

NORTHUMBERLAND

Northumberland County Council

Workforce Equality Analysis Report

Name of Group:	Northumberland County Council Workforce
Date of Analysis:	January 2018
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PART 1 – Overview

Northumberland County Council is committed to providing a fully inclusive environment to work in and to actively address equality issues that affect the workforce.

The equality analysis report covers a range of equality issues impacting on the current and future workforce of Northumberland County Council. The Council currently employs around 9,000 people (inclusive of schools) and is one of the largest employers in the County. The functions and policies provided by Human Resources (HR) therefore have a direct impact on the equality of all of its employees.

The Council's HR policies provide a framework for all of the Council's services and therefore influence the culture of the organisation as a whole, its institutional character and the informal and everyday practices which give employees and users the real messages about what is valued. The role of the Council as a community leader, and as a leading influence on the Northumberland Strategic Partnership means that it operates as an example to other employers and services.

The HR function is responsible for:

- Delivering the core strategic HR service across the Council and to some external organisations (including NCC Schools*) via Service Level Agreements .
- Embedding best practice standards of HR into line-management and specific business processes such as service planning and performance management through a HR business partnering arrangement..
- Developing and maintaining corporate HR policies, procedures, frameworks and guidelines in line with best practice to support frontline services and the County Council. To provide employment related advice and guidance to managers which includes performance management frameworks such as discipline, grievance and health & wellbeing policies.
- Supporting the County Council to attract and retain high quality employees and promote the organisation as an employer of choice.
- Provision of an Occupational Health and Wellbeing service (which is Nurse Led, and complemented by OH Physicians, Psychologists, Counsellors and Physiotherapists), as part of a shared service arrangement with Northumbria NHS.
- Provision of coaching service to improve staff development opportunities
- Ensuring that communications between management and the trade unions on terms and conditions of employment and other staffing related matters are maintained.
- Providing the strategic framework for the pay and reward of employees, including

maintenance of the Job Evaluation and Single Status Agreement, and the management of equal pay claims and associated litigation.

- Implementing a Learning & Organisational Development Strategy which helps to deliver the Council's organisational transformation; ensuring that the Council works together to build a culture that will reinforce our values and behaviours.

HR are responsible for collating core information about employment directly relevant to equalities. This helps the Council to understand the key equality issues in our workforce, assess our performance and take action where needed. All employee data collated in the report is sourced from Oracle ebusiness. applicant data is sourced from NEREO Jobs North East platform for applications made from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017.

*note, not all NCC schools choose to purchase the NCC HR SLA and some have an external provider of which the impact on their policies, organisational culture and service provided is unknown.

Employee Survey

The Council undertook an survey of its employees asking for their views and opinions on a wide range of issues in regards to working for Northumberland County Council. Around 64% of the workforce excluding schools responded across all Council Groups. Throughout this analysis, feedback from the survey has been used within this report to where appropriate.

Employee Equalities Monitoring Form

The Council has recognised that there is a need to further improve the quality of the information it holds about the equality profile of its employees. The Council's Equality Monitoring Form is now available to all employees with access to Oracle ebusiness in self service to enable direct access from the employee. This is a known area of improvement for the organisation and several initiatives will be looked at to increase the amount of equalities data NCC hold. This process is ongoing and subject to review through Oracle ebusiness changes being made to NCC systems.

Employee Grievances

The Council has a system in place to analyse employee grievances by protected characteristic to identify any trends. The Council has a number of policies in place to support employees with protected characteristics such as Dignity at Work that will replace the Bullying and Harassment policy , Flexible working request procedure, Carers in work policy. Network groups have the ability to comment and influence policies before ratification.

PART 2 – Information Analysis

1. Disability

1.1 What do we know?

Research has shown that disability is linked to poorer pay, job security, access to training and participation in decision making in the workplace¹. Current research around equality in the workplace for disabled people identifies differential workplace experiences for people with different types of disability. In a recent study of perceptions of disability discrimination², disabled employees reported more overt and subtle procedural injustice in the workplace than their non-disabled counterparts, and employees with non-physical disabilities such as mental illness, reported more negative experiences than those with physical disabilities.

According to some definitions there are currently around 11 million disabled adults and 770,000 children in the UK, equivalent to 24% of the adult population and 7% of all children³. Around half the working-age disabled population, over 3.5 million people, are out of work resulting in a significant waste of talent and potential productivity⁴.

The Life Opportunities Survey (LOS) is a large-scale longitudinal survey of disability in Great Britain. The report for 2009/11 found the following restrictions on participation in employment:

- 56% of adults with impairments experienced restrictions in the type or amount of paid work they did, compared with 26% of adults without impairments.
- The most common enabler for improving employment opportunities for adults with impairments was modified hours or days or reduced work hours. This was identified by 22% of adults with impairments, compared with 16% of adults without impairments.
- In the 2011 census 15% of adults aged 16-64 had a disability that limited work or daily living activities in the North East the highest percentage in England.

The population of disabled people includes wheelchair users, people with sensory and mobility impairments – these are an important minority of the total, but the majority of disabled people have other (often less visible) impairments.

Among adults, trends show increasing numbers of people reporting mental illness and

¹ Schur, Kruse, Blasi and Blank, 2009: 381.

² Synder, Carmichael, Blackwell, Cleveland and Thornton, 2010: 5.

³ Office for National Statistics (2004) "Living in Britain: Results from the 2002 General Household Survey"

⁴ Sayce Report, 2011

behavioural disorders, while the number of people reporting physical impairments is decreasing.

