

Corporate Workforce Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2015

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Section 1 – Introduction

Sunderland City Council's Workforce Equality & Diversity Report 2015 shows our equality monitoring information for a 12 month period from January – December 2015

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 2015:

The following are examples of some key activities the council implemented or achieved during 2015 to progress its equality agenda, in line with the 3 aims of the Equality Duty outlined above:

- Equality Scheme

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 explains how we set our equality objectives and where they are published.

- 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. We have also established, Heads of Service Equality Champions 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,

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 2016**
 The Council has been a participant in the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme since 2010. This is a good practice employers' forum for lesbian, gay and bisexual and transgender (LGBT) 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 (WEI), which is a benchmarking tool that can be used to assess an organisation's work on LGBT equality. The council have participated in the WEI since 2012 and continue to do so. . Although the index focusses on LGBT equality we will use the detailed feedback from the 2016 Equality Index to inform all of 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.
 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 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 in the implementation stage of completing a wide-ranging pay review via a Workforce Transformation Project, to be completed during 2016.
- **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.)
- **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 2015 we had **148** employees participating in the Scheme.
- **Apprenticeships and work placements**
The Council directly employed **39** apprentices and accommodated **86** people on work experience in the period from January to December

2015 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.
 We have been successful for the second year at Continuing Excellence (highest level) of the North East Better Health at Work Award
 The Employee Wellness Programme has had over 3,700 attendances by employees at sessions at work SCC locations across the City
 There are a number of free activity sessions available across the City; details can be obtained from the Employee Wellness Programme
- It is important that we collect employees 'equality information as it helps us to monitor the equality profile of our employees. Analysis of the information also 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. Information collected is confidential and stored securely. It would never be used in a way that could identify individuals. Collecting, monitoring and reporting the information is in line with the Council's Equality Scheme and it helps us to meet our obligation under the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- **Listening to our employees**
 Our Employee Equality Network was re-launched in 2014. Work is on-going to develop the role of the group, build membership and enable employees to participate more effectively. Some of our members are undergoing training to enable them to be a contact for other employees with equality concerns.
 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 Sunderland Partnership has worked with the City's LGBT equality forum and the Council to fly the Rainbow Flag above the Civic Centre. This has been done annually since 2010 to raise awareness of International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT).
- Other community initiatives that the council have supported or attended include Sunderland PRIDE, Sunderland University's Diversity Month 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 2015

At the end of December 2015, Sunderland City Council had a total workforce of **6,604**, of whom **4,046 (60.74%)** are employed centrally, and **2,615 (39.26%)** are employed directly by maintained schools, including 57 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)	4,046*	60.74%
Schools	2,615*	39.26%
Total	6,604	100%

*57 employees have jobs across both areas

3.2 Employees/Jobholders:

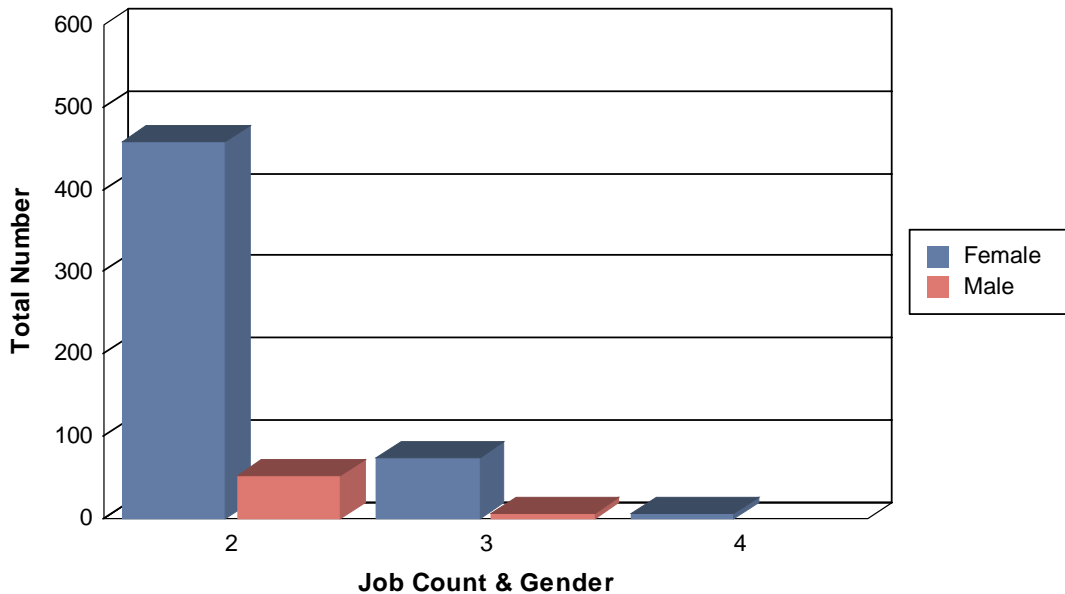
The above headcount figure relates to **7,292** Jobholders. The number of jobs (and contracts) is higher than the headcount figure as some employees have more than one job with the council.

