

Equality and Diversity Workforce Report

Stoke-on-Trent City Council

1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024



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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 organisations 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 of 31st December 2024, while the data is for the period 1st January 2024 – 31st December 2024.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council Strategic Context

Our City, Our Wellbeing, is our Corporate Strategy for 2024-2028, the plan outlines our vision and key priorities to create a thriving city for everyone.

To achieve our vision our plans have been set against seven key themes these are:

1. **Healthier** - Creating a healthier standard of living for all our citizens.
2. **Wealthier** - Reducing hardship and enabling greater shared prosperity.
3. **Safer** - Building empowered communities, safe from the threat of harm.
4. **Greener** - Conserving our environment and living more sustainably.
5. **Cleaner** - Working together to clean up our city and our communities.
6. **Fairer** - Tackling inequality and improving life chances for everyone.
7. **Skilled** – Providing opportunities for people to improve their skills and education.

For more details about the Corporate Strategy please click the following link - [Our City, Our Wellbeing | Corporate Strategy 2024-2028 - Our City, Our Wellbeing | Stoke-on-Trent](#)

To help shape our behaviours, forge and strengthen vital partnerships across sectors and communities, new corporate values have been developed. These will support us in creating new ways of working allowing us to work with the city's residents and partners to implement our corporate strategy, strengthening our commitment to our diverse city.



Empowerment: We will use our powers and resources, combined with the expertise of our dedicated workforce, to benefit the communities which we serve, enabling residents to shape more decisions about their lives and local environments.



Openness: We will be clear about the challenges that the Council is facing, how we are going to address them and whether we are making progress. We will always be open to new and better ideas.



Empathy: We care about the lives of our residents. We will provide help and support without judgement and will actively seek the views of our citizens to improve the services we deliver.



Partnership: We will be dedicated and supportive partners to all those who want to make our city a better place, forging strong relationships which span sectors and geographies.



Stewardship: We will take ownership of our commitments and responsibilities, be honest about where we can do better and demonstrate the utmost responsibility for the efficient use of public resources and assets.



Representation: We will champion our city and our citizens at every opportunity, talking up its many strengths and nurturing civic pride. We will

promote our city's culture, heritage, and future potential to wider audiences without downplaying the significance of local challenges.

Equality Objectives

Stoke-on-Trent City Council has developed its Equality Objectives aimed at embedding equalities within the Council's 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 Council's Equality Objectives for 2021 – 2025 can be found in appendix 1. New objectives are being developed for 2025 – 2029.

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

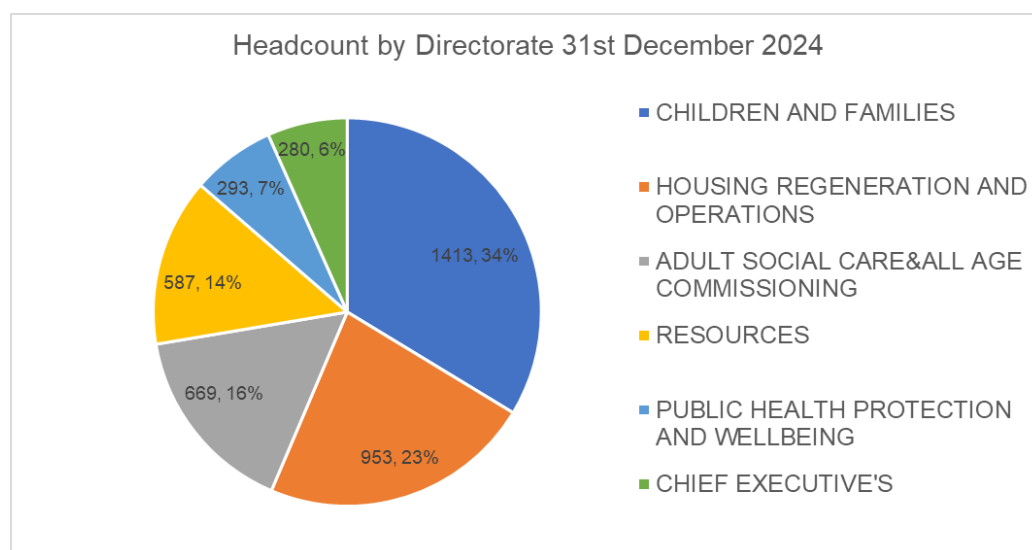
- [Living my best life - A life Course strategy for people with learning Disabilities - 2021 - 2026](#)
- ["Room to Grow" Children, Young People and Families' Strategy 2020-2024](#)
- [Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021 - 2025](#)
- [Community Cohesion Strategy 2020 – 2024](#)
- [Workforce and Organisational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

