

Corporate Workforce Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2011-12

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Section 1 – Introduction

Sunderland City Council's Workforce Equality & Diversity Report 2011-12 shows our equality monitoring information for the financial year April 2011 – March 2012.

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

We recognise and value the diversity of people in the city and those who work for the council, and are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all employees. As part of this commitment, we collect and publish equality information on our workforce, and use this as part of our workforce planning process, and to inform our equality objectives. This helps us to better understand our staff, identify any issues, and take action where required, in order to ensure that our employees are supported, and to create a better workplace.

Effective from 5th April 2011, the public sector Equality Duty, at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, requires public bodies to consider all individuals when carrying out our day to day work, in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to our own employees.

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

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

Section 2 – Context

Examples of Key equality activities during 2011-12:

The following are examples of some key activities the council implemented or achieved during 2011-12 to progress its equality agenda, in line with the 3 aims of the Equality Duty outlined above:

- New Equality Scheme (published April 2012)
<http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=498>
 This sets out what the council is doing to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people. As well as giving specific consideration to the 9 protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, it also includes consideration of wider equality issues such as income and caring responsibilities. The Equality Scheme has an associated action plan which includes **11 equality objectives** setting out what the council aims to achieve.
- Equality Champion
 We have recently established a senior equality champion. Our Assistant Chief Executive will work in conjunction with the Deputy Leader to promote and highlight equality issues.
- Equality Analysis
 Equality analysis is carried out on any proposed change or development to a service or policy. We undertake equality analysis on our employment policies where appropriate, to help us consider how they may affect different people in the workforce, and to take action to address any area that may have an adverse impact.
- ARCH hate-incident reporting
 The council is a partner in the ARCH Sunderland Hate Incident Reporting system, which reports hate incidents and links to other partner organisations who provide support and respond to incidents. Racist, transphobic, homophobic, religious and disability hate incidents can all be reported (anonymously, if preferred). This includes any incidents that take place in the workplace which employees do not feel able to bring up through other channels or with line managers. Both victims and witnesses of incidents can report to ARCH.

- Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme and Workplace Equality Index 2012

In 2010 the Council joined the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme, which is a good practice employers' forum for sexual orientation equality in the workplace. Our participation in the programme enables the use of the Diversity Champions logo, sending out a message about our values and helping us to attract a more diverse workforce. Organisations that join this programme can also use the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, which is a benchmarking tool that can be used to assess an organisation's work on lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) equality. Last year we took part in the Index for the first time. The results from the survey provided us with a useful baseline of our current performance in respect of LGB employees, and have led to a set of actions agreed at senior level designed to promote equality.
- Pay Policy Statement

The council's Pay Policy Statement is aimed at supporting the remuneration of the workforce in a fair and transparent way. It is subject to annual review and approved by full Council for each financial year, and is published on the council's website:
<http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4994>

It sets out the methods by which salaries of all employees are determined, the detail and level of remuneration of the council's most senior staff, the remuneration of the lowest paid employees, and the relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and of employees who are not Chief Officers.

The Pay Policy Statement reinforces our commitment to being an equal opportunity employer, and forms part of our policies to promote equality in pay practices. As such it links directly with the Single Equality Scheme. By ensuring transparency of senior pay and the relationship with pay of other employees, it will help to ensure a fair approach which meets our equality objectives.
- Equal pay audits of the workforce

The Council supports the principle of equal pay for work of equal value and recognises that we should operate a pay system that is based on objective criteria. As part of our commitment to putting equal pay principles into practice, we carry out regular monitoring of the impact of our pay practices. For the last six years, pay audits have been carried out annually on the whole workforce, providing us with useful comparative pay information. This enables us to monitor the effect of our HR practices and activities to see if they are helping to narrow pay differences, and to check that any gaps found are justifiable and not due to discriminatory pay practices, to eliminate bias and ensure fairness in pay.

