

**Slough Borough Council
Workforce Equality Data Report
March 2023 (Updated Version June 2023)**

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Introduction

The council has gone through an unprecedented period of change over the past 3 years. The serious financial challenges the council faces, a council-wide restructuring programme, and the lasting impacts of the pandemic (including changes to working practices) has inevitably affected our workforce. As we begin our journey of recovery and improvement, we want to ensure that fairness, dignity, and respect is at the heart of everything we do as an employer. To attract and retain a skilled and motivated workforce who can deliver the best services to our residents, we need to foster an environment of equal opportunities and inclusion: where staff are treated with dignity and respect, diversity is welcomed and celebrated, and where everybody can perform their job to the best of their abilities, irrespective of their background.

As an organisation, we are working hard to improve the accuracy of our workforce data and ensure our HR policies, practices, and procedures provide an inclusive and responsive workplace for all colleagues.

Workforce equality monitoring helps us to do that by telling us if:

- Our workforce is representative of the communities we serve
- We are attracting and retaining diverse talent
- We are applying our Human Resources policies and procedures consistently
- When we restructure or change teams, we are doing this fairly and understand the impacts on different staff groups

This report presents a summary of the council's currently available workforce equality monitoring for the year 2022 and helps to describe how we are meeting our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The data used to describe the diversity profile of our workforce was taken from the "snapshot date" of 31 December 2022. Where salary information is stated, this is based on full time equivalent salaries (FTE). The structure of the council workforce has gone through significant change over the past 3 years, and this will continue over the short-term period as we reshape services. This has inevitably impacted our ability to conduct year on year trend analysis, but this report is a starting point for future analysis, as we continue our recovery journey.

The report also goes on to detail some of the other activities undertaken to help eliminate discrimination, promote inclusion, and celebrate diversity in our workforce.

Meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty, Equality Act (2010)

Regulations made under the Equality Act 2010 require specified bodies to publish gender pay gap information. In addition public bodies must publish information to demonstrate its compliance with its duty under s.149 of the Act. Section 149 (known as the public sector equality duty (PSED)) requires the council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to the need to

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The information required to be published under the regulations is not prescribed, but includes information relating to persons who share a relevant protected characteristic who are (a) its employees; (b) other persons affected by its policies and practices. This report relates to the first category.

Statutory Reporting – Equality Objectives

The PSED also requires us to publish at least one or more corporate equality objective every 4 years. The council is currently in the process of updating these via the refreshed Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan sets out the vision and key priorities for the council over the next few years. It is anticipated that at least one of these equality objectives will relate to improving equality in our workforce. Specifically, the council is committed to developing programmes to encourage diversity at all levels of the organisation and is especially keen to ensure that at senior leadership levels there is a better reflection of its diverse resident base.

The [current Corporate Plan](#) can be viewed on our website. When the updated Corporate Plan has been agreed and been through public consultation you will be able to view it on our website.

Statutory Reporting - Gender Pay Gap

The Equality Act (2010) requires all organisations employing more than 250 staff to publish annually its gender pay gap. The council has consistently reported gender pay gaps significantly lower than the national average and is fully committed to promoting gender equality throughout its workforce. You can check the [past 3 years gender pay gap reports](#) on our website, including the latest report for 2022.

The Borough

To understand the information on our workforce in the wider context of the local demographic and specific equalities issues that face Slough as a town, a full equality profile of the borough, based on the latest Census data, can be found in the [Slough Insights Data pack March 2023 – Slough Borough Council](#)

Summary of key demographics from 2021 Census

Slough's total population at the time of the 2021 Census was 158,500

- **Age:** Slough's average age is 34, compared to 41 for the Southeast and 40 for England. 25% of Slough's population is under 15 years of age. This is compared to the England average of 18%. This is the second highest proportion of children under 15 in England and Wales (behind Barking and Dagenham)
- **Gender:** The borough has a slightly higher proportion of female residents (50.5%), than male (49.5%); 90% of residents had a gender identity the same as the sex registered at birth
- **Ethnicity:** Slough continues to be one of the most ethnically diverse towns in the UK. 46.7% of residents identify as Asian (compared to an England average of 10%), 36% of residents identify as White (compared to an England average of 81%), 7.6 % of residents identify as Black (compared to an England average of 4%) and 4% of residents identify as Mixed (compared to an England average of 3%)

- **Disability:** 26.3 % of Slough households include one of more disabled people (compared to an England average of 32%)

What diversity data do we monitor?

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society, in relation to nine protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Staff diversity information is recorded via confidential “self –service” on the council’s HR system. Whilst we encourage colleagues to self-disclose diversity data in relation to all the above protected characteristics, this is entirely voluntary and we also respect that due to a wide range of reasons, sometimes colleagues will not wish to disclose information for every category. Therefore, where data sets are incomplete, we have indicated levels of non-disclosure. We are committed to improving diversity declaration rates wherever possible, as this allows us to better understand our staff cohort and the impacts of our workforce policies and procedures.

This report focuses on Gender, Age, Disability and Ethnicity. As data collection on other categories improves, we will aim to publish analysis on this when available.

Workforce Profiles

On the snapshot date of 31 December 2022, the council employed **995** staff. (Permanent employees from Agresso) This includes permanent and directly employed staff and does not include agency or interim staff. It is acknowledged that the council currently has an elevated level of agency and interim staff; whilst there is significant recruitment of permanent staff underway to re-build a “right council” for Slough, as part of the recovery (especially in corporate support services), it is recognised that the current job and skills market remains challenging, and it is likely that there will remain a sizeable number of temporary staff in the short term. We are unable to provide equalities monitoring information on these individuals currently.

