

Subject:	Annual Equality Workforce Profile 2023/2024	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Date:	09/09/2024
Report of:	Head of People and Policy	Portfolio Holder:	Environment and Corporate Services
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 1.1 That Overview and Scrutiny considers the content of the Council's Annual Equality Workforce Profile for 2023/24 attached at Appendix 1, and agree any specific actions or issues that need to be taken forward arising from the content of the report.
- 1.2 That Overview and Scrutiny continues to monitor the Council's progress on equality and sufficient publication of equality information in line with current legislative and best practice requirements to ensure that the Council is operating fairly and equitably.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Annual Equality Workforce Profile covers April 2023 to March 2024.
- The report provides an annual summary of the profile of the workforce by its protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010 compared where possible to the 2021 Census (not all the information is currently available on the ONS website from the 2021 Census)

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Rossendale Borough Council is committed to ensuring that it is operating fairly and equitably in both its employment practices and service delivery, in line with, current legislation and codes of practice.
- 3.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council is to publish equality information on at least an annual basis.
- 3.3 The Councils Equality Policy was reviewed in 2021 and outlines how equality, diversity and inclusion for all staff and communities in Rossendale will be supported.

4. DETAILS

- 4.1 The Annual Equality Workforce Profile 2023-24 set out in Appendix 1 presents the Council's key workforce equality data.

Elected Member monitoring information is not included in this report, however it is available from Member Services on request.

4.2 Due to the Council's size, much of the data we actively collect in relation to our workforce relates to small numbers of people. The data we collect is monitored, wherever possible, against the Rossendale profile, this is based on the 2021 Census, not all 2021 Census information has been published to the ONS website. However, the Council is committed to work towards achieving a workforce that reflects the Rossendale profile and develop an organisation that champions a diverse workforce.

Although Equality Impact Assessments are not a legal requirement, the Council has embedded an Equality Impact Assessment process to assess the impact of our policies, practices and decision making on equality. Using good quality information and analysis can help identify practical steps to mitigate or eliminate any negative impacts or discrimination within the Council's policy development and decision making processes.

The Council has undertaken a number of public consultation exercises on community base projects including the Haslingden Market consultation.

Equality Impact Assessments are published with the relevant Council or Committee reports.

From 2017, any organisation that employs 250 or more staff must publish and report specific figures about their gender pay gap. The Council do not meet the requirements to report the gender pay gap to HMRC. However, the Council can report it does not have a gender pay gap.

4.3 The Council's Equality Policy has been reviewed this year as part of the policy periodic review process and it is proposed the Council's equality objectives are:

- To enhance understanding of and promote equality and diversity at all levels within the Council.
- To have a diverse workforce that aims to be representative of the borough and to ensure that all staff are treated fairly.
- To assess, consult and evaluate the equality impact of our policies and decisions and to change where reasonably possible what we do to mitigate or eliminate any inequality.
- To ensure that our staff and Councillors engage and communicate with members of the community in an accessible and inclusive way.

4.4 The Council is committed to continue to work with our partners, residents, customers and communities to promote equality, diversity and inclusion, and to tackle discrimination and harassment regarding our employees, residents and service users in all operations of the organisation and services it provides.

5. RISK

5.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

Non-compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and associated Equality Duties. This includes potential legal challenge and possible associated financial and reputational costs if equality duties are not complied with.

Possible investigation by the Equality and Human Rights Commission if equality information published is not considered sufficient.

6. FINANCE

6.1 As noted in the report, the progress made in this area assists the Council in mitigating the risk of legal challenge and therefore the associated financial risks.

7. LEGAL

7.1 No additional comments to be made in relation to this report.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard in the exercising of its functions in relation to the three aims of the Equality Duty, for the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- Advanced equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

8.2 The amount of regard that is “due” is set out in the Act and will depend on the circumstances of the case. Under the general equality duty there is a requirement to engage with people with protected characteristics and to have an adequate evidence base for Council decision-making. The duty to inform, consult or involve requires that the Council must involve communities and those directly affected at the most appropriate and proportionate level in ‘routine functions, in addition to one-off decisions.’ The Council is required to consult representatives of a wide range of local people; this should include local voluntary and community organisations and small businesses in such consultation.

8.3 Consultation has been undertaken with the Council’s Corporate Management Team, Portfolio Holder and Member Equalities Champion in relation to Annual Equality Workforce Profile 2023/24.

9.0 REASON FOR DECISION

9.1 The Council continues to ensure it is working to achieve positive outcomes for its communities and has maintained strong and clear leadership on the importance of equality as a core part of Council business, reflected in its the decision making processes, progress and activity across the Council.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Annual Equality Workforce Profile 2023/24	Attached as Appendix 1



Annual Equality Workforce Profile

2023-24



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Responsible Service	People and Policy	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Head of People and Policy	Date Agreed/Agreed At	
Date last Amended	July 2024	Due for Review	July 2025

Rossendale Borough Council is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion to eliminate unlawful discrimination. To support this other formats of this document are available upon request. Please contact PeopleandPolicy@rossendalebc.gov.uk.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Rossendale Borough Council is committed to developing an inclusive culture where all individuals are respected and treated fairly, where diversity is celebrated and everyone regardless of background can reach their full potential.