- **Equality & Diversity Training**
The council's equality and diversity training (eLearning plus a toolbox talk for employees who don't have internet access) raises awareness of the protected characteristics and will help to eliminate discrimination in the council. The programme reflects the latest equality guidance and the current edition is to be launched for managers, with an updated equality analysis process. Equality is also a key part of the Council's Sunderland Leadership Programme (SLP) which provides support for managers and recognises their key role in leading and supporting others. During this period, **91** employees participated in the SLP programme. Support for employees is also available through the Union Learning Representatives (ULR), to ensure that employees in potentially 'hard to reach' groups or locations are able to access support and development opportunities.
- **Placements for young people with a learning or physical disability**
In the last year we have provided placements where possible through direct contact with schools for those young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, as well as through the City Hospitals project.
- **Flexible Working**
We are strongly encouraging flexible working for all of our employees and offer a range of options on this. This can be particularly useful for employees who have caring responsibilities.
- **Childcare Vouchers**
The Council offers childcare vouchers to all employees, which helps to encourage parents with young children back to work. At the end of March 2012 we had **220** employees participating in the Scheme.
- **Apprenticeships and work placements**
The Council directly employed **53** apprentices and took on **128** work experience placements in the period from April 2011 to March 2012. We are currently increasing the number of apprenticeships and work placements, and next year's report is expected to show higher figures.
- **Health & Wellbeing Programme**
In the last year the council has been proactively rolling out its Health & Wellbeing programme, promoting and enabling healthy living within the council and within the City.
- We are currently in the process of collecting information from all employees which will enable us to have up to date equality monitoring information to help us see whether we are achieving our commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all staff. This should help us to better understand our employees, ensure they are supported, and create a better workplace. In addition collecting, monitoring and reporting the information is in line with the Council's Equality Scheme and equality objectives, as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

- **Listening to our employees**
Employee equality networks are currently being relaunched to develop the role of the participants, build membership and enable employees to participate more effectively.
The council will of course take any equality concerns seriously and address these through the appropriate channels. We would usually become aware of these through direct approaches from employees or trade union representatives, through our joint consultation arrangements and groups, or through practical implementation of our relevant policies.
- **Recruitment initiatives**
The council currently has a freeze on external recruitment except in exceptional circumstances. This is because we have to manage a long term reduction in the council's workforce due to reductions in public sector budgets. Reporting of equality analysis for external recruitment is therefore not appropriate. However, the council's internal recruitment practices promote equality and fairness by focussing on the strengths necessary to perform a role. We have received significant external recognition and acclaim for the sophisticated and objective techniques that we use, which are based on the latest research in occupational psychology. Our internal initiatives - the Internal Jobs Market (IJM) and SWITCH (Staff Working In Transition and Change) - both use the same matching process to compare individuals to roles. Matching employees to roles is based predominantly on a personality assessment, however verbal and numerical reasoning skills are also taken into account. The questionnaires which assess an individual in these areas have been widely tested by SHL for equality in respect of ethnicity and gender, and employees within the recruitment service are trained in how to best support a varying range of equality needs, especially disability, to ensure equality of access to the assessment.
- **Schools exchange between Chinese and Sunderland Schools**
Not only has the international exchange positively influenced attitudes on culture and ethnicity of our pupils, it has also impacted on parents and residents of our community.
- **Flying the Rainbow Flag**
To demonstrate the Council's commitment to sexual orientation equality in the workplace, the Council has flown the Rainbow flag annually since 2010, to promote International Day Against Homophobia.
- **Other community initiatives include Sunderland PRIDE, plus an event on the International Day of the Disabled.**

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

Section 3 - General Workforce Information

3.1 People in post at 31st March 2012

At the end of March 2012, Sunderland City Council had a total workforce of **11,825**, of whom **6,746 (57%)** are employed centrally, and **5,079 (43%)** are employed directly by LEA schools.

Reductions in government funding, the council's ongoing transformation agenda and the need for efficiency savings have led to a reduction in the council's workforce.

Because there is currently a freeze on external recruitment (except in exceptional circumstances, or in schools) opportunities for increasing the number of employees with protected characteristics have been limited.

Table by headcount

Non Schools	6,746	57%
Schools	5,079	43%
Total	11,825	100%

3.2 Employees/Jobholders:

The above headcount figure relates to **13,188** Jobholders. The number of jobs (and contracts) is higher than the headcount figure as some employees have more than one job with the council.

