



City of
Stoke-on-Trent

Equality and Diversity Workforce Report

Stoke-on-Trent City Council

1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023



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Introduction

Monitoring the workforce enables the Council to identify trends within employment practices, to investigate these further and implement change where appropriate. It also enables the council to fulfil its commitments to ensuring employment practices are free from discrimination and meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 (specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulation 2017.

The purpose of this report is to provide information in relation to how Stoke-on-Trent City Council is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The Equality Act places a 'general Equality duty' on public sector organisation's to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other unlawful conduct prohibited by the act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic
- Foster good relations between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic

The relevant protected characteristics (or groups) for the purpose of the Public Sector Equality Duty are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

The Public Sector Equality Duty aims to embed equality considerations into the day-to-day work of public authorities so that they tackle discrimination and inequality and contribute to a fairer society.

This report provides a summary and analysis of the organisation's workforce, excluding schools. The workforce profile is shown as at 31st December 2023, while the data is for the period 1st January 2023 – 31st December 2023.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council Strategic Context

The Stronger Together Strategic Plan 2020-24 set out the strategic vision and priorities for Stoke-on-Trent City Council and the wider city. The Council's Stronger Together vision was to work together to create a stronger city we can all be proud of. Underpinning this vision were five cross cutting values:

- Ownership and accountability
- Ambition
- Respect
- Involvement
- Working with others

These values described our commitment to building a city where everyone is respected and where the talents and skills of different groups are valued. Our employees are central to this vision and we demonstrate this commitment by creating a working environment where productivity and customer service improves because our employees are happier, more motivated and more aware of the value equality and diversity brings.

Full details of the council's 2021 – 2024 Strategic priorities and objective can be found in appendix 1

2024 will see the council replace the Stronger Together Strategic Vision. A draft corporate strategy, Our City Our Wellbeing has been launched and is under consultation. The new corporate strategy will set out the councils vision and priorities for the next four years.

Equality Objectives

Stoke-on-Trent City Council has developed its Equality Objectives aimed at embedding equalities within the Councils business and delivery planning process, with the aim of addressing persistent inequalities and to narrow the gap related to race, sexes (including gender reassignment), disability, sexual orientation, age, marital status, pregnancy and religion in service delivery.

Full details of the Councils Equality Objectives for 2021 – 2024 can be found in appendix 2.

Underpinning and supporting delivery against these objectives are Council strategies and plans such as: -

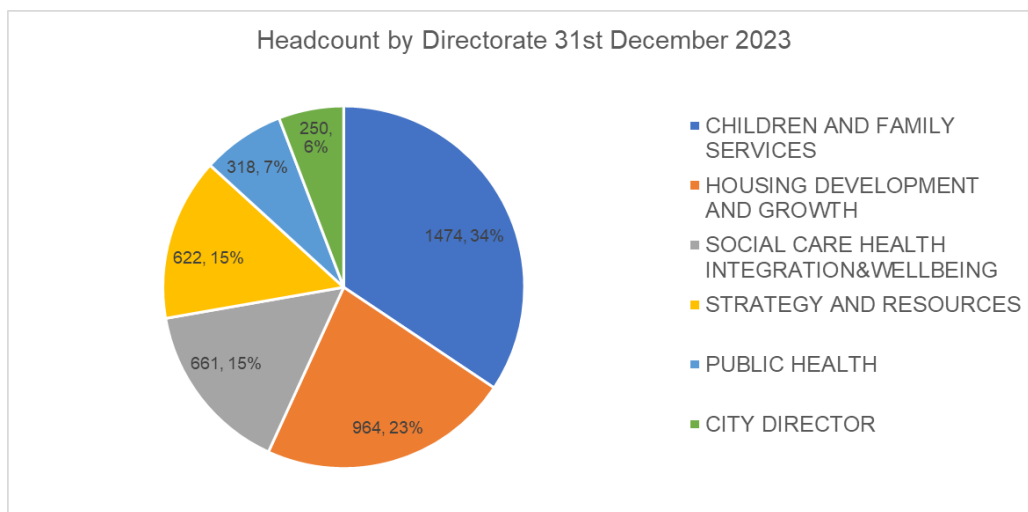
- [Living my best life - A life Course strategy for people with learning Disabilities - 2021 - 2026](#)
- ["Room to Grow" Children, Young People and Families' Strategy 2020-2024](#)
- [Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021 - 2025](#)
- [Community Cohesion Strategy 2020 – 2024](#)
- [Workforce and Organisational Development Strategy 2021 - 2024](#)
- [Equality and Diversity Strategy 2022 - 2025](#)