2. The Equality Act 2010

- 2.1 The Equality Act 2010 states that everyone has the right to be treated fairly and equally.
- 2.2 The Act places a general equality duty on all public sector organisations to have due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- 2.3 The equality duty is supported by two main specific duties which require public bodies to:
- Set and publish equality objectives at least every four years
 - Publish equality information at least annually.
- 2.4 **Protected Characteristics (or protected groups)**

The Council aims to ensure that no one receives less favourable treatment for reasons relating to all recognised protected characteristics covered by the Act.

The protected characteristics covered by the Act are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex (gender)
- Sexual Orientation

2.5 Equality Impact Assessment

The Public Sector Equality Duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities to have due regard to a number of equality considerations when exercising their functions.

An equality impact assessment is an evidence-based approach designed to help organisations ensure that their policies, practices, events and decision-making processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups from participation.

- 2.3 The Council recognises its statutory equality duties under legislation in terms of employment and service provision and is committed to meet them though its objectives set out in the Council's Equality Policy 2021:
- To enhance understanding of and promote equality and diversity at all levels within the Council.
 - To have a diverse workforce that aims to be representative of the borough and to ensure that all staff are treated fairly.
 - To assess, consult and evaluate the equality impact of our policies and decisions and to change where reasonably possible what we do to mitigate or eliminate any inequality.
 - To ensure that our staff and councillors engage and communicate with members of the community in an accessible and inclusive way.
 - To continue working with our partners, where appropriate, to reduce inequality in all of our communities.

3. Annual Equality Workforce Profile 2023-24

- 3.1 All public sector employers, including local authorities, have a statutory duty under the Act to publish the equality profile data it holds for its directly employed workforce at least annually to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 3.2 This data underpins the Council's commitment to ensuring that its employment practices are free from discrimination and fulfil the core statutory duty placed on all public sector employers.
- 3.3 The workforce equality profile is based on headcount of the workforce as at 31st March 2024. Elected Member monitoring information is not included in this report, if required the information is available from Member Services.
- 3.4 The Council is committed to work towards achieving a workforce that reflects the community profile and develop an organisation that champions a diverse workforce.
- 3.5 This annual report provides information about the composition of the workforce, the people we have recruited, the use of discipline, grievance and other procedures and information about employees who leave the authority.
- 3.6 Census figures have been used for comparison where they have been available on the Office for National Statistics website.

4. Population

- 4.1 In Rossendale, the population size has increased by 4.1%, from around 68,000 in 2011 to 70,800 in 2021. This is lower than the overall increase for England (6.6%), where the population grew by nearly 3.5 million to 56,489,800.
- 4.2 Analysis of our Workforce Profile data showed that 53% of staff live in the borough, 32% in BB4 postcode and 21% in OL13 postcode areas.

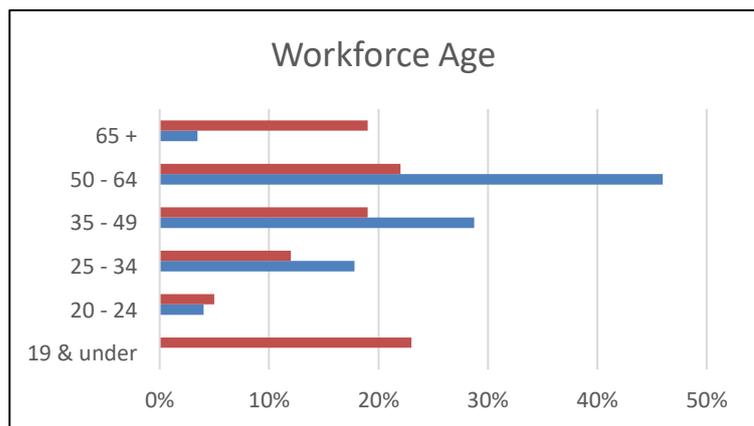
5. Workforce Profile

5.1 At 31st March 2024 the establishment was made up of 176.9 FTE posts, 14 of which were vacant. The Council employed 174 staff (162.9 full time equivalent). The headcount of 174 was made up of 151 full time, 20 part time employees and 3 casual employees. 154 employees are employed on permanent contracts, 17 employees are employed on temporary contracts and 3 employees are employed on a casual basis.

5.2 Employees are requested to inform People and Policy if any of their monitoring details change, however, updating details is voluntary so the information is not always accurate.

5.3 Age

	RBC	Rossendale
19 & under	0%	23%
20 - 24	4%	5%
25 - 34	18%	12%
35 - 49	29%	19%
50 - 64	46%	22%
65 +	3%	19%



As at 31st March 2024 the largest age group employed by the Council was staff aged 50 to 64 at 46%, the 2021 Census confirms that the largest working age group within the borough is 50 to 64 years. Compared to Council figures for 2022-23 the percentage of staff employed 50+ has increased from 47% to 49% and staff employed aged 40+ has increased from 68% to 78%.

