

Fairness, Inclusion and Equality

About Our Employees

January 2012

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Introduction

This report provides information on how Solihull Council is ensuring that our employees and potential employees are receiving fair treatment whatever their background or circumstances.

The information is part of a range of management information about our workforce which is routinely considered by the corporate leadership team as well as corporate and directorate equality and diversity groups.

The Equality Act 2010 identifies the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful, and provides the legal framework that protects people from discrimination based on a number of characteristics. These are referred to as 'protected characteristics' and are: **age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.**

Public authorities, including local councils, have a general duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between communities

Due regard to the aims of the duty

Public authorities must take 'due regard' to the equality duty when making decisions. When the equality duty is considered to be highly relevant we undertake Fair Treatment Assessments (FTAs), to systematically analyse the impact of our services and policies on our staff and customers to ensure we deliver our services in the fairest way.

We refer to 'fair treatment', rather than 'equality impact' because our level of equality analysis goes beyond the provisions of the Equality

Act, and considers fairness in a wider sense, including aspects such as socio-economic deprivation, human rights and sustainable communities. Summaries of completed FTAs can be found in the '[Fair Treatment Assessments](#)' page on our website.

Specific duties

In order to meet the requirement of the 'general duty' we have to do two specific things:

- publish equalities information, and
- publish our equalities objectives (including where we need to do more to meet the 'general duty')

Our equalities information must be updated at least annually and is available on the [Public Sector Equality Duties](#) page on our website. The information duty covers two areas, which are published in two separate reports:

- Our employees
- Our services and the people affected by them (covered in this report)

Our equalities objectives, which will be published separately, will be available by 6 April 2012 and will be updated at least every four years. More information on the duty to publish equality information can be found in the Equality and Human Rights Commission's [Equality Information and the Equality Duty: a Guide for Public Authorities](#).

Equality and Diversity Policy

Solihull Council's [Equality and Diversity Policy](#) was adopted in January 2012 and replaces our Equal Opportunities Policy. It expresses our commitment "to promoting equality of opportunity and equality of access that is free from discrimination, prejudice, harm, stereotyping, harassment, victimisation, and any other form of discrimination."

General information

Subsequent sections of this report consider our role as an employer from the perspective of individual protected characteristics (see page 3). This section covers the wider perspective across the various characteristics and explains the way much of the information in the following sections has been calculated.

Equality profile

It also places our employee profile as a whole in the broader context of Solihull's equality profile which is largely based on information from the 2001 Census. We have used data from the 2001 Census for comparison purposes as it is the most accurate available source, until the findings of the 2011 Census are released. Throughout this report, and to help inform our understanding of our local population, we also draw upon the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) more recent mid-year estimates. These only reflect broad trends and show that the local population is ageing and becoming more ethnically diverse (particularly amongst younger non-working age groups). Where ONS mid-year estimates have been used as a comparator it will be referred to in the appropriate section of this report.

There are five protected characteristics against which Census 2001 percentages are available: age, disability, race, religion or belief, and sex. These percentages are reproduced in the table opposite alongside the equivalents for our workforce at 30 September 2011. The employee percentages relate to all employees, except for Religion or Belief which is based on the number of employees who have provided this information.

The greatest variation between the Census percentages and those for our employees appear to relate to the protected characteristics of Disability and Sex. These and other smaller variations are discussed in the section for the relevant characteristic.

Protected characteristic	% of population (source Census 2001)	Employees (known %)
Age		
0-15	21.0	0.0
16-24	9.2	4.1
25-44	27.0	40.2
45-64	26.0	52.7
65 and older	16.8	3.0
Disability		
Yes	16.3	3.0
No	83.7	67.5
Race/Ethnicity		
Asian/Asian British	2.5	4.2
Black/Black British	1.0	2.4
Chinese/Other Ethnic	0.6	0.3
Mixed	1.3	1.1
All Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)	5.4	8.1
White	94.6	86.7
Sex/Gender		
Female	51.5	81.8
Male	48.5	18.2
Religion/Belief		
Buddhist	0.2	0.3
Christian	78.2	63.4
Hindu	0.9	1.1
Jewish	0.2	0.3
Muslim	0.8	1.3
Sikh	0.8	1.5
Other	0.2	3.0
None	12.0	19.5
Declined to Specify	6.7	9.7

Figures in the above table may add up to between 99.9% - 100.1% due to rounding.

