2023 \(Provisional Edition\)](#): Public Sector Gender Pay Gap (Table 13.12)

The Council does not pay bonuses to any employees.

Chart 2: Quartile Bands (Metric 6)



The pay quartile analysis identifies the proportions of male and female full-pay relevant employees in each of the four quartile pay bands.⁷ It shows that the distribution of male and female employees through the pay bands does not reflect the precise composition by sex of the employees used in the calculation of the gender pay gap albeit close in value; 66.12% females and 33.88% males.

There has been an increase of females in the Upper Quartile by 1.86%; in 2022 there were 63.00% females in this quartile and in 2023 there were 64.86% females in this quartile. The latter could be due to several factors. At the start of 2023, two new female Chief Officers commenced with the Council and another female Chief Officer started Acting Up into an Assistant Chief Executive post, which would have

⁷ To calculate the relevant proportions, all male and female full-pay relevant employees are ranked by hourly rate of pay. This list is then divided into four sections (quartiles) with equal numbers of employees in each.

increased the female distribution in the Upper Quartile. Also, some female Advanced Social Work Practitioners received retention payments that increased their overall GPG hourly rate quite significantly in March changing their quartiles.

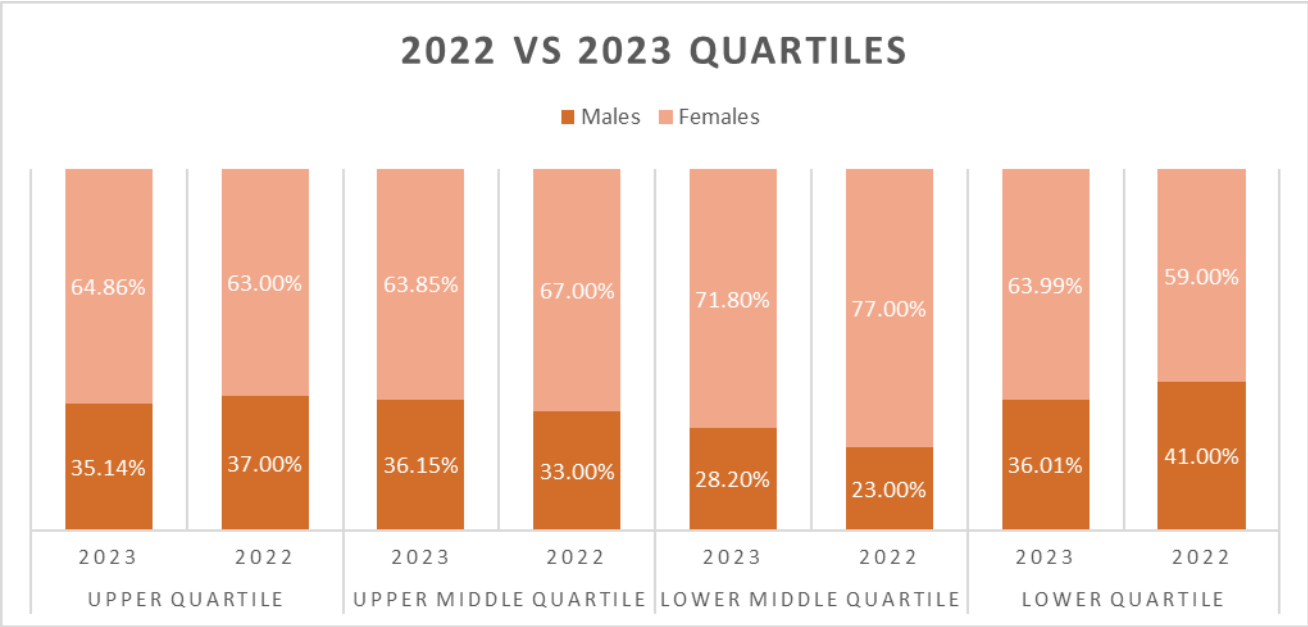
There has been an increase in the number of males in the Upper Middle Quartile by 3.15%; in 2022 there were 33.00% males in this quartile and in 2023 there were 36.15%. This could be because of male employees who have been promoted to or gained employment in Upper Middle Quartile jobs since the previous year's report. Alternatively, male employees who were in the Upper Quartile in the last year could have been pushed into the Upper Middle Quartile due to the increase in female hires in high level roles within the Council.