Current Workforce Headcount Profile¹:

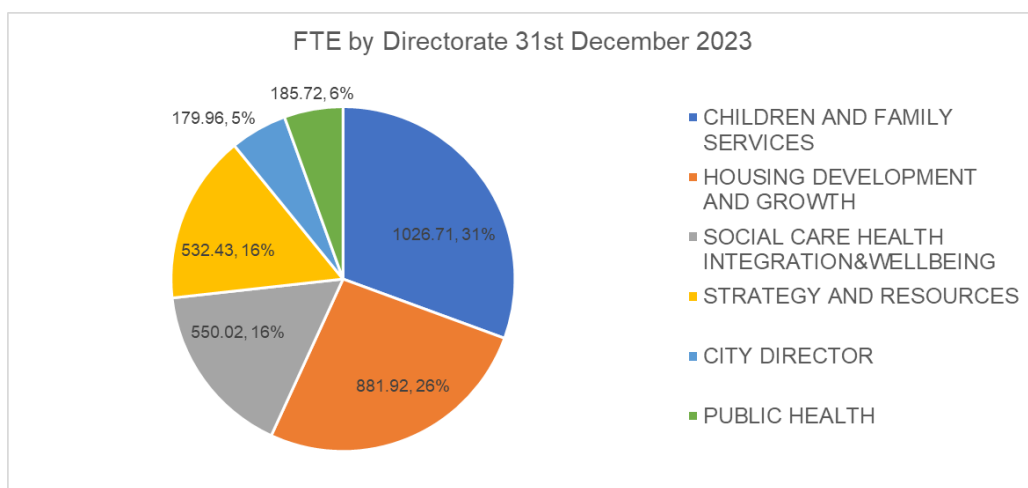
Payroll data as at 31st December 2023 (council managed employees only)

The data on the current workforce is extracted from the organisation's payroll system. At the time of reporting, there was a recorded headcount of 4289 employees (excluding schools). The 4289 headcount equates to a full time equivalent (FTE) of 3357 employees.

The following chart illustrates headcount across the six Directorates:



The following chart illustrates FTE across the six Directorates:



¹ Due to limited numbers on some protected characteristics, where the number of employees is less than or equal to five, to avoid identification these figures are not shown and a * used in their place.

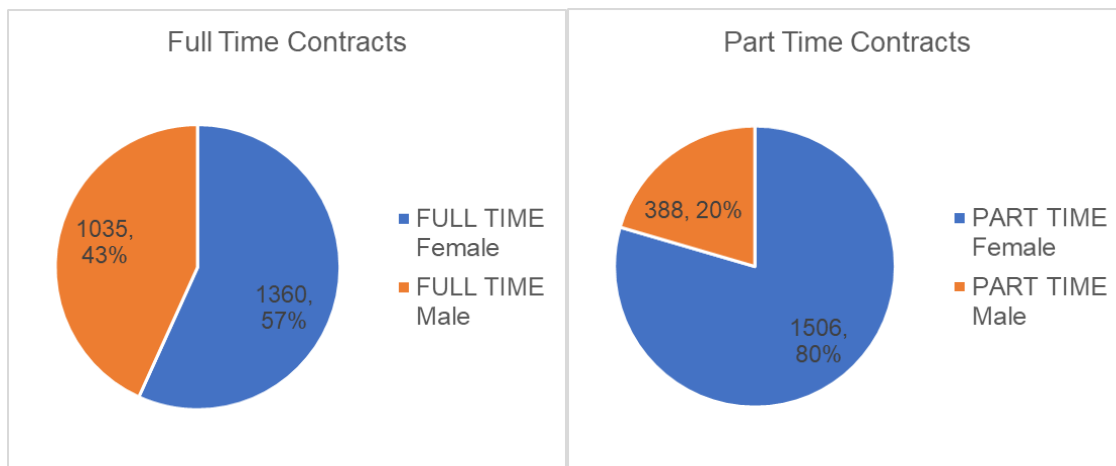
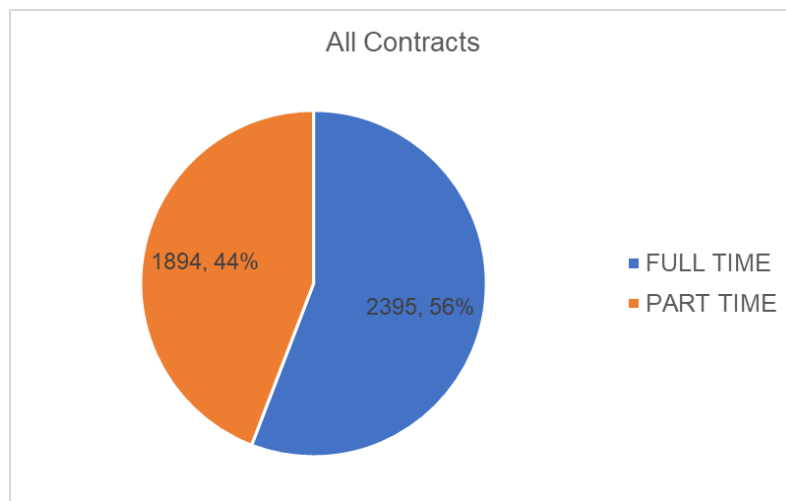
In summary the current profile for the organisation shows that:

