

Corporate Workforce Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2014

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Contents:	Page
Section 1: Introduction	1
Section 2: Context	2
Section 3: General Workforce Info	6
Section 4: By Sex	9
Section 5: By Age	9
Section 6: By Race	11
Section 7: By Disability	12
Section 8: By Pregnancy & Maternity	13
Section 9: By Gender Reassignment	14
Section 10: By Religion or Belief	15
Section 11: By Sexual Orientation	16
Section 12: By Marriage & Civil Partnership	17
Section 13: By Carers Information	18
Section 14: Conclusion	19

Section 1 – Introduction

Sunderland City Council's Workforce Equality & Diversity Report 2014 shows our equality monitoring information for a 12 month period from **January – December 2014**. (See also the 2012-13 Report, covering an 18 month reporting period ending December 2013, published in January 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.

From 5th April 2011, the public sector Equality Duty, at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, has required 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 2014:

The following are examples of some key activities the council implemented or achieved during 2014 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. Last year, Heads of Service Equality Champions were 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.
- **Hate-incident reporting**
 In April 2014 the council introduced a new system for reporting and recording hate incidents which allows people to report directly in to the council's Customer Service Network or via the council's website through an on-line reporting form. All forms of hate crime can 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 with line managers. Both victims and witnesses of incidents can report in to the system.
 A multi-agency Hate Incident Monitoring Group has been established to ensure on-going monitoring of incidents and to ensure that an evidenced based approach is taken to the deployment of resources and to the tackling of hate incidents across the city.
- **Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme and Workplace Equality Index 2015**
 The Council has been a participant in the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme since 2010. This 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 fourth year of participating. We will use the feedback from the 2015 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 about to complete a wide-ranging pay review via a Workforce Transformation Project, to be implemented in 2015.
- **Equality & Diversity Training**
The council's equality and diversity training currently consists of an eLearning programme for all staff, plus a paper-based option for toolbox talks for employees who don't have internet access. These aim to raise awareness of the protected characteristics and make employees aware of the need to treat colleagues and customers fairly. Equality and Diversity is also included in other courses, for example:
 - Recruitment and Selection: All those involved in Recruitment should complete this course before taking part in the process;
 - Leadership Programme: Where Equality and Diversity is considered alongside the Council's values and behaviours ('Proud, Decent, Together').
 - Customer Care training: Includes a hard hitting scenario illustrating unacceptable behaviour in relation to a disabled customer.
 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 three 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 strongly encourage 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 2014 we had **138** employees participating in the Scheme.
- **Apprenticeships and work placements**
The Council directly employed **59** apprentices and accommodated **96** people on work experience in the period from January to December 2014, including a small number of volunteering and internships. (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. The Council has very recently been awarded the North East Health at Work Award. This regional award recognises employers who assist their employees in improving their health and wellbeing.
- **Our employees have provided us with some up to date equality information.** We have had a big drive in the last year to encourage employees in the council to provide us with their 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**
Our Employee Equality Network was re-launched last year. Work is on-going 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, Diversity Month in partnership with the University of Sunderland, and The One World Party.

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 December 2014

At the end of December 2014, Sunderland City Council had a total workforce of **7,224**, of whom **4,546 (62.93%)** are employed centrally, and **2,739 (37.92%)** are employed directly by maintained schools, including 61 who have jobs across both areas (schools and 'non schools'). There continues to be a reduction on the headcount figures compared to previous years. Reductions in government funding, the council's on-going 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 (Central)	4,546*	62.40%
Schools	2,739*	37.60%
Total	7,224	100%