There has been a significant drop in female representation in the Lower Middle Quartile by 5.20%, dropping from 77.00% in 2022 to 71.80% in 2023. This could be because female staff have moved into the Upper Middle and Lower Quartiles, most supported by the female representation in the Lower Quartile rising by 4.99% in 2023. This could be in part due to the intake of a number of new female Apprentices paid at the national minimum wage. However, another factor could be the shift in the total number of employees per quartile. In 2022 there were 454 employees in each quartile and in 2023 there has been an increase to 461 employees per quartile meaning there are a larger proportion of staff members. The fact the Council has a larger sample size leads to chances of more accurate values, as the data nears a normal distribution among all the quartiles; overall giving a better clarity of results to be interpreted.

Most of the quartiles do represent the overall male female split proportions of the Council of 66.12% female and 33.88% male. The proportion of males and females in the Upper Quartile is the nearest to the overall gender composition of the workforce. This is a shift from the previous year where the proportion of males and females most clearly resembling the Council's workforce was the Upper Middle Quartile. This shift mirrors the fact that the proportion of female workforce in the two middle quartiles have both decreased with more women moving into the Upper and Lower Quartile extremes. The least representative of the overall workforce is the Lower Middle Quartile with a higher proportion of women than the general Council workforce distribution.

The proportions of male and female full-pay relevant employees within all four quartile bands changed compared to 2022. This indicates a transition of female and male staff between pay bands in the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The two extreme quartiles have both increased in female representation, whilst this decreased in the middle quartiles. See Chart 3 below for a visual comparison.

Chart 3: Two-Year Quartile Comparison



The data analysis represents a snapshot in time, and it should be noted that the Council’s demographics and breakdown by sex will change with time as employees leave and join the Council.

The narrowing of the mean gender pay gap from 2022 to 2023 can be attributed to several factors. There have been several Secondments and Acting Up arrangements in senior roles that have been performed by female employees who have received higher pay as a result which will have had a significant impact on the change in the quartile pay bands. The narrowing of the mean gap suggests that the female workforce is more present (as supported by the quartile breakdown) in the Upper and Lower Quartile compared to 2022, thus causing a mean that is not dissimilar to the male workforce that resides more in the Upper, Middle and Lower Quartile through the presence of a few highly paid females. This increase of the mean pay gap appears to not be present in the median pay gap as the highest paid female’s salary value would not have an effect on calculating the middle worker of the female workforce, but merely the quantity of higher paid female’s salaries in comparison to the male employees. The median is weighed down by more women in the Council occupying lower paying support and administrative roles; this is the driving force behind the median pay gap. The potential increase in

women in lower paying support and administrative roles within the Council is demonstrated by the increase of women in the lower quartile. As the Council has a much larger female workforce (almost 2:1) it would track for there to be a larger span and variety of workers within the female bracket than the male bracket, making the salary range larger for the women.

Non-Statutory Measures 2023

Ethnicity

The Council voluntarily calculates the pay gap for ethnicity (Table 30). There are 1166 (65.58%) White British employees, 271 (15.24%) Non-White British employees and 408 (22.95%) Unknown ethnicity employees in the scope of the analysis.

Table 30: Ethnicity Pay Gap Data on 2-Category Metric

Characteristic	Mean (Average)		Median (Middle)	
	2022	2023	2022	2023
Ethnicity	9.30%	12.21%	3.28%	11.00%

The mean ethnicity pay gap for the Council is 12.21% which means that White British employees received, on average, 12.21% more pay than Non-White British employees. To put this into perspective, the mean hourly rate means that White British employees were paid £18.34 per hour and Non-White British employees were paid on average £16.10 per hour.

