

## **Corporate Workforce Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2012-13**

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### **Section 1 – Introduction**

Sunderland City Council's Workforce Equality & Diversity Report 2012-13 shows our equality monitoring information for an 18 month period from **April 2012 – December 2013**. (See also the 2011-12 Report, covering the reporting year ending March 2012, published in January 2013. In Summer 2014 a further report will show our figures for the reporting year April 2013 – March 2014).

The report 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 5<sup>th</sup> 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 2012-13:

The following are examples of some key activities the council implemented or achieved during 2012-13 to progress its equality agenda, in line with the 3 aims of the Equality Duty outlined above:

- Equality Scheme 2012-2016  
<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 Champions  
 Within the council the Assistant Chief Executive is the lead Equalities Champion, working in conjunction with the Deputy Leader – who takes the lead equalities role for Elected Members – to promote and highlight equality issues. Heads of Service Equality Champions have very recently been established, to act as Leaders within the council, on equality strands and also on other issues relevant to Sunderland:  
**Age** – Director of Public Health,  
**Carers** – Head of Community Leadership programmes,  
**Disability** – Head of Customer Services,  
**LGBT** – Deputy Director of HR,  
**Military personnel and veterans** – Head of Housing Support and Community Living,  
**Poverty** – Head of Transactional Services,  
**Race** – Head of Transformation,  
**Religion and Belief** – Head of Scrutiny and Area Arrangements,  
**Gender** – Head of Corporate Assurance and Procurement.

- **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 2014**  
 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. The council continues to support the Equality Index, and we are now in our third year of participating, during which time we have improved our ranking by 135 places, which is very encouraging. We are now ranked within the top 200 organisations who participate in this Index. We will use the feedback from the 2014 Equality Index to inform our equality actions going forward.
- **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 helps 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. 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. The council is currently undertaking a wide-ranging pay review via a Workforce Transformation Project, to be introduced later this year.
- **Equality & Diversity Training**  
The council's equality and diversity training (an eLearning programme for all staff, plus a paper-based option for toolbox talks for employees who don't have internet access) raises awareness of the protected characteristics and helps to eliminate discrimination in the council. The programme was updated to reflect the latest equality guidance. It went live on the council's e-learning lounge and was communicated via the 'Manager's Briefing' in Autumn 2012. An e-learning module for all managers is currently being updated and will shortly be launched. 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. Support for employees is also available through the Union Learning Representatives (ULR's), 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, or who are leaving Care**  
In the last two years we have provided placements where possible through direct contact with schools and through the City Hospitals programme for those young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, as well as placements through the Teenagers to Work Programme for young people leaving Care.
- **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 December 2013 we had **274** employees participating in the Scheme.

- Apprenticeships and work placements  
The Council directly employed **43** apprentices and accommodated **184** people on work experience in the period from April 2012 to December 2013. (See Section 5.3).
- Health & Wellbeing Programme  
The council continues to proactively roll out its Health & Wellbeing programme, promoting and enabling healthy living within the council and within the City.
- Our employees have provided us with some up to date equality information. This helps us to monitor the equality profile of our employees, and helps us see whether we are achieving our commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all staff. Doing this helps 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  
An Employee Equality Network has recently been relaunched. Work is now underway to develop the role of the group, build membership and enable employees to participate more effectively. Participation is being actively encouraged via targeted communications.  
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 (via the Internal Jobs Market or IJM) 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. 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. Employees who are less confident in the use of computers have been assisted in this.

- **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 People with Disabilities.

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 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013

At the end of December 2013, Sunderland City Council had a total workforce of **7,759**, of whom **4,779 (61.59%)** are employed centrally, and **2,980 (38.41%)** are employed directly by LEA schools. This is a significant reduction on last year's figures. Reductions in government funding, the council's ongoing transformation agenda, school to academy conversions, alternative service delivery models (ASDM's) and the need for efficiency savings have all 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	<b>4,779</b>	<b>61.59%</b>
Schools	<b>2,980</b>	<b>38.41%</b>
Total	<b>7,759</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### 3.2 Employees/Jobholders:

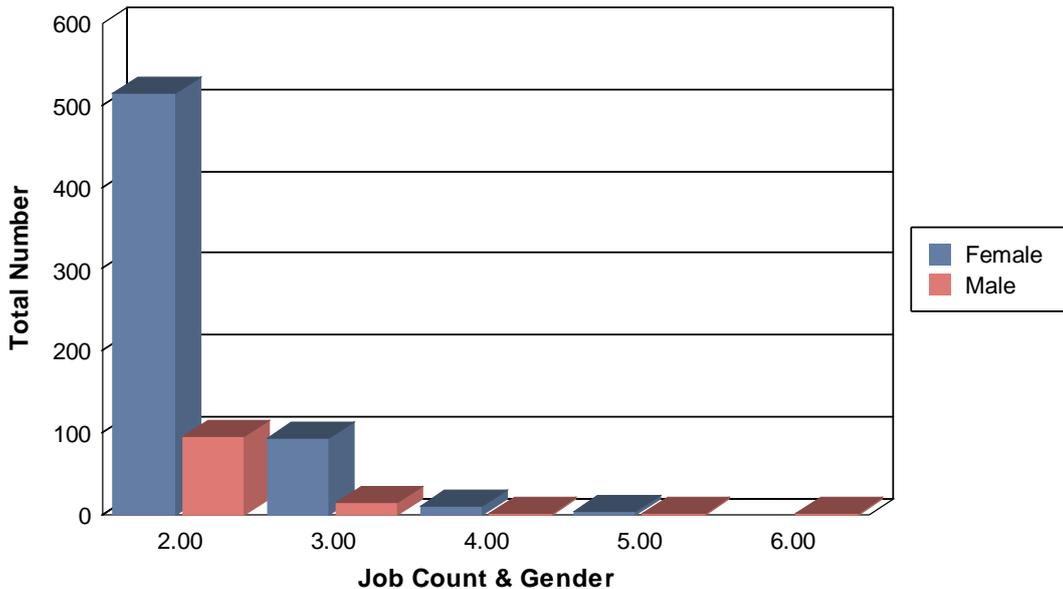
The above headcount figure relates to **8,637** Jobholders. The number of jobs (and contracts) is higher than the headcount figure as some employees have more than one job with the council.

**733** employees, or **9.45%** of the workforce, had more than one job within the council or one of its schools at the end of December 2013. 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	<b>2,062</b>	<b>4,964</b>	<b>7,026</b>	<b>7,026</b>
With 2 jobs	<b>95</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>1,220</b>
With 3 jobs	<b>14</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>321</b>
With 4 jobs	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>44</b>
With 5 jobs	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20</b>
With 6 jobs	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>
Total employees with multiple jobs	<b>112</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>1611</b>
Total	<b>2,174</b>	<b>5,585</b>	<b>7,759</b>	<b>8,637</b>

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



### 3.3 Part time working

**3,344** employees (**43.10%**) work on a part-time basis, (ie less than a standard 37 hour working week), and **4,415** (**56.90%**) 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 (Section 4).

**Table of part time/full time working**

Work Pattern	Percentage	Count
Full Time	<b>56.90%</b>	<b>4,415</b>
Part Time	<b>43.10%</b>	<b>3,344</b>
Total	<b>100%</b>	<b>7,759</b>

### 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 updated ratio (as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013) is **14.12:1**. This meets the Government expectation that the pay multiple relationship should be below 20:1 in local government.

## **Section 4 - by Sex**

- 4.1 **5,585** of the council's employees are women (**71.98%**), and **2,174 (28.02%)** are men.
- 4.2 Between April 2012 and December 2013, **1,615 men (31.23%)** and **3,557 women (68.77%)** left the Council for a range of reasons, including the council's voluntary severance programme.
- 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 **64.51%** of the group of top 5% of earners are made up of women. This is higher than last year. It indicates a relatively balanced gender split at the most senior levels.
- 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. **52.14%** of all women employed by the council work in jobs that are carried out on a part-time basis, compared to **19.87%** 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 (both childcare, and caring for family/friends). 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	71.98%	5,585
Male	28.02%	2,174
Total	100%	7,759