Within the Council, where employees have elected to declare if they have a disability or not, 3.39% of employees have identified themselves as having some form of disability. From this it would therefore appear from this data that the Council has an under-representation of disabled people in its workforce. However, given the high numbers of employees who have chosen not to declare this information, this may be due to under-reporting rather than under-representation. The continued development of the employee disability network group as well as internal campaigns to encourage disclosure may over time encourage employees to declare a disability.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission suggest that employee information of this nature be broken down by pay grade, and employment status (i.e. part time or full time).

Table 1 illustrates a breakdown of declared disability by Single Status pay band:

Table 1 Disability Status by Pay Band and Employment Status

Pay Band	% of staff who have said they have a disability	% of staff who said they had a disability who are part-time
Apprentice & Band 1	7.96	78.26
Bands 2 & 3	2.26	70.00
Bands 4 & 5	3.08	44.44
Bands 6 & 7	3.75	0.00
Bands 8 & 9	4.09	28.57
Bands 10 & 11	0.00	0.00
Band 12 and above	0.00	0.00
Other	2.25	38.46

The table above illustrates that the higher percentage of part time employees are at the lower end of the pay band scale. This could be due to the availability of part time work within lower pay grades as the majority of those employees who said they have a disability are within the lowest payband within the council as shown in Table 1.

Employee Survey

Disabled employees who completed the survey reported slightly less positive perceptions of workplace equality than non-disabled employees. In regards to physical or verbal abuse the responses were the same as those outside of this protected characteristic, although the same question relating to managers the response was slightly lower than the the norm response. A positive response was given in regard to discrimination the response was higher than the norm

response in feeling discriminated by customers/clients. However, some of the key areas raised by disabled respondents related to: physical or verbal abuse that had not been reported by service users (Norm response 54 points , those with a disability 39 points, 15 points lower); their views on flexible work patterns (norm response 70 points, those with disability 57 points, 13 points lower) and fewer disabled employees would recommend the council as a place to work than those who are not disabled (Norm response 57, those with disabilities 49 points, 8 points lower).

In relation to carers, 8.06% of employees who declared a caring responsibility are recorded on the employee database as being a carer of someone, although the current information is not broken down into specific areas of caring responsibility (Adult/Child) . Their views in the staff survey were similar to those employees that did not have caring responsibilities apart from a question in regards to the working of hours over and above contracted hours, which had a lower response than the norm. In the survey the norm response was 40 and the carer group response was 35, 5 points lower. A higher level of carers choose not to work above their contracted hours than other employees this could be due to their obligations/ responsibilities outside of work.

1.2 What are the key impacts on disabled people?

- The Council has decided to join the Disability Confident scheme to improve access to employment opportunities within the Council for disabled people.
- Job applicants with certain disabilities may require adjustments to be made to the application and recruitment process.
- Job descriptions and person specifications that concentrate more on process than output may inadvertently discriminate against some disabled people. For example not specifying how a role should be done but what is required from the role. Instead of using a named system to produce reports about complaints, state in the job description produce reports about complaints.
- Once in post, the provision of reasonable adjustments should mean that disabled employees get the support they need to effectively carry out their role.
- The HR policies that the Council has in place aim to ensure all disabled employees are treated fairly and consistently across all Council Groups.
- Some disabled employees could face prejudice or negative attitudes from others around their perceived ability to perform their jobs which will impact on their experience at work. Training is available to address negative attitudes and unconscious bias.
- Physical barriers to accessing some of the Council buildings will negatively impact on employees with disabilities linked to mobility or sensory impairment, and therefore consideration to support like referral to Access to Work, and offering Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) on a case by case basis may need to be considered.
- For carers and some disabled people, the flexible working arrangements enable them to

maintain their work/life balance more easily.

- The use of online recruitment systems may be a barrier to applications from some disabled people. Recruitment using paper applications or in alternative formats is still available if requested.

1.3 What do we have in place?

- A commitment to joining the Disability Confident scheme to employ, keep and develop the abilities of disabled employees. The organisation has Level 2 status and is committed to working towards level 3 status..
- Job applicants if they state have a disability should be contacted and offered adjustments as part of the recruitment process.
- A range of clear policies around supporting disabled employees at work.
- Flexible working arrangements which support all employees but which are noted to be of particular benefit to employees who have caring responsibilities.
- A commitment to highlighting flexible working arrangements during the advertising and recruitment process.
- Arrangement with the Supported Employment and Education Service to provide specific work opportunities in the Council for people with a learning disability.
- Arrangements to make reasonable adjustments in the workplace.
- An Occupational Health Referral system, including a psychologist and physiotherapist to support employees to return to, or maintain employment.
- Training for managers and employees to help them understand their responsibilities and to ensure that Council policies and procedures are applied consistently.
- Appraisal training for appraisers and appraisees.
- An Equality Monitoring Process for new and existing employees to help improve the Council's understanding of any equality impacts on employees.
- "Access to work" is used to support some disabled employees with equipment and support workers to facilitate their employment.
- Diversity information is included within the recruitment process.
- A review of access needs has been built into the appraisal process.
- Guidance is provided for job descriptions and person specifications to ensure that they concentrate on output rather than process, so that they do not inadvertently discriminate against disabled people.
- There is a Disability Network Group for employees. This is a joint group for staff from the County Council and Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.
- There is also a joint Autism Spectrum Disorder Network Group for employees of both organisations.
- A Carers at Work policy has been drafted and will be ratified in 2018 to support employees with caring responsibilities.
- Safecall telephone line to report concerns anonymously

1.4 What else do we need to do?

- Continue to roll out the Equality Monitoring Process to: improve the Council's understanding of any equality impacts on employees; to encourage employees to be aware of how data will be used and to enable employees to feel confident to complete equalities monitoring data.
- Diversity training will continue to be delivered and refresher training will be provided where necessary to ensure existing and future disabled employees get the support they need from the Council to effectively carry out their roles.
- Increase employee engagement in all areas and inclusive of those protective characteristics

2. Sex

2.1 What do we know?

Research suggests that women continue to experience discrimination in the workplace⁵ and are frequently paid less, promoted less often and receive less training than their male colleagues⁶. Within Northumberland, there is a relatively equal split between men and women and this is comparable with both regional and national figures as shown in Table 2:

Table 2 Gender Statistics (Census 2011)

Area	Total Population	Men	%	Women	%
Northumberland	316,000	154,100	49%	161,900	51%
North East	2,596,900	1,269,700	49%	1,327,200	51%
England	53,012,500	26,069,200	49%	26,943,300	51%

However, overall within the Council, the majority of people employed are female. Figure 1 illustrates the gender profile of the current Council workforce:

Figure 1 Gender Profile of Council Employees

⁵ Kimmel, 2009: 359.