The median ethnicity pay gap is 11.00% which means that the middle paid White British employee received 11.00% more than the middle paid Non-White British employee. Further analysis shows the mean hourly rate female employees were paid £15.63 per hour and Non-White British employees were paid on average £13.91 per hour.

Both the mean and median ethnicity pay gaps based on a 2-category metric (White British vs Non-White British) has widened, the mean has increased by 2.91% and the median significantly by 7.72%.

A common challenge in ethnicity pay gap reporting is the small sample sizes when breaking a workforce down into multiple ethnicity groups. The smaller each sample size becomes, the higher the likeliness of false skew. New members of staff, as well as leavers could

influence the information year by year without truly reflecting the workforce. Nevertheless, if ethnicity categories are kept too broad it may mask the impact on a specific ethnic group within the Non-White British category.

For this reason, in this year's pay gap analysis, it was decided to explore an expanded 6-category metric (White British, White Non-British, Mixed Multiple Ethnicity, Asian or Asian British, Black, or Black British and Arab or Other Ethnicity) alongside the usual 2-category metric. There are 1079 (58.36%) White British employees, 91 (4.92%) White Non-British employees, 25 (1.35%) Mixed Multiple Ethnicity employees, 133 (7.19%) Asian or Asian British employees, 99 (5.35%) Black or Black British employees, 14 (0.76%) Arab or Other Ethnicity employees and 408 (22.07%) employees with unknown ethnicity in the scope of the analysis. As this is the first year presenting an expanded breakdown it is not possible to compare these figures to previous years. All the categories show a significant pay gap, however the small sample sizes for some makes it impossible to attest to their validity as a representation of the Council as a whole employer.

Table 31: Ethnicity Pay Gap Data on 6-Category Metric

Statistics (2023)	White British	White Non-British	Mixed Multiple Ethnicity	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Arab or Other Ethnicity	Unknown
Number in Category	1079	91	25	133	99	14	408
Mean (Average)		11.23%	7.11%	14.60%	11.67%	11.01%	
Median (Middle)		10.30%	-2.37%	11.00%	12.28%	18.52%	

The largest mean pay gap is within the category of Asian or Asian British employees (15%). Across all categories, the mean is higher than the median, suggesting that the data is positively skewed towards lower values pulling the mean to that side. Nevertheless, it cannot be ignored that the small sample sizes for certain ethnic groups could cause their mean data to show skews that are not representative as each member of staff's hourly pay rate carries a heavier weight on the mean which could cause the data to be deemed insignificant.

The median shows pay gaps across all groups, except for the Mixed Multiple Ethnicity category where there is a negative pay gap. The Mixed Multiple Ethnicity bracket hosts only 1.35% of the disclosed staff therefore this finding could be deemed insignificant. Similarly, the finding that the Arab or Other Ethnicity category has the largest median pay gap could also be deemed insignificant due to the small

sample size of 0.76% of the known data The median pay gaps for the other three ethnicity categories are more in line with the overall median pay gap listed in the 2-category metric. Nevertheless, these differences demonstrate that consideration should be given to expanding the ethnicity categories used to identify if ethnicity specific pay gaps are present.

The ethnicity data used in this year’s report shows that 22% of employees have not disclosed their ethnicity which is an increase of 8%, compared to 2022. Encouraging staff to complete their equality information may help the Council better track pay gaps between ethnicity categories.

Disability

The Council voluntarily calculates the pay gap for disability (Table 32)⁸. There are 953 (52.00%) employees who declared no disability, 62 (3.00%) employees who declared a disability and 830 (45.00%) employees choosing to not specify. In 2022, 38.50% of employees chose not to specify and so there is an increase in employees who are choosing to withhold this information.

The mean disability pay gap for the Council is 4.64% which means that employees who declared no disability received, on average, 4.64% more pay than employees who declared a disability. The median disability pay gap is 5.96% which means that the middle-paid employee who declared no disability received 5.96% more than the middle-paid employee who declared a disability. To give further context, the mean hourly rate for self-declared non-disabled staff is £17.66 and median hourly rate of £14.95; while self-declared disabled staff have a mean hourly rate of £16.84 and median hourly rate of £13.91.

