Workforce Equality Report 2020-2021
March 2022

Contents

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	Protected characteristic of disability (S.6 Equality Act 2010). 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.
Employees	An employee works to the terms within a contract of employment and has contractual entitlements.
Ethnic minority	Refers to all non-'White British' employees.
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	Protected characteristic of gender reassignment (S.7 Equality Act 2010). Refers to employees who share this characteristic. 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 any part of a process to change attributes of their sex.
Gender	The Equality Act 2010 protects on the basis of 'sex'. However the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 refer to gender and so gender and sex, and their associated attributes (male, female, men and women), may be used interchangeably in the pay gap analysis.
Headcount	The number of Council employees regardless of full or part-time hours.

Known data	Information reported by employees on their protected characteristics and recorded on the Council's information systems.
LGB	Refers to Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual employees. This term may be used where data is aggregated.
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.

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 regards to equality.[1] Our information on pay is analysed to help us understand any pay differences between men and women working for the Council.

This report covers the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

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, analyses 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. Table 1 shows the percentage of total employees for which equality data is known and recorded.

Data is not collected on gender reassignment. Employee self-reporting on ethnicity, religion and belief and sexual orientation

Table 1: Known data for staff

Protected Characteristic	Head Count		Percentages	
	Known	Unknown	Known	Unknown
Age	2036	0	100.0	0.0
Disability	1382	654	67.9	32.1
Gender reassignment	0	2036	0.0	100.0
Pregnancy and maternity	2036	0	100.0	0.0
Race (ethnicity)	1950	86	95.8	4.2
Religion and belief	1415	621	69.5	30.5
Sex	2036	0	100.0	0.0
Sexual orientation	1408	628	69.2	30.8

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[1] The report does not include school-based staff even where the Council is the employer.

continues to increase year on year. It remains lowest for disability, religion and belief and sexual orientation.[2] Some data sets are small, which makes robust analysis problematic and means that we cannot always draw statistically significant and meaningful conclusions. Where data risks identifying employees, we have either not published this information or combined categories.

Local information

To understand the impact of employment policies and practices, our workforce data is compared with local demographic information and national population data.[3]

There is no local data about the number of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people living in Bedford Borough. ONS Experimental Official Statistics on sexual orientation in the UK in 2017 estimate that 2.0% of the UK population aged 16 and over identified themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual. Based on the Bedford Borough population of people aged 16+ in 2017, this estimate equates to 2,696 people.[4] No major Government or administrative surveys have collected data by including a question where transgender people can choose to identify themselves.

Bedford Borough

- An estimated working age population (those aged 16-74 years) of 121,686 people.
- 11.4% of residents aged 16-64 years have a limiting long-term illness, health problem or disability that affects their day-to-day activities.
- 28.5% of the population is from an ethnic minority community (are non-'White British'); for the working age population (16-74 years), this increases to 29.0%.
- 10.2% people are providing unpaid care to someone on a weekly basis.
- 69.8% of Bedford Borough residents consider themselves to have a religion or belief.

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[2] Personnel Services conducted a Local Government Association East of England benchmarking exercise in June 2018 to compare the Council's known data levels with other local authorities. The survey, which had limited responses, showed that our known data for staff was in line with, or higher, than other local authorities.
[3] Further information about Bedford Borough is on the Council's statistics and census website pages.
[4] ONS Sexual Orientation, UK: 2017

Policies and initiatives

Disability Confident Employer
The Council has been certified as a 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 have the opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.

Personnel Services policies and guidelines addressing equality issues
The Council has a number of 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

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.

ACA Network

The ACA (African, Caribbean and Asian) Network is specifically for staff who identify as black, Asian, brown or mixed/multi-heritage. The Network provides a safe space for Black and Asian staff, in any role and level, to come together and support each other personally and professionally in an informal environment.

Our workforce

Overview of our total workforce

The data presented in this chapter is based on a snapshot date of 31 March 2021.

On 31 March 2021 the Council employed 2,036 members of staff. Of the total workforce, 1,876 were on fixed hours contracts and more than half of these worked on a full-time basis.

Since the last report (based on 31 March 2020):

- 138 people have been offered a job with the Council;
- 179 people left Council employment.

Table 2: Overview, full / part time employees and leavers / starters

Overview	Headcount		%	
	2020	**2021**	**2020**	**2021**
Fixed hours contracts	1,909	1,876	92.0	92.1
Relief workers	85	83	4.0	4.1
Casual workers	83	77	4.0	3.8
Total	**2,077**	**2,036**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Fixed hours Full / Part time	Headcount		%	
	2020	**2021**	**2020**	**2021**
Full-time fixed hr	1200	1187	62.9	63.3
Part-time fixed hr	709	689	37.1	36.7
Total fixed hours contracts	**1,909**	**1,876**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Leavers/Starters	2019/20	2020/21
Headcount	2,077	2,036
Leavers	234	179
Starters/Offers	179	138

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.[5] Just over two-thirds (67.5%) of the workforce are aged 40-64 years old. Employees aged 50-64 years old are overrepresented within the workforce.