A total of 36% of the workforce are aged 55 or over. As more of the workforce moves into the 55 and over age range there is an increased importance on ensuring that in addition to retention initiatives to retain older workers, robust succession planning and management development training is embedded into service planning to ensure business continuity and effective managers for the future. Development training provided in 23/24 included level 5 coaching qualification for 6 managers and the rising stars development programme for 7 internal staff.

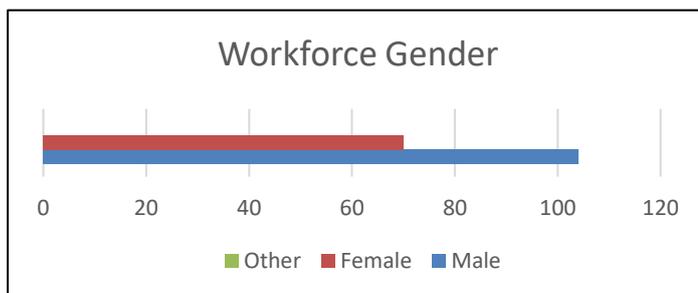
The percentage of staff aged 19 to 24 has decreased from 5% to 4%. To address this, the Council have introduced a number of apprenticeship roles to attract and develop a younger workforce. Vacant roles are reviewed on an ongoing basis to determine if they are suitable for an apprenticeship opportunity, especially those posts which are difficult to recruit to.

5.4 Gender

During the period 2023-24 the Council employed 60% males and 40% females indicating only a slight change from figures in the 2022-23 report. The higher percentage of males can be attributed to a predominantly male workforce within Operational Services which accounts for 40% of the workforce.

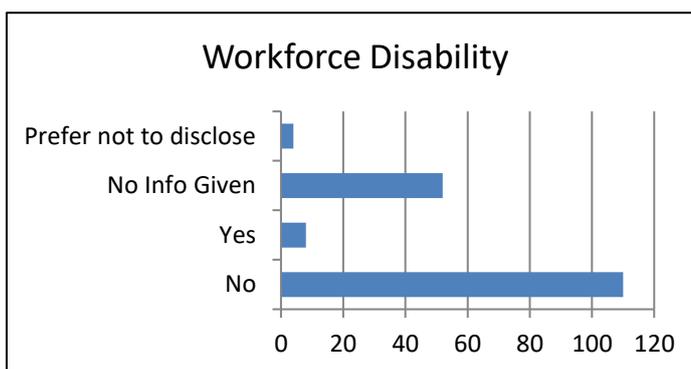
There were no members of staff identifying as other.

	No.	%
Male	104	60%
Female	70	40%
Other	0	0%
	174	100%



5.5 Disability

	No.	%
No	110	63%
Yes	8	5%
No Info Given	52	30%
Prefer not to disclose	4	2%
	174	100%



The data shows that 8 employees have declared a disability. In 2018 the Council gained the Disability Confident Employer (Level 2) accreditation by committing to inclusive and accessible recruitment this included, offering an interview to applicants with a disability if they meet the minimum criteria for the role. The Council was re-awarded the accreditation in February 2022.

We will continue to support existing employees who have or develop a disability by providing reasonable adjustments, referrals to Occupational Health and accessing external support such as Access to Work (a government scheme which can contribute to the costs of any extra support required to help employees stay in work) and Able Futures (a government funded scheme which offers a 9 month programme of mental health support to help employees stay in work).

5.6 Gender Reassignment (Employees living as birth gender)

	No.	%
Yes	152	87%
No	0	0%
Prefer not to disclose	12	7%
Info not given	10	6%
	174	100%



5.7 Marriage and Civil Partnership

The Council does not record data on marriage and civil partnership relating to the workforce.

5.8 Pregnancy and Maternity

During the period 2023-24 four members of staff took maternity leave. As at 31st March 2024 two have returned back to work and two are still on maternity leave.