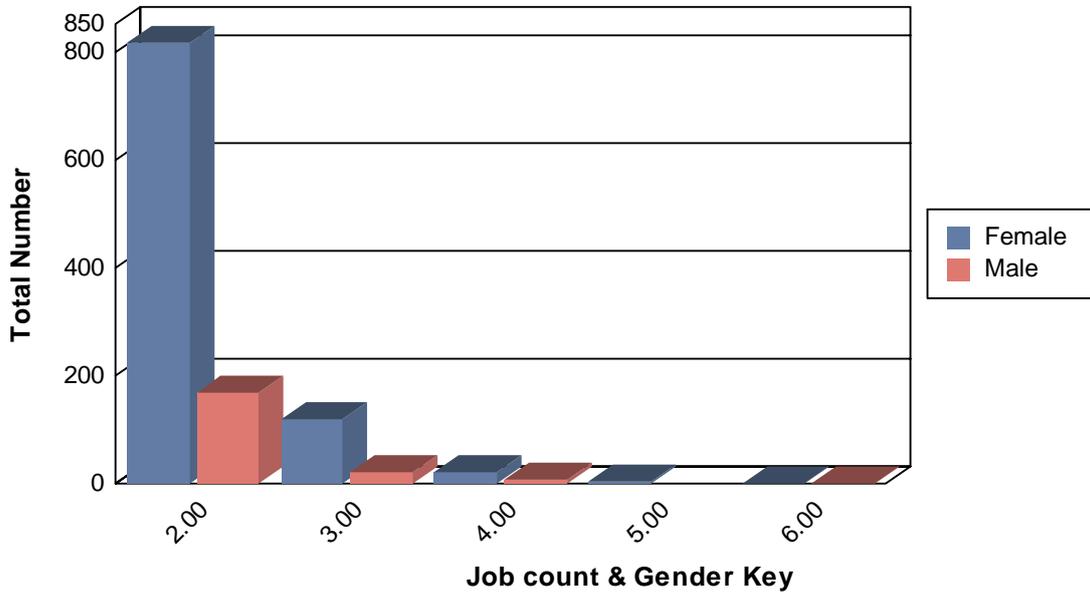
1,154 employees, or **9.76%** of the workforce, had more than one job within the council or one of its schools at the end of March.

The gender profile of the "multi job" group is shown in the table below.

Table showing multiple jobs, including by gender

Employees	Male	Female	Total employees	Total jobholders
With 1 job	3,115	7,556	10,671	10,671
With 2 jobs	167	816	983	1,966
With 3 jobs	21	118	139	417
With 4 jobs	6	22	28	112
With 5 jobs	0	2	2	10
With 6 jobs	1	1	2	12
Total employees with multiple jobs	195	959	1,154	2,517
Total	3,310	8,515	11,825	13,188

Number of employees, men & women with more than one job



3.3 Part time working

4,697 employees (**39.72%**) work on a part-time basis, (ie less than a standard 37 hour working week), and **7,128 (60.28%)** work full-time.

The incidence of part-time working across the grading structure shows a predominance of part-time working in lower paid roles, and this pattern is similar across the UK. This is considered further in the Gender section below.

Table of part time/full time working

Work Pattern	Percentage	Count
Full Time	60.28%	7,128
Part Time	39.72%	4,697
Total	100%	11,825

3.4 Pay Multiple: Ratio of highest paid employee to lowest paid employee

The council now calculates and reports the ratio between the pay of the highest paid employee and the lowest paid employee on an annual basis, and includes this in the Pay Policy. The ratio is currently **14.47:1**. This meets the Government expectation that the pay multiple relationship should be below 20:1 in local government.

Section 4 - by Sex

- 4.1 **8,515** of the council's employees are women (**72.01%**), and **3,310 (27.99%)** are men.
- 4.2 Between April 2011 and March 2012, **545 men (32.13%)** and **1,151 women (67.87%)** left the Council for a range of reasons.
- 4.3 The council has a range of family-friendly policies and flexible working arrangements, which contribute to making the council an attractive place to work. The gender profile suggests that such arrangements are a contributory factor in attracting women in particular to work for the council.
- 4.4 **47.29%** of the group of top 5% of earners are made up of women, indicating a relatively balanced gender split at the most senior levels (although not in comparison to the council's gender profile overall, which is more than two thirds women).
- 4.5 Although pay differentials are not based on gender, the impact of part-time working can have a major influence on the gender pay gap. **48.46%** of all women employed by the council work in jobs that are carried out on a part-time basis, compared to **17.25%** of all men employed by the council.