## Section 5 - Workforce Information by Age

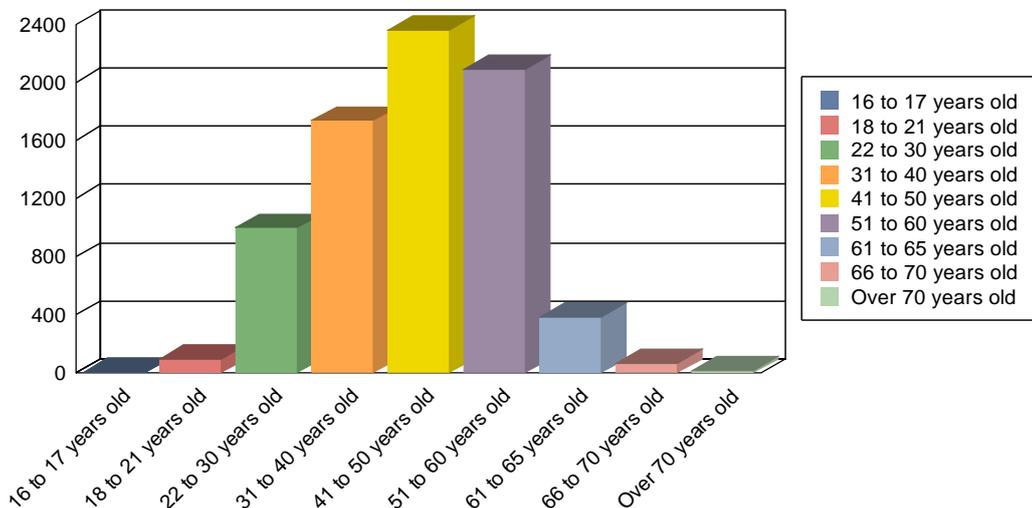
- 5.1 The age range profile of the council's workforce is fairly young, with **66.99%** of employees aged **under 50**, and nearly **33.01%** of employees aged **over 50** (see table below). The biggest age band group is the **41-50** years group, with nearly **30.43%** of employees within this age bracket.
- 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 **43** apprentices and accommodated **184** people on work experience in the period from April 2012 to December 2013. The council remains committed to supporting apprenticeships and work placements, and work experience has escalated, although apprenticeship opportunities have been restricted due to ongoing reorganisations.
- 5.4 **41.51%** of the council's **top earners** are aged between the 41-50 age band and **34.59%** 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	5	0.06%
18-21	95	1.22%
22-30	1,000	12.89%
31-40	1,737	22.39%
41-50	2,361	30.43%
51-60	2,092	26.96%
61-65	387	4.99%
66-70	66	0.85%

71+	16	0.21%
Total	7,759	100%

### Employees by Age Band



## Section 6 - By Race

6.1 At December 2013, the council had **113** black or ethnic minority (BME) employees, ie 1.45% of the workforce. The breakdown by broad ethnic group was 92.14% White, 0.32% Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups, 0.82% Asian/Asian British, 0.12% Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, 0.19% Any other ethnic group, 1.10% prefer not to say, 5.31% Not known.

### Table of Employees by Race/Ethnicity (aggregated into broad ethnic groups)

Ethnicity	Non Schools		Schools		Totals	
	Total	%age	Total	%age	Total	%age
White	4,451	93.14	2,698	90.54	7,149	92.14
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	22	0.46	3	0.10	25	0.32
Asian/Asian British	23	0.48	41	1.38	64	0.82
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	7	0.15	2	0.07	9	0.12
Any Other Ethnic Group	12	0.25	3	0.10	15	0.19
Prefer not to say	78	1.63	7	0.23	85	1.10
Not Known	186	3.89	226	7.58	412	5.31
Total	4,779	100.00	2,980	100.00	7,759	100.00

Note: Sunderland City Council records "Gypsy or Irish Traveller" under "Any Other Ethnic Group" rather than under "White" broad ethnic group.

- 6.2 In Sunderland, the 2011 Census records the Ethnic group of the resident population as below:

**Table of 2011 Census by Ethnic Group: Sunderland Residents**

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

- 6.3 Given that 4.07% of the people living in Sunderland are BME, there is some 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.
- 6.4 There were **110** BME leavers during the period April 2012 to December 2013.
- 6.5 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 **1.57%**. 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 **161** employees (**2.08%**) with a declared disability at the end of December 2013. **88** employees with a declared disability

left the council during the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013.

- 7.2 23.4% of people in Sunderland have a limiting long term illness (LLTI) or disability, and 11.7% of the working age population in Sunderland have a LLTI or disability. (Information sourced from the ONS Annual Population Survey). This suggests that there is some under-representation of employees with a disability in comparison to the local community, and/or under-reporting.
- 7.3 **0.63%** 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	161	2.08%
Employees who don't consider themselves to have a disability	7,232	93.21%
Employee info withheld	118	1.52%
Employee info not known	248	3.20%
Total	7,759	100%

## **Section 8 – By Pregnancy & Maternity**

- 8.1 A snapshot figure at the end of **December 2013** shows **135** women on maternity leave.
- 8.2 **322** employees went on maternity leave between April 2012 and **December 2013**. Of these, **95.31%** of employees whose maternity leave finished in this 18 month period returned to work, which is a significantly high proportion.
- 8.3 **274** employees were recorded as participants in the Childcare Voucher Scheme at the end of December 2013. 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 asked employees to advise whether or not they have parental responsibility for a child under the age of 18. The information provided helps us to understand our workforce profile, and to ensure that our policies and practices best support employees with childcare responsibilities. The return rate on our census was low and we are about to request further information from staff. However, our information to date shows that 7.84% of the Council's workforce have parental responsibility for a child under the age of 18, although the number is likely to be a lot higher, as information is currently not known for 89.65% of the workforce.