Data Recording Note

- Data quality outputs vary due to changes within the system. Some of these may be due to operational practice or methodological change. Data outputs and data validation from directorates is under review.
- For data recording purposes and openness and transparency kindly note that Inaccurate, inconsistent, missing and duplicate data pose threats to cultivating trustworthy data sets. Data quality is key focus for Slough Borough Council in utilising data for operational and strategic decision making. The data quality challenges that lead to inaccurate or misleading analytics results are continuously being reviewed as part of the wider ‘data strategy and data standards’ implementation.
- If you have any questions around the data please submit a request via our normal channels.
- Due to data reporting anomalies in the Agresso system, which are in the process of being worked through and resolved, there may be some rounding errors and some salary information that is labelled as N/A.

Gender Profile

Table 1. Gender profile

Gender Profile Type	Female	Male	Grand Total
Gender profile of the Council	58.19%	41.81%	100.00%
Gender profile of starters	52.94%	47.06%	100.00%
Gender profile of leavers	59.38%	40.63%	100.00%

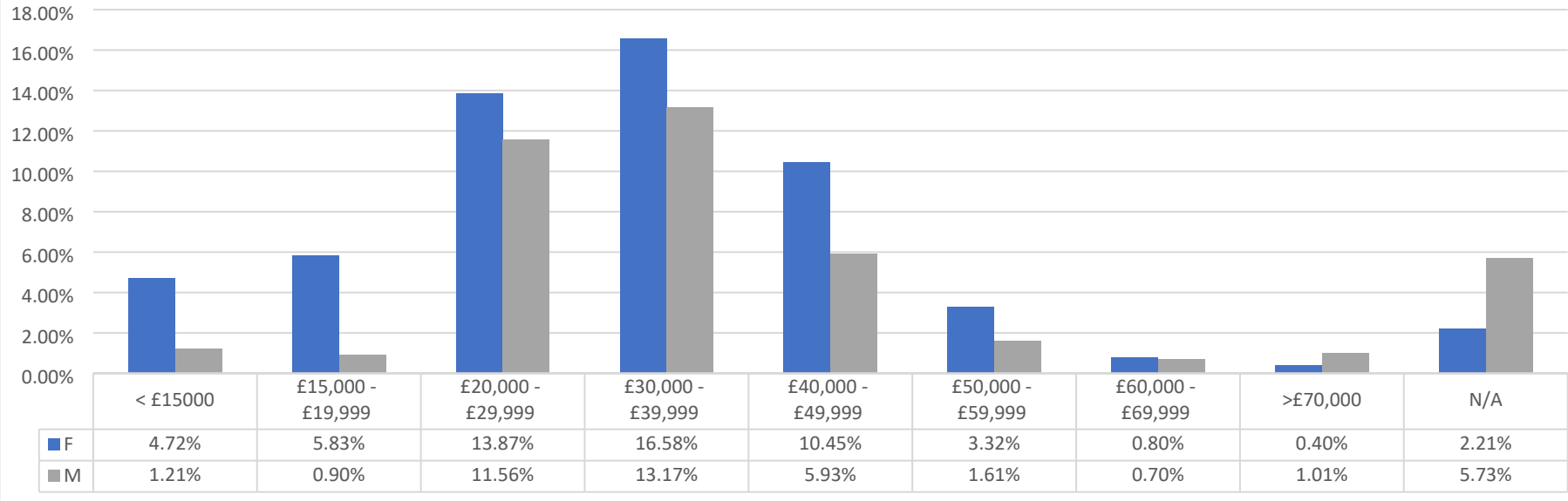
Gender Profile figures are for Council is at 31/12/2022.

Gender Profile for Starters for Council is from 01/01/2022 – 31/12/2022.

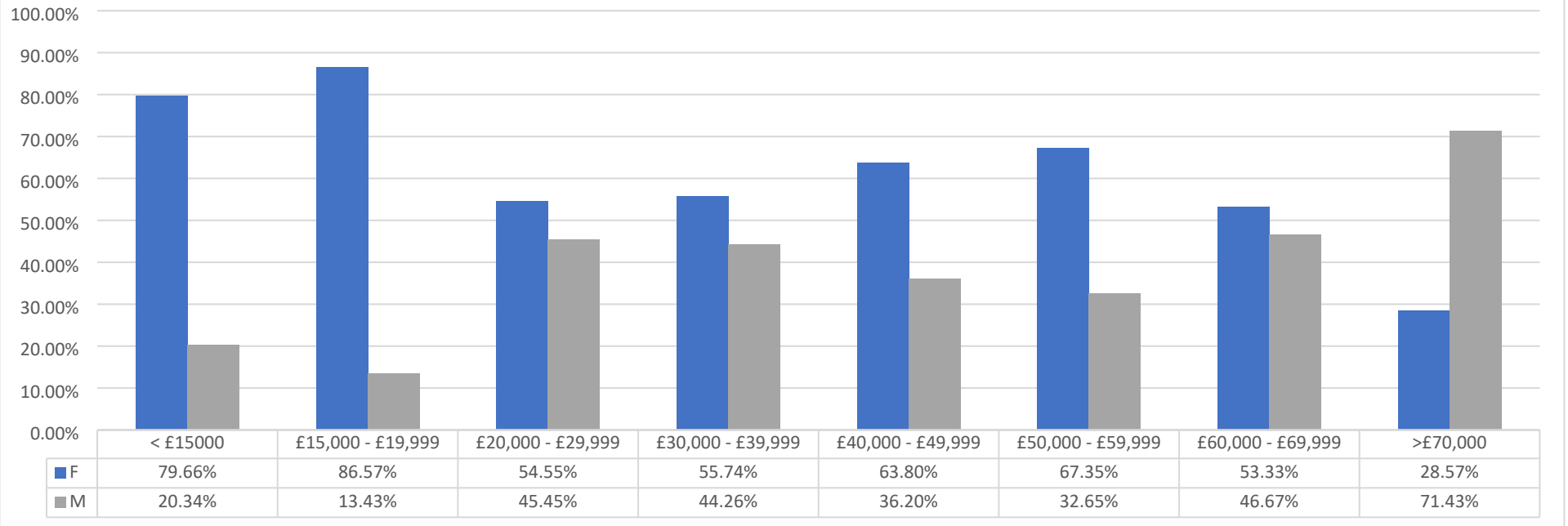
Gender Profile for Leavers for Council is from 01/01/2022 – 31/12/2022.