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

Table of Employees by Gender

Gender	Percentage	Count
Female	72.01%	8,515
Male	27.99%	3,310
Total	100%	11,825

Section 5 - Workforce Information by Age

- 5.1 The age range profile of the council's workforce is fairly young, with **68%** of employees aged **under 50**, and nearly **32%** of employees aged **over 50** (see table below). The biggest age band group is the **41-50** years group, with nearly **30.7%** of employees within this age bracket.
- 5.2 The current profile with its under-50's majority is interesting, and may be partly as a result of the council's proactive support of the

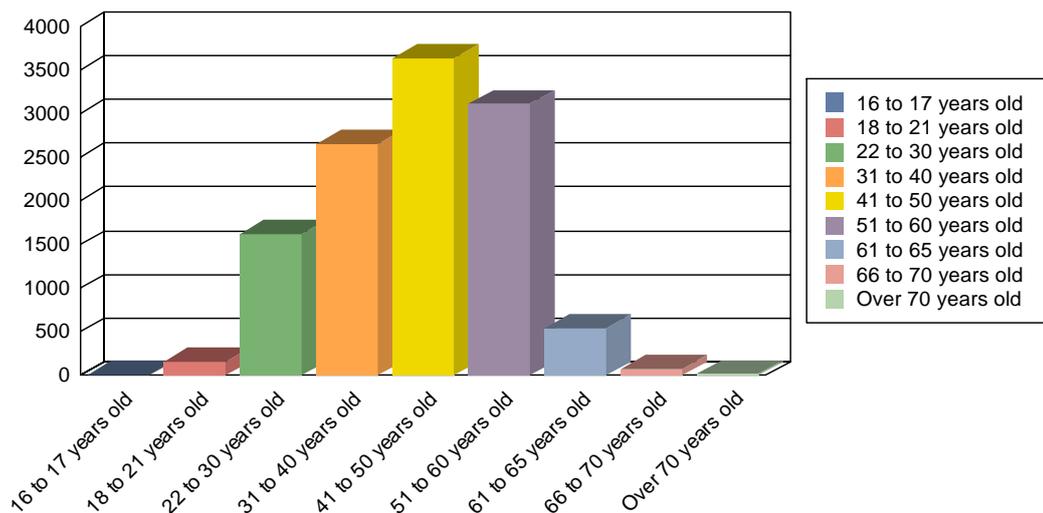
management of early retirements, as part of a raft of measures designed to support the Sunderland Way of Working, the Transformation Programme and the need for efficiency savings.

- 5.3 Although there is currently a freeze on external recruitment, the council continues to be active in its promotion of apprenticeships. The council directly employed **53** apprenticeships during the financial year 2011-12, and took on **128** work experience placements.
- 5.4 **35.51%** of the council's top earners are aged between the 41-50 age band and **39.27%** are in the 51-60 age band. This is expected as employees develop and gain experience.

Table of Employees by Age Band

Age Band	No. of employees	% Workforce Profile
16-17	4	0.03
18-21	162	1.37
22-30	1,627	13.76
31-40	2,659	22.49
41-50	3,633	30.72
51-60	3,110	26.30
61-65	545	4.61
66-70	69	0.58
71+	16	0.14
Total	11,825	100%

Employees by Age Band



Section 6 - By Race

- 6.1 At March 2012, the council had **152** black or ethnic minority (BME) employees, ie 1.29% ⁽¹⁾ of the workforce. The breakdown is shown in the table below:

Table of Employees by Race

White (British, Irish, Other)	91.32%
Black or Black British	0.19%
Asian or Asian British	0.52%
Other	0.37%
Mixed	0.20%
Not known	5.67%
Information Withheld	1.73%
Total	100%

- 6.2 The categories for recording and reporting information have recently changed and our current staff census is asking employees to provide information on a different set of broad ethnic groups, which will be included in next year's report.
- 6.3 In Sunderland, the 2011 Census records the Ethnic group of the resident population as below:

Table of 2011 Census by Ethnic Group: Sunderland Residents

White	
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	94.8%
Irish	0.2%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0%
Any other white background	0.9%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	
White and Black Caribbean	0.2%
White and Black African	0.1%
White and Asian	0.2%
Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background	0.1%
Asian/Asian British	
Indian	0.6%
Pakistani	0.2%
Bangladeshi	0.8%
Chinese	0.6%
Any other Asian background	0.5%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	
African	0.4%
Caribbean	0%
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	0%
Other Ethnic Group	
Arab	0.1%
Any other ethnic group	0.2%

(1) Minor variances with BVPI figures reported, due to slightly different methodology.