Employee profile

Solihull Council actively monitors our workforce in terms of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Data obtained for this report covers the 12 month period to 30 September 2011, or is a snapshot position as at 30 September 2011 (teachers and academy based staff have been excluded from the data because they are not direct employees of the Council). This amounted to 5,214 employees on 30 September 2011. However, some of those employees hold more than one post (or 'assignment') in the Council. Information, such as the full time/part time analysis, uses figures based on the total number of assignments that are being undertaken (5,722).

There is extensive information available to show the employee profile by the protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Race (Ethnicity), Sex (Gender). There is more limited information on Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation. We do not have comparable data for the additional characteristics of Pregnancy/Maternity or Gender Reassignment (Transsexual).

The following key issues are analysed as appropriate in the sections covering Age, Disability, Race and Sex: full and part time posts, pay gap, new starters and leavers. Staff survey information is also analysed in this way.

Working full and part time

Full time working for the Council is 37 hours per week. Legislation does not provide a set definition of 'part time working', so this could mean anything less than 37 hours.

The measure adopted for part time working in this report is 30 hours or less, which was the measure used in a recent Office for National Statistics (ONS) Business Register and Employment Survey.

As an organisation we are committed to agreeing requests for flexible working where possible and recognise the benefits that this can bring

for the individual employees concerned and to us as an organisation. These include the ability to combine work with other commitments, such as caring responsibilities and studying, easing into retirement and improving work-life balance.

3,397 current assignments are for 30 hours or less out of the total of all assignments of 5,722. This equates to 59%.

Pay gap information

To demonstrate whether there is a disproportionate concentration of people with particular protected characteristics in lower paid employment, we have analysed the equality profile of our employees across the range of our standard pay grades. The salary range across these grades has been split into three levels for analysis:

1. Under £18,453 a year
2. Between £18,454 and £38,041 a year
3. Between £38,042 and £67,431 a year.

Overall, 53.5% of employees who are paid within these grades are at the first (lowest) level, 39.0% are at the middle level and 7.4% are at the highest level.

The section on gender contains further information on average salary as a further indicator of any gender pay gap (pages 15 and 16).

Occupational segregation

'Occupational segregation' is the term used for those jobs that are almost exclusively held by people with a particular characteristic, such as nursery workers and engineers, who respectively tend to be female and male. At present we do not have a systematic way of assessing occupational segregation, although we are well aware of specific instances where it traditionally happens.

For this reason, we have, for instance, taken positive action to

encourage women to apply for engineering posts. We are also working in partnership with Soroptimist International (an organisation for career women) to encourage Year 9 schoolgirls to choose careers in physics, chemistry and engineering through a **Skirting Science** event in March 2012. We are, though, starting from a relatively strong position as seven out of 35 engineering jobs (20%) in the Council are currently held by women.

New starters and leavers

An important indication of whether our recruitment policies are addressing any under-representation concerns is the equality profile of people recruited over the year – our new starters, and how it relates to the profile for people leaving the organisation. There were 321 new starters over a 12 month period up to 30 September 2011 and 529 leavers. This is considered against the appropriate protected characteristic.

Grievances, disciplinaries and dismissals

There were four formal grievances raised during the year with no identified equality issues raised in any case.

We recognise this isn't the full picture and we are developing our information systems to improve the management overview of grievances at an organisational level. The policies we have in place provide a delegated responsibility to managers to respond to grievances and implement lessons learnt across the span of their management control and we are confident that these management processes are working.