Current Workforce Headcount Profile¹:

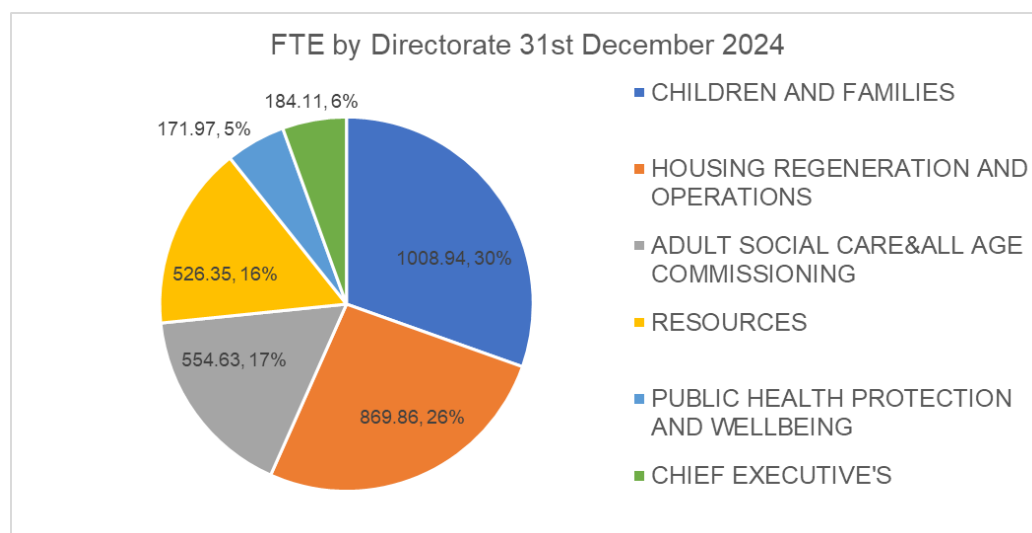
Payroll data as of 31st December 2024 (council managed employees only).

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 4195 employees (excluding schools). The 4195 headcount equates to a full time equivalent (FTE) of 3316 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.

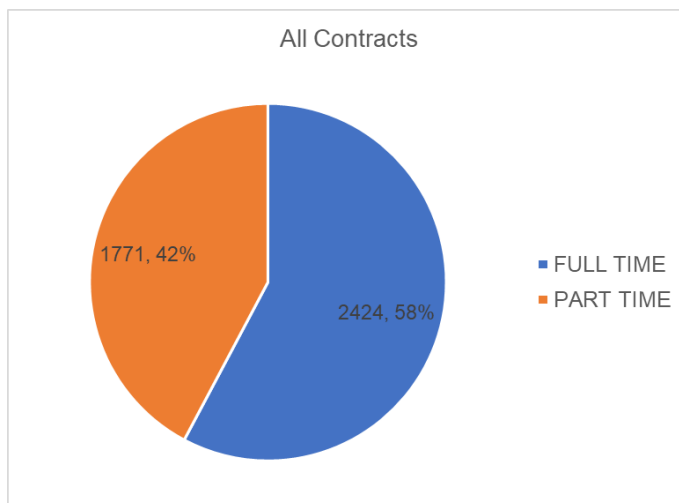
In summary the current profile for the organisation shows that:

Gender:

Female employees account for 67% (2790) of the workforce and male employees account for 33% (1405). Our FTE shows 64% (2117) are female employees and 36% (1199) are male employees.