Gender:

Female employees account for 67% (2866) of the workforce and male employees account for 33% (1423). Our FTE shows 64% (2148) are female employees and 36% (1209) are male employees.

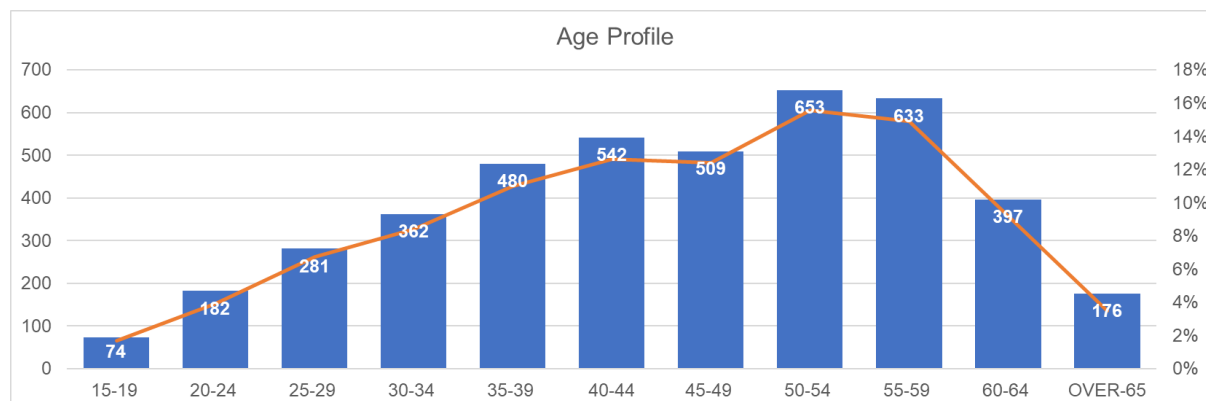
Contract:

2395 (56%) of employees are full time and 1894 (44%) of employees are part time, working less than 37 hours per week. The vast majority (80%) of part time employees at 1506 are female.



Age:

Age profile of the workforce:



The Council's workforce is under-represented in the younger age groups – 1.7% are aged 15-19, 4.2% aged 20-24. Work being completed through our Educational Engagement project links us with local schools, colleges and universities. These opportunities allow us to explain about the roles and the routes into these roles here at the Council.

Disability:

Disability	Headcount at 31 Dec 2023
Declared Disability (Including Other)	177
No Disability Declared	4112

On 15th September 2023 Stoke-on-Trent City Council were reaccredited as a Level 2 Disability Confident employer, which means we are ensuring that disabled people and those with long term health conditions have the opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.

To attain this level in the scheme the Council has had to demonstrate that the way in which we advertise, recruit and retain disabled people and people with health conditions, is fair and inclusive to all.

