

Corporate Workforce Diversity Report 2010/2011 – Executive Summary

1. Introduction

This is Sunderland City Council's 'Corporate Workforce Diversity Report - Executive Summary' analysing the equality monitoring information for the financial year April 2010-March 2011. This Summary sets out information about the Council's workforce and how its activities as an employer affect people with different 'protected characteristics'. This is the first time the council has published this information and it will be reviewed.

2. Context

2.1 Equality related legislation, case law and good practice continue to be areas closely monitored by the Council to ensure continued compliance. Key changes include the following:

- In September 2009 the Equality Framework for Local Government replaced the Equality Standard for Local Government altogether. The Council is now committed to attaining the 'Excellent' level of the Equality Framework.
- The Equality Act 2010 harmonises and strengthens discrimination law. Parts of the Act came into force on 1st October 2010 and other parts came into force in April 2011. The new public sector Equality Duty came into force on 5th April 2011.

2.2 The Council is currently in a period of change. Analysis is based upon the structure in place during 2010/2011. At the end of this period the Council had a head count of 13,021 employees. The full-time equivalent total was 10,479.75. ? Of the 13,021 employees 4,899 are part time and 8,122 are full time employees.

2.3 The following table shows the distribution of employees by Directorate:

Directorate	2008/ 2009 %	2009/ 2010 %	2010/ 2011 %
Children's Services	55.00	55.76	55.36
City Services	22.95	20.21	20.18
Comm & Corporate Services	N/A	N/A	3.91
Health, Housing and Adult Services	11.49	13.58	14.10
OCX	10.56	10.45	6.44

3 Examples of Key Activities

3.1 The following are examples of some key activities the Council implemented or achieved during 2010/2011 to progress its equality agenda.

- In 2008 the Council was assessed through Peer Assessment at Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government, which equates to the 'Achieving' level of the Equality Framework for Local Government. The Council is working towards attaining the 'Excellent' level of the Equality Framework.
- Over 4,500 employees have completed the e-learning equality and diversity training package which was launched in 2008. An updated package was launched in June 2010 which is being rolled out. The training will help to eliminate any discrimination within the Council.
- The Sunderland Leadership Programme has an equality element. Feedback from participants has included the following key points, i.e. that it provided a clear understanding of the Council's priorities and was relevant to the job role. In addition, all participants have access to individual coaching where any specific barriers or issues can be explored.
- During the period January 2010 to December 2010 the Council, working in partnership with other local organisations, offered 6 placements for young people with a learning disability or physical disability.
- The Council values all employees and is committed to helping them achieve a rewarding work-life balance. We have introduced an employee benefits scheme available to employees on a range of purchases including numerous retailers, entertainment and family days out. Access to this unique range of benefits and discounts hopefully assists employees in achieving this balance.
- The Council offers childcare vouchers to employees. By March 2011 we had 212 employees participating in the scheme.
- We are continuing to introduce flexible ways of working.

4. Age Equality

4.1 Please see the following table showing statistics relating to age equality.

	2009/2010				2010/2011			
	16-25 %	16-25 %	16-25 %	16-25 %	16-25 %	26-40 %	41-55 %	56 + %
Directorate								
Children's Services	8.43	34.12	41.03	16.42	7.55	34.14	41.84	16.48
City Services	10.39	22.37	46.14	21.10	9.67	23.02	45.09	22.22
Comm & Corporate Services	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6.48	41.06	45.19	7.27
Health, Housing and Adult Services	4.83	29.9	50.30	14.98	3.65	27.94	52.61	15.80
OCX	8.97	38.47	42.91	9.66	16.81	32.66	39.45	11.08
Council Total	8.39	31.56	43.52	16.53	7.98	31.20	43.99	16.83

- 4.2 It can be seen that 60.82% of Council employees are aged over 41 years. 7.98% of Council employees are aged 16-25 and this is similar to the figure nationally where 7% of local government employees are under the age of 25.
- 4.3 The Council needs a diverse mix of ages to realise business benefits and to plan for our managers of the future, and to advance equality of opportunity. We are continuing to develop an improved, co-ordinated approach to apprenticeships and work placements across the Council. This is to ensure that our programmes attract a diverse mix of individuals reflective of the community.
- 4.4 There are health and wellness strategies in place to promote and enable healthy ageing within the City. As the majority of our employees are from the Sunderland area it is recognised that it is beneficial to support these aims in our employment practices. We have an attendance management and wellness project within the Council. We have flexible working practices in place, which we are continuing to embed and improve. We have an appraisal process in place, and are committed to ensure that our employees receive the development opportunities that they require to perform their job role. We have also introduced a flexible retirement option to enable employees to reduce their hours prior to retirement in line with changing pension rules.

5. Disability Equality

- 5.1 Please see the following table showing statistics relating to disability equality.