Our workforce by disability

The disability profile of employees is presented in Table 4. Data on employees' disability status is known for 67.9% of our workforce, a slight increase from last year. Based on known data, 5.8% of our workforce has declared a disability; this is largely unchanged from last year when this was 6%.

The number of employees who declared a disability remains lower than the percentage of residents of Bedford Borough, where 11.4% of the Borough population aged 16-64 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.

Table 3: Workforce by Age

Age Range	Bedford Borough 16-74 years		Bedford Borough Council	
	Number	%	Number	%
16-19	8,200	6.8	9	0.4
20-24	9,400	7.8	42	2.1
25-29	9,900	8.2	108	5.3
30-34	11,100	9.2	154	7.6
35-39	11,500	9.5	223	11.0
40-44	11,300	9.4	250	12.3
45-49	12,300	10.2	266	13.1
50-54	12,200	10.1	323	15.9
55-59	10,400	8.6	300	14.7
60-64	8,800	7.3	235	11.5
65-69	8,900	7.4	91	4.5
70-74	6,900	5.7	25	1.2
75+	-	-	10	0.5
Total	**120,900**	100	**2,036**	100.0

Table 4: Workforce by disability

Disability	Number	%
No	1,302	94.2
Yes	80	5.8
Prefer not to say	2	-
Unknown	652	-
Total (known data)	2,036	100.0

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[5] https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/economic-labour-market-status-of-individuals-aged-50-and-over-trends-over-time-september-2020/economic-labour-market-status-of-individuals-aged-50-and-over-trends-over-time-september-2020

The Council's target to achieve a workforce of at least 8% disabled employees for the 2020-21 reporting period was not achieved.[6] The Council has plans to implement a number of actions to increase workforce diversity in regards to disability. This includes the Apprenticeship Strategy placing greater focus on attracting disabled applicants and our ambition to become a Disability Confident Leader. In addition the council already offers a guaranteed interview to disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a post.

Our workforce by ethnicity

The ethnicity profile of employees is presented in Table 5. Ethnicity data is known for 95.8% of the workforce, an increase on last year.

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

Employees from a White British background are overrepresented within the workforce. Employees from an ethnic minority background remain underrepresented in the workforce in comparison to the local working age population. This is particularly the case for White Non-British and Asian employees.

Table 5: Workforce by ethnic group

Ethnic Group	Bedford Borough (Aged 16-74yrs)	%	Council (Total workforce)	%
White British	82,291	72.3	1418	75.6
White Non-British	10,917	9.6	91	4.9
Mixed/multiple ethnic	2,497	2.2	42	2.2
Asian or Asian British	12,643	11.2	177	9.4
Black or Black British	4,557	4.0	124	6.6
Arab or Other Ethnic Group	859	0.7	23	1.2
Total	113,764	100*	2,036	100*

Source: 2011 Census, ONS. 2012. (The 2011 Census provides the latest data on ethnicity).

Table 6: Workforce by religion and belief

Religion	Bedford Borough		Council	
	Number	%	Number	%
Christian	93,346	59.3	749	52.9
Buddhist	509	0.3	8	0.6
Hindu	2,420	1.5	30	2.1
Jewish	171	0.1	3	0.2
Muslim	8,610	5.5	55	3.9
Sikh	3,336	2.1	40	2.8
Other religion	1,506	1.0	43	3.0
No religion	37,229	23.6	487	34.4
Religion not stated	10,352	6.6	621	-
Total (known data)	157,479*	100	2,036	100

Source: 2011 Census, ONS. 2012

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[6] The Council has Personnel Services' targets in regards, to disability, ethnicity and gender as part of the Best Value Performance Indicators (BV16 and BV17). The targets exclude casual workers. The target for disabled staff (BV16a) is 8% for 2020-2021.

The Council set a target to achieve a workforce with at least 27% of employees from an ethnic minority background for the 2019-20 reporting period, which was not achieved. The Council will monitor the makeup of recruitment panels to ensure that they are diverse to reduce the impact of unconscious bias. In addition, equality and diversity training will continue to be promoted to increase awareness of the benefits a diverse team provides.

Our workforce by gender reassignment

Although it is possible to record gender reassignment on the Personnel Services and Payroll system, it is not utilised by employees.