There were 16 Dismissals in the 12 months to 30 September 2011; three of these were disability related dismissals on the grounds of medical capability/ill health. However, only one of the cases involved an employee with a declared disability.

Discrimination complaints and other prohibited conduct

The Council's Dignity at Work policy recognises our duty to ensure "a working environment that promotes dignity amongst the whole workforce and is free from any form of harassment, intimidation or bullying." It provides the basis for investigating allegations of discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation and the measures that will be taken when allegations are substantiated.

During the year, three cases were investigated under this policy, none of which was upheld.

Engagement with staff and Trade Unions

Solihull Council meets regularly with the trade unions through the Corporate Negotiation Consultation Committee (CNCC) and the Directorate Negotiation Consultation Committees (DNCCs). Membership includes managers at Director level and Senior Trade Union Representatives. As well as consultation they also provide dispute resolution (if appropriate) and CNCC negotiates on the Council's Terms & Conditions and Corporate policies.

As an illustration, following the implementation of the Equality Act 2010, our policies and procedures were reviewed with CNCC to ensure compliance and best practice. Planning and progress of policies reviewed included:

- Recruitment and Selection
- Equality and Diversity
- Dignity at Work
- Sickness Absence Management

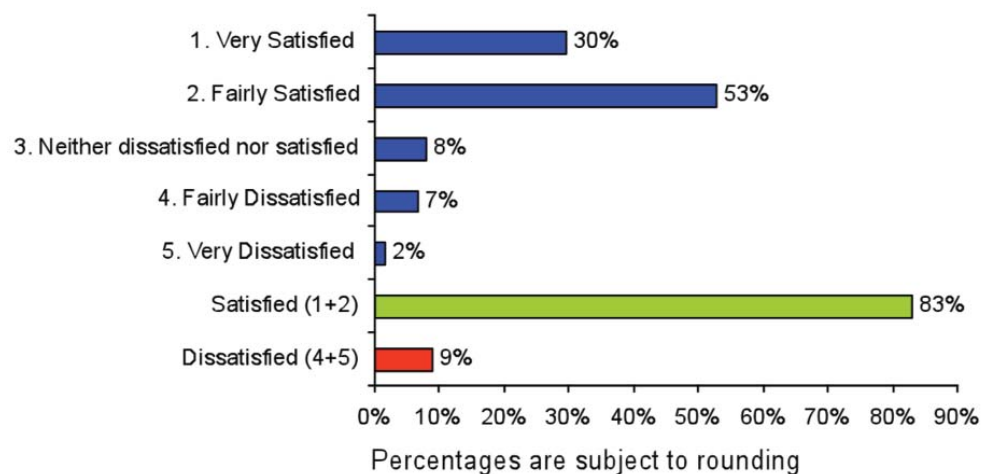
During the year to 30 September 2011, there have been no issues raised through CNCC, or informally through discussions with staff, that relate to any specific protected characteristic.

Staff survey

Our staff survey is one of the ways in which we gain an understanding of the views and satisfaction levels of our employees. The last full employee survey was carried out in February 2009 and is based on a response rate of 47% (1,200 responses out of 2,750 questionnaires distributed). The survey was limited to 'Core Council' staff and, therefore, did not include schools based employees.

It is important that the information we receive is equality monitored to identify whether any groups of staff have greater levels of dissatisfaction than others. The following table shows the overall level of satisfaction of our staff based on the last survey. It shows that 83% of our staff were either fairly satisfied or very satisfied with their present jobs. This compares with a satisfaction rate of 77% for the previous survey conducted in 2006.

Overall Level of Satisfaction with Present Job



These results have been benchmarked against national data to place the results in context. The Council's staff satisfaction rate compares favourably in this wider context.

The aggregated result for five Metropolitan Authorities nationally and three leading Private Sector organisations were 67% and 69% respectively.

If we consider full time and part time employees, the level of satisfaction rises slightly for part time staff to 87% with a commensurate reduction in levels of dissatisfaction of part time staff to 7% (compared to 9% over all).

