

Appendix 1 – Employee Information section of the 2023 Equality Outcomes Progress Report

4 Employee Information

4.1 Introduction to Employee Information

One of the duties under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 is to gather and use employee information. Employees may provide their diversity data during recruitment and may add or update their diversity data at any point during their employment through the Council's HR and Payroll system, CoreHR.

The duty requires the organisation to gather annual information on the composition of its employees as well as annual information on recruitment, development, and retention of employees with respect to the number and relevant protected characteristics of employees. The information must be used to better perform the general equality duty.

The mainstreaming report must include an annual breakdown of the information gathered and must also include details of the progress that the organisation has made in gathering and using the information to enable it to better perform the general equality duty.

The employee information in this 2023 Mainstreaming Report comprises the following by protected characteristic as shown in Appendix G **(for the purposes of Staff Governance Committee – this is Appendix 2)**:

- Composition of employees for 2021 and 2022;
- Recruitment information, namely applicants shortlisted applicants and successful applicants for calendar years 2021 and 2022;
- Development information, namely employees who undertook corporate training in calendar years 2021 and 2022;
- Retention information, namely employees who left the organisation in calendar years 2021 and 2022;
- Discipline and grievance data in calendar years 2021 and 2022;
- Gender pay gap data.

In accordance with the requirements stated in the guidance, the above has been produced for the organisation as a whole and in relation to the Education Authority (which comprises teachers and other employees in the Education Service). Appropriate analysis has been undertaken in relation to the figures.

It should be noted that where there were minimal numbers of employees in a category, the actual figure has been removed from the table and replaced with the

words 'Under 5'. This is to help ensure that no individual employees can be identified so that confidentiality in relation to sensitive personal data can be maintained.

The employee information contained in this report is to be used in relation to the planning of current and future employment equality related initiatives, in order to make progress towards our Equality Outcomes.

4.2 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

To support with the delivery of our employer equality outcomes, an [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan](#) was developed. This Action Plan was co-created following engagement with our workforce, Equality Ambassadors Network and partner organisations. This Action Plan also supports with the organisation's various accreditations and pledges such as Investors in Young People, Disability Confident and Equally Safe at Work.

While proposing [some suggested actions](#), the Action Plan sought to establish employee working groups for the purposes of ongoing listening and development and so that any actions taken forward were meaningful and co-created by our diverse employees.

In 2021, we established five working groups, in addition to maintaining our existing Equality Ambassadors Network:

Age Working Group
Disability Working Group
LGBT+ Working Group
Race Working Group (known as 'RED' – Race Equality and Diversity)
Working Group for Sex as a protected characteristic

Each of these working groups is made up of employees who either have a protected characteristic, are an ally or are interested in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Membership of these groups is flexible, with employees giving their time as and when they are able.

Each group is facilitated by a People and Organisational Development Advisor who all form part of an oversight working group which ensures that all of the work is co-ordinated, joined up and takes into consideration intersectionality.

4.3 Existing Employee Equalities Networks

For several years, the organisation has had an Equality Ambassadors Network who regularly communicate and use a Microsoft Teams Channel to share learning, ask questions and organise and promote talks, events and discussions about equality, diversity and inclusion topics. As of January 2023, there are 81 employees who form this network from across the organisation.

The Council also has a Young Employee Network, giving young employees the opportunity to have their voices heard. In the last year the Network has input to the review of the Council's Recruitment and Selection process, the Council's Smarter Working Test and Trial, and has also organised information sessions for young employees on Pensions and Mental Health and Wellbeing.

4.4 Employer Accreditations, Pledges and Commitments

Aberdeen City Council, as an employer, has several accreditations, pledges and commitments which, in addition to the Outcomes, provide frameworks and requirements for equality, diversity and inclusion purposes. These are below:

- *Carer Positive* – acknowledges Aberdeen City Council as a positive employer for those with caring responsibilities.
- *Disability Confident* – acknowledges Aberdeen City Council as a positive employer for disabled people.
- *Equally Safe at Work* – acknowledges Aberdeen City Council as a safe and supportive workplace for women.
- *Investors in Young People* – acknowledges Aberdeen City Council as a positive and supportive employer for young people.
- *Young Person's Guarantee Employer* – acknowledges that Aberdeen City Council has committed to the Young Person's Guarantee 'Asks' in supporting young people into and during employment.
- *Menopause Workplace Pledge* – acknowledges that Aberdeen City Council commits to supporting employees through menopause.
- *Pregnancy Loss Pledge* – acknowledges that Aberdeen City Council is a supportive employer for those who experience pregnancy loss.
- *Public Sector Joint Commitment to Tackling Racism in Employment* – acknowledges Aberdeen City Council as committed to tackling racism in employment practice.