595 employees, or **9.01%** of the workforce, had more than one job within the council or one of its schools at the end of December 2015. 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	1691	4318	6,009	6,009
With 2 jobs	51	458	509	1,018
With 3 jobs	6	73	79	237
With 4 jobs	0	7	7	28
Total employees with multiple jobs	57	538	595	1283
Total	1,748	4,856	6,604	7,292

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



3.3 Part time working

2,809 employees (**42.53%**) work on a part-time basis, (ie less than a standard 37 hour working week), and **3,795** (**57.47%**) work full-time. The number of part-time workers is very slightly lower this year compared to last year (44.05%).

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	57.47%	3,795
Part Time	42.53%	2,809
Total	100%	6,604

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 2015) is **10.28:1**. This meets the Government expectation that the pay multiple relationship should be below 20:1 in local government. The council is adopting the Living Wage during 2016, which will increase the pay of the lowest paid employees, and reduce this ratio.

Section 4 - by Sex

- 4.1 **4,856** of the council's employees are women (**73.53%**), and **1,748 (26.47%)** are men.
- 4.2 Between January 2015 and December 2015, **435 men (33.03%)** and **882 women (66.97%)** 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 **65.45%** of the group of top 5% of earners are made up of women. This is slightly higher than last year (**65.11%**). 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. **51.63%** of all women employed by the council work in jobs that are carried out on a part-time basis, compared to **17.28%** 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 established a Head of Service Equality Champion to lead on Gender issues.

Table of Employees by Gender

Gender	Percentage	Count
Female	73.53%	4,856
Male	26.47%	1,748
Total	100%	6,604

Section 5 - Workforce Information by Age

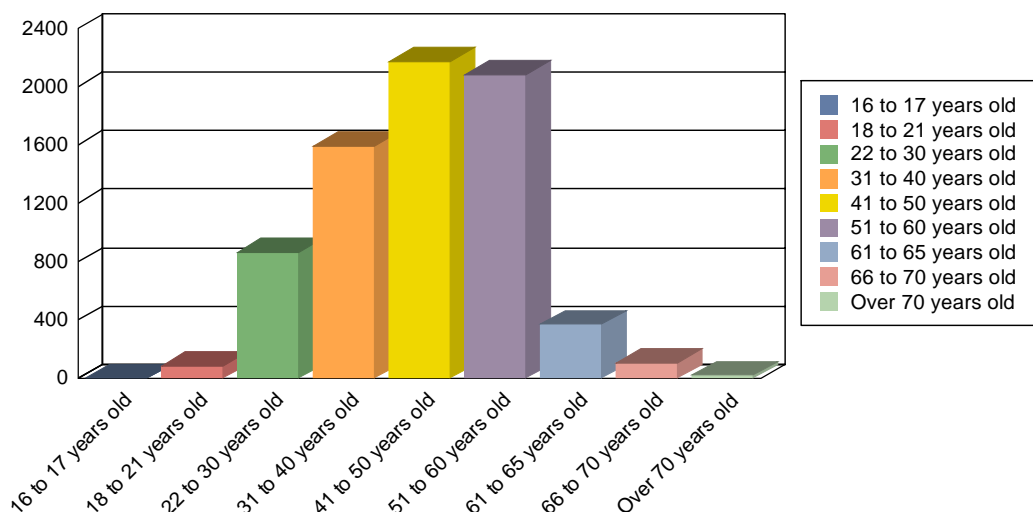
- 5.1 The age range profile of the council's workforce shows that **65.28%** of employees are aged **50 and under**, and nearly **34.72%** of employees are aged **51 or over** (see table below). Less than **14%** of employees are aged **30 and under**. The biggest age band group is the **41-50** years group, with nearly **29.8%** 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 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 **39** apprentices and accommodated **86** people on work experience in the period from January to December 2015 including a small number of volunteering and internships. The council remains committed to supporting apprenticeships and work placements.
- 5.4 **39.93%** of the council's **top earners** are aged between the 41-50 age band and **35.42%** are in the 51-60 age band. This is expected as employees develop and gain experience.
- 5.5 The council has 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	1	0	1	0.02%
18-21	57	27	84	1.27%
22-30	477	324	797	12.07%
31-40	625	863	1,484	22.47%
41-50	721	1,239	1,945	29.45%
51-60	584	1,306	1,861	28.18%
61-65	119	213	328	4.97%
66-70	26	62	87	1.32%
71+	5	12	17	0.26%
Total	2615	4046	6,604	100%