The next staff survey is planned for later in 2012.

Future actions

We will work to identify information gaps and extend our analysis in future reports. Actions will be identified to address concerns arising from the information analysed in each section and will contribute towards our Equality Objectives, which will be published in April 2012.

An action identified in this section is to undertake a staff survey which is planned to take place later in 2012.

We also require a more systematic approach to understanding occupational segregation in the organisation and may need to identify initiatives to address this.

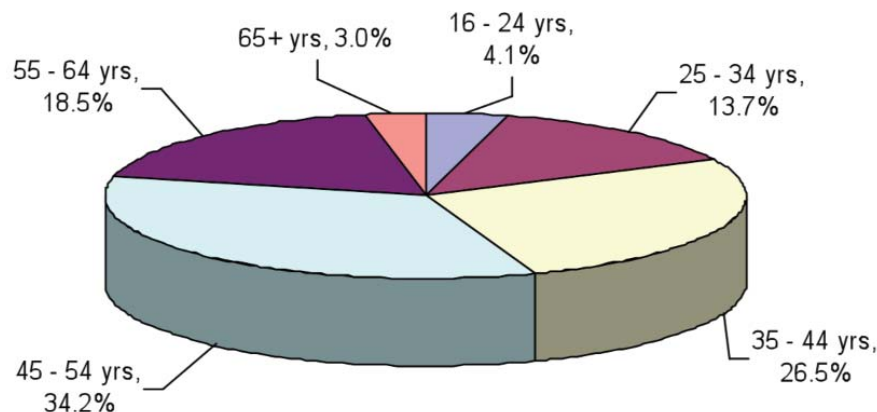
We will develop our information systems to improve the management overview of grievances at an organisational level.

Age

Employee profile

This pie chart shows the distribution of our employees by age bands

Employee Age Distribution at 30.09.11



A more recent estimate, than the 2001 Census, of our borough's age profile can be found in the Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2010 Population Estimates. The percentages quoted in the table opposite give proportions of the 15-69 population rather than the ONS estimate of the population as a whole. We can see from our workforce profile that a number of employees do continue to work for the Council past 65 and we actively welcome this.

The figures from the table opposite for other age bands, however, demonstrate that employees under 35 are less well represented in the workforce than across Solihull as a whole. This is largely because the workforce population is significantly older than the population of Solihull in the age ranges of 35 and over, with the biggest variation in the 45-54 range.

ONS 2010 Population Estimates	%	Employee Data	%
15-24	17.8%	16-24	4.1%
25-34	15.1%	25-34	13.7%
35-44	19.8%	35-44	26.5%
45-54	21.5%	45-54	34.2%
55-64	18.1%	55-64	18.5%
65-69	7.7%	65+	3.0%

The most telling effect of this older profile is the 16-24 year age band, which is a quarter of the overall percentage for Solihull. This figure becomes even more significant when seen alongside the figures for new starters and the leavers. The figure for the people in this age band will inevitably be affected by the high number of young people who go into full time further education prior to taking up employment.

Working full and part time

The only age band for which the number of full time employees exceeds part time is 25-34. In the 16-24 age range, 62% of employees are part time (the overall percentage is 59%).

There is a predictable increase in part time working as employees get older, with 89% of employees aged over 65 working part time. This reflects the organisation's policy on flexible working.

New starters and leavers

Over the last 12 months, up to the 30 September 2011 there were 63 or 19.6% of new starters aged 16-24, compared to a workforce percentage of 4.1 for this age group. Whilst this looks encouraging, comparisons against leavers in this age group demonstrate that 77 or 14.6% of leavers were also from this age group. This demonstrates little movement in changing the age profile of the workforce.

A similar comparison of employees aged 25-34 shows that 63 or 19.6% of new starters during the year were aged 25-34, compared to a workforce percentage of 13.7, with a correspondingly higher number of leavers in this age range (104 or 19.8%). Increased activity for starters and leavers within the younger age groups is to be expected as this is the time of maximum job mobility.