4.5 Existing Council Initiatives

The Council is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion for all current and future employees. Indeed, in the organisation's recent [Workforce Delivery Plan](#), equality, diversity and inclusion continue to be a focus of work for the foreseeable future. In addition, the recently approved and refreshed [Capability Framework](#) for employees focuses on a core capability theme called 'Care' which strengthens the focus on and the importance and visibility of equality, diversity and inclusion across the organisation.

The Council already has a significant number of initiatives and activities which support equality, diversity and inclusion including:

- A range of policies and guidance documents including an equality and diversity policy, flexible working guidance, family friendly policies and guidance, disability in the workplace guidance, supporting carers at work

guidance, supporting attendance policy and guidance, transgender equality and transitioning in the workplace guidance, equal pay policy, gender-based violence policy, special leave policy, IVF guidance, and career break policy;

- A robust and fair approach to recruitment and selection, including recruitment and selection guidance for managers covering equality, discrimination and unconscious bias;
- A Guaranteed Interview Scheme which includes schemes for disabled people, young people, care-experienced young people and 'New Scots';
- Flexible and smarter working for many roles across the organisation including options such as part-time hours, term-time, flexi-time, compressed working weeks and annualised hours;
- Support for mental health and wellbeing, including a counselling and occupational health service for employees.

4.6 Actions Taken April 2021 – March 2023

The work that the groups have either done themselves or have been supported by People and Organisational Development to do since being established following Staff Governance Committee in April 2021 is:

4.6.1 Equality Outcome 1

Equality Outcome 1

Improve the diversity of our workforce and address any areas of underrepresentation, ensuring that there are equal opportunities for all protected groups (with consideration for both internal employees and external applicants), with a particular and prioritised focus on **Age, Disability, Race and Sex**.

Summary of Actions Taken April 2021 – March 2023

Each of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Groups that were established undertook sessions, facilitated by People and Organisational Development, in which they reviewed the Council's existing recruitment and selection process. This provided key feedback around barriers and challenges. The sessions were also made open to key contacts from external equalities groups such as Autism Understanding Scotland and North-East Sensory Services so that subject matter expertise could be included. As a result, guidance was created for recruiting managers on making their processes more inclusive. In addition, the recruitment and selection training available is being updated to reflect key points raised by our working groups. This training, along with the Council's Code of Conduct, has already been updated recently to reflect the Council's Equally Safe at Work accreditation.

In addition to the above, the Council's Race working group, RED (Race Equality and Diversity) has reviewed the Council's recruitment and selection process against the Scottish Government's Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit to ensure that it follows best practice.

Representatives from People and Organisational Development have also joined the University of Aberdeen's Anti-Racism Roundtable with other local

organisations to address racism in employment, including exploring how joined up working with other organisations can support more people from minority ethnic backgrounds into employment with the Council.

This further supports the Public Sector Joint Commitment that Aberdeen City Council committed to, to tackle racism in employment.

We have been committed to sharing all senior vacancies and development opportunities with our equalities groups and Equality Ambassadors Network to ensure that the vacancies are visible and to allow for any queries or questions about support. This has included programmes such as the Association of Chief Officers of Scottish Voluntary Organisations (ACOSVO) Leadership Exchange Programme for which ten out of fourteen participants over the last two years have been women.

We are committed to attracting, retaining and to be an employer of choice for young people. Our Apprenticeship Programme continues to develop and since 2019 we have introduced 10 new Modern Apprentice Frameworks (it has traditionally been trades apprentices we have recruited) to the Council increasing the options and opportunities for young people. In 2022 we worked nationally to introduce a new Building Standards Framework and recruited a new Modern Apprentice to this role. Of the new Modern Apprentice frameworks (non-craft / trades) introduced in 2019, 16 of the 19 apprentices secured roles after successfully completing their Apprenticeship. We work closely with our Employability Team and recently supported the UK Government Kickstart Scheme which provided funding to employers, with the aim of employing young people aged 16-24, at risk of long-term unemployment. Over the duration of the highly successful scheme, we employed 83 young people who met the criteria for the scheme on 6 month paid Internships at the Living Wage rate. Of these, as at January 2023, 34 are still employed by the Council, having secured either a further fixed term contract or permanent employment, 3 of those starting Modern Apprenticeships. We continue to link with Schools, Colleges and Universities and attend events such as careers fairs. We also support the Career Ready Programme providing Mentors and paid internships as part of the 2-year mentoring programme.