Our workforce by religion and belief

The profile of our workforce by religion and belief is presented in Table 6. Data on religion and belief is held for 69.5% of the workforce, an increase on last year.

The religion and belief profile of employees remains largely unchanged from last year. Almost two thirds of employees (65.6%) hold a religion or belief. Of these, over half of the workforce (52.9%) self-reported as 'Christian' and 3.9% as Muslim; both of these are slightly lower than the percentage of residents in Bedford Borough.

Our workforce by sex

The profile of our workforce by sex is presented in Table 7. The workforce split by sex has stayed similar to previous years, with two thirds (66.8%) of the workforce being female and one third (33.2%) 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 7: Sex

Sex	Number	%
Female	1360	66.8
Male	676	33.2
Total	2036	100.0

Table 8: Sexual orientation

Sexual Orientation	Number	%
Heterosexual	1373	97.5
LGB	35	2.5
Prefer Not to Say	250	-
Unknown	378	-
Total (known data)	2036	100.0

Our workforce by sexual orientation

The profile of our workforce by sexual orientation is presented in Table 8. Data on sexual orientation is held for 69.2% of our workforce, an increase from last year's report. There has been an increase in the number of staff who have told us they prefer not to disclose this information, from 146 in last year's report to 250.

The workforce split by sexual orientation remains the same as last year. The vast majority (97.5%) of our workforce self-disclose as 'heterosexual'. Our workforce self-reporting as LGB (2.5%) is in line with 2% estimated by national data.[7]

Summary

The Council's workforce data shows that:

- **Just over two-thirds of employees are aged 40-64 years old.**
- **5.8% of employees have a disability.**
- **Almost one quarter of employees are from an ethnic minority background; a little over three quarters of employees are White British.**
- **Two thirds of the Council's workforce are female.**
- **Almost two thirds of the Council's workforce have a religion or belief; a little over one third do not.**
- **2.5% 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.**

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[7] ONS Experimental Official Statistics (2017) ONS Sexual Orientation, UK: 2017

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, have been shortlisted and subsequently have been offered a post.

Between April 2020 and March 2021, the Council received 1116 job applications; 394 of these applicants were shortlisted for interview. Following the interview process, 99 applicants were offered a job. Due to the pandemic, numbers are lower for this reporting period in comparison to previous years. During April 2020 and for the next few months only recruitment to critical front line posts went ahead, and interviews for advertised roles were paused.

Age

Table 9: Recruitment by age

Age Range	Total applications	%	Total interviewed	%	Total appointed	%
Under 25	153	15.6	54	15.8	13	13.7
25-29	112	11.4	34	9.9	10	10.5
30-34	154	15.7	44	12.9	13	13.7
35-39	89	9.1	29	8.5	12	12.6
40-44	138	14.1	36	10.5	11	11.6
45-49	128	13.0	46	13.5	9	9.5
50-54	89	9.1	43	12.6	9	9.5
55-59	88	9.0	38	11.1	12	12.6
60-64	31	3.2	18	5.3	6	6.3
65 plus	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Unknown	134	-	54	-	4	-
Total (known)	**982**	**100**	**342**	**100**	**95**	**100**

Compared to the working age population, the council received a positive number of applications from people aged in their 30s and 40s. 24.8% of applicants were aged 30-39 years compared to 18.7% of the working age population; 27.1% of applicants were aged 40-49 years old compared to 19.52% of the working age population.

Applicants aged 30-34 years old and those aged over 55 years were the most successful throughout the recruitment process.

This year there were no applicants aged over 65 years. This may be as a result of pandemic 'stay at home' restrictions and guidance that particularly affected older ages.

Disability

Table 10: Recruitment by disability

Disability	Total applications	%	Total shortlisted	%	Total appointed	%
Yes	58	6.0	23	6.8	5	6.0
No	904	94.0	315	93.2	79	94.1
Unknown	154	-	56	-	15	-
Total (known)	**962**	**100**	**338**	**100**	**84**	**100**

The percentage of applications from disabled people (6.0%) was under-representative of the percentage of residents in Bedford Borough with a disability (11.4%). This is similar to previous years. Further analysis shows that 39.7% of all disabled applicants were shortlisted for interview; this is a decrease from last year when 48.4% of disabled applicants were shortlisted. 8.6% of disabled applicants were appointed to a role.