⁶ Antecal, Barcus and Cobb-Clark, 2009: 782.

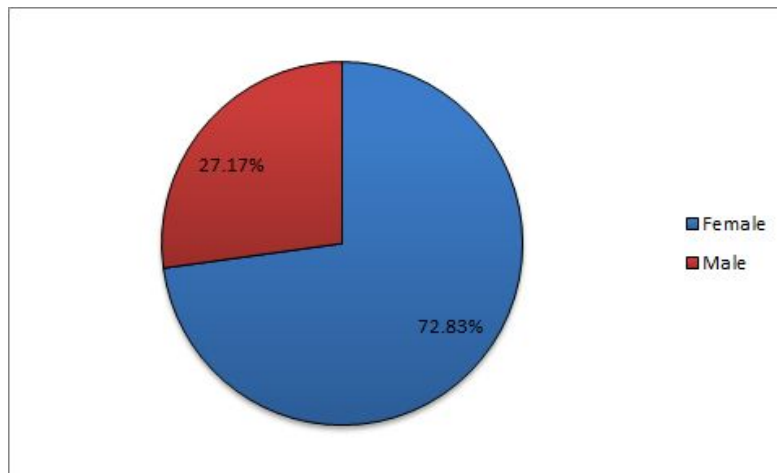


Figure 1 shows the majority of employees within Northumberland County Council are female.

Table 3 provides more detail on the gender profile by Pay Band and also Employment Status (i.e. part time or full time):

Table 3 Gender profile by Pay Band and Employment Status

Pay Band	% of Women Employed	% of Men Employed	% of Women Employees who work Part-Time	% of Male Employees who work Part-Time
Apprentice & Band 1	89.88	10.12	86.12	6.35
Bands 2 & 3	77.25	22.75	70.30	8.59
Bands 4 & 5	71.84	28.16	54.67	5.27
Bands 6 & 7	57.19	42.81	25.68	6.18
Bands 8 & 9	63.20	36.80	16.90	2.29
Bands 10 & 11	53.03	46.95	6.06	1.52
Band 12 and above	53.33	46.67	0.00	0.00
Other	70.96	29.04	28.96	2.57

From Table 3 it is apparent that there is a higher proportion of women at lower pay bands than men, and at the higher pay bands, there is a smaller proportion of women and men working part time. In relation to job applicants, in 2017, 56.2% of applications were from Women and 38.5% were from Men and 5.3 % preferred not to state gender.

Employee Views

In the staff survey, neither gender felt particularly discriminated against and responses were evenly answered.

As part of the work around implementing Single Status, the Council commissioned some equalities work around the potential impact of this on men and women, and the roles which more predominantly occupied more by one sex than another.

The outcome of this work was to conclude that in relation to the basic grading and pay structures:

- All the gender grade basic pay gaps narrow under the Northumberland County Council grading and pay structure for single status employees, all to less than significant levels.
- An analysis of those gaining and losing in relation to their basic pay (taking into account bonus payments) shows that there are higher proportions of female than male basic pay gainers and of male than female basic pay losers. The overall patterns are broadly reflected in the individual grades.
- The job evaluation system adopted by the Council was specifically designed for the range of 'single status' jobs and to comply with equal value principles and practices.
- Analysis of jobs proximate to grade boundaries shows that, although there are a number of grade boundaries with female-dominated jobs immediately below and male-dominated jobs above, the jobs in question are invariably accompanied by jobs of opposite gender dominance, so it would be difficult to argue that there was discriminatory impact to the positioning of the grade boundaries.
- The pay structure has scales with minimum point plus either 3 or 4 incremental points. This is consistent with recommended good practice in relation to both gender and age discrimination.
- The pay scales are discrete, in that the maximum point of each lower grade is one scale point lower than the minimum of the next higher grade. There is thus no point at which an employee on the higher grade can be paid less than an employee on the lower grade (as can occur with overlapping pay scales). This is good practice in respect of equal pay legislation.

All of the above are consistent with proposals moving towards equal pay for work of equal value and pay policies generally designed in accordance with good practice and principles.

2.2 What are the key impacts on men and women?

- Since the Council employs a much higher proportion of women than men, any changes to employment arrangements will inevitably impact more on women.

- Single status has narrowed the pay gap in relation to gender.
- Research suggests that women are more likely to have caring responsibilities outside of their employment, and this does potentially have an impact on their employment needs.