*61 employees have jobs across both areas

3.2 **Employees/Jobholders:**

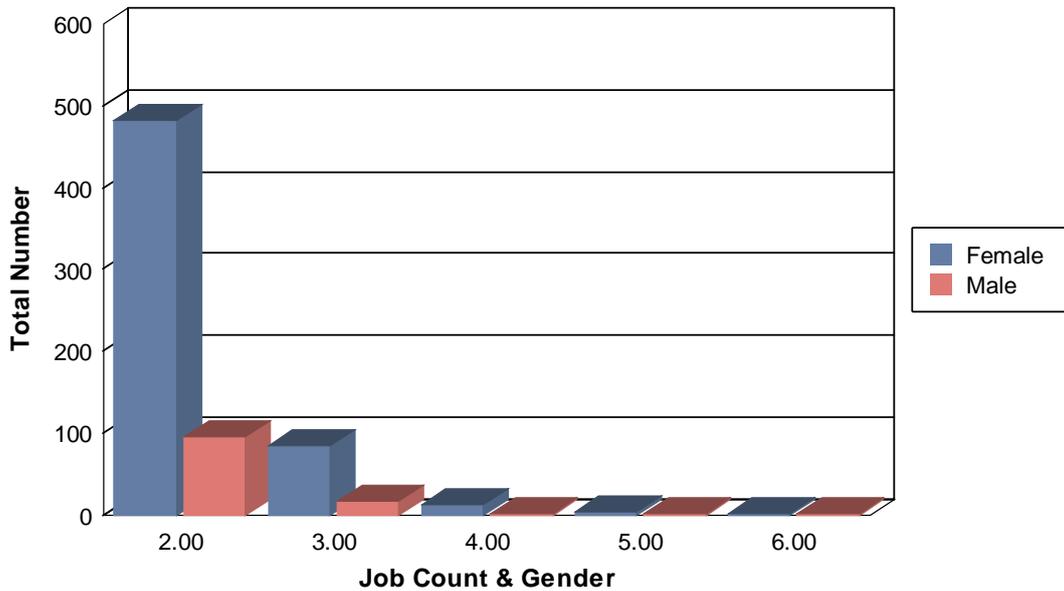
The above headcount figure relates to **8,074** Jobholders. The number of jobs (and contracts) is higher than the headcount figure as some employees have more than one job with the council.

699 employees, or **9.68%** of the workforce, had more than one job within the council or one of its schools at the end of December 2014. 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	1907	4618	6,525	6,525
With 2 jobs	95	482	577	1,154
With 3 jobs	17	85	102	306
With 4 jobs	1	12	13	52
With 5 jobs	2	3	5	25
With 6 jobs	1	1	2	12
Total employees with multiple jobs	116	583	699	1549
Total	2,023	5,201	7,224	8,074

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



3.3 Part time working

3,182 employees (44.05%) work on a part-time basis, (ie less than a standard 37 hour working week), and **4,042 (55.95%)** work full-time. The number of part-time workers is very slightly higher this year compared to last year (43.10%).

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	55.95%	4,042
Part Time	44.05%	3,182
Total	100%	7,224

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 31st December 2014) is **14.01:1**. This meets the Government expectation that the pay multiple relationship should be below 20:1 in local government. The council is committed to adopting the Living Wage later this year, which will increase the pay of the lowest paid employees, and reduce this ratio.

Section 4 - by Sex

- 4.1 **5,201** of the council's employees are women (**72.00%**), and **2,023 (28.00%)** are men.
- 4.2 Between January 2014 and December 2014, **336** men (**25.17%**) and **999** women (**74.83%**) 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 council's gender profile suggests that such arrangements are a contributory factor in attracting women in particular to work for the council.
- 4.4 **65.11%** of the group of top 5% of earners are made up of women. This is slightly higher than last year (64.51%). 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. **52.91%** of all women employed by the council work in jobs that are carried out on a part-time basis, compared to **21.26%** 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.

- 4.6 The council has recently established a Head of Service Equality Champion to lead on Gender issues.

Table of Employees by Gender

Gender	Percentage	Count
Female	72.00%	5,201
Male	28.00%	2,023
Total	100%	7,224

Section 5 - Workforce Information by Age

- 5.1 The age range profile of the council's workforce shows that **66.85%** of employees are aged **50 and under**, and nearly **33.14%** of employees are aged **51 or over** (see table below). The biggest age band group is

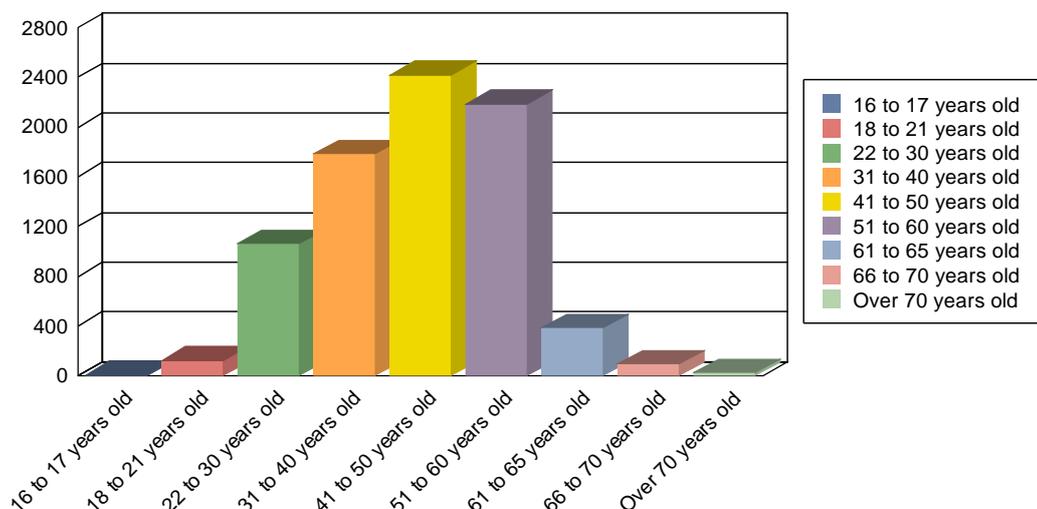
the **41-50** years group, with nearly **29.7%** of employees within this age bracket.