Both the mean and median disability pay gaps have widened; the mean has increased by 3.64% and the median significantly by 5.28%.

Table 32: Disability Pay Gap

Characteristic	Mean (Average)		Median (Middle)	
	2022	2023	2022	2023
Disability	1.00%	4.64%	0.68%	5.96%

Due to the small sample size, changes such as the disability status of new starters and leavers could have a significant impact on the figures. If new staff who have declared a disability join at either end of the pay spectrum, that could cause both the median and the mean pay gap to change significantly. Only 3% of the Council workforce declared a disability and 52% declared they do not have a disability, that means comparing two greatly different sized sample populations.

⁸ To demonstrate our commitment to fair and equal pay for all employees, the Council has been voluntarily calculating the ethnicity pay gap since 2013/14 and the disability pay gap since 2014/15.

To reduce the disability pay gap it is important to try and reduce the amount of unknown data held by encouraging staff to complete their equality information. Only 4.7% of the top 5% earners have a known disability (this is below the 5.0% target), which implies that greater focus should also be placed on creating opportunities and supporting disabled staff to reach the top 5% of earners, and in general higher paid jobs.

Summary

The Council's pay gap analysis show that:

- **The overall mean gender pay gap is 2.32% and the median pay gap is 3.48%.**
- **The mean gender pay gap improved, while the median widened compared to 2022.**
- **The gender pay gaps identified through this analysis are mainly as a result of employee distribution with a higher proportion of female workers in lower paid roles.**
- **The improvement of the mean gender pay gap can be partially attributed to two female Chief Officers who commenced with the Council at the start of 2023 and another female Chief Officer Acting up into an Assistant Chief Executive post.**
- **The overall mean ethnicity pay gap is 12.21% and the median pay gap is 11.00%.**
- **Both ethnicity pay gaps widened in comparison to 2022.**
- **Calculating the ethnicity pay gap based on six categories made the significance of the results more questionable, however it does demonstrate pay gaps among the different ethnicity categories in comparison to White British employees.**
- **The overall mean disability pay gap is 4.64% and the median pay gap is 5.96%.**
- **Both disability pay gaps widened compared to 2022.**

Achievements (within the reporting period)

1. Introduction of the Workforce Strategy 2022- 2026, which features EDI as one of the themes. It outlines what has been achieved and sets out further actions to meet the Council's objectives.
2. Launch of a Management Apprenticeship Programme (Level 3 & 5), encouraging the development of female, ethnic minority and disabled employees who either aspire to move into a management position in future or those already managing people who want to further develop their managerial skills.
3. Set up of employee-led Early Careers Network and Menopause Network which brought the number of Council staff networks to 5. The Council continues to encourage the set up a Staff Disability Forum.
4. The mean gender pay gap improved in comparison to the previous reporting year, from 3.10% to 2.32 %.
5. Purchase of LinkedIn Recruiter License which supports the Council in reaching out to a wider and more inclusive recruitment market.
6. Promotion of trans inclusion in One Team staff communications, including encouraging staff to use gender pronouns in email signatures.
7. The first Big Conversation successfully launched with the topic being Neurodiversity in the Workplace. Workshops and conversation created opportunities for discussion and reflection across the Council.
8. Introduction of Informal Recognition Toolkit helping managers and colleagues to recognise diverse individual contributions made by their team and peers.
9. Change Champions representing all directorates, champion and steer transformation by providing regular updates and feedback and seeking out concerns, questions and suggestions from colleagues, including identifying equality matters relating to the change process.
10. Roll out of a comprehensive collection of 17 Equality Diversity and Inclusion e-learning courses via BBOLT, including Unconscious Bias Awareness mandatory for all recruitment panel members.
11. Introduction of mandatory refresher Equality, Diversity and Inclusion e-learning training to be undertaken every 2 years.
12. Suicide Prevention and other mental health training delivered by MIND were offered to all staff.
13. Continued facilitation of agile working to support staff in achieving a healthy the balance of work and home life.