2.3 What do we have in place?

- The Council has maternity, paternity, adoption leave, shared parental leave and other 'family friendly' policies that provide support to both men and women in promoting work life balance generally, and caring responsibilities with work. The domestic violence policy supports both men and women who may be in violent relationships. The Dignity at Work policy supports all genders and gender identities and provides support should people feel harassed in the workplace; and, policies such as the flexi scheme, flexible work requests and leave of absence, which have been in place for many years, support carers to maintain a work life balance and stay in employment.
- The Council's pay policy statement provides an outline of the way in which the Council's pay and reward policies are determined and applied across the Council. The job evaluation exercise carried out in 2011 was equality impact assessed by an independent assessor (agreed with the recognised trade unions). The evaluation scheme and its outcomes were deemed to be 'equality proofed', with the gender pay gap narrowing, thus, within the County Council, there should be no evidence that women are paid less than men for work of equal value. The EIA determined that there were 'no significant issues'.
- With regard to training opportunities, work in the Learning and Organisational Development section is ongoing to improve the information the Council has available to put in place any necessary strategies to ensure that women are not disadvantaged in comparison to men.
- Gender Pay Gap report - All public sector employers are required to publish information about gender pay gaps by 31 March 2018 on an annual basis. We have begun to collate our information and will publish to meet legislation. In 2017 females were the higher percentile in Upper, Lower Middle and Lower quadrants with males only higher in the Upper Middle quadrant.
- Women are more likely to require part time work, (e.g. part time and flexible working opportunities) when roles are advertised full time they can be filled in many ways by the manager to encourage flexibility e.g. condensed hours, multiple part time contracts, agile working.

2.4 What else do we need to do?

We need to ensure that the detailed equality work carried out in 2011 is used to best effect. The EIA determined that pay issues should be monitored. Employee Services will ensure that systems are in place to record things such as starting salaries and incremental progression, and, the HR service will ensure that all jobs are properly evaluated under the Council's job

evaluation scheme.

- increase employee engagement in all areas and inclusive of those protective characteristics

3. Race

3.1 What do we know? Research evidence suggests that racial discrimination is a persistent cause of inequality in the workplace for black and minority ethnic (BAME) groups of people⁷, and can come in many guises with negative consequences for both the individual and the organisation⁸. These consequences include impaired emotional and physical well being, higher rates of absenteeism, and other withdrawal behaviours⁹.

Studies have shown that workers from BAME groups spend more time looking for work, experience less stable employment, and have fewer opportunities for advancement than their white counterparts¹⁰, and are more likely to experience workplace bullying¹¹. Consistent with the demographic profile of Northumberland as a whole, the majority of Council employees are identified as 'White British' – 96.59%. Table 4 breaks this down into ethnic group:

Table 4 Ethnic Profile of Council Employees Ethnicity	% of Employees
African	0.04%
Any other Asian background	0.13%
Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background	0.13%
Any other White background	0.98%
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	0.04%
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0.04%
Bangladeshi	0.09%
Chinese	0.09%
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	96.59%
Indian	0.17%
Irish	0.38%

⁷ Hirsh and Lyons, 2010: 269.

⁸ Mistry and Latoo, 2009: 20.

⁹ Deitch, Barsky, Butz, Chan, Brief and Bradley, 2003: 1317.

¹⁰ Pager and Shepherd, 2008: 188.

¹¹ Lewis and Gunn, 2007: 660.

Mixed - White and Asian	0.04%
Pakistani	0.04%
Prefer not to say	0.68%
Traveller	0.09%
White - Irish	0.13%
White - Other	0.13%
White and Asian	0.13%
White and Black African	0.09%

In terms of part time or full time status, of those who have declared their ethnicity, 48.6% of BAME employees are part time, as compared to 53.83% of employees who identified as 'White British'. In relation to Pay Band, Table 5 gives a breakdown of the percentage of employees who have declared their ethnicity who are not identified as 'White British':

Table 5 Race profile by Pay Band

Pay Band	% of Employees who are not identified as 'White British'
Apprentice and Band 1	5.54
Bands 2 and 3	2.94
Bands 4 and 5	2.91
Bands 6 and 7	6.25
Bands 8 and 9	8.18
Bands 10 and 11	2.94
Bands 12 and above	5.00
Other	2.95

In relation to new applicants, the race profile of new applicants is given in Table 6:

Table 6 Race profile of New Applicants (January to December 2017) Racial Group	% of Applicants
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	0.28%
Asian or Asian British - Chinese	0.08%
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0.29%

Asian or Asian British - Other Asian background	0.26%
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0.37%
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British - African	0.95%
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British - Any Other background	0.06%
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British - Caribbean	0.08%
Chinese, Chinese British or other ethnic group - Chinese	0.03%
Chinese, Chinese British or other ethnic group - Other ethnic group	0.01%
Mixed - Other Mixed / multiple ethnic background	0.29%
Mixed - White and Asian	0.14%
Mixed - White and Black African	0.44%
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	0.12%
No Answer Given	6.36%
Other Ethnic Group - Any other ethnic group	0.09%
Other Ethnic Group - Arab	0.12%
Prefer Not to Say	0.55%
White - Any Other White Background	1.37%
White - English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	87.87%
White - Gypsy / Roma Traveller	0.05%
White - Irish	0.19%

Employee Survey

In the employee survey, people from different ethnic groups responses in regards experience of abuse from a manager was higher than the norm in stating they have not had such an experience, this is a positive response in regards to NCC managers. Also those with this protected characteristic did not respond any higher than the norm response in regards to discrimination in the workplace. Respondents that identified as BAME Black,asian,minority ethnic had a very low response in regards to reporting physical/verbal abuse. This group of employees also did not respond as highly to the statement the council acts fairly with regards to career progression/promotions. This will require further work with communications to enable employees to feel confident to report abuse and to give confidence that recruitment is fair in regards to promotion and progression and identify any barriers.

3.2 What are the key impacts on people from different racial groups?

- Job applicants educated outside of the UK may not have commonly recognised qualifications and unless job adverts are worded correctly to ensure equivalent qualifications are accepted, the advert may be interpreted as a barrier to people applying for jobs. Although HR can advise appointing managers about international levels of education.