	2009/2010 %				2010/11 %			
	No	Not known	With held	Yes	No	Not Known	With held	Yes
Children's Services	93.91	3.80	0.99	1.29	94.51	3.47	0.87	1.15
City Services	93.17	2.04	2.18	2.61	94.06	1.22	1.90	2.82
Comm & Corp Serv	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	95.28	0.79	1.38	2.55
Health, Housing and Adult Services	86.74	1.61	8.16	3.49	86.93	1.58	8.17	3.32
OCX	94.28	1.95	1.26	2.51	93.56	2.98	1.07	2.38
Total	92.96	2.81	2.20	2.03	93.32	2.61	2.14	1.93

- 5.2 1.93% of the workforce in 2010/2011 has informed the Council that they consider that they have a disability. This is compared against a regional local government workforce figure of 2.31% (2002-2003)¹ who consider that they have a disability.

It can be seen that in 2010/2011 4.75%% of our workforce has not declared or have withheld their disability status. We should work to understand why employees have chosen to not declare or have withheld this information.

- 5.3 The Disability Two Tick symbol is displayed on the Council's job advertisements. It raises awareness of our commitment. In 2008 the Council was successfully re-assessed against the symbol by Jobcentre plus.

- 5.4 The help to advance equality of opportunity, the Council decided to continue to be involved in the Sunderland disability placements scheme, which is co-ordinated by the City Hospital. This scheme aims to offer young people with a learning or physical disability the chance to complete a work placement. As mentioned, during the period January 2010 to December 2010 the Council, working in partnership with other local organisations, offered 6 placements for young people with disabilities.
- 5.5 Mindful Employer was launched in 2004 and the Council has signed the Charter for Employers who are Positive About Mental Health. By signing the Charter it is a tangible display of the Council's commitment to improving the working lives of our employees. The Charter is about working towards the principles of it and a willingness to work towards better practice.

6. Gender Equality

- 6.1 Across the Council we employ a higher proportion of women (71.68%), although there are variations by Directorate as shown below:

Directorate	2010 / 2011	
	Female %	Male %
Children's Services	79.71	20.29
City Services	55.78	44.22
Comm & Corporate Services	67.78	32.22
Health, Housing and Adult Services	75.38	24.62
OCX	46.84	53.16
Council Total	71.68	28.32

The above profile is typical within local government where nationally almost 75% of employees are women.

- 6.2 The Council is committed to maintaining a pay and grading structure that is fair and equitable. In October 2005 the first phase of the pay and grading review was implemented covering all 7,500 "Green Book" employees graded up to Scale 3. This was achieved using job evaluation and the removal of bonus schemes. In addition, a number of compensation payments were made to large groups of predominantly female former manual employees who had not had access to bonus schemes. As part of a commitment to putting equal pay principles into practice the Council will continue to carry out regular monitoring of the impact of our pay practices. The Council remains committed to conducting a pay and grading review for the remaining "Green Book" employees (up to SCP 49) at some point in the future, but it is not considered appropriate at this time as the Council is re-structuring service delivery to meet the challenge of significant budgetary pressures.

6.3 The Sunderland Leadership Programme is aimed at developing current and potential managers. It can be seen that in line with the gender profile across the Council more women are participating in the SLP than men at each Level:

	SLP Level 2	SLP Level 3	SLP Level 4
Male	5	14	20
Female	20	25	27

7. Race Equality

7.1 Please see the following table showing statistics relating to race equality.

	White(British,Irish,Other)%	Black or Black British	Asian or Asian British	Other	Mixed	Not Known	Withheld
Children's Services	88.18	0.10	0.65	0.37	0.11	10.14	0.44
City Services	93.15	0.11	0.19	0.42	0.30	3.61	2.21
Comm & Corporate Services	97.05	0.00	0.00	0.39	0.00	2.16	0.39
Health, Housing & Adult Services	91.61	0.44	0.33	0.22	0.33	0.33	6.75
OCX	88.20	0.12	0.72	0.48	0.48	9.42	0.60
Total	90.02	0.15	0.49	0.37	0.20	7.08	1.70

- 7.2 Great Britain is a multi-cultural country. “10% of the population would describe themselves as from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background”². Some areas, however, are more diverse in terms of race than others. For example, people from minority ethnic groups accounted for around 1 in every 3 people living in London, but for less than 1 in every 20 people living in the North East region³.
- 7.3 It can be seen that the population in Tyne and Wear is less ethnically diverse than other metropolitan counties and England⁴.
- 96.8% white in Tyne and Wear;
 - 90.9% white in England; and
 - 82.4% white in Metropolitan Counties.
- 7.4 Within Sunderland 98.1% of residents are white, with the next largest ethnic minority group being from the Bangladeshi community (0.4%). The City’s BME community is mainly concentrated into a few geographical areas, including Hendon, Barnes and Thornhill.
- 7.5 It can be seen from the figures mentioned above that the % of employees from an ethnic minority within the Council is 1.21%.