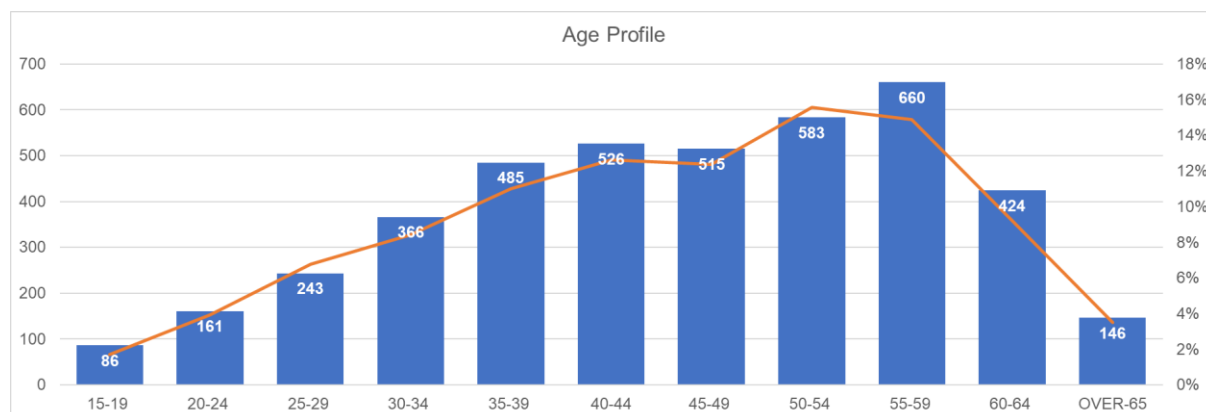
Contract:

2424 (58%) of employees are full time and 1771 (42%) of employees are part time, working less than 37 hours per week. The vast majority (79%) of part time employees are female (1399).



Age:

Age profile of the workforce:



The Council's workforce is under-represented in the younger age groups – 2.1% are aged 15-19, 3.8% 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 roles here at the Council.

Disability:

Disability	Headcount on 31 Dec 2024
Declared Disability (Including Other)	222
No Disability Declared	3973

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 91% (3835) of all employees which shows:

Ethnicity	Headcount at 31 Dec 2024
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	3437
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	72
Prefer Not To Say	65
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: African	49
White: Other White	44
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Other Black	36
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	31
Asian or Asian British: Indian	18
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	16
White: Irish	13
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	12
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	12
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Caribbean	6
Asian or Asian British: Chinese	6
Asian or Asian British: Other Asian	6
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	5
White: Roma	*
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	*
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	*
Other ethnic group: Arab	*
Not Declared	360

Sexual Orientation:

We hold sexual orientation data on 2973 (71%) of all employees which shows:

Sexual Orientation	Headcount 31 st Dec 2024
Same sex and opposite sex (Bisexual)	38
Same sex (gay/lesbian)	54
Opposite sex (Heterosexual)	2754
Prefer self-describe / prefer not to say	127
Unknown	1222

Marital Status²:

We hold marital status data on 3371 (80%) of all employees, which shows:

Marital Status	Headcount at 31 Dec 2024
Married / Civil Partnership	1670
Single	980
Divorced/Separated	250
Cohabiting	350
Widowed	25
Common Law	25
Prefer not to say	71
Unknown	824

Religion:

We hold religion data on 3031 (76%) of all employees, which shows:

Religion	Headcount 31 Dec 2024
Christianity	1424
No Religious Belief	1271
Prefer not to say	280
Islam	92
Other	75
Buddhism	11
Hinduism	10
Judaism	*
Sikhism	*
Zoroastrianism	*
Unknown	1023

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.

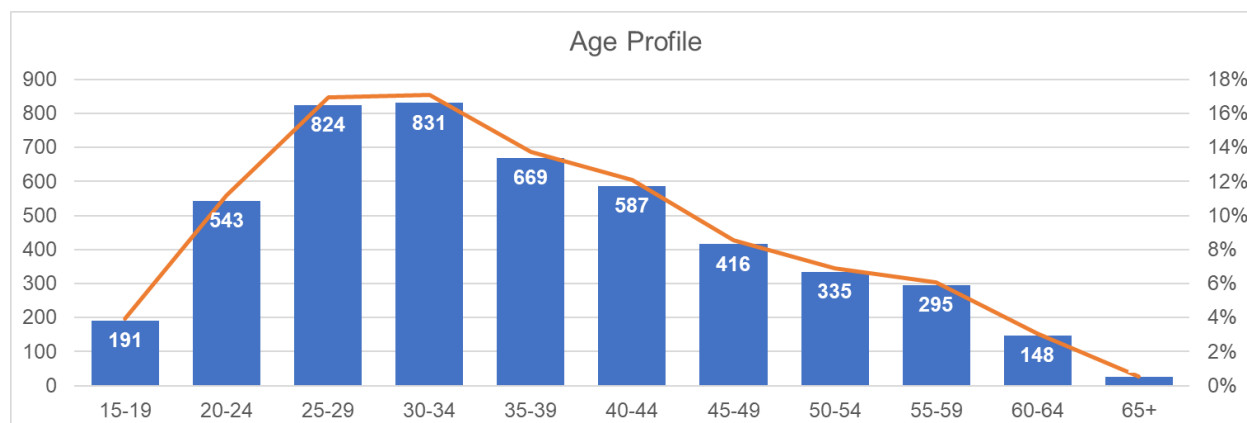
² Whilst Marriage and Civil partnership is a protected characteristic it is not a ‘relevant’ one for the purpose of the Public Sector Equality Duty