3.3 What do we have in place?

- Our HR policies and Equalities policy include specific reference to delivering equality on protected characteristics.
- Our staff training includes specific reference to race equality.
- Equalities monitoring takes place at recruitment stage and the Council's Recruitment Code of Practice provides advice and guidance on all aspects of the recruitment process, including how to draw up person specifications (to ensure, for example, that where possible candidates who have English as a second language are not discouraged from applying for jobs), the gender and racial mix on recruitment panels, and advice on genuine occupational qualifications.
- The Council has a clear policy on checking all prospective employees' right to work in the UK (which is a statutory requirement).
- There are some roles within NCC where there is statutory requirement that a standard of English must be adhered to (Legislation)
- Monitoring is taking place of Asylum and Immigration information eligibility requirements to ensure all employees are compliant with legislation
- Safecall telephone line to report concerns anonymously

3.4 What else do we need to do?

- Continue to increase the number of employees who have declared their ethnicity through the Employee Monitoring Form process.
- Review the way in which jobs are advertised to see if there are any further opportunities to encourage applications from underrepresented groups. Possibly to target specific journals used by BAME communities to advertise posts
- increase employee engagement in all areas and inclusive of those protective characteristics
- Further work in regards to reporting incidents of physical or verbal abuse

4. Sexual Orientation

4.1 What do we know?

Research undertaken by Stonewall, one of the leading charities for LGBT+ equality found that many LGBT+ public and private sector employees find it difficult to fully be themselves in the workplace which then impacts on their efficiency, relationships with colleagues, and their

confidence and motivation¹². In addition, particular problems with being ‘out at work’ arise in public services that involve manual labour or operate in male dominated environments¹³.

Whilst homophobia is arguably decreasing, many lesbians, gay men and bisexuals hide their sexual orientation out of fear of harassment¹⁴.

Black and minority ethnic LGBT+ employees sometimes feel they have to choose whether to identify with their ethnicity or sexual orientation, rather than both. They may face racism from other LGBT+ people or homophobia from people from the same cultural or ethnic background. The same might be said for staff with disabilities or other multiple identities

Although the Council does now ask new and existing employees about their sexual orientation, there are quite high numbers of employees who have chosen not to declare this. Of those who have declared their sexual orientation, 1.10% indicated that they are lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Sexual Orientation by declared:

Sexual Orientation	% of Employees (Declared)
Bisexual	0.13
Gay or Lesbian	1.13
Heterosexual or Straight	91.33
Prefer not to say	7.51

Summary of Job Applications between 1.1.17 and 31.12.17:

Sexual orientation	Appointed	Did Not Attend	On Hold	Rejected	Submitted	Withdrawn	Grand Total
Bisexual	1			49	21	1	72
Gay or Lesbian	2			106	28	6	142
Heterosexual or straight	168	9	18	5078	1447	109	6829
No Answer Given	17	2		421	97	13	550
Other				11	3		14
Prefer not to say	4		1	142	42	1	190
Grand Total	192	11	19	5807	1638	130	

¹² Guasp and Balfour, 2008.

¹³ Colgan, Wright, Creagan and McKearney, 2009: 287.

¹⁴ Metcalf and Rolfe, 2011: 1.

Employee Survey

In the Employee Survey, a higher than the norm response was given stating there had been no experience of physical or verbal abuse by managers or colleagues. There was a low response from this group in regards to the statement I am confident NCC would address my concerns. We need to make sure LGBT+ people will feel confident appropriate action will be taken if they raise concerns. Other responses were reflective of responses from other groups. Information on the percentage of LGBT+ staff is available by category and directorate but because of low numbers has been amalgamated here to prevent individuals being identified.

4.2 What are the key impacts on people of different sexual orientations?

- There is evidence to suggest that LGBT+ employees who feel comfortable about being out at work about their sexual orientation, perform better at work and have a better work experience.
- Homophobic attitudes can negatively impact on the health and well being of LGBT+ employees and also impact on business productivity. There is also an impact on staff whose friends and relatives are LGBT+.

4.3 What do we have in place?

- The Council has established a joint LGBT+ employees network group with Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to help work towards improving workplace experience for LGBT+ people.
- The Council is a Stonewall Diversity Champion and took part in the Stonewall workplace equality index for the first time in 2011. In the 2015 survey The Council was ranked 19th in the index of the Top 100 employers and 4th within local government employers. The Council is continuing to work with Stonewall in identifying areas for improvement.
- An LGBT+ Champion who acts as a source of advice and guidance.
- The LGBT+ employees group developed a 'Coming out at work' guide to support LGBT+ employees and guidance for managers.
- The Council and Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust hosted a site at the Northern Pride event to raise the profile of the organisations and to demonstrate their commitment to LGBT+ equality.
- The HR policies and E&D Policy make a specific commitment to LGBT+ equality, and LGBT+ employees have the same rights under employment policies and entitlement to benefits such as pensions as other employees.
- Staff training includes specific reference to LGBT+ equality.
- Policies around entitlement to leave make reference to same sex partners.
- We have clear procedures for dealing with bullying in the workplace on the basis of sexual

orientation or gender identity.

- Safecall telephone line to report concerns anonymously

4.4 What else do we need to do?

- Continue to support the LGBT+ staff network.
- Support and attendance at newly developed Northumberland Pride event
- We need to build the confidence of LGBT+ employees to report any concerns and are working with the LGBT+ staff group on actions to address this.
- Use the results of the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index to identify further areas for improvement and development.
- Develop a guide for Managers on supporting LGBT+ people who want to come out in the workplace.
- Continue to improve the equality information we hold about employees through the Equality Monitoring Form process and encourage employees to feel confident in declaring monitoring data.
- increase employee engagement in all areas and inclusive of those protective characteristics

5. Age

5.1 What do we know?

Increasing recognition of the impact and challenges of an ageing population on society and the labour market has now resulted in a range of national initiatives focused around age and employment¹⁵. There is widespread evidence that older workers, in particular, face age discrimination at work¹⁶ and that they are misunderstood, ignored and vulnerable to the effects of age-related stereotyping¹⁷.