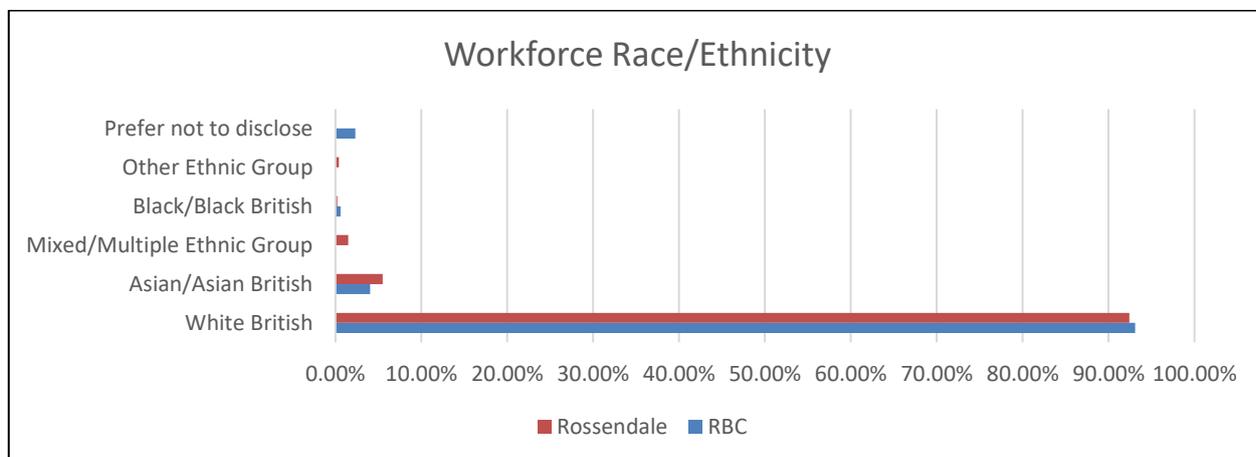
The Council aims to positively support employees during their maternity leave and when they return to work. We understand the importance of supporting employees to achieve a successful work life balance and are committed to exploring flexible working options.

5.9 Race and Ethnicity

The percentage of White British was 93.1% and non-white minorities in employment overall at RBC for 2023-24 was 4.59%. The figure of 4.59% represents 8 members of staff. According to the 2021 Census the population in Rossendale indicates that 6% of Rossendale's total population were from minority ethnic communities.

We will continue to work with recruiting managers to ensure fair and inclusive interview practices across the Council and provide Equality Awareness training to all staff. We will review our recruitment practices on an ongoing basis to ensure that our selection processes are equitable for all and do not create any barriers for applicants.

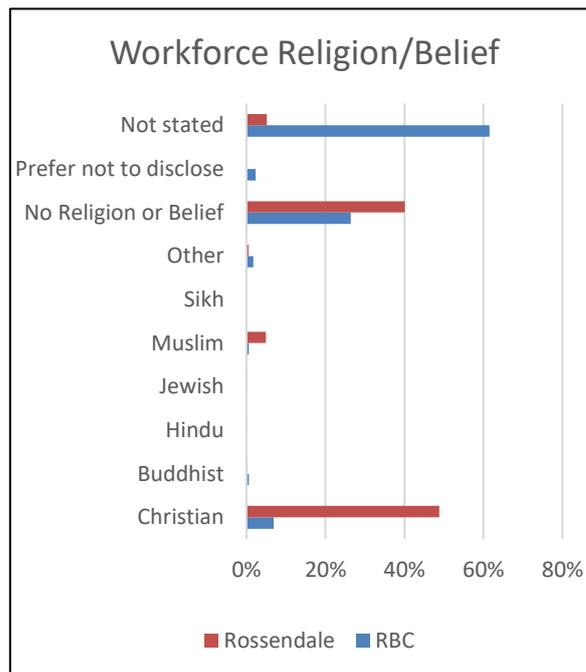
	RBC	Rossendale
White British	93.10%	92.40%
Asian/Asian British	4.02%	5.50%
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group	0.00%	1.50%
Black/Black British	0.57%	0.20%
Other Ethnic Group	0.00%	0.40%
Prefer not to disclose	2.30%	0.00%
Totals	100%	100%



5.10 Religion and Belief

Data as at 31st March 2024 is shown in the table below, this has been compared to the figures of the Rossendale community (Census 2021).

	RBC	Rossendale
Christian	6.90%	48.80%
Buddhist	0.57%	0.30%
Hindu	0.00%	0.10%
Jewish	0.00%	0.10%
Muslim	0.57%	4.90%
Sikh	0.00%	0.00%
Other	1.72%	0.50%
No Religion or Belief	26.44%	40.10%
Prefer not to disclose	2.30%	0.00%
Not stated	61.49%	5.20%
	100%	100%



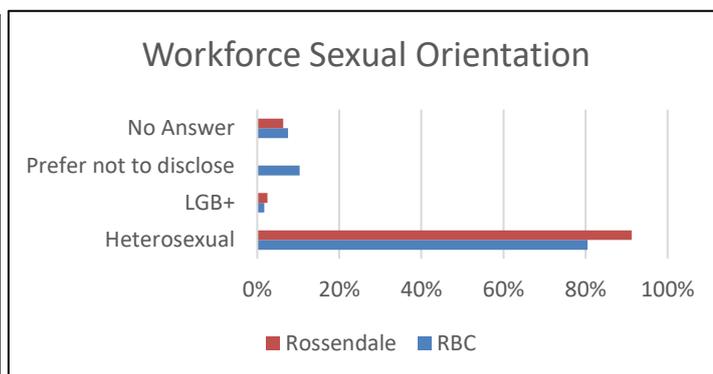
The Council is committed to the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of anti-Semitism.

The Council supports people of all different religion and beliefs, and promotes the use of a room for prayer. We also encourage and support flexible working options during religious observance and festivals.

5.11 Sexual Orientation

Data as at 31st March 2024 show the following information on sexual orientation.