- 6.4 Given that there are an estimated 4% BME people living in Sunderland, there is slight under-representation of BME staff across the council. As there is currently an external recruitment freeze (except in schools), this picture is not likely to improve much in the near future.
- 6.5 There were **22** BME leavers during the period April 2011 to March 2012.
- 6.6 The council also records and reports on the percentage of black or ethnic minority employees within the group of the top 5% of highest earning council employees, and this was **2.26%**. This suggests that the relatively small proportion of BME employees are currently employed in higher graded posts within the Council.

Section 7 - By Disability

- 7.1 The council had **220** employees (**1.86%**)⁽²⁾ with a declared disability at the end of March 2012. **31** employees with a declared disability left the council.
- 7.2 25.83% of people in Sunderland aged 16-64 consider themselves to have a disability.⁽³⁾ This suggests that there is some under-representation of employees with a disability in comparison to the local community.
- 7.3 **1.52%** of the council's top 5% of earners, are made up of people who have a disability.
- 7.4 The council is accredited under the 'Two Ticks Positive about Disabled People' standard and meets its commitments under this. To demonstrate our commitment to disability equality in the workplace, the council uses the Disability Two Tick symbol on the external recruitment website and on our recruitment documentation.

Table of Employees by Disability:

Disability Count	No. of employees	%
Employees who consider themselves to have a disability	220	1.86
Employees who don't consider themselves to have a disability	11,050	93.45
Employee info withheld	267	2.26
Employee info not known	288	2.44
Total	11,825	100

(2) Minor variances with BVPI figures reported, due to slightly different methodology.

(3) Information sourced from ONS Annual Population Survey, July 2011-June 2012.

Section 8 – By Pregnancy & Maternity

- 8.1 A snapshot figure at the end of March 2012, shows **196** women on maternity leave.
- 8.2 **448** employees went on maternity leave between April 2011 and March 2012. Of these, **94.78%** of employees whose maternity leave finished in the 2011/12 financial year, returned to work, which is a significantly high proportion.
- 8.3 **226** employees participated in the Childcare Voucher Scheme at the end of March 2012. This scheme provides an easy way for working parents to save on the cost of childcare, through the exchange of a portion of their salary into vouchers, to pay for registered and approved childcare, thereby making savings on tax and national insurance. This directly helps to encourage parents with young children back to work.
- 8.4 Our staff census which is currently out with employees, asks them to advise whether or not they have parental responsibility for a child under the age of 18. The information provided will help us to understand our workforce profile, and to ensure that our policies and practices best support employees with childcare responsibilities.

Section 9 – By Gender Reassignment

- 9.1 Information on employees who have gone through or are going through gender assignment is not currently available. The council is currently asking all employees to provide updated equality information on all of the protected characteristics. For the first time we are asking our employees whether their gender identity is the same as they were assigned at birth. It is worth stating that the information can only be asked on a voluntary basis. However, we hope that employees will be willing to share this information with us, providing us with a baseline of employee information to help to inform our policies and practices.

Section 10 – By Religion or Belief

- 10.1 Information on employee's religion or belief is not currently available. As mentioned above, we are currently asking employees to complete a staff census with information on their protected characteristics, on a voluntary basis. For the first time we are asking our employees to provide information on their religion or belief. We hope that employees will be willing to share this information with us, providing a baseline of employee information to help to gain a better understanding of equalities across the council, and inform our policies and practices where they impact on religion or belief.

- 10.2 In Sunderland, the 2011 Census records the religion or belief of the resident population as being 70.3% Christian, 1.3% Muslim, 0.3% Sikh, 0.2% Other religion, 0.2% Buddhist, 0.2% Hindu, 0% Jewish. 21.9% No religion, and 5.6% Religion not stated.
- 10.3 The Council's employment policies and procedures in place for supporting employees in respect of religion or belief, include for example:
- Specific flexibility available in our Leave of Absence Policy for religious or cultural observance.
 - The allocation of prayer rooms for use during lunch break periods.
 - "Religion/belief" as a named category on our Harassment Formal Complaints Form, which asks for the nature of harassment complaints.