Source: Agresso Reports

Gender profile across salary bands as percentage of the workforce



Gender profile across salary bands as percentage of each band



Key Highlights (Gender)

- The council employs more women than men. This is consistent with the gender profile seen nationally across local government.
- Although women outnumber men in all pay bands up to £69,999 (FTE), there are disproportionately more women than men in the lowest pay bands, and more men than women in the most senior pay band (over £70,000 FTE).
- The proportion of women leavers is broadly proportionate with the overall proportion of women in the workforce. Conversely, the proportion of women joining the organisation in 2022 has been slightly lower.

Age Profile

Table 2. Age Profile

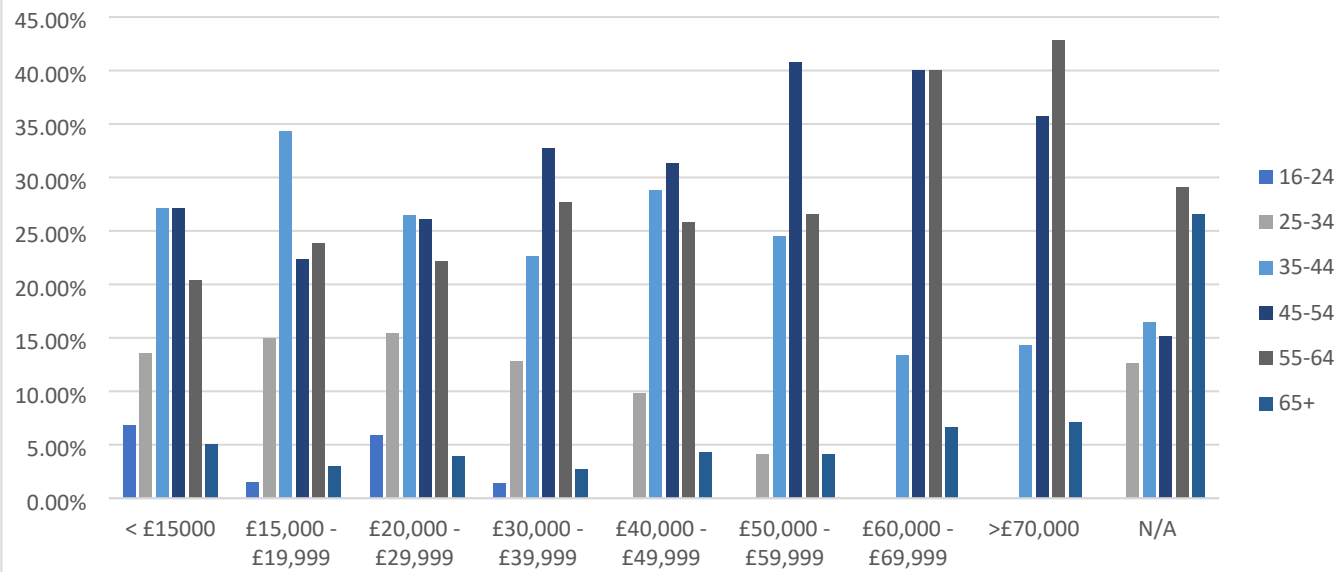
Age Profile Type	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 Plus	Grand Total
Age profile of the Council	2.41%	12.36%	25.03%	28.94%	25.73%	5.53%	100.00%
Age profile of starters	7.30%	13.87%	20.44%	29.93%	21.17%	7.30%	100.00%
Age profile of leavers	7.98%	22.09%	24.54%	14.11%	20.25%	11.04%	100.00%