	RBC	Rossendale
Heterosexual	80%	91%
LGB+	2%	3%
Prefer not to disclose	10%	0%
No Answer	7%	6%
	100%	100%



The lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or sometimes questioning), and others community (LGBTQ+) were officially recognised in the 2021 Census for the first time in its 220 year history. The 2021 Census shows that in Rossendale 3% of people over the age of 16 identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGB+).

5.12 Gender Pay Gap Reporting

From 2017, any organisation that has 250 or more employees must publish and report specific figures about their gender pay gap.

The gender pay gap is the difference between the average earnings of men and women, expressed relative to men's earnings.

The Council do not meet the requirements to report the gender pay gap to HMRC however for the purpose of this report we have calculated as below:

Mean male hourly rate of pay £16.26

Mean female hourly rate of pay £17.18

Overall mean hourly rate of pay £16.63

The data shows that the mean female hourly rate is actually higher than the mean male hourly rate of pay. Accordingly to the ONS survey in 2023, the gender pay gap stood at 7.7%, our figures show that the mean female hourly rate is 5.6% higher than the mean male hourly rate of pay.

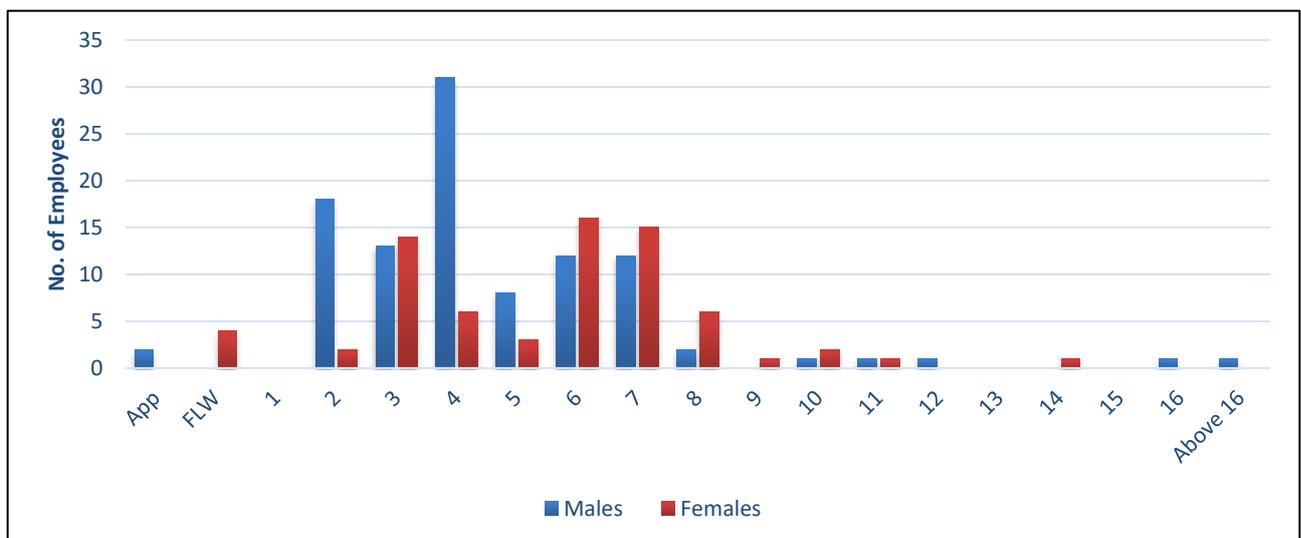
[Gender pay gap in the UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

5.13 Pay

Comparison of the distribution of male and female employees at each salary grade shows that men are highly over represented at grades 2 and 4. The roles of staff paid at Grade 2 and 4 are predominantly male orientated roles, such as Waste Operative and LGV Driver.

6. Distribution of male and female employees at each salary grade

6.1



6.2 The Council is committed to paying a Real Living Wage because we believe that staff deserve a wage that meets their everyday needs and is in line with the cost of living. The Living Wage Rate is reviewed every year and is higher than the statutory National Minimum Wage and the National Living Wage.

7. Workforce Disciplinary and Grievance Cases

7.1 The following tables show equality monitoring of any employee disciplinary and grievance cases that have been managed under the formal process of the Disciplinary Policy, Grievance Policy and Dignity at Work Incorporating Bullying and Harassment Policy.

7.2 Age

	No.
16-18	
19-24	
25-39	1
40-49	
50-59	
60+	1
	2

7.3 Gender

	Disciplinary	Harassment	Grievance
Male	2		
Female			
	2		

7.4 Disability

	Disciplinary	Harassment	Grievance
Disabled			
Not Disabled	2		
	2		

7.5 Race and Ethnicity

	Disciplinary	Harassment	Grievance
White	2		
Non-white Minorities			
	2		

7.6 Religion and Belief

	No.
No belief	
Prefer not to disclose	2
	2

7.7 Sexual Orientation

	No.
Heterosexual	
Prefer not to disclose	2
	2

7.8 We will continue to provide support to managers to ensure that all employees are treated fairly and in line with existing policies that support the Councils values.