Recruitment – advertising and applications

Our recruitment data shows that the Council advertised 410 posts (including all multiple post vacancies), which generated 4,898 applications consisting of 3,944 (81%) external applications and 954 (19%) internal applications. In addition, during the period there were four executive level posts advertised.

Of all the applications, 2,891 (59%) were female, 2,007 (41%) were male.

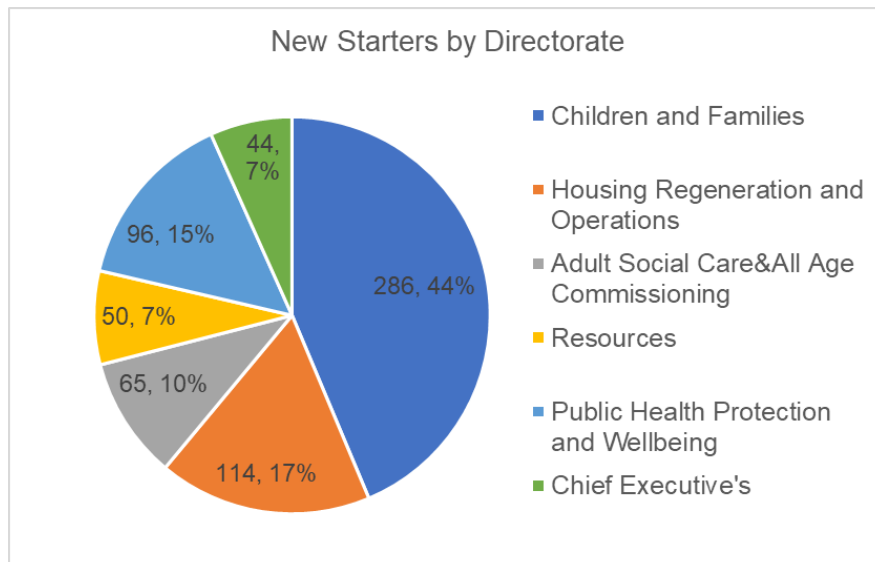
The following chart gives a breakdown of applications by age group



- 3,011 were English/Welsh/Scott/N Irish/British – White (61%), 514 were African - Black/African/Caribbean/British (10%), 241 were Pakistani – Asian or Asian British (5%), 224 were Indian – Asian or Asian British and 130 unknown or prefer not to say (3%) with the remaining 778 made up of other ethnic categories (16%).
- In relation to sexual orientation 150 were not specified (3%), 221 were prefer not to say (5%), 4,233 were Heterosexual (86%), 146 were bisexual (3%), 132 were same sex (3%) and 16 self-described.
- 49 applications were from people declaring themselves as having a disability. 4,849 (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 six executive roles recruited for over the period, 105 applications were received. The majority (62%) of applicants stated their ethnicity as White British. 76% of applicants stated they did not have a disability, 7% did have a disability with ten applicants stating 'prefer not to say'. One in four of the applications were 45-54 years old (38%), with approximately one in four applications received for people under this age group – aged 16-44 (28%). 77% of the applicants stated they were heterosexual with eight applicants who were LGBTQ+. The gender split was 47% female, 45% female with 9% not stating their gender.