Ethnicity:

We hold ethnicity data on 90% (3869) of all employees which shows:

Ethnicity	Headcount at 31 Dec 2023
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	3534
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	66
White: Other White	46
Prefer Not To Say	34
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	32
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Other Black	28
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: African	22
White: Irish	16
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups ¹	16
Asian or Asian British: Indian	15
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	13
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	13
Asian or Asian British: Other Asian	7
Asian or Asian British: Chinese	7
White: Roma	6
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Caribbean	*
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	*
Other ethnic group: Arab	*
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	*
Unknown	420

Sexual Orientation:

We hold sexual orientation data on 2812 (66%) of all employees which shows:

Sexual Orientation	Headcount 31st Dec 2023
Same sex and opposite sex (Bisexual)	36
Same sex (gay/lesbian)	46
Opposite sex (Heterosexual)	2643
Prefer self-describe / prefer not to say	87
Unknown	1477

Marital Status²:

We hold marital status data on 3499 (82%) of all employees, which shows:

Marital Status	Headcount at 31 Dec 2023
Married / Civil Partnership	1735
Single	1040
Divorced/Separated	253
Cohabiting	347
Widowed	33
Common Law	23
Prefer not to say	68
Unknown	790

Religion:

We hold religion data on 3031 (71%) of all employees, which shows:

Religion	Headcount 31 Dec 2023
Christianity	1376
No Religious Belief	1214
Prefer not to say	259
Islam	84
Other	76
Buddhism	10
Hinduism	*
Judaism	*
Sikhism	*
Zoroastrianism	*
Unknown	1258

All employees have access to review and amend their equalities data in the HR System MyView. The provision of personal equalities information within the Council is voluntary and employees have the option of choosing not to declare their information with the option to “prefer not to say” available to select.

We will continue to promote the importance of reviewing and updating our personal equality and diversity data and review our monitoring procedures from recruitment to leavers.

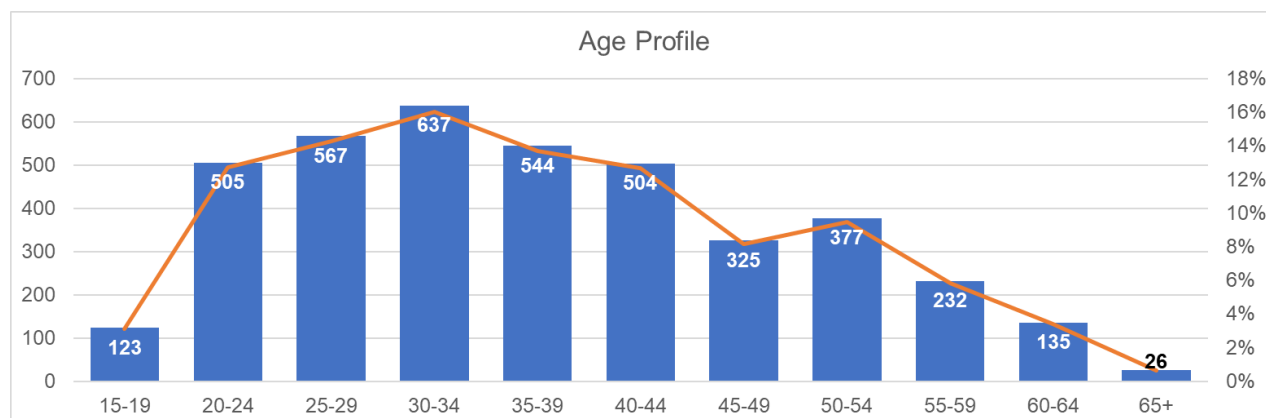
² Whilst Marriage and Civil partnership is a protected characteristic it is not a ‘relevant’ one for the purpose of the Public Sector Equality Duty

Recruitment – advertising and applications

Our recruitment data shows that the Council advertised 497 posts (including all multiple post vacancies), which generated 4030 applications consisting of 2909 (72%) external applications and 1121 (28%) internal applications. In addition, during the period there were four executive level posts advertised.

Of all the applications, 2337 (58%) were Female, 1693 (41%) were male.

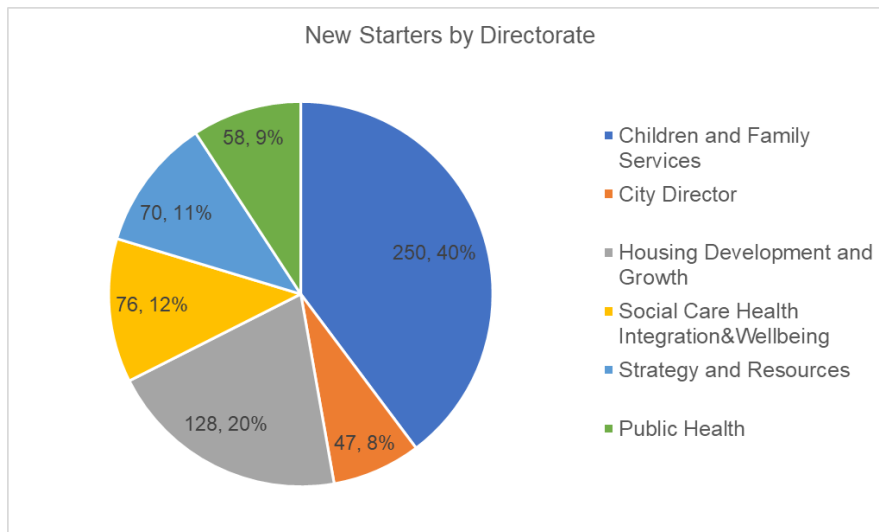
The following chart gives a breakdown of applications by age group