## **Section 9 – By Gender Reassignment**

- 9.1 Information held on employees who have gone through or are going through gender assignment is minimal. The council asked all employees to provide updated equality information on all of their protected characteristics. For the first time we asked 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 hoped 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. Despite our update exercise, there are still large gaps in our information which are "not known". We are therefore about to contact employees who have not yet provided information, although they will of course have the opportunity not to disclose information on an equality aspect if they so wish.
- 9.2 Our records show that 17.63% of employees have the same gender identity as assigned at birth, and information is missing for 82.28% of employees. The numbers are too low to report on employees who have gone through or are going through gender reassignment.

## **Section 10 – By Religion or Belief**

- 10.1 Information held on employee's religion or belief is currently minimal. As mentioned above, we asked our employees to complete a staff census with information on their protected characteristics, on a voluntary basis. For the first time we asked our employees to provide information on their religion or belief, to provide 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. Despite our update exercise, there are still large

gaps in our information which are “not known”. As mentioned above, we will shortly be contacting employees who have not yet provided information, although employees can of course choose not to disclose information on an equality aspect if they so wish.

- 10.2 Employees record their religion or belief as 13.42% Christianity, 0% Hinduism, 0% Judaism, 0.06% Islam, 0.04% Sikhism, 0.05% Buddhism, 0.15% Other religion or belief, 3.52% No religion or belief, 0.55% Prefer not to say, 82.20% Information Missing.

**Table of employees by Religion or Belief**

Religion	Central Total	Central %age	Schools Total	Schools %age	Final Total	Final %age
Christianity (including Catholic, Protestant all other Christian denominations)	893	18.69%	148	4.97%	1,041	13.42%
Hinduism	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Judaism	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Islam	5	0.10%	0	0.00%	5	0.06%
Sikhism	3	0.06%	0	0.00%	3	0.04%
Buddhism	4	0.08%	0	0.00%	4	0.05%
Other religion or belief	12	0.25%	0	0.00%	12	0.15%
No religion or belief	250	5.23%	23	0.77%	273	3.52%
Prefer not to say	43	0.90%	0	0.00%	43	0.55%
Not known	3,569	74.68%	2,809	94.26%	6,378	82.20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,779</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>2,980</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>7,759</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

- 10.3 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.

- 10.4 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 minimal. Our recent census asked employees, on

a voluntary basis, to provide information for the first time on their sexual orientation, to provide a baseline of information.

As mentioned above, we will be writing out to staff again to ask them to provide this data, although employees will have the option not to disclose this, if they prefer.

- 11.2 In the council, less than 0.5% of our employees report being LGB, indicating that we need to do some work to ensure people feel comfortable declaring their sexual orientation on a monitoring form
- 11.3 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 will be using the feedback from last year's index to make improvements where appropriate.
- 11.4 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 a previous Stonewall Workplace Equality Index survey highlighted the fact that this was not always made clear explicitly. We therefore reviewed the wording of our benefits policies to make sure that this was made clear. In particular, we 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).
- 11.5 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 minimal. Our census asked our employees this question for the first time. Again, gaps in the information require us to go back out to employees to request them to share this information with us, in order to provide 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 the council, employees report their relationship status as:  
4.39% Never married or registered as a same sex civil partnership,  
10.61% Married, 0.37% Separated, 1.46% Divorced, 0.09% Widowed,  
82.24% Information not known. The numbers of employees in a registered same sex civil partnership are too low to publish, indicating that we need to some work to ensure people feel comfortable declaring this on a monitoring form.

- 12.3 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%. (Information sourced from the Centre for International Research on Care, Labour & Equalities). 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 asked 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."  
 As mentioned, the return rate on our Census was low and we are looking to increase the return rates. However, our information to date shows that 2.51% of our employees declare themselves to meet the definition of being a Carer. 1.02% report being both Carer and "Parent Carer" (ie having parental responsibility for a child under age 18). As information is missing for 89.65% of the workforce, the numbers are likely to be a lot higher.
- 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:

- **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.

Hopefully, as we continue to record and report on our workforce equalities information, levels of confidence will increase and we will start to get more meaningful data which we can use to gain a better understanding of equalities across the council, and to inform our policies and practices where they impact on the equality strands.

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.