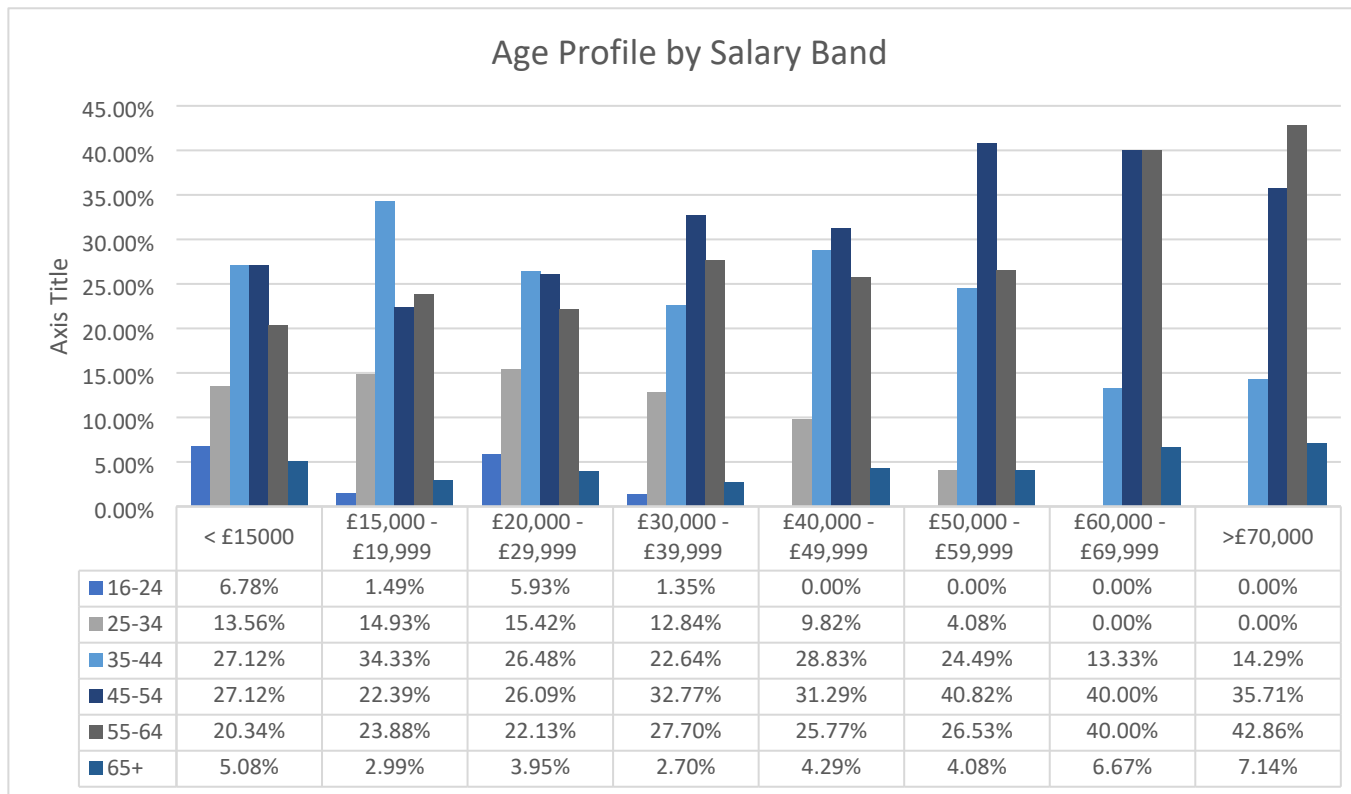
Age Profile figures are for Council is at 31/12/2022.

Age Profile for Starters for Council is from 01/01/2022 – 31/12/2022.

Age Profile for Leavers for Council is from 01/01/2022 – 31/12/2022.

Age Profile by across salary bands as percentage of the workforce





Key Highlights (Age)

- Almost 80% of the council's workforce is aged 35-64 years, with around 29 % of employees being in the 45-54 age category
- In 2022, nearly 50% of new starters were aged between 35-54 years.
- Around a quarter of all leavers in 2022 were aged 35-44 years, with around 11% of leavers being over 65 years of age.

Disability Profile

Table 3. Disability Profile

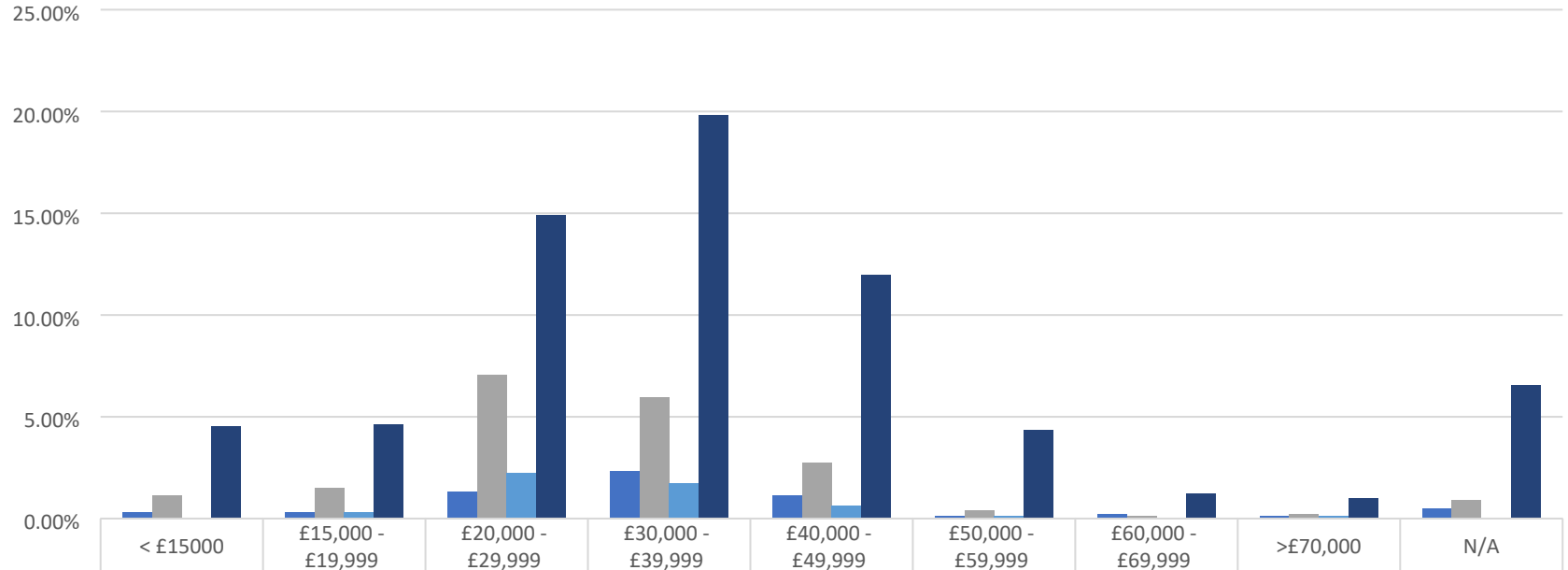
Disability Profile Type	Disabled	Non-disabled	Prefer not to say	Undisclosed	Grand Total
Disability profile of the Council	6.23%	19.90%	5.03%	68.84%	100.00%
Disability profile of starters	0.73%	7.30%	0.00%	91.97%	100.00%
Disability profile of leavers	6.75%	22.70%	2.45%	68.10%	100.00%