Although it is recognised that age discrimination can be of detriment to people of any age, studies have shown that attitudes are generally more negative towards older workers than younger workers¹⁸.

However, a recent DWP report on attitudes to age in Britain¹⁹, found that 36% of people report age discrimination as “very serious” – and younger people report it as more serious than older people.

The shift in the age balance of the population covered by the Council is part of a broader national and international pattern. However, there are a higher proportion of people aged over 65 in our local population as compared with the regional and national picture. Table 7 presents a profile of Northumberland’s population based on age.

¹⁵ Ross, 2010: 169.

¹⁶ Redman and Snape, 2006: 167.

¹⁷ Loretto, Vickerstaff and White, 2007

¹⁸ Kite, Stockdale, Whitley and Johnson, 2005: 241; Shore, Chung-Herrera, Dean, Holcombe Ehrhart, Jung, Randel and Singh, 2009: 117.

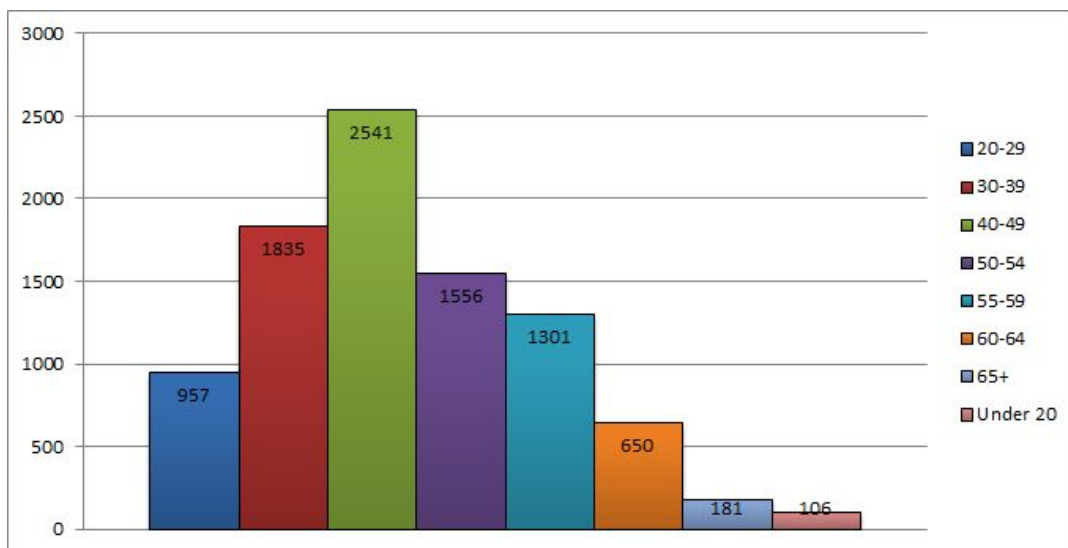
¹⁹ DWP, Attitudes to age in Britain 2010/11

Table 7 Population Age Statistics (Census 2011)

Area	Total Population	0-14 (yrs) %	15-64 (yrs) %	65+ (yrs) %
Northumberland	316,000	15.8	64.1	20
North East	2,596,900	16.6	66.1	17.3
England	53,012,500	17.7	66	16.3

The overall age profile of those employed within the Council is illustrated in Figure 3:

Figure 3 Age Profile of the Council Workforce



The age profile broken down by Pay Band and Employment Status is given in Table 8:

Table 8 Age profile by Pay Band and Employment Status

Grade	Under 20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+	Grand Total
Apprentices & Band 1	89	104	184	332	190	187	120	69	1275
Bands 2 & 3	4	237	278	449	276	246	131	32	1653
Bands 4 & 5	1	173	341	587	406	421	209	46	2184
Bands 6 & 7		55	140	249	177	142	69	9	841
Bands 8 & 9		40	139	170	96	82	38	3	568

Bands 10 & 11			21	42	34	26	7	2	132
Band 12 & above			3	18	24	10	4	1	60
Other	12	348	729	694	353	187	72	19	2414
Grand Total	106	957	1835	2541	1556	1301	650	181	9127

Employee Views

Comments from older employees suggested that some felt that their skills and experience were sometimes not valued. From the staff survey, most respondents in the higher age group 65 -74 did not feel they were able to make suggestions to improve work and didn't feel they were involved in changes that affect work. The higher age group also felt their training needs mandatory and non mandatory were not being met. However, some comments from younger respondents (18-24) suggested that some felt that they were sometimes overlooked with a high response stating they have not had a an appraisal in the last 12 months, although the younger age group did state positively they would recommend NCC as an employer.

5.2 What are the key impacts on people of different ages?

- Employees of any age can be subject to ageist prejudice from others, however younger and older employees are more likely to be affected.
- Some older people applying for jobs may not have commonly recognised qualifications and therefore if job adverts are not carefully worded to include recognition of equivalent qualifications, this could act as a barrier to employment.
- During rounds of voluntary redundancy, older people are particularly more likely to take up this option although it is offered to people of all ages.
- There are some physically demanding jobs within the Council which, for some people, may become more difficult to manage as they get older.
- Disability increases significantly with age and this may have implications on the support required at work.