Conversations have started with Grampian Regional Equalities Council as well as with other public sector partners such as NHS Grampian and Police Scotland to co-ordinate and join together on further employer engagement activities with communities so as to support and encourage applications to the Council, as well as get feedback and undertake active listening, whilst at the same time avoiding 'consultation fatigue'.

Our recruitment and selection data in relation to equalities now includes details of shortlisted candidates throughout the process by protected characteristic so that the Council can further monitor and report on this.

It is worth noting that many of those actions whose primary impact is on our Outcome 2 will have an indirect impact on Outcome 1 as they serve as 'Employer of Choice' activity for Aberdeen City Council, positively impacting our 'employer brand', which will encourage more applicants from diverse backgrounds to apply for our vacancies or to continue / progress their career with Aberdeen City Council.

4.6.2 Equality Outcome 2

Equality Outcome 2

Ensure that all of our employees who have protected characteristics feel fully valued, safe and included at work, with a particular and prioritised focus on **Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Sex and Sexual orientation**.

Summary of Actions Taken April 2021 – March 2023

To support with making our workplaces as inclusive as possible, People and Organisational Development have been working closely with our staff working groups. The initial meetings reflected on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and suggested actions and then the groups have been taking forward some of those actions, or others they felt to be of higher priority to make our workplace more inclusive. Some of these actions are included below:

Disability

- Introduction of Deaf Awareness and British Sign Language for Beginners to 99 targeted employees
- Guidance on reasonable adjustments launched.
- Mental Health Awareness Intranet page created for managers.
- Various internal communications on topics such as neurodiversity, Tinnitus, Parkinson's, Autism, Access to Work, Carers Week, Tourette's, UK Disability History Month, Scottish Learning Disability Week, International Day of Disabled Persons, Multiple Sclerosis Society
- Posters created to raise awareness of Sensory Awareness
- Reasonable Adjustments Passports approved at Committee (due to be implemented)
- Promotion of 'quiet space' virtual working sessions organised by Autism Understanding Scotland
- Confidential survey undertaken on mental health & wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic
- Implementation new online courses on mental health in the workplace and a series of mental health and wellbeing webinars for staff were run in partnership with the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH).

Race

- Race terminology document created for People and Organisational Development Advisors
- 2021 and 2022 Intranet posts for Black History Month
- Internal promotion and staff tours of the Art Gallery's 'Reframing the Collection' exhibition.

Sex

- Staff communications and Intranet awareness raising for International Women's Day 2022
- Launch of a colleague recognition / celebration nomination process for International Women's Day 2023
- University of Aberdeen webinars for International Women's Day promoted to ACC employees
- Intranet posts on Empowering Women in Digital Leadership including an example of a woman's experience as a conference panellist in a digital transformation / cyber security environment
- During the Covid-19 pandemic, communications were issued to staff about domestic violence and support available, including the Council's Gender-Based Violence policy

Multiple

- CoreHR imaging amended to reflect Lunar New Year 2023 (Race, Religion or Belief)
- A large focus has been placed on supporting employees through menopause including:
 - A menopause intranet page created with advice and guidance
 - Menopause co-lab café's organised and promoted in partnership with partner organisations
 - Internal menopause peer group created on Yammer
 - Promotion of event for autistic people going through menopause run by Autism Understanding Scotland (Age, Disability, Sex)
- Black History Month 2022 – panel discussions organised including employees and external partners, including a panel on the intersectionality of race and disability (Disability, Race)
- Updating of the Employee Maternity Checklist to ensure that those who are breastfeeding get access to a private room in the workplace for expressing (Pregnancy and Maternity, Sex)
- 'Mx' introduced as a title option on CoreHR (Gender Reassignment, Sex)
- Grampian Pride promoted to internal employees and experiences of staff attendees shared with the workforce (Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation)
- Introduction of a number of initiatives which focus on digital inclusion and accessibility including accessibility bot, live captions, immersive reader and translate in teams (Disability, Race)

All

- Introduction of a Star Award for Diversity and Inclusion, the first winner of which was selected at the Star Awards 2022
- Creation of various Yammer employee peer support groups in topics such as mental health and wellbeing, tinnitus and hearing loss and general equality, diversity and inclusion
- Input from staff working groups into the Smarter Working review and creation of an intranet page with guidance and advice for managers on ensuring inclusivity when considering smarter working options for their team(s)
- Socially inclusive events for employees interested in diversity and inclusion, organised by our LGBT+ working group

- Creation of a Microsoft Teams channel for equality, diversity and inclusion communications with the development of a shared diversity calendar
- Introduction of a Dignity and Respect at Work policy and guidance to replace the Council Managing Bullying and Harassment at Work policy and guidance.