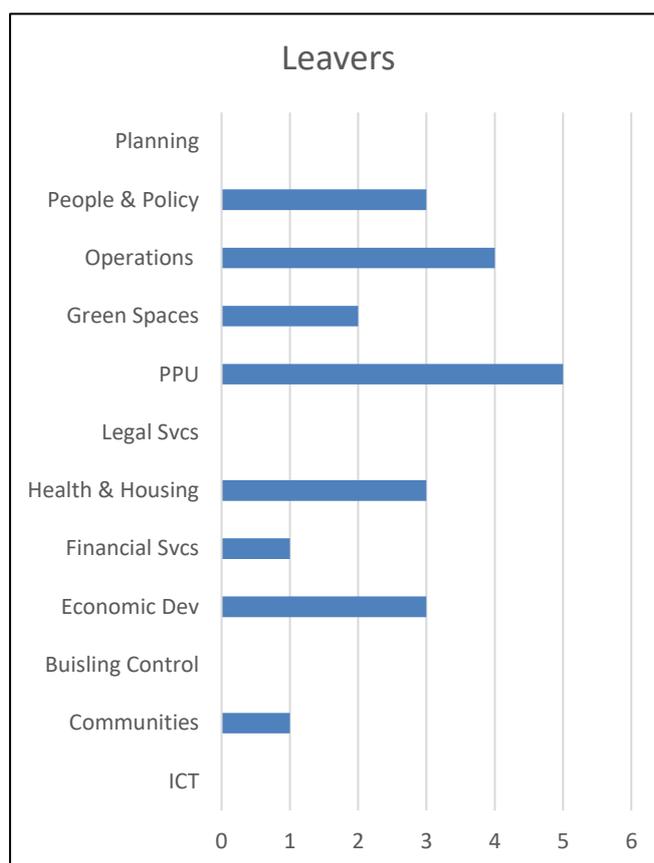
7.9 Training will be provided periodically for Managers on dealing with disciplinary and grievance matters.

8. Leaving the Council

8.1 Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) advises the average national turnover percentage to be 15%. The Council's staff turnover for 2023-24 was 12.87% with 22 leavers overall.

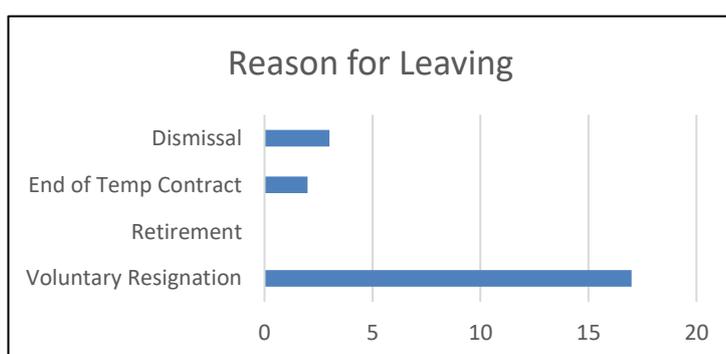
The following table breaks down the leavers by service.

Service	No. of Leavers
Chief Executive	0
ICT	0
Communities	1
Buisling Control	0
Economic Dev	3
Financial Svcs	1
Health & Housing	3
Legal Svcs	0
PPU	5
Green Spaces	2
Operations	4
People & Policy	3
Planning	0
	22



8.2 A total of 77% of leavers left or retired voluntarily from the Council in 2023-24.

Reason For Leaving	No.
Voluntary Resignation	17
Retirement	0
End of Temp Contract	2
Dismissal	3
	22



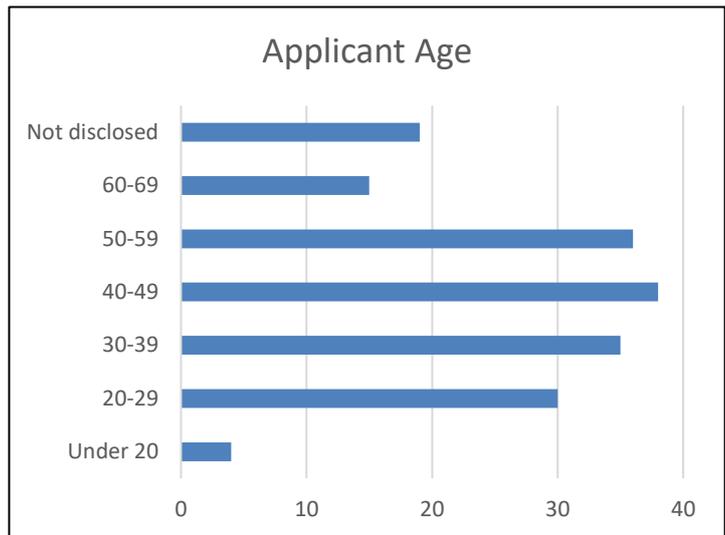
8.3 The exit interview process has been reviewed in July 2023 and a member of Policy & Performance now meets with employees who leave to assist in identifying any key problems or trends which need to be addressed to help retain the workforce.