Ethnicity

Table 11: Recruitment by ethnicity[8]

Ethnic group	Total applications	%	Total shortlisted	%	Total appointed	%
White British	584	60.1	256	71.5	59	64.8
Non White British	388	39.9	102	28.5	32	35.2
Unknown	144	-	36	-	8	-
Total (known)	**972**	**100**	**358**	**100**	**91**	**100**

As in previous years, in comparison to the ethnic minority working age population of Bedford Borough (27.7%), applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds were over-represented in the number of applications received by the Council (39.9%). For the first time since reporting the percentage of White British applicants appointed (64.8%) was less representative that the working age population of the Borough as a whole (72.3%) and the percentage of ethnic minority applicants appointed (35.2%) more representative than the Borough. This is likely because the Council only recruited to front line critical posts for part of this reporting period and these roles, such as social workers and residential care workers, tend to be areas where ethnic minority staff are better represented. The overall percentage of ethnic minority applicants appointed shows an increase from the previous year (28.5%)

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[8] As the data involves small numbers it has been aggregated to avoid personal identification of individuals.

As in previous years, ethnic minority applicants (as a group) are less successful throughout the recruitment process. Further analysis shows that applicants from Asian backgrounds in particular experience disparity in recruitment outcomes.

Sex

Table 12: Recruitment by sex

Sex	Total applications	%	Total shortlisted	%	Total appointed	%
Female	610	55.7	237	62.9	58	62.4
Male	486	44.3	140	37.1	35	37.6
Unknown	20	-	17	-	6	-
Total (known)	**1,096**	**100**	**377**	**100**	**93**	**100**

55.66 % of all applicants, a decrease from last year, and 62.37% of all appointments were women; 9.5% of female applicants were appointed compared to 7.20% 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. This is likely because the front line critical roles recruited to during include a high number of part time roles in residential homes which historically have a significantly higher proportion of female applicants.

Sexual orientation

Table 13: Recruitment by sexual orientation [9]

Sexual Orientation	Total applications	%	Total shortlisted	%	Total appointed	%
Heterosexual	902	96.6	322	95.3	79	94.1
LGB	32	3.4	16	4.7	5	6.0
Unknown	182	-	56	-	15	-
Total (known)	**934**	**100**	**394**	**100**	**99**	**100**

3.43% of applicants and 5.95% of applicants appointed were LGB. The percentage of LGB applicants appointed increased from last year (2.8%). Again, there was a significant number of applicants that did not provide information on their sexual orientation as part of the recruitment process, although known data increased from last year.

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[9] As the data involves small numbers it has been aggregated to avoid personal identification of individuals.

Religion and belief [10]

There remains a high percentage of applicants not declaring their religion and belief at the application stage. In comparison to the local population (32.2%), appointed applicants who hold no religion were slightly over-represented (36.6%). Applicants and appointments of candidates who were Christian (51.2%) were underrepresented in comparison to the local population (59.3%).

Summary

The Council's data on recruitment for critical front line posts shows that:

- **Less job offers were made in the reporting year as recruitment was limited to critical front line posts only;**
- **Disabled applicants are under-represented throughout the recruitment process;**
- **White British applicants were under-represented at appointment stage;**
- **Applicants from Christian backgrounds are under-represented at application and appointment stage;**
- **The percentage of LGB applicants appointed has increased**
- **Male applicants are under-represented at each stage of the recruitment process.**

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[10] Recruitment data for religion and belief involves small numbers. To avoid personal identification of individuals, data for this protected characteristic has not been published.

Employees leaving the Council

Table 14: Reasons for leaving employment

Leaving Reason	No.	%
Death In Service	8	4.5
Dismissal	7	3.9
Fixed Term Contract End	3	1.7
Redundancy Compulsory	5	2.8
Redundancy Voluntary	3	1.7
Resignation Not returning from Maternity Leave	4	2.2
Resignation New Job	48	26.8
Resignation New Position in Local Government	2	1.1
Resignation - Personal Reasons	44	24.6
Resignation Re Location	6	3.4
Resignation Undisclosed	18	10.1
Retirement Early	1	0.6
Retirement Early due to ill health	3	1.7
Retirement Standard	27	15.1
Total	**179**	**100**

Table 14 shows that 179 employees left Council employment in the twelve months from 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021. This is a decrease from the previous year when 234 employees left.

The main reason for leaving the Council was resignation for alternative employment, 29.1% of all leavers in total.

8 employees in total left council due to redundancy. The Council had committed to analysing compulsory redundancies by protected characteristics, however this number is statistically too small to draw any conclusions.

Analysis of leavers' data by protected characteristics, against the workforce, showed disparity in regards to age:[11]

- Younger employees were over represented amongst leavers. Employees aged 29 years an under made up 14.5% of all leavers and 7.8% of the whole workforce.
- Older employees, with the exception of employees aged 65 years and over, were under represented amongst leavers.