- 2891 were English/Welsh/Scott/N Irish/British – White (72%), 201 were African - Black/African/Caribbean/British (5%), 148 were Pakistani – Asian or Asian British (4%) and 172 unknown or prefer not to say (4%) with the remaining 618 made up of other ethnic categories (15%).
- In relation to sexual orientation 325 were not specified (8%), 168 were prefer not to say (4%), 3318 were Heterosexual (82%), 84 were same sex (2%), 121 were bisexual (3%), 14 self-described.
- 59 applications were from people declaring themselves as having a disability. 3971 (99%) declared no disability. Part of the local authority's commitment to fulfilling lives through greater independence and employment is to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria.
- For the four executive roles recruited for over the period, 55 applications were received. The majority (78%) of applicants stated their ethnicity as White British. 85% of applicants stated they did not have a disability, 7% did have a disability with four applicants stating 'prefer not to say'. Nearly half of the applications were 45-54 years old (44%), with approximately one in ten applications received for people under this age group – aged 25-44 (29%). 85% of the applicants stated they were heterosexual with three applicants who were LGBT. The gender split was 64% male, 33% female with one 'prefer not to say'.

New Starters

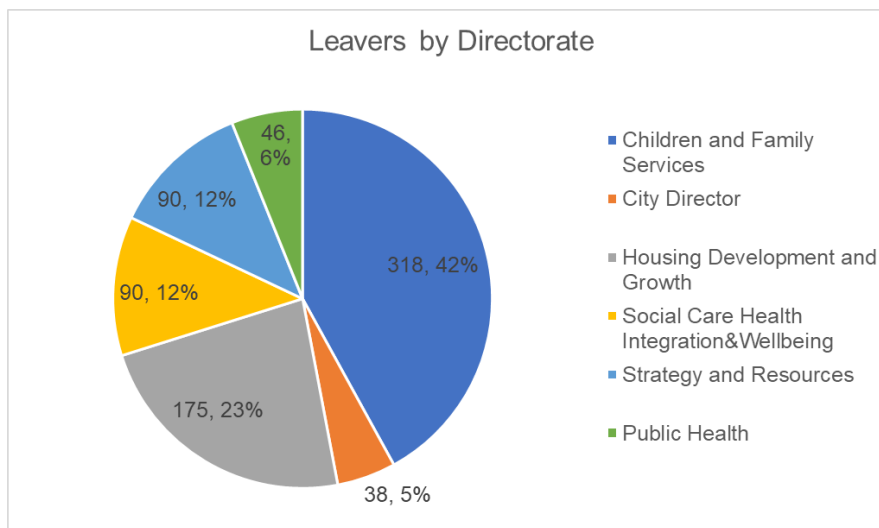
The total number of employees who started at the Council between 1st January 2023 and 31st December 2023 was 629.



The below graph shows how the New Starters were distributed across the organisation:

Leavers

The total number of employees leaving the organisation was 757, of these 110 were through redundancy, 224 resigned and 208 were due to the end of a fixed term, casual or temporary contract, the remaining 215 were due to various other reasons. This equated to an 13% turnover rate (FTE) and a 18% turnover rate (headcount).



The below graph shows how the leavers were distributed across the organisation:

Maternity and Paternity Leave

Stoke-on-Trent City Council has a range of family-friendly policies and practices.

For the period 1st January 2023 – 31st December 2023, 69 employees started maternity leave and 22 of these employees returned to work in the same period.

A further 49 employees had started maternity leave in 2022 and returned to work in 2023.

All who took maternity leave returned to work and were still with the council as of the 31st December 2023.

During this period, 13 employees took paternity leave – six employees took 2 weeks leave, with seven taking one week.

Pay and Grading

Stoke-on-Trent City Council has a job evaluation scheme in place to ensure that jobs are objectively assessed, while avoiding prejudice or discrimination. All employees are paid as per the [Pay Policy Statement 2023 – 2024](#) which is reviewed on an annual basis.