On the other hand, only 20 or 6.2% of new starters were aged 55 or older (workforce percentage 21.5%) with 118 or 21.5% of this age range leaving the organisation.

Staff survey

Results from the staff survey show that satisfaction with the Council is highest for employees 60 years old and above (86%) and lowest for those under 25 years of age (79%). The overall figure for the workforce is 83%.

The dissatisfaction level is 8% for both over 60s and under 25s only slightly lower than for the workforce as a whole (9%).

Issues arising from 'due regard'

A fair treatment assessment (FTA) on the Accident Reporting process identified that some older employees may not be comfortable with completing the on-line Accident Reporting Form. There is a requirement upon managers to provide the necessary support for reporting.

A Health and Safety Training FTA identified the need for training materials to be relevant to all ages (e.g. avoiding references to events before younger employees were born/of working age.)

Future actions

The Council recognises the steadily aging profile of its workforce, and is identifying ways to address this through the development of a Succession Strategy that encourages the recruitment, development and retention of young people. Measures we are undertaking to

support the recruitment of younger people include Apprenticeships, Internships and Work Experience Placements.

Case Study – Work Experience Placements

Work experience placements can be a huge benefit to both employer and employee; they give the person completing the placement invaluable experience that looks great on their CV, while having an extra team member is always extremely helpful.

In June 2011, we launched a placement programme in conjunction with Job Centre Plus, and as part of the Get Britain Working initiative, aimed at young people currently receiving Job Seeker's Allowance. It has proved to be a real success story.

The aim is for candidates to get real work experience that can help them stand out from the crowd when applying for jobs, while the placement does not affect their benefits and allows them to claim back travel expenses.

To date, we have taken on 15 candidates and set them working in corporate governance, planning/building control and with the park rangers.

The scheme has proved its worth, as our Head Park Ranger explained.

“One of the young people was with my team for just three weeks before she secured an apprenticeship with the Environment Agency. Her success in getting that job was as a direct result of the work she did with us and the reference I was able to give her.

“And that isn't our only success story; another candidate completed the full eight weeks with us, but enjoyed himself so much he is still volunteering with us one day a week while he continues to look for work.

“These stories just underline how the scheme can be a big win for both sides – I'd definitely recommend setting up a placement in your team.”

Placements are for a minimum of two weeks to a maximum of eight weeks in duration and generally involve around 25-30 hours a week. Candidates are still able to claim their Job Seeker's Allowance while completing a placement.

Disability

Employee profile

Over the last 18 months the Council has actively promoted the importance of employees completing the disability reporting element of their electronic employee record. This resulted in an improvement in recording which reduced the proportion of 'not specified' to 16.3% as well as increased the levels of reported disabled employees to 5.6%.

Since April 2011, a large number of employees working in Adult Social Care transferred from Solihull Care Trust to the Council due to changes in Government regulation within the NHS. Amendments to the electronic employee system are still under development to enable these employees to record their disability status.

This pie chart shows the current distribution of our employees against declared disability (3.03%) with a corresponding increased level of not specified as a direct result of the staff transfer. It is anticipated that systems improvements will be in place by April 2012 to enable the recording to be improved and reduce the proportion of 'not specified' across the whole workforce.

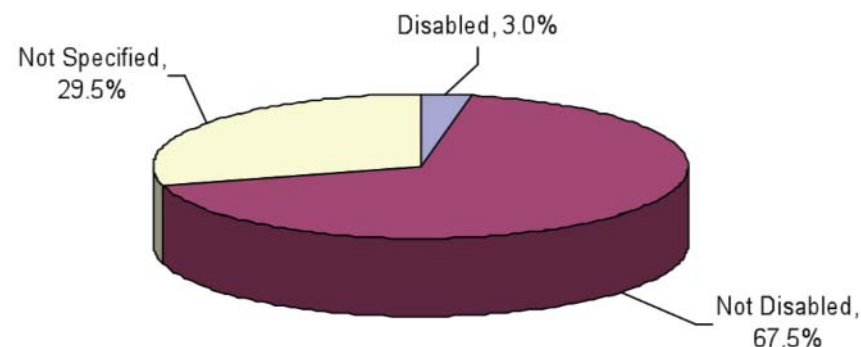
Comparisons with the average percentage of disabled employees for the top 25% of councils in the last year of Best Value Performance Indicators (2007/08) which was 4.6%, shows there is likely to be a favourable comparison when employee data is more complete.