4.7 Employee Data Summaries

The data for 2021 and 2022, which is outlined in Appendix G (**for the purposes of Staff Governance Committee – this is Appendix 2**), has been used for the below key point summaries to support and reflect progress towards our employer equality outcomes and further areas for improvement, in addition to [2020 data](#) provided from the most recent mainstreaming report to allow for trend analysis.

Whole Council

The percentage of the Council's workforce has remained constant at approximately 70% female to 30% male. 2021 saw an increase in females represented across all stages of the recruitment process from application to successful hire. While this has since fallen in 2022, there is still an upwards trend since 2020. At the same time, the percentage of females leaving the organisation has also decreased from 73.07% of leavers in 2020 to 65.57% of leavers in 2022. On the reverse, we are seeing an increase in the proportion of males leaving the organisation from 26.93% in 2020, to 34.43% in 2022. Whole there has been an increase in successful male applicants since 2021, from 20.72% to 28.13% in 2022, it is worth exploring this further to determine if this is something to address. For training and development purposes, the majority of those who undertake training in the organisation are female, in line with our workforce population, though we have seen an increase in more males attending training from 12.33% in 2020 to 22.21% in 2022.

The percentage of those under 20 in the workforce has slightly increased since 2020 coming out of the Covid-19 pandemic. 2019 had a higher number within this category due to the early years expansion which resulted in a large number of modern apprenticeships available. The largest group in the Council remains at 50-59, closely followed by 30-39. These numbers have remained relatively consistent over last 3 years. We have seen an increase in the number of applications from under 20s, from 217 in 2020 (1.38% of applications) to 612 in 2022 (3.7% of applications). This may evidence that the Council is improving its employer brand with this age category or that more roles suitable to the younger workforce are being made available. At the same time, under 20s made up 2.53% of successful hires in 2022, while the highest proportion were in the 30-39 age category. Under 20s were 1.51% of leavers in 2022, which evidences that we are recruiting and retaining at a higher rate within this category than the rate at which they are leaving the organisation. In addition, we are seeing an increase in 20–29-year-olds undertaking training, up from 11.2% in 2020 to 17.88% in 2022. With an older workforce, there is an added importance on ensuring that there is sufficient talent pipelining and knowledge transfer across the organisation.

While we have increased the number of disabled people employed by the Council since 2020, the proportion of the workforce declaring themselves to have a disability has decreased very minimally. The number of those who choose not to disclose their disability has also increased minimally. It is worth noting that our grievance data shows that 7.14% of people who raised a grievance are those who also have a disability. Compared to disabled people making up 3.65% of the workforce, this seems disproportionate. Given the small number of grievances, it may just need some further exploration to ensure that there is nothing which is the cause of this which disproportionately affects disabled employees, if we are seeing an increase in people confident to raise issues and concerns or if this is just coincidental given the small number of grievances in the organisation. The proportion of leavers who are disabled has decreased since 2021 from 4.71% to 3.70%. This shows that currently any impact on grievances may not be having an impact on retention or turnover but should still be explored, alongside more exploration around recruitment of disabled people.

Since 2020, we have seen a very slight increase in number of non-white employees from 2.57% of the workforce to 3.34% of the workforce. Headcount across these different groups has also increased, showing an upwards trend. The successful recruitment of non-white groups is currently sitting at 9.53% of all recruits which supports the upward trend. To further support this, we have seen an increase in applications from non-white groups with candidates from these groups making up 19.9% of applicants in 2022. Data from 2021 shows that this was previously 13.94%. However, it is also worth noting that the proportion of leavers from these groups has increased since 2020 from 1.68% to 3.44%. This will need to be explored further to ensure that we are retaining ethnically diverse employees at the same time as recruiting them.

There has been a year on year increase in the workforce population across all sexual orientation categories except for heterosexual which has seen a slight drop. There has also been a year on year increase for successful recruitment and training access for people from these groups. It is worth noting that grievances made by Gay or Bisexual employees made up 14.28% of total grievances, compared to these two groups making up only 2.14% of the workforce combined. This should also be explored further to determine if the cause of this is something which may disproportionately affect gay or bisexual employees, if we are seeing an increase in people confident to raise issues and concerns or if this is just coincidental given the small number of grievances in the organisation. Leavers data is showing a slight proportional increase of leavers who are Gay and Bisexual but only minimally, but this further supports the need to explore this.