New Starters

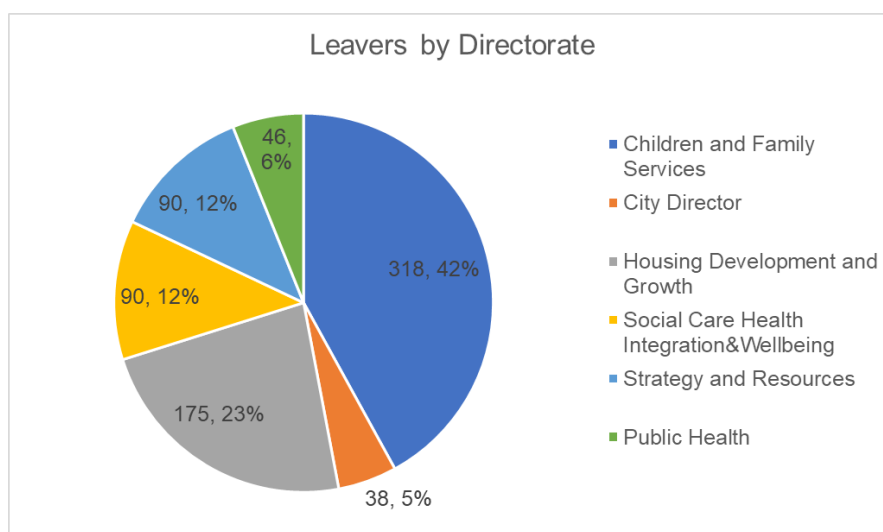
The total number of employees who started at the Council between 1st January 2024 and 31st December 2024 was 655.



The graph shows how new starters were distributed across the organisation.

Leavers

The total number of employees leaving the organisation was 635, of these 41 were through redundancy, 204 resigned and 143 were due to the end of a fixed term, casual or temporary contract, 69 retired with the remaining 178 were due to various other reasons. This equated to an 10% turnover rate (FTE) and a 15% turnover rate (headcount). A further 53 staff were TUPE transferred to another organisation.



The graph shows how 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 2024 – 31st December 2024, 75 employees started maternity leave and 29 of these employees returned to work in the same period.

A further 46 employees had started maternity leave in 2024 and returned to work in 2025.

All who took maternity leave returned to work and were still with the council as of the 31st December 2024.

During this period, 17 employees took paternity leave – thirteen employees took 2 weeks leave, with four 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 2024 – 2025](#) 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 2024 data publication is 30 March 2025.

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. Where required external providers will be procured to deliver certain topics.

In addition to the corporate Learning and Development team the Children and Family Learning and Development Academy and Adult Social Care Workforce teams 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 2024 employees attended the following mandatory Equality and Diversity training:

- 848 employees completed the Equality and Valuing Diversity e-learning.
- 94 employees attended the Respect and Inclusion session, as part of induction

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

Our employees have also had access to a wide range of other Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion courses, including those provided by Inclusive Employers as part of our membership courses are available via different delivery methods either face to face, online or via e-learning widening accessibility to learning.

Some of the courses accessed by our employees are: -

- Accessibility eLearning - How to Ensure Documents are Accessibility Compliant
- Autism Awareness Training
- Dementia Awareness Gender Reassignment Discrimination
- LGBT+ Awareness
- Unconscious bias and inclusive decision making

During 2024 we renewed our membership to Inclusive Employers recognising the benefit it gave us in accessing relevant and up to date Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 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 onsite support is made available.

Updates and continuing work

The City Council is committed to reviewing and enhancing its policies, procedures, and employee benefits to create a workplace that employees take pride in. A key component of this process is the input from our employee network groups, which receive strong support from senior management. These groups help identify areas for improvement, ensuring that our employees are given the support, development, and recognition they deserve to thrive and deliver excellent service to the community. This initiative is guided by the Equality and Diversity Strategy 2022–2025, alongside the appointment of a dedicated Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion officer. Below, we highlight some of the key achievements from the past year and outline our plans to build on these efforts in 2024.

Over the past twelve months as a council, we have:

- Signed up to the Care Leaver Friendly Charter, whereby we as a council commit to working on key actions to make our organisation more accessible for our care leavers.
- Launched the first pilot of reciprocal mentoring, pairing 7 senior leaders with 7 ethnically diverse members of staff to partake in a 6-month programme.
- Completed a Disability Access Audit of our main building to ensure it is accessible to any staff with a disability.
- 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.
- Delivered training sessions on unconscious bias and inclusive behaviours to improve the experience for staff.
- Our Staff Networks delivered a session to our senior leaders on unconscious bias.

Race Equality Working Group and Ethnically Diverse Staff Network

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.
- Recommitted to the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standards; reviewing exit interviews, improving our data, and adjusting policies to make changes and meet our statistical targets.
- Compiled and organised essential resources available on internal platforms to support staff in enhancing their knowledge and understanding of race equality in the workplace.