8. Religion or Belief Equality

- 8.1 In Sunderland 81% of residents are Christians, with 0.75% of the population being Muslim. 9.63% have no religion, and religion not stated was 7.58%. (2001 Census).
- 8.2 The Council is developing the monitoring of this equality strand. For example, with regard to harassment and bullying at work, it was decided that a revised Harassment Formal Complaints Form be introduced in July 2009. The revised form includes the nature of harassment complaints, such as religion/belief. The revised form was introduced to improve monitoring and to help to eliminate any harassment, bullying or discrimination, on the grounds of religion/belief, etc.
- 8.3 The Council has a number of policies and procedures in place for supporting employees. The Leave of Absence Policy, for example, specifically identifies the flexibility that may be available for religious or cultural observance. Employees who would like time off for religious or cultural observance can request flexibility in the arrangement of shifts, rotas and working hours generally; and also annual leave, flexi- days or unpaid leave.
- 8.4 Rooms are allocated within the Civic Centre as prayer rooms to use during lunch break periods.
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9. Sexual Orientation Equality

9.1 Statistics relating to this equality stream include the following:

- Official government statistics estimate that 6% of the adult population are lesbian, gay or bisexual, i.e. approximately 3.5 million people.
- It is not known how many people living in Sunderland are lesbian, gay or bi-sexual.
- Stonewall research shows that in the North East of England if you are lesbian, gay, or bisexual, only 7% of staff are open about their sexuality in the workplace, compared to 50% of staff in London.

9.2 The Council has long been committed to ensuring equality for its residents and employees. The Council is working with partnership organisations to promote Sunderland as an inclusive city to remove barriers people may face. In addition, the Council has the following in place:

- The e-learning equality and diversity training package raises awareness of sexual orientation and will help to eliminate any discrimination within the Council.
- Other training programmes with equality and diversity a key component, e.g. the Sunderland Leadership Programme.
- Harassment, disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- An internal Mediation Service delivered by trained mediators
- Development of the monitoring of this equality strand across the Council (see below).

9.3 The Council, for example, is monitoring harassment and bullying at work. As mentioned, it was decided that a revised Harassment Formal Complaints Form be introduced in July 2009. The revised form includes the nature of harassment complaints, such as sexual orientation. The revised form was introduced to improve monitoring and to help to eliminate any harassment, bullying or discrimination, on the grounds of sexual orientation, etc.

9.4 In 2010 the Council joined Stonewall, which is an organisation that works to achieve equality and justice for LGB people. It offers advice and support to over 600 organisations including IBM, Barclays, Barnardos, the Royal Navy and other Councils.

10. Pregnancy and Maternity

10.1 Of all the employees whose maternity leave finished in the 2010/2011 financial year 97.97% returned to work. A small percentage (2.03%) did not return to work when their maternity leave finished. In addition, 70.64% of those on maternity leave were from the Children's Services Directorate, however, a large percentage (79.71%) of employees from Children's Services are female.

11. Harassment and Bullying

- 11.1 The Council is opposed to all forms of harassment or bullying. The equality and diversity training package defines harassment, explains that harassment may be linked to any of the equality issues outlined in the training (e.g. race, disability, etc) and how to report harassment.
- 11.2 The Council has an Harassment at Work Policy and a network of trained Harassment Advisers offering confidential discussions with employees who feel they are being harassed or bullied.
- 11.3 During the period 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011 there were 15 employees who complained formally of harassment or bullying and therefore the number of formal cases is very low.

11. Carers

- 11.1 The vast majority (80%) of the UK's 6 million carers are of working age. There are 31,864 carers in Sunderland, 26% of these providing 50 or more hours of care per week (8,359 in total) (2001). In addition, carers in Sunderland save the economy £706.9 million per year. Within the Council 861 employees declared their status as a carer in an employee survey which took place during 2005.
- 11.2 The Council has developed a package of support for employees with caring responsibilities. For example:
- *Flexible Working* – We have a wide range of flexible working policies relating to, for example, job share, part year working, career breaks, etc. All Council employees can make a request for flexible working arrangements. An employee who therefore requires a change to their working arrangements in order for them to exercise their caring responsibilities can apply for flexible working.
 - *Carers Leave/ Emergency Time Off to Care for Dependents* – Managers can use their discretion to grant employees paid leave of up to 5 days per leave year in order to support emergency caring responsibilities.
 - *Counselling Services* – All employees including those who are carers have access to confidential employee counselling services.
- 11.3 A dedicated intranet site for carers has been developed based on what the Council currently offers its carer employees, with some links to the existing provisions in other policies/procedures. This “signposts” employees to the current support available to carers.

12. Equality Employee Groups

- 12.1 The Council's has established 6 equality employee groups for equality and diversity, relating to the following 6 equality strands:
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- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation.

12.2 Each group focuses upon taking the equality agenda forward under its own equality strand, and the groups are able to support the development of its strand across the Council.

12.3 The Council is intending to re-launch these groups in order to develop the role of the groups, build membership and to enable employees to participate more effectively. The Council will also consider whether there is a need to establish any additional equality employee groups.