As per the Equality Act 2010 (specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulation 2017, Gender Pay Reporting Legislation requires employers with 250 or more employees to publish statutory calculations annually showing how large the pay gap is between their male and female employees. We are required to publish this data separate from this report on our own website and the Gender Pay Gap service government website. The deadline for March 2023 data publication is 30 March 2024.

Workforce Development Opportunities

The Learning and Development team aims to support the Council's vision by designing and delivering training, aligned with the corporate priorities and strategic objectives and to ensure compliance with mandatory training.

In addition to the corporate Learning and Development team the Children and Family Services Learning and Development Academy work to support their staff in designing and delivering courses that meet their specific sector needs.

Training is provided in subjects to support the skills, knowledge, behaviours and professional development across the organisation.

In 2023 employees attended the following mandatory Equality and Diversity training:

- 616 employees completed the Equality and Valuing Diversity e-learning
- 344 employees attended the Respect and Inclusion session, as part of induction
- 625 employees completed the WRAP- Workshop to Raise the Awareness of Prevent training, either face to face or via e-learning
- 813 employees completed Modern Slavery training, either face to face or via e-learning

The annual number of employees attending these courses will fluctuate dependent upon the mandatory time scales to attend refresher training.

Our employees have also had access to a wide range of other courses that enhanced their knowledge of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Courses have been made more accessible as they are made available via different delivery methods either face to face, online or via e-learning.

Some of the courses accessed by our employees are:-

- Accessibility eLearning - How to Ensure Documents are Accessibility Compliant
- Autism Awareness Training
- Culture, Diversity and Anti-racist practice: new perspectives and challenges
- Gender Reassignment Discrimination
- Sensory Awareness

During 2023 we became a member of Inclusive Employers providing us with more access to information and training that we can share with staff.

Courses are made available to all employees and access or learning requirements are identified at the time of booking. Any additional support required is assessed by a teacher trained practitioner as part of the learning programme. Should additional needs be identified by the learner, a bespoke course or 1:1 on site support is made available.

Updates and continuing work

The City Council is actively reviewing and refining its policies, procedures, and employee benefits to foster a workplace that employees are proud to work for. Central to identifying necessary improvements are our employee network groups, all of which are supported by senior management. This effort sheds light on areas needing attention to ensure our employees receive the support, development, and recognition they deserve that enables them to thrive and provide excellent services to our community. Driving this initiative is the Equality and Diversity Strategy 2022 – 2025, along with the appointment of a dedicated Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion officer. Below outlines some of the notable accomplishments from the past year and our plans to further these efforts in 2024.

Over the past twelve months as a council we have:

- Reviewed and updated our Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure to be in line with best practice. Created a new EIA screening tool, updated the EIA template and ensured. through a check by the Assistant Director of Governance and Registration at our Senior Management Team meeting. that all impacted changes to procedures and services had an EIA before proceeding.
- Created an Equalities Board chaired by the city director and including our networks' strategic sponsors as well as representatives from the unions, aligning all the ongoing workstreams within the networks
- Joined Inclusive Employers, a membership organisation for employers who are committed to prioritising Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). Membership with Inclusive Employers gives us access to expert support from leaders within the EDI field, as well as key training and resources.
- Developed an Equality and Diversity internal site that contains an abundance of resources, including guidance for managers and public facing members of staff on language and bias
- Added a statement regarding our commitment to Equality and Diversity on all job adverts
- Conducted a staff census, informing all employees of the importance of completing their characteristics information in order to understand the diversity of our workforce.

Race Equality and Workforce Race Equality Standard Working Groups

The Race Equality working group has continued to work on its action plan to strive towards achieving the targets set. Some of the key work that has taken place over the last year is:-

- Ethnically Diverse Staff Network group continues to meet bi-monthly, in addition to the Race Equality Task and Finish group
- Continued to work on our Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standards; reviewing exit interviews, improving our data and adjusting policies to make changes and meet our statistical targets
- Reviewed and collated key resources that are shared on internal sites for all staff to access in order to support their knowledge and understanding of race equality in the workplace
- As a council we continue to commit to the Race at Work Charter
- Continue our Educational Engagement to ensure that young people across the City understand they can aspire to any role and know that we are an inclusive employer welcoming a diverse workforce
- Reviewed internal training for EDI to ensure it equips staff to be an anti-racist workplace.
- Launched an internal Respect Statement to accompany our Bullying and Harassment policy, outlining our stance on inclusion and equality amongst colleagues in the workplace

As a council we are also about to launch a Reciprocal Mentoring programme specifically for ethnically diverse staff, giving them the opportunity to share their experiences with senior leaders across the organisation.