Disability Profile figures are for Council is at 31/12/2022.

Disability Profile for Starters for Council is from 01/01/2022 – 31/12/2022.

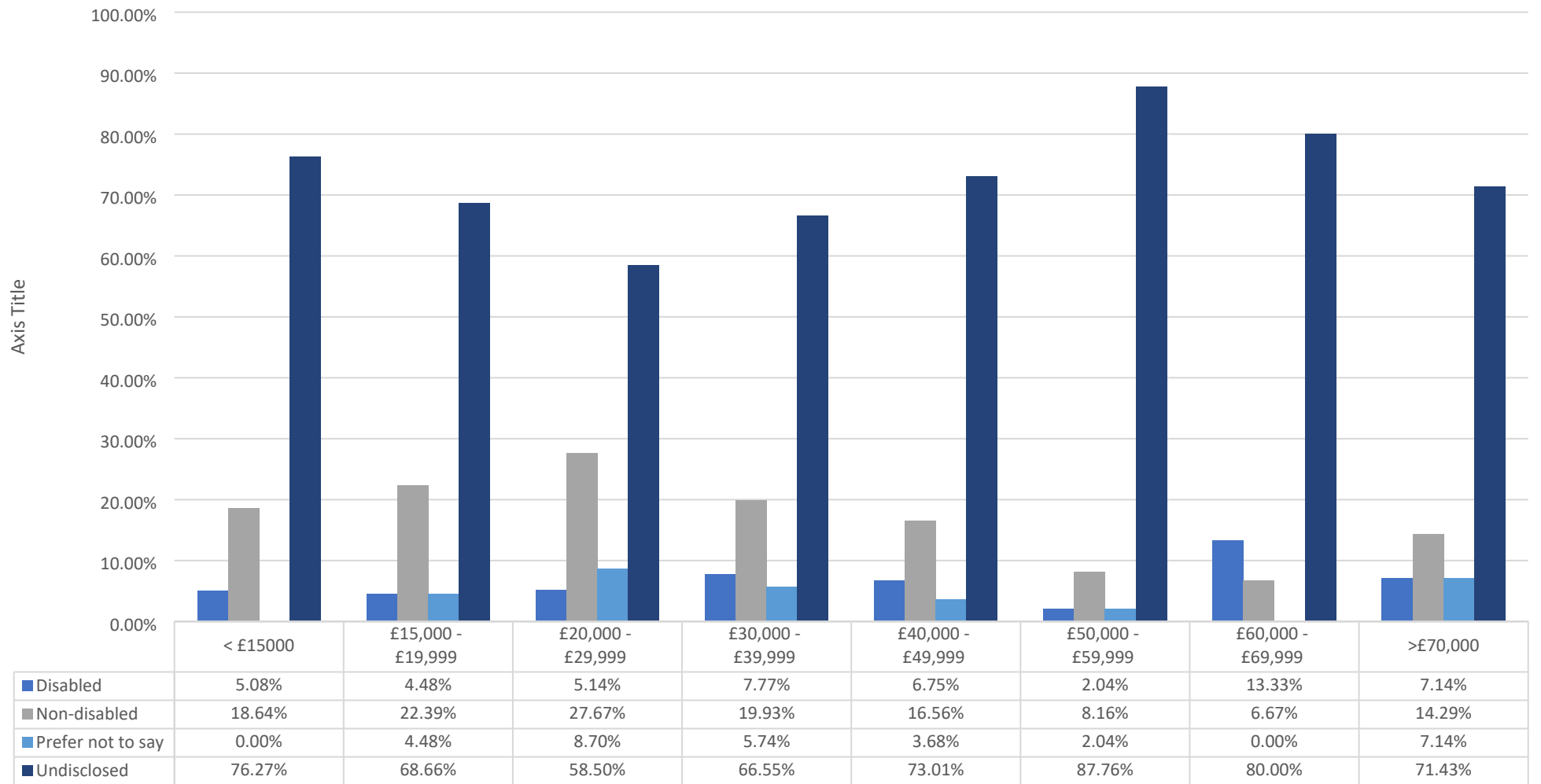
Disability Profile for Leavers for Council is from 01/01/2022 – 31/12/2022.