9. Job Applicants Profile

9.1 As part of the recruitment process equality monitoring of applicants is undertaken. It is not compulsory for applicants to disclose this information.

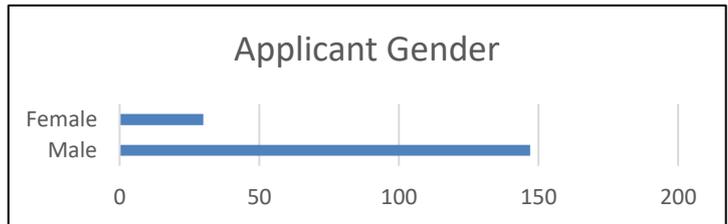
9.2 Age

	No.	%
Under 20	4	2%
20-29	30	17%
30-39	35	20%
40-49	38	21%
50-59	36	20%
60-69	15	8%
Not disclosed	19	11%
	177	100%



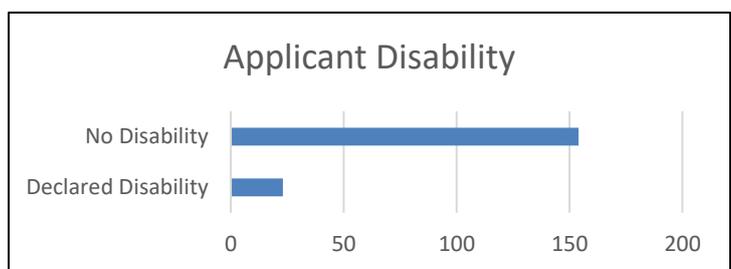
9.3 Gender

	No.	%
Male	147	83%
Female	30	17%
	177	100%



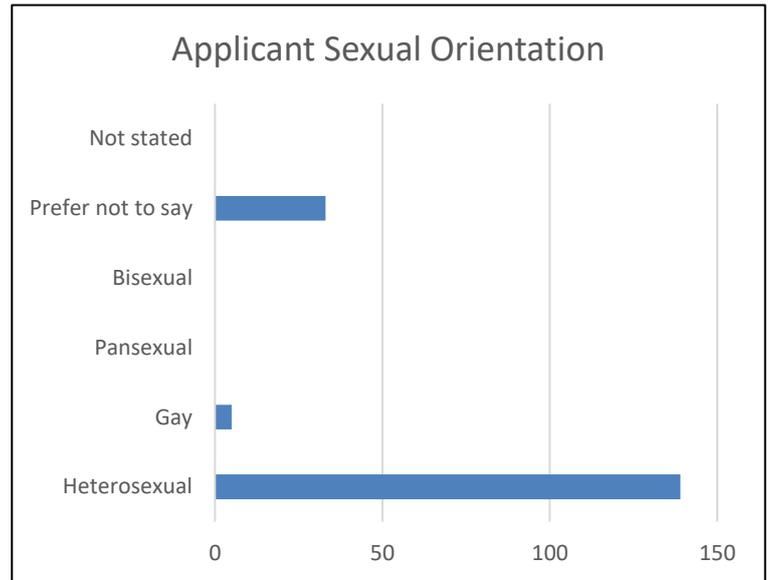
9.4 Disability

	No.	%
Declared Disability	23	13%
No Disability	154	87%
	177	100%



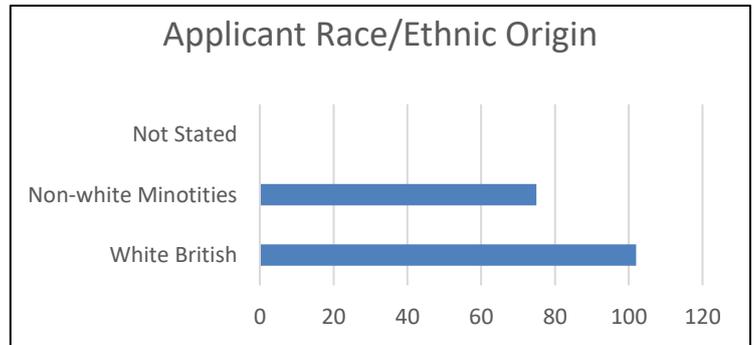
9.5 Sexual Orientation

	No.	%
Heterosexual	139	79%
Gay	5	3%
Pansexual	0	0%
Bisexual	0	0%
Prefer not to say	33	19%
Not stated	0	0%
	177	100%