5.3 What do we have in place?

- The Council no longer operates a 'normal' retirement age, but support is provided to prepare those who are planning to retire for this.
- The Learning and Organisational Development section provides equalities training which includes training and education on the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of age.
- The Council is taking a leading role with a nationally supported project promoting "Ageing Well in Northumberland". This project is led by a Councillor acting as Older People's

Champion. Ageing Well in Northumberland potentially has an important impact on the relations between older people and others in the population as it explicitly encourages an “asset based” approach – which emphasises the personal, physical and financial resources of older people and their communities and which aims to consider the opportunities presented by an ageing population, as well as ensuring that mental and physical needs are effectively addressed. The project also aims to make ageing well an issue for the whole council, indeed the whole community. The activities which give quality of life to older people and promote their mental and physical well-being are often those which are available to the community as a whole, rather than those which are provided specifically by health and social care agencies.

- A corporate Apprenticeship Scheme targeted at young people.

5.4 What else do we need to do?

- Continue to monitor the workplace experience of employees of all ages.
- increase employee engagement in all areas and inclusive of those protective characteristics

6. Religion or Belief

6.1 What do we know?

Within the workplace, research has found that many of the issues raised around religion or belief tend to be operationally focussed and relate to the terms and conditions of work that make the observance of religious practices impossible²⁰. In addition, research has found a link between poorer workplace experience and religious attire. People wearing religious attire such as the hijab (head scarf worn by some Muslim women), for example, can become targets of stigmatization due to the negative stereotypes associated with their religion²¹ resulting in poorer employment opportunities and lower personal expectations of employment. There is also evidence to suggest that people with particular religious affiliations or beliefs, in particular Muslims, have higher rates of unemployment and are less likely to be represented in more senior positions²² in the workplace.

A high proportion of employees have not declared their religion or belief, however, Table 9 gives a breakdown of this for those employees who have.

Table 9 Religion/Belief of employees who have declared this as compared with Northumberland Population.

²⁰ Denvir, Broughton, Gifford and Hill, 2007: 3; and Dickens, Mitchell and Creegan, 2009: 19.

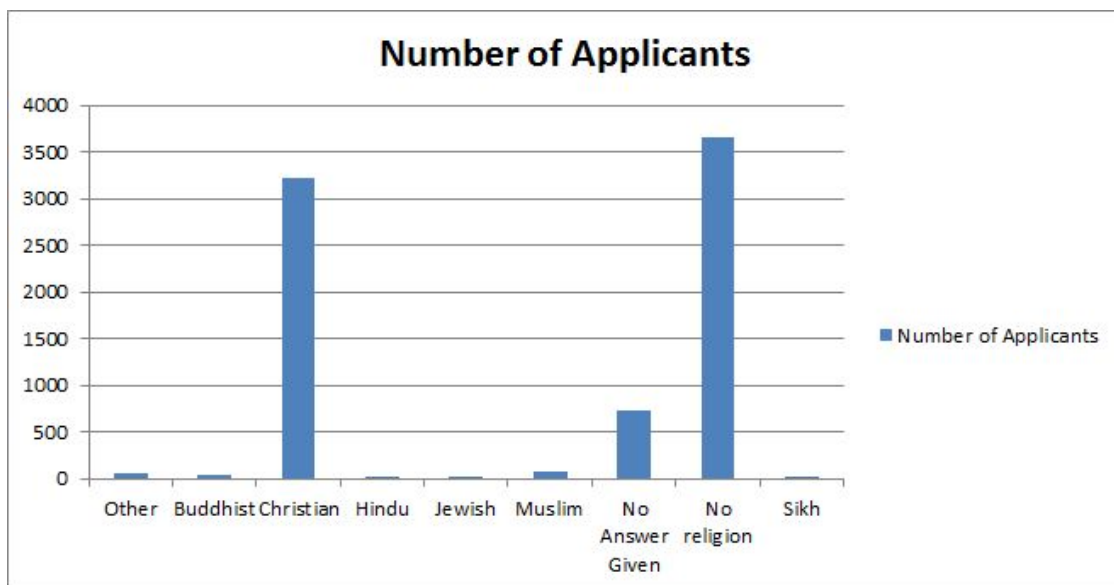
²¹ Ghuman and Jackson, 2010: 6.

²² Weller, 2011: 14.

Religion	% of Employees (% based on number of staff who declared a religion)	% Northumberland Population (from Census 2011)
Christian	62.45	68.60
No Religion	31.76	23.90
Other	0.64	0.30
Buddhist	0.17	0.20
Muslim	0.26	0.30
Hindu	0.03	0.10
Sikh	0.26	0.20
Prefer not to say	4.33	6.40

In relation to new applicants, Figure 5 illustrates the profile relating to applicant's religion and beliefs:

Figure 5 Religion/Belief Profile of New Applicants



Employee Views

In the staff survey, most employees indicated that they did not experience any particular issues relating to their religion or beliefs. No specific religion/belief stated they had received harassment from managers or colleagues. The only group that had responses outside the norm were Buddhists that stated they had not reported any physical/verbal abuse which was lower than other responses.

6.2 What are the key impacts on people with different religions and beliefs?

- People with particular religions or beliefs may wish to take time out during the day for religious observance or have particular requirements to take leave around particular religious festivals or events (e.g. Easter, Eid etc.).
- Employees with certain beliefs may have objections to carrying out certain tasks (e.g. handling alcohol.) which may need to be managed by the organisation.
- Employees with certain beliefs may have particular requirements around food preparation and storage.
- Employees working in certain roles (e.g. catering staff) may have particular training needs around the preparation and handling of food for people of different religions and beliefs.