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[11] Data on leavers involves small numbers. To avoid personal identification of individuals, data for religion and belief, sexual orientation has not been published.

Table 15: Leavers by age

Age Range	No.	%
Under 25	13	7.3
25-29	13	7.3
30-34	20	11.2
35-39	8	4.5
40-44	18	10.1
45-49	17	9.5
50-54	22	12.3
55-59	17	9.5
60-64	22	12.3
65 plus	29	16.2
Total	**179**	**100**

Table 16: Leavers by Disability

Disability	No.	%
Yes	6	5.0
No	115	95.0
Unknown	58	-
Total (known data)	**179**	**100**

Table 17: Leavers by ethnicity

Ethnic Group	No.	%
Asian/Asian British	13	7.8
Black/Black British	11	6.6
Mixed	6	3.6
Other	6	3.6
White British	124	74.3
White Non British	7	4.2
Prefer Not to Say	9	-
Unknown	3	-
Total (known data)	**179**	**100**

Table 18: Leavers by sex

Sex	No.	%
Female	119	66.5
Male	60	33.5
Total	**179**	**100**

Top 5% Earners

The Council reports quarterly in the Performance Business Report on:
- the percentage of top 5% of earners that are female;
- the percentage of top 5% of earners from an ethnic minority background; and
- the percentage of top 5% of earners who have a disability.[12]

The year-end 2020-21 targets and outturn are shown in table 19.[13]

Table 19: Top 5% of Earners

	Female	Ethnic Minority	Disability
Target	50.0%	14.0%	5.0%
Outturn	50.9%	14.5%	5.6%
RAG/DOT	⬇G	⬇G	⬆G

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 regards to female, ethnic minority and disability employees were all achieved.

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[12] 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 plus including any individuals on an identical salary to that at the 5% threshold.

[13] 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 these percentages as involves low numbers.

Disciplinary and grievance

Between April 2020 and March 2021, the Council dealt with 28 disciplinary cases and 5 grievances.[14]

Disciplinary
The 28 cases in this reporting year is a decrease of 28.2% from the 39 cases in 2019/20.

Age
Similarly to last year, most disciplinary cases concerned staff aged 45-49 (25%) who in comparison make up 13.1% of the total workforce.

Ethnicity
Based on known data for ethnicity, 69.2% of disciplinary cases concerned White British employees. A higher percentage of disciplinary cases (30.8%) involving ethnic minority employees were noted in comparison to the percentage of ethnic minority employees in the workforce (24.4%). This trend has been noted in previous years.

Religion and Belief
In percentage terms, employees who are Hindu are disproportionally involved in disciplinary cases. Numerically, this number is small.

Sex
Male employees made up 50% of all disciplinary cases and 33.5% of the workforce.

Table 20: Disciplinary Cases

Sex	No.	%	Ethnicity	No.	%
Male	14	50.0	White British	18	69.2
Female	14	50.0	Non White British	8	30.8
			Unknown	2	-
Age	No.	%	Disability	No.	%
Under 25	1	3.6	Yes	2	10.0
25 - 29	2	7.1	No	18	90.0
30 - 34	1	3.6	Undisclosed	8	-
35 - 39	3	10.7			
40 - 44	3	10.7			
45 - 49	7	25.0			
50 - 54	6	21.4			
55 - 59	4	14.3			
60 +	1	3.6			

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[14] 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. Caution should be taken in interpreting data, as due to the relatively small numbers involved it may not yield meaningful findings.

<u>Grievances</u>
During the period 2020-21 a total of 5 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 all formal grievances were raised by female staff.

Summary

The Council's data on disciplinary action shows that:
- **Employees aged 45-49 years old and employees from an ethnic minority background are more likely to be subject to the Council's disciplinary process.**

Training

During 2020-2021, 630 employees accessed 118 different training courses managed through the Workforce Development team.[15] The main course categories accessed include corporate induction, wellbeing, personal development and social care training. Due to the pandemic most of the training undertaken were e-learning courses via BBOLT, the Council's Online Learning and Training Portal; with some virtual courses such as finance and procurement training attended via video conferencing. Service specific training organised by and recorded within individual Council directorates is not included in this analyses.