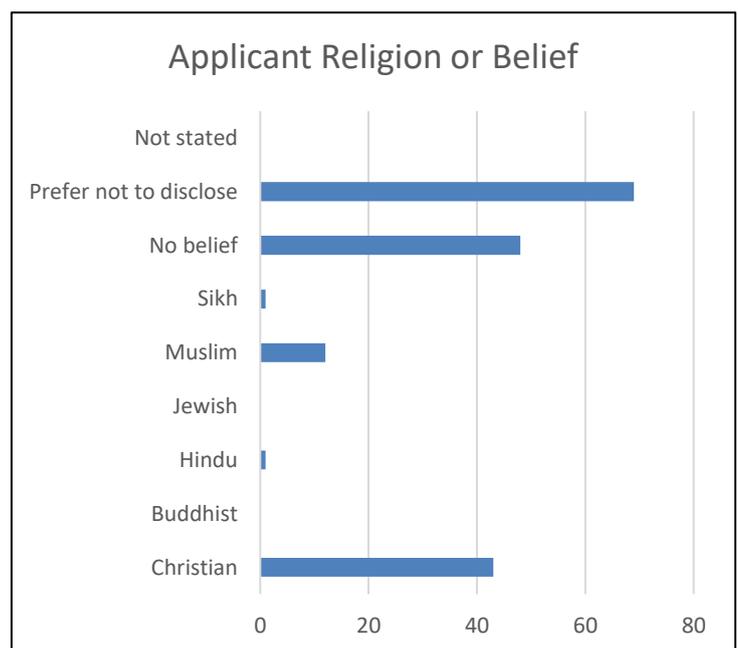
9.6 Race and Ethnicity

	No.	%
White British	102	58%
Non-white Minorities	75	42%
Not Stated	0	0%
	177	100%



9.7 Religion and Belief

	No.	%
Christian	43	25%
Buddhist	0	0%
Hindu	1	1%
Jewish	0	0%
Muslim	12	7%
Sikh	1	1%
No belief	48	28%
Prefer not to disclose	69	40%
Not stated	0	0%
	174	100%



10. Complaints and Discrimination

- 10.1 No complaints have been made against the Council or its staff on the grounds of prohibitive conduct (discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment) and abuse of authority).

11. Trade Unions

- 11.1 The Council works with Unison and GMB unions.
- 11.2 The Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 came into force on 1st April 2017, which put in place the provisions in the Trade Union Act 2016 requiring relevant public sector employers to publish specified information related to facility time provided to trade union officials.
- 11.3 This information is published on the Council's website.

12. Awareness Raising/Training and Development

- 12.1 The Council recognise that it is critical for our staff to have the skills and knowledge to help eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equal opportunities and value diversity. Staff are required to undertake periodic equality, diversity and inclusion training on an annual basis.
- 12.2 The Equality Duty (section 149 of the Act) came into force on 5 April 2011 requiring the Council to have an adequate evidence base for its decision-making. Rossendale Borough Council engages and consults with local residents to help us understand more about how our policies affect (or will affect) the different groups who use our services. This information is used to inform and improve decision making throughout the Council. Examples of engagement and consultation during 2022-23 include online and face to face sessions in relation to the changes at Haslingden Market.
- 12.3 The Council also consults and engages with staff through team meetings that contain key corporate messages, staff surveys, annual staff engagements sessions, wellbeing champions, Joint Consultative Committee, Operations Health and Safety Committee and the Chief Executive Huddle.

13. Engagement and Consultation

- 13.1 The Equality Duty (section 149 of the Act) came into force on 5 April 2011 requiring the Council to have an adequate evidence base for its decision-making. Rossendale Borough Council engages and consults with local residents to help us understand more about how our policies affect (or will affect) the different groups who use our services. This information is used to inform and improve decision making throughout the Council. Examples of engagement and consultation during 2022-23 include online and face to face sessions in relation to the changes at Haslingden Market.
- 13.2 The Council also consults and engages with staff through team meetings that contain key corporate messages, staff surveys, annual staff engagements sessions, wellbeing

champions, Joint Consultative Committee, Operations Health and Safety Committee and the Chief Executive Huddle.

14. Hate Crime/Incidents and Domestic Abuse Reporting

- 14.1 Hate crimes and incidents can have a serious impact on victims and their quality of life and can damage community cohesion. The Council is committed to working with individuals, communities, health and law enforcement services in order to tackle incidents and crimes motivated by prejudice and hate. The Council is a member of Lancashire Hate Crime and Cohesion Partnership Group and also has a Hate Crime Action Plan.
- 14.2 The Council has invested Domestic Abuse funding from Lancashire County Council to develop an in-house domestic abuse housing service. This is delivered locally, and will continue to look at ways it can best support partner domestic abuse support services, in future. The Council is White Ribbon accredited.

15. Conclusion

The Council is committed to delivering services based on the principles of fairness and equality. These principles underpin our core priorities in The Valley Plan – Our Plan, Our Place.

- Thriving Local Economy
- High Quality Environment
- Healthy and Proud Communities
- Effective and Efficient Council

These priorities are for the benefit of all of those who live, work and visit Rossendale and the Council will be unable to achieve these priorities if the services it provides are unfair or unequal.

The Council's Equality Policy was reviewed in 2021 and outlines how we will continue to promote equality, diversity and inclusion for our staff and communities in Rossendale.

The most current Workforce Profile Report is made available to Council employees through the Council's Intranet.