LGBTQIA+ Employee Network

Over the last 12 months the network group has continued to grow, with regards to giving advice and support to not only our managers and other Local Authorities, but also to individual staff and their families:

- Our relationship with Staffs Police and Staffs Fire and Rescue has continued to grow and develop. In working together, it will create a more collaborative approach for public services both across the City and the wider Staffordshire area
- We collaborated with Staffs Police, Staffs Fire and Rescue and the NHS and all flew the flag for IDAHOBIT 2023 and will work with them again to do the same in 2024
- The network group are proactive in their approach in ensuring the network group is known across every service and in all Council venues
- The network attended 2023 Stoke Pride, ensuring that the council is spreading the message of its commitment to equality in the workplace across its communities.
- We continue to work with Foster Carers and offer advice and guidance when necessary.
- Attended the new Cabinet's Engagement session to discuss the work being done on equality
- Added equalities information to all educational engagement sessions

Following the success of the networks attendance at Pride in 2023, the network is in the process of planning what 2024's attendance looks like.

Early Careers Network

Since the network developed, it has continued to connect staff across the council who are either in the early stages of their career, or facing a career change, who are looking to network and develop within their roles. We continue to offer key development sessions, including a session on tips for interviews and applications and discussions from senior staff about their career journeys. Moving forward the group is hoping to continue to grow and offer further opportunities for staff to develop in their roles, supporting staff at the beginnings of what we hope is a long career at the council. Particularly, we will be looking at linking in to the work that is ongoing with T-Level students and apprentices.

Our Educational Engagement programme continues to grow with more interaction with schools' colleges and universities. We offer placements, career talks, mentoring and mock interviews. In the coming year we will continue to make these offers and will be developing these to work more with SEND young people by offering Supported internships.

Disability Awareness Network Group

Last year the City Council launched its Disability Awareness Network Group, which since it was launched has grown and attracted staff from all areas of the council. It continues to influence key decisions and policy, and the Group has had a positive impact on the culture at the council relating to disability awareness, especially as relates to the workplace. This has included the following:

- Completed a disability awareness survey, based on which they created an action plan to drive forward the objectives of the group
- Developed and implemented a Neurodiversity in the Workplace policy
- Created factsheets to aide staff in their awareness and understanding of Neurodiversity
- Reconfirmed our status as a committed Disability Confident Employer, with aims to achieve our Leader status
- Joined Neurodiversity in Business – NiB are a business forum and industry group for organisations to share industry good practice on neurodivergent recruitment, retention and empowerment.
- Providing information and signposting to staff across the council
- Raise disability related issues with the senior leadership team to help inform policy, strategy and decision making.

Over the next year, the network is also looking to continue to raise awareness of disability in the workplace through lunchtime learning sessions deflowered by the network members, being involved in a disability access audit of our office building, and grow the network's membership.

Perimenopause and Menopause Working Group

In 2023, the council launched its Perimenopause and Menopause Working Group. The aim of the working group is to develop an open and supportive culture for all colleagues experiencing the perimenopause and menopause. It also aims to provide an environment which allows managers to know their responsibilities and to understand how the perimenopause and menopause can affect individuals, and how they can support those experiencing the menopause at work.

We have recently gained access to Henpicked, through our involvement in our Integrated Care System, which offers additional resources and guidance on menopause in the workplace and how to be a menopause friendly employer. Further work and future actions are in the process of being developed for 2024.

Our staff networks are also working collaboratively to plan a workshop in 2024 for our senior leaders based on some of the intersectionality of the issues faced for underrepresented groups, particularly focusing on unconscious bias.

Fostering Friendly

Fostering Friendly is a scheme created by The Fostering Network, the UK's leading fostering charity. The scheme supports employers to implement a policy which promotes fostering and supports their foster carer employees. Stoke-on-Trent City Council is a Fostering Friendly employer and has been working hard over the last year to encourage major local employers to join in pledging support for children in care.

Armed Forces Covenant

In 2023 we received the 2023 Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold Award for our commitment to supporting the Armed Forces community and their families. The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award is the highest award available and recognises the positive role that employers play in supporting the Armed Forces community.