Table 21: Training accessed by age, disability, ethnicity and sex

Age	Number	%	Disability	Number	%	Ethnic Group	Number	%
Under 25	22	3.5	No	402	92.8	White British	452	76.5
25-29	28	4.4	Yes	31	7.2	White Non-British	28	4.7
30-34	46	7.3	**Total (known data)**	**433**	**100**	Asian or Asian British	43	7.3
35-39	70	11.1				Black or Black British	47	8.0
40-44	94	14.9	**Sex**	**Number**	**%**	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	15	2.5
45-49	96	15.2	Female	492	78.0	Arab or other ethnic group	6	1.0
50-54	100	15.9	Male	138	22.0	**Total (known data)**	**591**	**100**
55-59	98	15.6	**Total**	**630**	**100**			
60+	76	12.1						
Total	**630**	**100**						

Age
Employees aged 60 years and over are under-represented in the percentage of employees accessing training. This group make up 17.7% of the workforce and accessed 12.1% of the training opportunities managed through the Workforce Development team. As most training is now e-learning, this may indicate that the e-learning offer is impacted by digital/ICT literacy of employees from older age groups.

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[15] 630 employees was used for this analysis and counts a member of staff only once if they accessed any training regardless of the number of different courses they completed. This approach differs from previous years whereby staff were counted each time they accessed training and could therefore affect comparative analysis with past training data.

Sex

Male employees are under-represented in the percentage of employees accessing training. Male employees make up 33.2% of the workforce and accessed 22% of training opportunities. National findings have identified that female employees are more likely to take up online learning and the flexibility of online learning contributes to this.[16]

Table 22: Training accessed by religion and sexual orientation

Religion/belief	Number	%	Sexual orientation	Number	%
Christian	255	57.1	Heterosexual	435	97.1
Buddhist	0	0	LGB	13	2.9
Hindu	6	1.3	**Total (known data)**	**448**	**100**
Jewish	1	0.2			
Muslim	13	2.9			
Sikh	7	1.7			
Other religion	11	2.5			
No religion	153	34.3			
Total (known data)	**446**	**100**			

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[16] The British online learning platform FutureLearn identified that women were likely to take an online course than men were, with the pandemic exacerbating the appeal of online learning opportunities for women. See https://adigaskell.org/2021/12/03/covid-saw-a-boost-in-online-learning-among-women/

Pay Gap

Introduction

All public, private and voluntary sector organisations with 250 or more employees[17] 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 31st March and publish the metrics before 30th 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, we are a relevant organisation covered by the regulations and as such data was collected on the snapshot date of 31 March 2021. This identified 2,036 employees in scope of the Gender Pay Gap analysis. 145 employees were not 'full pay' employees and were removed from the analysis making a total of 1,891 employees used in the calculation of the metrics of which 1,243 (65.7%) were female and 648 (34.3%) 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 a number of 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. In particular, promoting equality of opportunity for all and a culture that values differences. As an employer, we want to ensure our workforce is representative of the community it serves and that we attract and retain talented employees

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

from a wide range of backgrounds and with diverse skills and experience. We regularly carry 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 of the 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. Additional hours over and above contracted hours have been included in the calculation where part time workers have worked these subject to a maximum of 37 hours per week (the Council's standard working week). Overtime hours (hours worked in excess of the standard working 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 2021

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 Council's results.

Table 23: Mean and Median (Metrics 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Difference between males and females	Mean (Average)		Median (Middle)	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Gender Pay Gap	8.2%	6.6%	11.7%	8.9%
Gender Bonus Gap	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

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 6.6%, which means that male employees received, on average, 6.6% more pay than female employees. 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 8.9%, which means that the middle paid male employee received 8.9% more than the middle paid female employee. Both the mean and median gender pay gap improved, compared to 2020.

The difference between the mean and median gender pay gap in 2020 was 3.5%. In 2021 the difference had reduced to 2.35%. This is because the median pay gap decreased at a faster rate, 2.8%, than the mean pay gap, 1.65%. As the mean is lower than the median, it indicates that the dataset in skewed by the presence of low earners, who are mainly female.

Bedford Borough Council's gender pay gap is significantly below the national public sector scores of 14.5% for the mean, and 15.8% for the median, as published by the Office of National Statistics based on their Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings. [18]

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 we comply with equality legislation and provide equal pay for work of equal value.

Table 24: Bonus (Metric 5)

Proportion of employees receiving Bonus	Female		Male	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Receiving Bonus	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Not receiving Bonus	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The Council does not pay bonuses to any employees.

The pay quartile analysis identifies the proportions of male and female full-pay relevant employees in each of four quartile pay bands.[19] It shows that the distribution of male and female employees through the pay bands does not reflect the overall composition by sex of the employees used in the calculation of the gender pay gap; 66.8% females and 33.2% males.

There are proportionately more females than males in the two lowest pay quartiles (Q1 and Q2) due to female employees clustered into female dominant roles such as caring and administration, which tend to be lower paid. Proportionately more males than females are represented in the two highest pay quartiles (Q3 and Q4), which may indicate that barriers exist which make women less likely to be found in management and senior positions.