Working full and part time

A similar number of disabled employees work full time (80 employees) as compared to part time (86 employees), and similarly make up a small proportion of both our full time (3.4%) and our part time employees (2.5%).

However, the low figures involved and the high proportion of 'not specified' makes it problematic to reach specific conclusions.

Employee Disability Distribution at 30.09.11



New starters and leavers

The proportion of new starters known to have a disability was only 1.9% (or 6 individuals). This figure is relatively reliable as the 'not specified' proportion (16.2%) is consistent with the usual level for workforce monitoring. Based on this new starter figure, there is reason to examine if more positive action measures could be considered to encourage applications from more disabled people.

The proportion of disabled employees leaving the Council (3.0% or 16 individuals) is consistent with the current employee profile (3.0%), as is the 'not specified' proportion (29.2% compared to 29.5%). This means that disabled employees are leaving at no faster or slower rate than the workforce as a whole.

Staff survey

The survey shows that satisfaction with the Council is significantly lower for disabled employees with 9% fewer disabled employees expressing some form of satisfaction than the percentage for the workforce as a whole (74% compared to 83%). As the percentage of disabled employees who expressed dissatisfaction is the same as that for the workforce (9%), the main difference rests with those disabled employees who have not expressed an opinion either way.

Issues arising from ‘due regard’

A Fair Treatment Assessment (FTA) on our accommodation identified that managers must discuss with individual disabled employees their specific needs and complete a risk assessment. A joint action plan will be agreed to ensure that, where reasonable, the individual’s specific needs and Health and Safety requirements are met.

The Government’s Employment Strategy ‘**Valuing Employment Now: Real Jobs for People with Learning Disabilities**’, published in 2009, laid down a challenge to public sector agencies to lead by example in the recruitment of people with learning disabilities and set a precedent for other employers to follow. Over the last three years, Solihull Council has risen to the challenge. And through the use of positive action recruitment practices and process changes, the Council has recruited a further 15 people with learning disabilities. (See our Case Study).

Disabled Employee Network

In 2010, the Council launched a Disabled Employee Network for disabled employees to feel valued as individuals and be able to influence policy development.

Future actions

Improve monitoring levels for the protected characteristic of Disability
Extend monitoring systems to include employees transferred from Solihull Care Trust.

Examine whether more positive action measures could be considered to encourage applications from more disabled people.

Case Study – STEPS Supported Recruitment- David’s Story

Government laid down a challenge for public sector employers to do all that they can to employ more people with learning disabilities. In response, we made a commitment in October 2008 to employ seven people with a learning disability by March 2010. In successfully meeting that first target, there was a number of success stories to tell – one of them being David. David joined us as an Administration Support Assistant in January 2010 after being supported through the application process by STEPS (Support Towards Employment, Progression and Satisfaction), a then Solihull NHS Care Trust funded supported employment service that helps people with learning disabilities into employment (now part of the Council).



David said: “STEPS sent me the job advert. I applied for it, got to the interview stage and got offered the job!” STEPS initially came in and supported David in his role, but gradually phased out their support to David and his line manager.

After a few weeks in work, David said, “It’s changed my life already. I think my workmates would say I’m very bubbly and that I get on with the job and I hope having this job will help me get a better social life.

“The best part of my job is being able to help out lots of different areas while I’m at work”

Two years on and David is still as enthusiastic and popular as ever – and the number of offices in the Council that have benefitted from his support is continuing to grow.