In order to achieve the Gold award from the Ministry of Defence, the city council has:

- Ten extra paid days leave for Reservists
- Supportive HR policies for Reservists, Veterans, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers
- Supportive HR policies for spouses and partners of those serving in the Armed Forces
- Promoted the benefits of supporting those within the Armed Forces community, by encouraging other organisations to sign the Armed Forces Covenant and engage with the Employer Recognition Scheme.

Celebrating our diverse culture

As one of the largest employers in the city our employees are from diverse backgrounds, races and faiths, working together supporting our communities. We want to celebrate the culture within the council, sharing information and dates of religious festivals, national and international days and to highlight the ongoing work towards equality, diversity and inclusion. We celebrated Ramadan, International Day Against Homophobia Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOBiT), International Women's day, Pride month, Learning Disability week, Black History month, Diwali and Christmas, as well as many more. We have shared internal communications highlighting the stories of our staff and the diversity of their backgrounds and experiences. In 2024 we aim to build on our commitment to strengthen the communities understanding of what we as a council do to embrace diversity.

Appendix 1 – Strategic priorities and objectives 2020-2024

Strategic priorities and objectives

Sitting underneath the council's vision are five strategic priorities. Aligned to each priority are a number of strategic objectives that we will endeavour to deliver over the next four years.



Priorities

Support vulnerable people in our communities to live their lives well

Enable our residents to fulfil their potential

Help businesses to thrive and make our city more prosperous

Work with our communities to make them healthier, safer and more sustainable

An innovative and commercial council, providing effective leadership to help transform outcomes

Strategic Objectives 2020/24

- Transform outcomes for vulnerable children and young people in the city
- Help to protect vulnerable adults from neglect and harm
- Work with partners to tackle the causes and impacts of homelessness and rough sleeping
- Protect families from the harmful impacts of drug and alcohol misuse
- Address financial hardship and improve access to affordable financial services

- Improve education and skill levels for residents of all ages
- Protect and improve mental and physical health and wellbeing
- Improve the quality and supply of housing in the city
- Enable our residents to secure and progress in sustainable employment
- Transform digital infrastructure to improve access to online services

- Foster enterprise and entrepreneurship to support local business growth
- Deliver a high-quality transport network that boosts connectivity and enables sustainable travel
- Work with local and national partners to boost employment, pay and productivity
- Prioritise the redevelopment of derelict and brownfield sites at strategic locations in the city
- Celebrate and promote our great city as a destination for business, heritage and culture

- Improve the environmental sustainability of our towns and communities
- Work with residents and partners to make our communities safer, cleaner and healthier
- Reduce the numbers of empty properties to enable our town centres to thrive
- Transform community involvement in tackling issues which hold our city back
- Invest in communities to help build resilience and grow social capital

- Deliver more joined-up services to maximise efficiency and achieve improved outcomes
- Ensure the continued financial stability of the City Council
- Work with partners to devise innovative and collaborative approaches to local challenges
- Deliver a wide range of commercial services and invest to enable the city to prosper
- Improve the use of data in decision-making and service improvement

Appendix 2 - Equality and Diversity Objectives 2021 – 2025

The underlying causes and aggravating factors which give rise to inequalities tend to have arisen over the course of many years and cannot be eradicated within a short timescale. Also, the objectives are designed to align as closely as possible with the priorities and strategic objectives contained in the new Stronger Together Strategic Vision, which is broadly similar in structure and approach to the original Stronger Together Strategic Plan. Retaining similar descriptions of individual equality objectives also promotes more effective transparency in terms of performance monitoring and reporting against each of the objectives.

An additional consideration regarding the revised equality objectives is the nature and scale of impacts arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. The objectives reflect the fact that an important part of the focus of the citywide response to and recovery from the pandemic will involve identifying, assessing and mitigating adverse impacts on individuals, groups and communities, as well as working to protect communities from the threat of future outbreaks, strengthen local resilience and community cohesion and increase employment and economic growth.

The objectives are listed below

- Narrow the gap in educational attainment levels between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and the average city pupil
- Narrow the gap between the city and the rest of the UK regarding adult skills and qualifications
- Improve access to employment for groups which experience barriers to work
- Reduce health inequalities
- Celebrate and promote our great city as a destination for business, heritage and culture
- Work with residents and partners to make our communities safer, cleaner and healthier

The full objective details which can be found in the attached document will be monitored and reviewed in line with the Stronger Together Priorities and updates given as we make progress. [Equality Objectives 2021-24.pdf](#)