Future Actions

Actions will be monitored over the period of the Council's Workforce Strategy 2022-2026.

Actions	Lead	Outcome
Strategy, Policy & Guidance		
Implement and update the equality actions identified in the Workforce Strategy Report 2022 -2026.	HR	Successful implementation and self-accountability.
Develop a Council-wide Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy encompassing the workforce, as well as service delivery.	Senior EDI Officer	Develop an inclusive culture where individuals are respected and treated fairly, where diversity is celebrated, and where everyone regardless of background can reach their full potential, both within the Council's workforce and in the work done to serve the community.
Review of Recruitment Process, including focus on EDI-related aspects.	HR	Attract and retain a diverse workforce.
Explore options to offer guaranteed interviews for care leavers where minimum criteria are met for apprenticeships posts and possibly wider.	Workforce Development	Enable care leavers to break down barriers to employment and support them to achieve their potential.
Review Equality Analysis Guidance and Reporting form. Support better understanding of undertaking Equality Analyses and the wider Public Sector Equality Duty.	Senior EDI Officer	Considered decision making that will advance equality, inclusion and diversity by removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people because of their protected characteristics.
Launch new Work Experience Guidance giving priority to young people in receipt of free school meals, LAC, young carers, with a EHCP or SEN.	Workforce Development	Help local young people with protected characteristics (including those in care and from lower socio-economic backgrounds) to achieve their goals through building confidence, learning new skills and applying the knowledge they have gained.
Develop Menopause Guidance for Managers	Team Leader People	Ensure staff experiencing the menopause are supported and feel included in their working environments. Create open culture for discussing issues relating to menopause.
Review the Performance and Development Review (PDR) Guidance and process, including embedding EDI as an objective for all staff	Workforce Development	Make the overall process more accessible to all. Integrating EDI into all working practices through objective setting.

Actions	Lead	Outcome
Data & Targets		
Reconfigure employee self-service system to capture additional equalities data on gender reassignment and sexual orientation. Promote self-reporting on equality data.	HR Systems & Senior EDI Officer	Decrease in unknown data will allow a better understanding of the workforce, help address disparities and inequality, and support long-term strategic planning.
Collect qualitative data to understand barriers experienced by young staff, staff with disabilities and staff from ethnic minorities.	HR	Inform and implement positive change through staff consultation, which also promotes staff inclusion. Address issues that cannot be identified through qualitative data.
Improve annual Workforce Equality Report accessibility, e.g. through including graphs, charts etc.	Senior EDI Officer & HR Data & Processing Officer	Data in a user-friendly format which is easier to understand and compare for all users.
Collect qualitative data through exit interviews when employees leave to gain better insight and understanding of reasons for leaving	HR Resourcing	Support diversity and inclusion, by providing valuable insights into employees' experiences and identifying areas for improvement.
Breakdown and analyse apprentice equality data comparing it to the overall workforce and determine how representative the apprentice cohort is of the local community to identify under-represented groups.	Workforce Development	Allow steps to be taken to attract applicants into apprenticeships from under-represented groups and to encourage and support staff from under-represented groups to undertake an apprenticeship as a development opportunity.
Work with the Performance Team to review targets for the top 5% earners.	HR and Performance Team	Continue to work at increasing diversity at senior levels internal promotion and external recruitment.
Reduce ethnicity and disability pay gaps (in addition to the gender pay gap) through working on removing barriers to retention and development – and thereby pay progression – for these staff groups.	HR	Ensure ethnic minority and disabled staff have equal access to career progression and higher paid jobs.