Disability profile across salary bands as percentage of the workforce



	< £15000	£15,000 - £19,999	£20,000 - £29,999	£30,000 - £39,999	£40,000 - £49,999	£50,000 - £59,999	£60,000 - £69,999	>£70,000	N/A
■ Disabled	0.30%	0.30%	1.31%	2.31%	1.11%	0.10%	0.20%	0.10%	0.50%
■ Non-disabled	1.11%	1.51%	7.04%	5.93%	2.71%	0.40%	0.10%	0.20%	0.90%
■ Prefer not to say	0.00%	0.30%	2.21%	1.71%	0.60%	0.10%	0.00%	0.10%	0.00%
■ Undisclosed	4.52%	4.62%	14.87%	19.80%	11.96%	4.32%	1.21%	1.01%	6.53%

Disability profile across salary bands as percentage of band



Key Highlights (disability)

- Nationally, disabled people face many barriers in employment and the employment rate of disabled people is significantly lower than that of non-disabled people. As a Disability Confident employer, the council is committed to identifying and removing these barriers and will continue to take action to improve how we recruit and retain disabled talent.
- In 2022, just over 6% of the workforce stated that they have a disability. However, almost 70% of employees had not disclosed their disability status, and it is accepted that the council needs to better understand the reasons behind this and encourage greater staff disclosure. It is also understood that disability may be acquired during employment and an employee's status may change and so more awareness around regularly updating this are required.
- Furthermore, 92% of new starters in 2022 have not declared whether they have a disability.
- The council has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to make sure employees with disabilities, or physical or mental health conditions, are not substantially disadvantaged when doing their jobs. However, the council must be aware of the disability and need for support to address any barriers experienced and therefore this will remain a key part of the ongoing work to encourage colleagues to provide their diversity data. An additional category in the HR system allows staff to input more detail on the nature of their disability. This information will be useful to review future analysis of the effectiveness of policies to support disabled employees, including reasonable adjustments.

Ethnicity Profile

Table 4. Ethnicity Profile

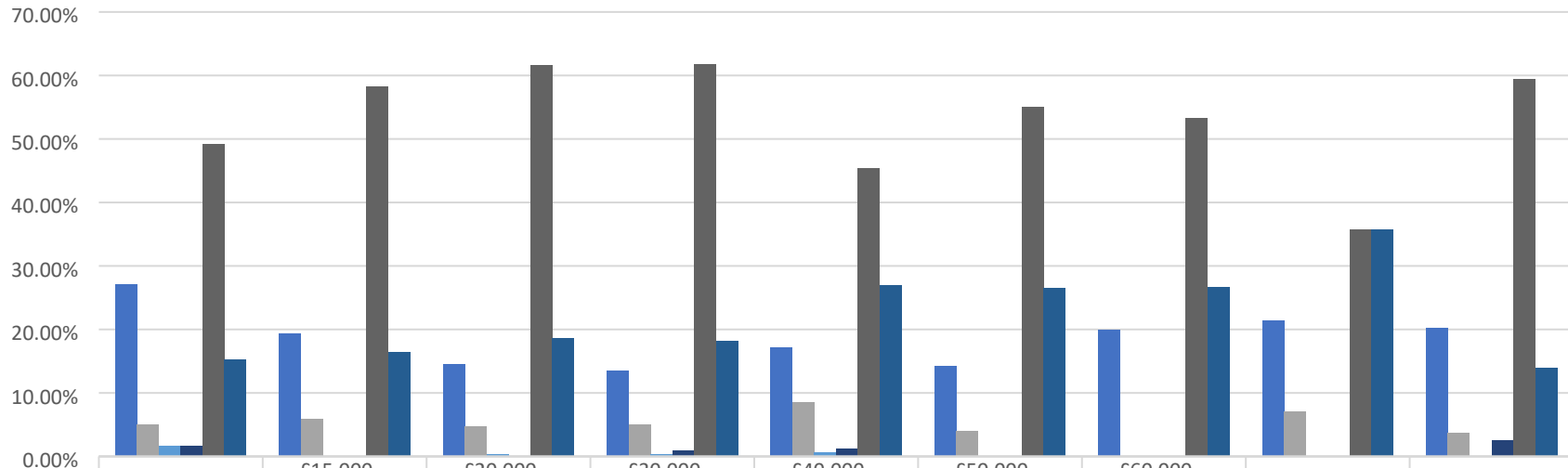
Ethnicity Profile Type	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Mixed	White	Chinese or Other ethnic Group	Undisclosed
Ethnicity profile of the Council	16.30%	5.42%	0.81%	19.94%	0.41%	57.12%
Ethnicity profile of starters	14.60%	3.65%	0.00%	10.22%	0.00%	71.53%
Ethnicity profile of leavers	15.34%	4.91%	2.45%	15.95%	0.00%	61.35%

Ethnicity Profile figures are for Council is at 31/12/2022.

Ethnicity Profile for Starters for Council is from 01/01/2022 – 31/12/2022.

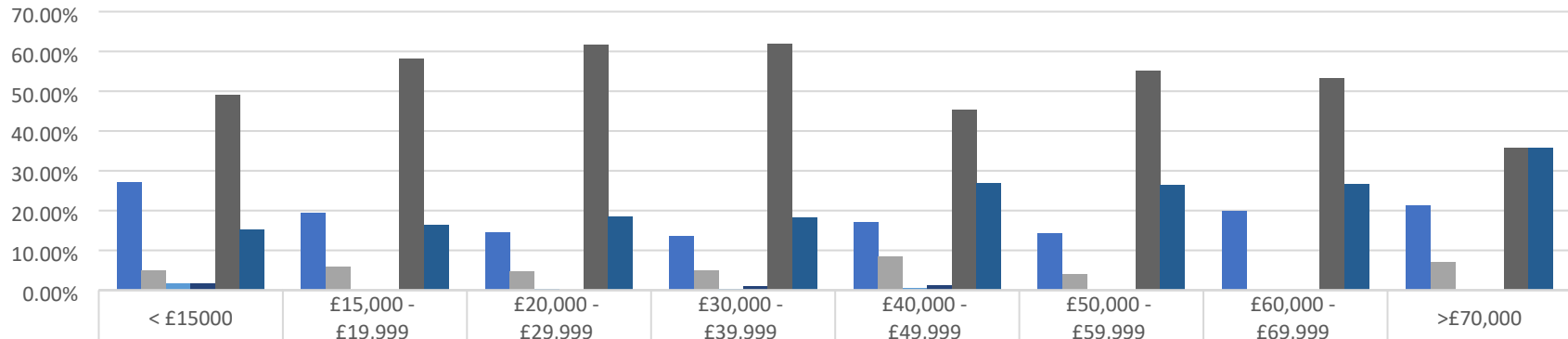
Ethnicity Profile for Leavers is from 01/01/2022 – 31/12/2022.