Behind the recruitment of David and 14 of his colleagues through the STEPS supported scheme there has been a major effort identifying roles specifically for people with learning disabilities. In addition, further work has been undertaken to rewrite application forms and other documentation used in the application process for these roles.

We have also established a STEPS employees’ management support group to provide support for people within the Council who are involved in or new to, the recruitment, management and mentoring of employees with learning disabilities. As an experience sharing forum, it has helped the Council to develop new approaches as necessary, such as simplifying our Personal Development Review procedures and producing easy read versions of the associated paperwork.

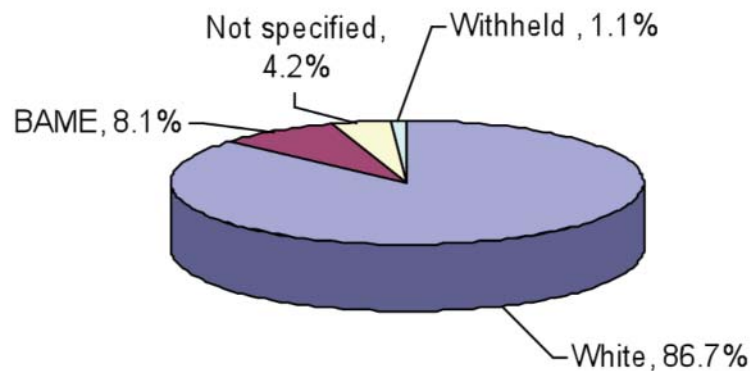
Considering we only had two people with a learning disability employed by the Council before September 2008, we feel we have come a long way in a short time.

Race (or Ethnicity/Ethnic Origin)

Employee profile

This pie chart shows the distribution of our employees by race

Employee Race/Ethnicity Distribution at 30.09.11



Generally, BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) employees represent a slightly smaller percentage of the overall workforce population than the BAME representation in the population of Solihull as a whole, which is 11.8% according to the ONS 2009 Population Estimates. However, the 'not specified' and 'withheld' percentages could be having an effect on these figures.

Working full and part time

In terms of race, BAME employees are less likely to be working part time than their white counterparts. Numerically, BAME employees are almost equally shared between the two (227 full time/225 part time). However, white employees are significantly more likely to be working part time than full time (60.6%/39.4%).

Pay gap information

There is no significant variation between the proportions of BAME employees at each salary level and those of white employees. 48.2% of BAME employees are at the lowest level of pay compared to 54.0% of white employees, while at the highest level of pay the respective proportions are 7.1% and 7.4%.

New starters and leavers

8.7% (or 28) of new starters were known to be from BAME communities, which is a slight increase on the proportion of known BAME employees as a whole (8.1%). The situation is similar with leavers, 8.5% (45) were known to be from BAME communities.

Staff survey

81% of BAME employees indicated they were satisfied with their present jobs, which is slightly lower than the overall percentage than that for non BAME employees (both 83%). However, the percentage of very satisfied employees is lower (23% compared to 30%). This is something that needs to be monitored specifically when the 2012 survey is undertaken. The overall level of dissatisfaction is only slightly lower (8%) for BAME employees than for the workforce as a whole (9%).

Issues arising from 'due regard'

One issue that has arisen from FTAs with employment implications is not assuming that all employees for whom English is an additional language are comfortable with their English at all times. As a responsible employer, we accept that in rare instances, an employee who is conversationally happy to speak English may require interpreting support in a more formal or stressful situation, such as a Managing Attendance interview, or training session outside their immediate sphere of work, such as a Health and Safety course.

Future actions

Make a specific check of the levels of high satisfaction amongst BAME employees when undertaking the 2012 Staff Survey.

Case Study – BAME Employee Network

Solihull Council had a Black Workers Support Group for several years before it reformed into the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Employee Network during 2010/11. Membership is open to all employees who define themselves as BAME.