Section 11 – By Sexual Orientation

- 11.1 Information on the percentage of our employees who are Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual (LGB) is not currently available. As mentioned above, we are currently asking all employees to provide updated equality information on all of the protected characteristics. For the first time we are asking our employees, on a voluntary basis, to provide information on their sexual orientation. We hope that employees will be willing to share this information with us, providing a baseline of information to gain a better understanding of equalities across the council, and inform our policies and practices where they impact on sexual orientation.
- 11.2 Our participation in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and use of the Diversity Champion Logo (see Section 2) is a clear demonstration of our commitment to sexual orientation equality in the workplace, and we are using the feedback from last year's index to make improvements where appropriate.
- 11.3 For example, although our employment policies and benefits apply to everyone in the council and all relevant benefits will be paid to both same sex and opposite sex couples, responses from the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index survey last year highlighted the fact that this was not always made clear explicitly. We have therefore reviewed the wording of our benefits policies to make sure that this is made clear. In particular, we have amended our Leave of Absence Policy (Bereavement Leave and Carers Leave provisions); our Adoption Leave and Pay Policy; and our Maternity Policy (paternity/maternity support leave provisions).
- 11.4 Flying the Rainbow flag annually to promote International Day against Homophobia (see Section 2) also sends a message out of the council's commitment to sexual orientation equality in the workplace.

Section 12 – By Marriage & Civil Partnership

- 12.1 Information on employees by marriage and civil partnership is not currently available. Our census which is currently out with employees asks this question for the first time. We hope that employees will be willing to share this information with us, providing a baseline of information to gain a better understanding of equalities across the council, and inform our policies and practices where they impact on marriage and civil partnership.
- 12.2 In Sunderland, the 2011 Census records the relationship status of residents as shown below:

**Table of 2011 Census by Marital & civil partnership status:
Sunderland Residents**

Never married and never registered a same-sex civil partnership	35.3%
Married	45.1%
In a registered same-sex civil partnership	0.1%
Separated	2.4%
Divorced	9.2%
Widowed	7.9%

Section 13 – By Carers Information

- 13.1 The national statistics on Carers are significant. 80% of the UK's 6 million carers are of working age, and in the North East this increases to 82%.⁽⁴⁾ 3 million carers combine work and care. Every year, over 2 million people become carers, so that there is a new population of carers in the workforce every day. 3 in 5 people will become carers at some point in their lives, and 1 in 5 people will give up work to care for somebody.
- 13.2 The council census which is currently out to all employees, asks employees to advise whether they are a Carer, so that we can understand our workforce profile and the demands on our employees in respect of caring responsibilities. The definition used is:
“A carer is someone who, without payment, provides help and support to a friend, neighbour, relative or partner (opposite or same sex) who could not manage without this help because of frailty, illness or disability.”
- 13.3 As a supportive and flexible employer, balancing service needs with individual employee needs, we recognise that offering supportive practices can help us to manage attendance levels. We have developed a package of support for employees with caring responsibilities. These include:

(4) Centre for International Research on Care, Labour & Equalities

- **Flexible Working:**
In fact, the council strongly encourages all employees to consider working flexibly, either on a permanent or temporary basis. A range of options are available (including flexi time, career breaks, the purchase of additional annual leave, compressed working hours, job share, part year working etc). Not only does this make the council an attractive place to work, it achieves financial efficiencies while protecting jobs. The level of flexibility assists employees in achieving a better work life balance, and enables us to provide choice and respond to employees' changing circumstances. This is particularly relevant when supporting our employees who have caring responsibilities.
- **Carers Leave/Emergency Time Off to Care for Dependents:**
Managers can use their discretion to grant employees paid leave of up to 5 days per leave year in order to support emergency caring responsibilities.
- **Counselling Services:**
All employees, including those who are carers, have access to confidential employee counselling services.
- A dedicated intranet site for carers has been developed. This "signposts" employees to the current support available to carers.

Section 14 - Conclusion

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

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