Ethnicity profile across salary band a percentage of workforce



	< £15000	£15,000 - £19,999	£20,000 - £29,999	£30,000 - £39,999	£40,000 - £49,999	£50,000 - £59,999	£60,000 - £69,999	>£70,000	N/A
■ Asian or Asian British	27.12%	19.40%	14.62%	13.51%	17.18%	14.29%	20.00%	21.43%	20.25%
■ Black or Black British	5.08%	5.97%	4.74%	5.07%	8.59%	4.08%	0.00%	7.14%	3.80%
■ Chinese or Other ethnic Group	1.69%	0.00%	0.40%	0.34%	0.61%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
■ Mixed	1.69%	0.00%	0.00%	1.01%	1.23%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.53%
■ Undisclosed	49.15%	58.21%	61.66%	61.82%	45.40%	55.10%	53.33%	35.71%	59.49%
■ White	15.25%	16.42%	18.58%	18.24%	26.99%	26.53%	26.67%	35.71%	13.92%

Ethnicity profile across salary bands as percentage of band



■ Asian or Asian British	27.12%	19.40%	14.62%	13.51%	17.18%	14.29%	20.00%	21.43%
■ Black or Black British	5.08%	5.97%	4.74%	5.07%	8.59%	4.08%	0.00%	7.14%
■ Chinese or Other ethnic Group	1.69%	0.00%	0.40%	0.34%	0.61%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
■ Mixed	1.69%	0.00%	0.00%	1.01%	1.23%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
■ Undisclosed	49.15%	58.21%	61.66%	61.82%	45.40%	55.10%	53.33%	35.71%
■ White	15.25%	16.42%	18.58%	18.24%	26.99%	26.53%	26.67%	35.71%

Key Highlights (ethnicity)

- The current levels of non-disclosure of ethnicity mean that it is difficult to provide any significant analysis in this area. Over 50% of staff have not declared a broad ethnic group category. Around 70% of new starters in 2022 had not disclosed this.
- The council recognises that it needs to improve on the declaration rates of employees' ethnicity. This is partly due to how ethnicity data is currently categorised on the Agresso HR system but also ensuring that employees are aware of how to update this themselves and are comfortable doing so
- The HR system does record a detailed ethnicity/nationality grouping and work is being done to reconcile this with broader ethnic groups. The government has recently published guidance on how to use ethnicity groupings data for analysis of ethnicity pay gaps. It acknowledges that this is much more complex than analysing gender pay gaps and employers may have to make decisions about how to combine different ethnic groups to ensure their results are reliable and statistically sound and to protect confidentiality.

Supporting Equality and Diversity in the Workplace

Corporate Buildings

The council's Head Office, Observatory House, is fully accessible and includes a multi-faith prayer/quiet room and both gender neutral and separate sex toilet facilities on each floor.

Equality Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are undertaken to support our decision-making and are published with the relevant reports on the council website. Significant decisions relating to the workforce will be reported to the Employment and Appeals Committee. An EIA is a systematic check against the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty with regard to different equality groups. EIAs help us to understand how a decision might impact different people and enables us take action to ensure that we meet needs and promote equality.

When assessing the equality implications of decisions affecting our workforce, EIAs are carried out whenever there is a major organisational restructure that affects employees as set out in the Organisational Change policy, and to support policy formulation and review.

Inclusive Workforce Policies

HR policies are subject to an equality impact assessment (EIA) to ensure that they are fair and accessible to all staff and consider the needs of all equality characteristics. The council has recently commenced a programme of review and update of its policies and has established Policy Review Panels, which include representatives from the Staff Network Groups (see below) to provide wider staff consultation generally, and comment on specific equalities issues as necessary

The revised *Organisational Change Policy and Procedure* requires managers to conduct an EIA at beginning of any proposed staffing change, considering any equalities concerns raised through the consultation period, with a final EIA being completed at the conclusion of the process.

The council has a range of *Family Friendly and Leave Policies*, including flexible and agile/hybrid working and support for those with caring, volunteering and fostering responsibilities. The council also offers enhanced maternity and adoption pay.

Recent policy development has included a fully updated *Dignity at Work Code of Conduct* (dealing specifically with discriminatory or offensive behaviours and how to raise concerns both formally and informally), *Policy and Guidance to Support Trans Employees* and *Guidance on Menopause in the Workplace*. A dedicated intranet page has been built with additional information and resources to raise awareness of menopause and its impact on employees.

Wellbeing and Mental Health

The council offers all employees access to a free and confidential 24-hour Employee Assistance Programme to support wellbeing both in and out of the workplace.

The council has recently developed a *Managing Stress at Work Code of Practice* to support managers with identifying and supporting staff suffering from workplace stress.

Learning & Development

The council provides a range of learning opportunities including mandatory training on Equality in the Workplace. All employees have access to an extensive on-line e-learning catalogue as well as face to face courses. The Diversity and Inclusion Lead, based in Human Resources, is available to support managers with ad hoc training as required and can provide expert advice on inclusion matters.