Education Authority

The percentage of the Education workforce has remained consistent at approximately 87% female to 13% male. This is a large difference to the overall proportions of the Council workforce as a whole. While we have seen a slight increase in the proportion of male successful hires which now sits at 18.77%,

similarly to the Council workforce as a whole, Education has also seen an increase in the proportion of males leaving the organisation from 15.49% in 2020 to 20.93% in 2022. It may be worth exploring if this is something to address. For training and development purposes, the majority of those who undertake training in the Education Authority are female, in line with the workforce population, though we have seen an increase in more males attending training from 4.94% in 2020 to 10.88% in 2022.

The current gender pay gap for Education employees in this council is 18.95% (in favour of men). There is a significant gender pay gap for this group with male employees being paid, on average, a higher hourly rate than females. This gender pay gap results from an under-representation of men in the lower pay bands, particularly in school administration and support roles. This compares with a gender pay gap of 18.65% reported in the Mainstreaming Report of 2021 (hence a moderate increase of 0.3%). This should also be addressed in considering the above alongside occupational segregation and any potential underrepresentation at leadership and management levels.

The percentage of those under 20 in the Education workforce has slightly increased since 2020, though this took a dip in 2021. The largest group remains the 30-39 group with 50-59 second. Numbers across the different age groups have remained relatively consistent over the last 3 years. While 2022 has seen a very slight decrease in applications from under 20s for Education roles since 2021, there is an overall increase when compared to 2020 from 0.88% to 1.70%. We have also seen a slight decrease in successful applications from under 20s since 2021. This number is expected to be lower compared to the workforce as a whole given the volume of roles in the Education Authority being teachers which require a university qualification, though it is still worth exploring this further. The 20-29 age group has seen an increase in applications since 2021 from 23.54% to 27.57% in 2022. This age group has also seen the largest increase in training uptake since 2020, from 11.22% to 17.48% in 2022. We are, at the same time, seeing fewer leavers in this age category since 2020, from 20.09% to 22.38% in 2022.

Since 2020 the number of disabled people employed within Education has increased and the proportion of the Education workforce declaring themselves to have a disability has also slightly increased, albeit minimally. At the same time, we have seen a very slight decrease since 2020 of job applications for Education roles from those who have a disability, as well as a very slight increase in those not disclosing anything related to disability at application stage. This is therefore worth exploring further.

We have seen a very slight increase in the number of non-white employees from 2% of the workforce to 3% of the Education workforce since 2020. Headcount across these different groups has also increased, showing an upwards trend. At the same time, we are seeing an increase in job applications for Education roles from non-White groups, increasing from 9.26% in 2020 to 18.85% in 2022. Successful hires from these groups in 2022 also sits at 9.1% of all successful hires across Education. While we have seen a very slight increase in the proportion of leavers from non-White groups since 2020, from 1.32% to 2.03%, these numbers are still low in comparison to the Education workforce profile and our successful hires.

4.8 Gender Identity Data

It should be noted that Gender Identity figures are currently not available due to an identified inaccuracy with this data. This is in the process of being corrected alongside the full data improvement on our HR and Payroll system, CoreHR. This improvement will see a change to diversity questions and categories in line with the Scottish Government guidance on best-practice diversity data collection and analysis. Work is currently underway to implement this improvement.

We are, however, currently able to analyse Gender Identity data within TalentLink, our recruitment management system.

4.9 Further Action

To support with achieving the employer equality outcomes based on the above summaries, the Council:

- Has plans to introduce Diversity Packs for recruitment adverts which support candidates with any requests for reasonable adjustments to our selection processes, as well as guidance on what to do if trans or transitioning;
- Is developing an 'Accelerator' leadership development programme for those underrepresented at leadership level. This will provide additional support for employees from these groups to ensure training and development is delivered in a way that is accessible, inclusive and meaningful, removing the barriers from traditional development programmes. This is being co-designed with our staff working groups;
- Has included occupational segregation as part of its review into workforce planning and training spend for 2023/24 to address areas of highest need
- Will work closely with community groups and partner organisations to address underrepresentation;
- On 28th March, will host an event for employees and employers on supporting disabled people in the workplace (this was rescheduled to 2023 from December 2022 as a result of adverse weather);
- Will be undertaking a review of its family friendly policies and procedures
- Will create an ED&I Intranet Hub;
- Will create a function as part of the Hub which allows employees to provide feedback, ideas and suggestions for inclusion outwith working groups;
- Is reviewing its ED&I training in light of Staff Governance Committee approving Job Families on 30th January 2023.

People and Organisational Development will also review the data analysis with our staff working groups and relevant areas to gather feedback and take forward further actions for improvement.