- 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 **59** apprentices and accommodated **96** people on work experience in the period from January to December 2014, including a small number of volunteering and internships. The council remains committed to supporting apprenticeships and work placements.
- 5.4 **40.82%** of the council's **top earners** are aged between the 41-50 age band and **35.37%** are in the 51-60 age band. This is expected as employees develop and gain experience.
- 5.5 The council has recently established a Head of Service Equality Champion to lead on Age issues.

Table of Employees by Age Band

Age Band	School employees	Central employees	Total employees	% Workforce Profile
16-17	2	1	3	0.04%
18-21	53	61	114	1.58%
22-30	478	471	942	13.04%
31-40	665	969	1,625	22.49%
41-50	759	1,403	2,146	29.7%
51-60	626	1,358	1,961	27.15%
61-65	116	224	335	4.64%
66-70	32	48	79	1.09%
71+	8	11	19	0.26%
Total	2739	4546	7,224	100%

Employees by Age Band



Section 6 - By Race

6.1 At December 2014, the council had **108** black or ethnic minority (BME) employees, ie 1.50% of the workforce. The breakdown by broad ethnic group was 93.38% White, 0.37% Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups, 0.84% Asian/Asian British, 0.11% Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, 0.17% Any other ethnic group, 0.98% prefer not to say, 4.14% 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	4,302	94.63	2,502	91.35	6,746	93.38
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	22	0.48	5	0.18	27	0.37
Asian/Asian British	23	0.51	38	1.39	61	0.84
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	7	0.15	1	0.04	8	0.11
Any Other Ethnic Group	10	0.22	3	0.11	12	0.17
Prefer not to say	64	1.41	8	0.29	71	0.98
Not Known	118	2.60	182	6.64	299	4.14
Total	4,546	100.00	2,739	100.00	7,224	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

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%

- 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 **20** BME leavers during the period from January to December 2014.
- 6.5 The council also records and reports on the percentage of black and minority ethnic employees within the group of the top 5% of highest earning council employees, and this was **1.42%**.
- 6.6 The council has recently established a Head of Service Equality Champion to lead on Race issues.

Section 7 - By Disability

- 7.1 The council had **189** employees (**2.62%**) declare themselves disabled at the end of December 2014. **34** declared disabled employees left the council during the period from 1st January to 31st December 2014.

- 7.2 25.6% of people in Sunderland aged 16-64 declare themselves disabled (Information sourced from the ONS Annual Population Survey, latest figures at December 2012). This suggests that there is either some under-representation of disabled employees 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 disabled people.
- 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.
- 7.5 The council has recently established a Head of Service Equality Champion to lead on Disability issues.

Table of Employees by Disability:

Disability Count	School employees	Central employees	Total employees	%
Employees who consider themselves disabled	16	173	189	2.62%
Employees who don't consider themselves disabled	2542	4206	6,687	92.57%
Employee info withheld	21	96	117	1.62%
Employee info not known	160	71	231	3.20%
Total	2739	4546	7,224	100%

Section 8 – By Pregnancy & Maternity

- 8.1 A snapshot figure at the end of **December 2014** shows **117** women on maternity leave.
- 8.2 **276** employees were on maternity leave between January and December 2014. Of these, **92.54%** of employees whose maternity leave finished in this 12 month period returned to work, which is a significantly high proportion.
- 8.3 **138** employees were recorded as participants in the Childcare Voucher Scheme at the end of December 2014. 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. We recently requested updated information on this from our staff, and our information to date shows that **13.91%** 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 this category for some of the workforce.

Section 9 – By Gender Reassignment

- 9.1 Information on employees who have gone through or are going through gender assignment is still not widely held. The council asked all employees to provide updated equality information on all of their protected characteristics. We recently 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. As a result of our update exercise, we have reduced (but not removed) the gaps in our information which is “not known”. Of course employees have the opportunity not to disclose information on an equality aspect if they so wish.
- 9.2 Our records show that **38.26%** of employees have the same gender identity as assigned at birth, and information is missing for **61.09%** of employees – although the percentage of missing information is reduced when schools are excluded. **0.60%** of employees chose not to disclose information on this. **0.06%** of employees have self-reported as having gone through or are going through gender reassignment. The breakdown of schools/central has been removed due to the low numbers involved.