Slough Borough Council has taken on 39 Apprentices in the last financial year and works with schools to promote and encourage use of apprentices.

Recruitment & Retention

The council has a policy of advertising all vacancies internally for 2 weeks before going out to external advert (exceptions are made for positions where there is a shortage of skills internally)

All roles are advertised on our website, and we have adapted our application process to ensure it is simpler and more accessible for candidates.

The council is a Disability Confident employer and offers a guaranteed Interview Scheme for any candidate who declares a disability and meets the essential criteria of the role.

The council proactively works with applicants and employees to support Reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities.

Applicants are asked to submit equalities information with their application (although this is entirely voluntary). This is removed from the application prior to any shortlisting and is collected entirely for monitoring purposes

All job advertisements include the strapline “We Value Diversity” and that we encourage application from under-represented groups.

The council is currently updating its Recruitment Policy and Procedures and further equalities data on applicants and recruitment will be published as soon as it is available.

Staff Networks

The council is committed to promoting dialogue and engagement with diverse staff groups and currently has the following networks in place:

R.E.A.C.H (Race Equality and Celebrating Heritage) Network:

Established in 2021, following an all-staff survey into race equality and staff support, R.E.A.C.H Network is an employee-led resource group for any employee who has an interest in promoting race equality in the workplace, and/or self-identifies their ethnicity as being part of a minority group.

The network exists to

- To support anyone who self-identifies their ethnicity as being part of a minority group.
- To enable ethnic minority staff to feel that they are part of and have a vital role to play within the Council.
- To discuss issues around race equality in the workplace, particularly those that affect ethnic minority staff with key decision makers within the Council.
- To assist in formulating new and reviewing existing policies and procedures.
- To assist the SBC in meeting its statutory obligations regarding its duty under the Equality Act 2010.
- To assist in the identification of training needs, advise on the provision of courses to meet those needs, and on the content of courses with equality and diversity implications as they relate to ethnic minority staff.
- To provide an arena for staff to raise their concerns and participate in equalities related discussions, in a safe and confidential environment.
- To provide an opportunity for staff to update each other on local and national policy and developments.
- To work alongside other employee resource groups to promote equality of opportunity and diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Key work for 2022/3 has included:

- Review of HR policies and procedures, including Dignity at Work and Grievance
- Work with HR to improve ways of recording ethnicity on the HR System and encourage staff to self – declare
- Raised profile of race equality issues through CLT (Corporate Leadership Team) sponsorship
- Organised an in-person staff event to celebrate Black History Month and celebrate staff diversity
- Held bi-monthly meetings for staff

REACH's priority areas for this year include:

- Improvement of equality data insights to improve awareness of workforce policy and practice impacts
- Improvement of equality, diversity, and inclusion training offer
- Continued celebration of cultural events
- Support for the development of mentorship programme

SBC Women's Network

The SBC Women's Network was established in 2018. This was the first year of statutory gender pay gap reporting, and the network was formed in response to this as part of an action plan to improve gender equality.

The network exists to:

- Raise awareness around gender and diversity issues
- Work collectively to improve policies and institutional practices that affect women in the workplace
- Offer employees at all levels in the organisation, the opportunity to meet informally and discuss issues in the workplace that matter to them
- Provide peer –based support, sharing experience and knowledge in a confidential “safe space”
- Provide consultation and review of HR policies and particularly support the development of policies that support gender equality in the SBC workplace

Key work for 2022/3 has included:

- HR policy review, including Dignity at Work and Grievance
- Support to develop the council's first Menopause Guidance and information on intranet
- Raising awareness of women's personal safety
- Events to celebrate International Women's Day and provide advice on Wellbeing, Cost of Living Crisis, and Pensions

The Women's Network's priorities for 2023 include

- Supporting the establishment of a “menopause café”, to promote better awareness around menopause symptoms and offer opportunities for peer-led discussion and support
- Support the development of a “carers café”
- Review data on women’s representation in the organisation and explore barriers to progression
- Develop qualitative information on women’s experiences in the organisation through focus groups and staff survey.

Employees with Disabilities Forum

This network exists to:

Ensure any disabled employee can feel supported in the workplace and have a chance to share their experiences and views.

- Promote greater awareness of how disability affects both our colleagues and residents.
- Work together to ensure employment and services are fair and accessible.

Key work has included:

- Support for individuals around reasonable adjustments and return to the office
- Review of HR policies and procedures
- Consultation on accessibility of services and the workplace

The Employees with Disabilities Forum's focus areas for 2023

The focus areas for 2023 are to re-launch the Forum and increase membership (following the departure of several long-standing members).

It is recognised that staff declaration rates on disability remain low, with many employees having not disclosed this on the employee self-service HR system. The Forum seeks to raise awareness of the importance of doing this, to ensure that disabled employees are fully supported in the workplace.

In 2023, as well as pursuing their own priorities the networks aim to work jointly, to improve diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Conclusion

The council is committed to being an inclusive employer and seeks to place employees at the centre of its recovery process. Data analysis is the starting point for evidence –based interventions to improve diversity and inclusion across the organisation, and ensure HR policies and processes are fair and accessible to all employees. This report will be updated as further HR and workforce data becomes available and further actions to support workforce –related equality objectives are agreed.

HR and Workforce data is to be developed at both a strategic and operational level with a robust training plan implementation announced (March 2023). The development will centre around understanding data using analysts with in-house knowledge and advanced reporting features. The production of a comprehensive suite of reports that are linked to equalities is in testing to enable regular reporting on progress.