Actions	Lead	Outcome
Develop, Collaborate & Celebrate		
Deliver face-to-face training on Unconscious Bias for managers, to supplement available e-learning.	Senior EDI Officer	Better understanding of unconscious bias how it affects the workplace, and what can be done to mitigate its effects.
Starting quarterly Welcome Sessions for New Starters and a biannual Conference for new Tier 3 and 4 Managers with a dedicated EDI agenda item.	Workforce Development & Senior EDI Officer	Raise awareness by addressing everyday workplace issues surrounding EDI. Result in a better understanding of EDI good practice and how to implement it
Offer Recruitment Training for managers.	Workforce Development	Support managers to successfully implement the equality and diversity elements of the Equality Act in recruitment and selection.
Encourage and support the setup of further staff forums.	Senior EDI Officer	Promoting a more inclusive workforce allowing employees to create a safe space to share lived experience and influence Council workforce policies.
Network with others from inside and outside the organisation to keep up-to-date and to share EDI-related learning and best practice.	Senior EDI Officer	Benchmark progress against others and explore what they are doing to adopt and adapt ideas where appropriate.
Set up an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Champion Forum.	Senior EDI Officer	Promote equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace. Help influence and inform policies.
Celebrate Key Events from the Diversity Calendar.	Senior EDI Officer	Raise awareness of and promote inclusivity, respect, and appreciation for individual differences.
Introduce a formal Staff Recognition Scheme	Workforce Development	Recognise and celebrate diverse contributions and perspectives to help foster an inclusive workplace culture.

Appendix A: Personnel Services Policies

Sickness Absence Policy and Manager's Guide	The Sickness Absence Policy and Managers' Guide ensures managers are aware of their responsibilities to support employees, through reasonable adjustments as required, to return to work after a period of sickness absence relating to their disability.
Recruitment Guidelines	The Recruitment Policy outlines the Council's commitment to undertake recruitment in accordance with the Government's disability confident scheme as a Disability Confident employer.
Flexible Working Guidelines	The Flexible Working Guidelines are produced as part of the Council's commitment to providing flexible and family friendly working policies. The Flexible Working Guidelines outline an employee's legal right to apply for flexible working. It also outlines a manager's responsibility to consider applications for flexible working seriously.
Maternity/Adoption Guidance and Support Leave	These guides ensure managers and employees are aware of and understand the Council's maternity/adoption and support leave provisions.
Paternity and Parental Leave Guidance	These guides ensure managers and employees are aware of and understand the Council's paternity and parental leave provisions.
Redundancy Procedure and Guidelines	<p>The Redundancy Procedure ensures that in any selection criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An employee's genuine long term sickness absence must not be considered to ensure no disadvantage to employees with a disability. • Assessing experience must be based on an employee's ability rather than the number of years they have undertaken such activities to ensure that there is no age discrimination. • Consideration of flexibility must not be used in a way that disadvantages female employees or carers who are more likely to work flexibly due to caring responsibilities.
Domestic Abuse Support Guidelines	The Council acknowledges that domestic abuse can occur in all areas of society, and it will treat this with the same degree of seriousness as any other form of harassment, violence or abuse and is not to be tolerated. The Council will strive to create a working environment that promotes this principle and supports those experiencing or are involved in domestic abuse. Support guidelines are in place for this purpose which will ensure that any employee who is experiencing or has experienced domestic abuse can raise the issue in the knowledge that the matter will be treated sympathetically and in confidence.

Appendix A: Personnel Services Policies

Agile Working Policy	Agile Working is about encouraging and supporting smarter working by allowing flexibility around how and where Council employees can carry out their work, enabling employees to maximise their productivity and performance. The Agile Working Policy sets out the key elements of managing and supporting an agile approach to work. The aim of the policy is to ensure fair and consistent processes are followed and employees know what is expected of them when working in such a manner.
Bullying and Harassment Guidance	The Bullying and Harassment Guidance outlines the behaviour expected of Council staff and the procedures and support which are available to raise any concerns of bullying and harassment in the workplace.
Shared Parental Leave Policy and Guidance	The Shared Parental Leave Policy and Guidance outlines employees' right to take Shared Parental Leave (SPL) to care for a child due to be born, or placed for adoption, on or after 5 April 2015. SPL gives employees with caring responsibilities for babies or newly adopted children the opportunity to share up to 50 weeks' leave should they wish to do so.
Time Off for Dependants	Time off for dependants is a right which allows employees to take a reasonable amount of time off work to deal with certain unexpected or sudden emergencies and to make any necessary longer-term arrangements.