The proportion of males and females in the lowest pay quartile (Q1) is the nearest to the overall gender composition of the workforce. This a shift from the previous year where the proportion of males and females that most closely resembled the Council's workforce was Q3. This is due to more female employees progressing to the top quartile from the third quartile and fewer females working in the lowest paid quartile. It is this distribution of employees that results in the gender pay gaps.

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[18] ONS 2020 (updated provisional) Public Sector Gender Pay Gap (Table 13.12)
[19]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 an equal number of employees each.

The proportion of female employees in the lowest pay quartile (Q1) decreased again, from 70% in 2020 to 67% in 2021. The proportion of female employees in the highest pay quartile (Q4) increased from 62% in 2020 to 63% in 2021. This demonstrates that female employees have been recruited into more senior positions.

The data and analyses represent 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.

Chart 1: Metric 6
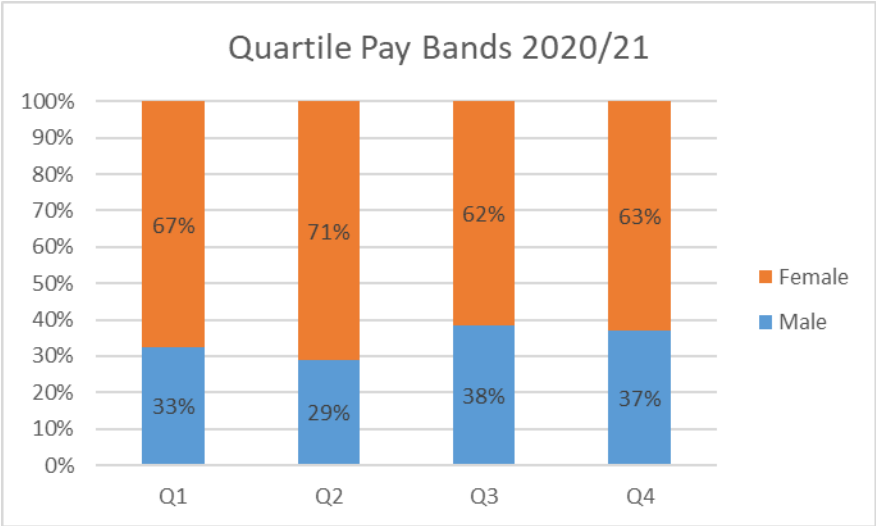
The narrowing of the gender pay gap from 2020 to 2021 can be attributed to several reasons. Firstly, the retention payments care staff received in recognition of their work during Covid would have mainly benefitted female employees, as they are disproportionately represented in the care industry. Furthermore, there have been a number of secondments and acting up arrangements in senior roles that have been performed by female employees, who have received higher pay as a result. This will have had a significant impact on the change in the quartile pay bands. The improving median gap suggests that female employees in general are progressing throughout the Council, especially from the lower paid quartiles (Q1-2).

Non-Statutory Measures 2021
The Council voluntarily calculates the pay gap for ethnicity and disability (Table 25)[20]. Excluding records where the ethnicity or disability is unknown, there are 1405 (80.7%) White British employees and 336 (19.3%) non-White British employees. There are 1184 (94.1%) employees who declared no disability and 74 (5.9%) employees who declared a disability.

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[20] 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.

Table 25: Ethnicity and disability pay gap

Characteristic	Mean (Average)		Median (Middle)	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Ethnicity	13.0%	13.7%	12.0%	16.4%
Disability	1.1%	1.5%	-0.5%	3.2%

The mean ethnicity pay gap for the Council is 13.7%, which means that White British employees received, on average, 13.7% more pay than non-White British employees. The median ethnicity pay gap is 16.4%, which means that the middle paid White British employee received 16.4% more than the middle paid non-White British employee.

The mean disability pay gap for the Council is 1.5%, which means that employees who declared no disability received, on average, 1.5% more pay than employees who declared a disability. The median disability pay gap is 3.2%, which means that the middle paid employee who declared no disability received 3.2% more than the middle paid employee who declared a disability.

The ethnicity pay gap increased slightly from 2020, the mean pay gap by 0.7% and the median pay gap by 4.4%. The disability pay gaps also increased relative to 2020, the mean by 0.4% and the median by 3.2%.

As with the gender pay gap, the figures for the ethnicity and disability mean and median gaps are driven by the distribution of employees within the Council. It should however be noted that the level of non-disclosure for ethnicity (7.9%) and disability (33.5%) amongst the employees included in the calculations may have impacted on the above mean and median pay gap figures.