Gender Identity	Total employees	%
Employees who consider themselves to have the same gender identity as birth	2764	38.26%
Employees who don't consider themselves to	4	0.06%

have the same gender identity as birth		
Employee info withheld	43	0.60%
Employee info not known	4413	61.09%
Total	7,224	100%

Section 10 – By Religion or Belief

- 10.1 We recently asked our employees to provide information, on a voluntary basis, 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. The update exercise improved, the gaps in our information which are “not known” although we still do have some gaps. As mentioned, employees can choose not to disclose information on an equality aspect if they so wish.
- 10.2 Employees record their religion or belief as 29.93% Christianity, 0.01% Hinduism, 0.01% Judaism, 0.17% Islam, 0.06% Sikhism, 0.11% Buddhism, 0.43% Other religion or belief, 7.79% No religion or belief, 1.90% Prefer not to say, 59.59% 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)	1,958	43.07%	230	8.40%	2,162	29.93%
Hinduism	1	0.02%	0	0.00%	1	0.01%
Judaism	1	0.02%	0	0.00%	1	0.01%
Islam	10	0.22%	2	0.07%	12	0.17%
Sikhism	4	0.09%	0	0.00%	4	0.06%
Buddhism	8	0.18%	0	0.00%	8	0.11%
Other religion or belief	31	0.68%	0	0.00%	31	0.43%
No religion or belief	518	11.39%	49	1.79%	563	7.79%
Prefer not to say	133	2.93%	5	0.18%	137	1.9%
Not known	1,882	41.40%	2,453	89.56%	4,305	59.59%
Total	4,546	100.00%	2,739	100.00%	7,224	100.00%

- 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 faith 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.
 - The establishment of a Head of Service Equality Champion to lead on Religion and Belief issues.

Section 11 – By Sexual Orientation

- 11.1 Information on the percentage of our employees who are Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual (LGB) does not provide a complete picture. We still have information missing on employees' sexual orientation for 59.79% of employees, although this gap reduces when schools are excluded.
- 11.2 In total, 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

Table of Employees by Sexual Orientation:

Sexual Orientation	Total employees	%
Heterosexual / Straight	2766	38.29%
Gay / Lesbian	24	0.33%
Bisexual	5	0.07%
Other	1	0.01%
Prefer not to say	109	1.51%
Not Known	4319	59.79%
Total	7,224	100%

- 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.
- 11.6 For some years now the council has established a Head of Service Equality Champion to lead on LGBT issues.

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 being: 10.45% Never married or registered as a same sex civil partnership, 22.79% Married, 0.91% Separated, 3.52% Divorced, 0.39% Widowed, 0.08% Same sex civil partnership, and 59.68% Information not known.

The number of new civil partnerships is plummeting because marriage is now available to everyone, and same sex couples who have previously had a civil partnership can go through a conversion ceremony resulting in a marriage certificate backdated to the date of the original civil partnership. We will consider next year whether to continue to separate the figures for Marriage and Civil Partnerships.

Table of Employees by Relationship Status:

Relationship Status	Total employees	%
Never Married / registered in a same sex relationship	755	10.45%
Married	1646	22.79%
Separated	66	0.91%
Divorced	254	3.52%
Widowed	28	0.39%
In a same sex civil partnership	6	0.08%
Prefer not to say	158	2.19%
Not Known	4311	59.68%
Total	7,224	100%

- 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. 70% of the UK's 6.5 million carers are aged between 25-64. In Sunderland there are 32.5 thousand carers, of whom 72% fall into this age bracket. (Information sourced from the 2011 Census and Carers UK).
The 2011 Census figures for the UK show an 11% rise in the number of carers over 10 years, and it is predicted that there will be 9 million carers in the UK by 2037.
3 million carers combine work and care. Every year, over 2.1 million people become carers, so that there is a new population of carers in the workforce every day, and a high turnover in people affected, because almost as many people find their caring responsibilities coming to an end.
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. Former carers of working age remain significantly less likely to be in work than non-carers of working age.
- 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.”
Our records show that **4.44%** of our employees declare themselves to meet the definition of being a Carer. **1.69%** report being both Carer and “Parent Carer” (ie having parental responsibility for a child under age 18). Information is missing for a large section of the workforce, and so 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.
 - The council has established a Head of Service Equality Champion to lead on Carers issues.

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.