6.3 What do we have in place?

- HR policies and Equalities Policy make specific reference to Religion and Belief equality.
- Staff training makes specific reference to Religion and Belief equality.
- Flexible working arrangements are in place to support employees who make need time off to practice their religion.
- Ability to use rooms for prayer if required
- Safecall telephone line to report concerns anonymously

6.4 What else do we need to do?

- Continue to improve the information we hold about employees religion and beliefs through the Equality Monitoring Form process.
- Review if there are any groups of employees with specific training needs around religion and belief.
- increase employee engagement in all areas and inclusive of those protective characteristics

7. Transgender

7.1 What do we know?

The number of transgender people is not accurately known. Because of the social stigma attached to this, arising from a widespread lack of awareness of the true nature of the condition, it is something that is often kept hidden. Therefore it is only possible to collect statistics on the numbers of people who declare and such figures undoubtedly represent only a proportion of those affected. GIRES estimate 1% of the population is Trans*. Trans* is used to include people with different gender identities as well as people who are transitioning from the gender they

were assigned at birth. The Council does not currently record this information ; in common with a national increase there has been an increase in Northumberland of the number of people seeking support with gender identity issues.

7.2 What are the key impacts on trans* people?

- Confidentiality around someone's transgender status is important. Whether someone wishes other people to know about their status may change over time, particularly if the person is in transition.
- Gender identity can have major implications for mental health, with trans or gender variant people more likely to experience depression and attempt suicide. It is important that people are accepted and supported in the workplace

7.3 What do we have in place?

- HR policies and Equalities policy include specific reference to trans* and gender identity equality.
- Staff training makes specific reference to trans* and gender identity equality.
- As an employer, the Council has a duty to protect an individual's right to privacy. In particular, people will be treated according to the gender they identify with and their status will not be disclosed, unless the employee has explicitly consented to disclosure. Pre-employment checks will be carried out in accordance with the relevant legislation whilst taking into account the above.
- We have an LGBT+ Champion who acts as a source of advice and guidance and a staff group which includes trans* and gender identity support..
- A specific policy Transitioning at Work is currently being drafted relating to support for people in transition from the gender they were assigned at birth or with different gender identities.. This should enable employees to feel comfortable in knowing that the Council has guidance to ensure that all employees are treated fairly and sensitively. This will also provide help and guidance for managers that have a member of staff transitioning.
- Safecall telephone line to report concerns anonymously this is open to all staff and is LGBT+ inclusive.

7.4 What else do we need to do?

- Continue to support the (Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans*) LGBT+ staff network.
- increase employee engagement in all areas and be inclusive of those with protected characteristics
- consider providing a contact for job applicants who have transitioned and have questions about the application process or need additional support.
- including a positive equalities statement on job applications to encourage applications from

all protected groups.

8. Pregnancy and Maternity

8.1 What do we know?

The Council's return to work rate is high, the majority of women who take maternity leave return to their former job following their leave period although the majority return on reduced hours following maternity leave.

8.2 What are the key impacts around pregnancy and maternity?

- During maternity leave, pregnant women need to be kept up to date and informed about any key work developments that may impact on them.
- Women with young children who have returned to work who are still breastfeeding may have particular requirements around milk expression and storage.
- Ensuring appropriate childcare arrangements are in place is a key issue for those people with children.

8.3 What do we have in place?

- There are some very specific policies relating to pregnancy and maternity e.g. maternity leave provisions, a childcare voucher scheme, various time off provisions such as shared parental leave, which go above and beyond what is required by legislation. The Council also has an adoption leave policy, shared parental leave and other family friendly policies such as maternity support leave for those (men and women) supporting women at or around the time of childbirth. An action from the Equality Action Plan revised the grievance recording database to ensure pregnancy and maternity related grievances can be recorded separately.
- The council also provides Keep in Touch days for employees on maternity/adoption leave to allow specific times back at work during the period.
- Flexible working arrangements are in place which can support people who have childcare responsibilities.

8.4 What else do we need to do?

- Review the Council's HR policies in respect of adoption, paternity and maternity, shared parental leave to ensure they meet legal requirements.

9. Marriage and Civil Partnership

The Equality Act protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination but does not provide protection against discrimination because of marriage or civil partnership in the provision of services and is not covered by the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The marriage and civil partnership protections ensure that someone is protected from discrimination at work (or in training for work) because they are married or in a civil partnership.

The provisional number of civil partnerships in the UK in 2010 was 6,385, an increase of 1.7 per cent since 2009 (Office for National Statistics, 2011). Northumberland had one of the highest numbers of civil partnership formations in the North East in 2010 (Office for National Statistics, 2011).

Of the current workforce, of those who were willing to declare their marital status, 56.5% of the total number of employees indicated that they were married. It is not clear what proportion of these people are in a civil partnership as this has only recently been recorded.

Marriage and civil partnership equality issues are covered within HR policies.

Addressing the data gaps

The equality analysis has identified a number of areas where consideration of strengthening or reviewing data could be made. In particular, the Council needs to focus on improving the quality of the equality profile of our employees through rolling out the Equality Monitoring Form process and continuing to encourage staff to complete equality monitoring data.

The Council also needs to continue to monitor the workplace experience of its employees and the formation of network groups to highlight issues and concerns will help address this within the organisation.

Key equality issues

Priority equality objectives for HR and Workforce

It is clear from this equality analysis that the HR function has a number of potential impacts, positive and negative, on all of the protected equality groups both specifically and collectively.

In particular, the analysis has identified the need to improve the quality of information about

employees in relation to their protected characteristics so that the Council can get a better understanding of how effectively it is delivering on equality.

The staff survey identified a number of specific issues for disabled employees and for carers, and we need to ensure that disability equality is being achieved and that managers and other employees are aware of their responsibilities around this. The staff also identified some specific issues in regards to reporting abuse by Black and Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) employees, there is a need for greater knowledge around issues such as how to raise an equality related concern, while the responses of LGBT+ staff were similar to most non LGBT+ staff and there have been improvements in the experience of these groups there were some areas that require more investigation a focus on staff training and communication should help to address this.