Summary

The Council's pay gap analyses show that:

- **The overall mean gender pay gap is 6.55% and the median pay gap is 8.9%.**
- **Both the mean and median gender pay gaps improved, compared to 2020.**
- **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 gender pay gaps can be attributed to the Covid retention payment to care workers, and the increased number of secondments and acting up arrangements, which were primarily performed by female employees.**
- **The overall mean ethnicity pay gap is 13.7% and the median pay gap is 16.4%.**

- **Both ethnicity pay gaps grew compared to 2020, the mean slightly and the median more significantly.**
- **The overall mean disability pay gap is 1.5% and the median pay gap is 3.2%.**
- **Both disability pay gaps grew compared to 2020, the mean slightly and the median more significantly.**
- **The change in the disability pay gap now means that disclosed disabled employees' median pay rates are again lower than disclosed non-disabled employees hourly pay rates.**

Actions to improve workforce equality

In response to this report and trends identified from previous workforce equality reports, we have identified the following actions to improve workforce equality.

Recruitment and retention			
The issue is….	**Our action is to…**	**The end result will be…**	**We will measure this by…**
Disparity in recruitment and retention outcomes for staff in regards to staff aged under 30 years, disabled staff and ethnic minority staff	Address disparity in the development of the Recruitment and Retention Strategy	Recruitment and Retention Strategy action plan that addresses disparity to be developed by March 2023	Increased percentage of disabled, ethnic minority and applicants aged 30 years and under applying and successfully being appointed
Recruitment and retention levels amongst young employees: • Employees aged under 30 years are underrepresented within the workforce • Employees aged under 30 years are most likely to leave Council employment	Support development and re-launch of the Early Careers Network, targeted at young employees aged 30 years and under. The Network will provide an informal arrangement to understand the experiences of younger employees. Increased use of social media promotion of recruitment vacancies with recruiting panel members encouraged to promote vacancies through own social media. Increase the number of new apprenticeship starts as set out in the Council's Apprenticeship Strategy.	Qualitative employee data to understand the barriers experienced by young staff. Opportunities to work with the network to develop initiatives that reduce the number of leavers aged under 30 years. An increase in the number of appointments who are aged under 35 years.	Percentage of leavers aged under 35 years. Percentage of applicants under 35 years applying and successfully being appointed.

Recruitment levels amongst disabled employees: • Disabled employees are under-represented in the workforce • Applications from disabled people is under-representative of the Borough	Support development of a disabled staff group. The group will provide an informal arrangement to understand the experiences of disabled staff. Council to sign up to the Mencap regional consortium that will deliver and support apprenticeships with SEND.	Qualitative employee data to understand the barriers experienced by disabled staff. An increase in the number of appointments of apprenticeships who are disabled.	Percentage of disabled applicants applying and successfully being appointed.
Recruitment levels amongst ethnic minority employees: • Asian and White non British employees are under-represented in workforce • Asian and Black applicants are less likely to be appointed than other groups	Carry out sample checks at stages of recruitment process to understand issue; issues may be picked up by Recruitment and Retention Strategy. Resourcing to provide challenge on ethnic diversity of recruiting panel. Link Unconscious Bias training to PDR process	Either able to explain the disparity in recruitment or develop initiatives through the Strategy to address disparity. Ethnic diversity on recruiting panels. Evaluation of impact of training	Percentage of ethnic minority applicants successfully being appointed.
Lack of employee data on gender reassignment	Promote trans inclusion in One Team staff communications including encouraging use of gender reassignment field on Resource Link; inviting staff to use gender pronouns in email signatures (and Microsoft Office Teams if able) and spotlighting stories of why this is important to staff.	An increase in staff providing gender reassignment data.	Increase in percentage of known data

	Support development of LGBT staff network. The Network will provide an informal arrangement to understand the experiences of LGBT staff and numbers.	Qualitative employee data on barriers experienced by LGBT employees.	Feedback from LGBT staff network.
Disabled and ethnic minority employees are under-represented at management level (top 5%) Gender, disability and ethnicity pay gaps	Review targets for top 5% to be more ambitious. Targeted promotion of Management Apprenticeships at level L3 and L5 for female, disabled and ethnic minority employees.	Targets more reflective of the workforce Annual cohort of Management Apprenticeships reflective of workforce and revised top 5% targets.	Annual target setting cycle 2022/23. Learning and Development training data.

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 Policy	The Recruitment Policy outlines the Council's commitment to undertake recruitment in accordance with the Governments 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 manager and employees are aware of and understand the Council's paternity and parental leave provisions.
Redundancy Procedure and Guidelines	The Redundancy Procedure ensures that in any selection criteria: 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 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.
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

Appendix A: Personnel Services Policies

	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.