- Evaluated internal EDI training to ensure it effectively prepares staff to contribute to an anti-racist workplace.
- Created a supportive environment for staff to share their experiences and support one another.

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 partnership with Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue continues to grow and strengthen. By working together, we are fostering a more collaborative approach to public services, benefiting both the City and the wider Staffordshire area.
- We teamed up with Staffordshire Police, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue, and the NHS to support IDAHOBIT 2024, and we look forward to collaborating again for the same cause in 2025.
- The network group is proactive in raising awareness, ensuring its presence is known across all services and within every Council venue.
- The network participated in the 2024 Stoke Pride, further demonstrating the Council's commitment to equality in the workplace and across its communities.

Disability Awareness Network

The Disability Awareness Network has started to become an influential body within the City Council, promoting disability inclusion, increased awareness of neurodiversity, and best practices relating to disability across all levels of the organisation. Through a combination of policy input, awareness initiatives, and direct support, the Network continues to shape an inclusive council culture that respects and values the contributions of disabled and neurodivergent staff. Its impact can be seen across several critical areas:

- Reconfirmed our commitment as a Disability Confident Employer with a goal to achieve Leader status.
- The Network has been proactive in educating staff about neurodivergent conditions such as autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and dyspraxia, among others. Through presentations at team meetings and council events, the Network is helping to build a greater understanding and acceptance of neurodiversity, reducing stigma, and promoting a more inclusive workplace culture.
- Network has developed a range of practical resources, toolkits, and guides specifically for neurodivergent staff and their managers.
- Through a centralised approach to disability-related resources, the Network has made it easier for staff to access support, guidance, and information.
- The Network offers hands-on guidance, addressing issues and uncertainties as they arise. This includes advice on compassionate communication, helping managers adopt inclusive practices, and offering direct support to staff.

- Collaborating with senior leadership to influence policies, strategies, and decisions
- As an expert resource for staff at all levels within the council to access, the Network reviews and advises on council policies, ensuring they align with best practices in disability inclusion.

The Disability Awareness Network has not only impacted policies but has also started to profoundly influence the council's workplace culture. Its work ensures that disability and neurodiversity are integral to our understanding of diversity and inclusion. By continuing to advocate for an accessible and equitable workplace, the Network reinforces the council's commitment to a culture where all employees, regardless of ability, are respected, supported, and empowered.

Perimenopause and Menopause Working Group

Over the past 12 months the council has seen its Perimenopause and Menopause Working Group grow and develop. The purpose of setting the group up was to develop an open and supportive culture for all colleagues experiencing the perimenopause and menopause. Since then, it has provided an environment which allows managers to understand how to support staff and how the perimenopause and menopause can affect individuals. The group has also given colleagues a safe place to meet with others and discuss any issues they may be having and possible improvements that could be made. This has been done through:

- Access to Henpicked, offering additional resources and guidance on menopause in the workplace and how to be a menopause friendly employer.
- Hosting a Menopause Café to mark World Menopause Day and bring people together across the organisation.
- A staff survey to mark Work Menopause Day to find out how colleagues are being affected.
- Supporting staff through guidance and signposting to resources.
- Developing a hub of information for all staff to access on our internal site.
- Re-writing and launching the Menopause Policy in October 2023.
- Regular group meetings.
- Seeking to have sanitary products returned to toilets in the workplace.
- Developing an e-learning for staff that should be ready to launch in early 2025.

Fostering Friendly

Fostering Friendly is an initiative developed by The Fostering Network, the UK's leading fostering charity. The program helps employers adopt policies that promote fostering and offer support to their foster carer employees. Stoke-on-Trent City Council is proud to be a Fostering Friendly employer and has been actively encouraging prominent local businesses over the past year to pledge their support for children in care.

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 2025 we aim to build on our commitment to strengthen the communities understanding of what we as a council do to embrace diversity. The Equality Diversity and Inclusion Officer role will be working with our Community Cohesion team playing a key part in community engagement across Stoke-on-Trent helping to strengthen communities and making it a great place to live.

New equality objectives will be developed and published in 2025 and are intended to help the council improve the delivery of inclusive services, employ a diverse workforce, and provide equality of opportunity for all staff.

Appendix 1 - 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 can be found in the attached document [Equality Objectives 2021-24.pdf](#)