Employees by Age Band



Section 6 - By Race

6.1 At December 2015, the council had **103** black or ethnic minority (BME) employees, ie **1.56%** of the workforce. The breakdown by broad ethnic group was 93.84% White, 0.38% Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups, 0.80% Asian/Asian British, 0.12% Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, 0.12% Any other ethnic group, 0.86% prefer not to say, 3.74% 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	3842	94.96	2411	92.20	6197	93.84
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	18	0.44	7	0.27	25	0.38
Asian/Asian British	20	0.49	33	1.26	53	0.80
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	7	0.17	1	0.04	8	0.12
Any Other Ethnic Group	12	0.30	6	0.23	17	0.26
Prefer not to say	51	1.26	6	0.23	57	0.86
Not Known	96	2.37	151	5.77	247	3.74
Total	4046	100.00	2615	100.00	6,604	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 **21** BME leavers during the period from January to December 2015.
- 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 **1.41%**.
- 6.6 The council has established a Head of Service Equality Champion to lead on Race issues.

Section 7 - By Disability

- 7.1 The council had **181** employees (**2.74%**) declare themselves disabled at the end of December 2015. **26** declared disabled employees left the council during the period from 1st January to 31st December 2015.

- 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 **0.61%** 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 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	18	163	181	2.74%
Employees who don't consider themselves disabled	2,438	3,746	6,128	92.79%
Employee info withheld	16	79	95	1.44%
Employee info not known	143	58	200	3.03%
Total	2,615	4,046	6,604	100%

Section 8 – By Pregnancy & Maternity

- 8.1 A snapshot figure at the end of **December 2015** shows **116** women on maternity leave.
- 8.2 **262** employees were on maternity leave between January and December 2015. Of these, **90.44%** of employees whose maternity leave finished in this 12 month period returned to work, which is a significantly high proportion and is a positive reflection of the council's employment policies to support working parents, e.g. flexible working options.
- 8.3 **148** employees were recorded as participants in the Childcare Voucher Scheme at the end of December 2015. 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. Our information to date shows that **13.75%** 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 In 2015 a new transgender policy was produced in consultation with a transgender employee and the employee network. 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 **38.28%** of employees have the same gender identity as assigned at birth, and information is missing for **61.11%** of employees – although the percentage of missing information is reduced when schools are excluded. **0.55%** 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	2,528	38.28%
Employees who don't consider themselves to have the same gender identity as birth	4	0.06%

Employee info withheld	36	0.55%
Employee info not known	4,036	61.11%
Total	6,604	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 31.54% Christianity, 0.02% Hinduism, 0.03% Judaism, 0.26% Islam, 0.06% Sikhism, 0.09% Buddhism, 0.41% other religion or belief, 8.62% No religion or belief, 1.91% Prefer not to say, 57.07% Not Known.

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)	1,786	44.14%	323	12.35%	2,083	31.54%
Hinduism	1	0.02%	0	0.00%	1	0.02%
Judaism	2	0.05%	0	0.00%	2	0.03%
Islam	11	0.27%	6	0.23%	17	0.26%
Sikhism	4	0.10%	0	0.00%	4	0.06%
Buddhism	6	0.15%	0	0.00%	6	0.09%
Other religion or belief	27	0.67%	1	0.04%	27	0.41%
No religion or belief	484	11.96%	88	3.37%	569	8.62%
Prefer not to say	119	2.94%	8	0.31%	126	1.91%
Not known	1,606	39.69%	2,189	83.71%	3,769	57.07%
Total	4,046	100.00%	2,615	100.00%	6,604	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 Council has established 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 57.30% 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	2,693	40.78
Gay / Lesbian	22	0.42
Bisexual	6	0.09
Other	2	0.03
Prefer not to say	97	1.47
Not Known	3,784	57.30
Total	6,604	100.00

- 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 the 2016 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 and Transphobia (see Section 2) and promoting Sunderland Pride also sends a message out of the council's commitment to sexual orientation equality in the workplace.
- 11.6 The council has established the Deputy Director of HR and OD as 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: 11.66% Never married or registered as a same sex civil partnership, 24% Married, 1.01% Separated, 3.77% Divorced, 0.45% Widowed, 0.09% Same sex civil partnership, 2.20% prefer not to say and 56.81% 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	770	11.66
Married	1,585	24.00
Separated	67	1.01
Divorced	249	3.77
Widowed	30	0.45
In a same sex civil partnership	6	0.09
Prefer not to say	145	2.20
Not Known	3,752	56.81
Total	6,604	100.00

- 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% falls 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 **4.13%** of our employees declare themselves to meet the definition of being a Carer. **1.73%** reports being both Carer and “Parent Carer” (i.e. 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" employee 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 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.

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.

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.