The new Network consulted with its members and other BAME workers in the Council on the needs and future direction of the Network. This led to an aspirations paper being developed, which resulted in an action plan being drawn up.

A key issue identified through the consultation was that the members of the Network wanted to work with the wider Council structures to address any under representation in Council job areas within the wider context of the Council's workforce strategy development.

The Network acts as an advisory body and consultative forum to the Council on issues of race equality in employment and the

specific needs of BAME service users and residents. It has therefore gained a lot of experience over the years on issues affecting BAME communities for any manager undertaking Fair Treatment Assessments and other consultations.

The (then) Black Workers Support Group was instrumental in supporting Solihull Council's first attempts to celebrate Black History Month and the BAME Employee Network continues to participate in the steering group to develop the programme on an annual basis.

In addition, the Network provides a forum for BAME employees to come together and exchange information in conjunction with the other Employee Networks (for Disabled and for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans employees) to work towards the elimination of discrimination and the promotion of equality.

As with all Employee Networks, membership is open to employees from Solihull Community Housing as well as the Council.

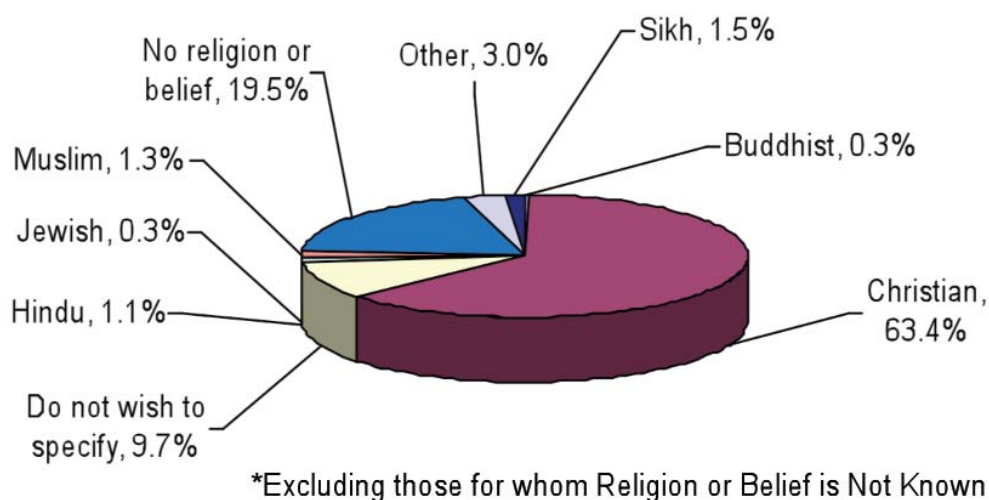
Religion or Belief

Employee profile

Religion or belief was only added to the Council's equality monitoring system in 2009/10, and the system is reliant on existing employees updating their own personal records.

Currently, we have limited completion of personal records in relation to religion or belief, with no records completed for 4,046 of our 5,214 employees (77.6%). The following chart has been created using only the responses we have received, to minimise the distortion that 'unknowns' in the profile would create.

Employee Religion or Belief Distribution at 30.09.11



The table on page 3 shows that our workforce profile is roughly equivalent to our borough population by religion and belief. The exception is the proportion of Christian employees, which appears relatively low, whilst other religions or beliefs appear to be slightly more represented.

Issues arising from 'due regard'

Possible implications were identified in the Council's Code of Conduct in terms of standards of appearance and employees wearing clothing or jewellery in accordance with their faith or religious belief. The Code, however, is non-specific and sets a wide standard of acceptable 'business casual' dress. The only practical constraint would be where health and safety was compromised.

An FTA on our accommodation recorded that In the event of a member of staff requesting accommodation to facilitate prayer, every effort would be made to provide appropriate facilities and/or a private area.

Management will support, where practical, any action plan arising out of the findings from the religion and belief survey of all staff undertaken in September 2010 (See Case Study)

Future actions

We will be encouraging greater recording of religion/belief monitoring information.

Case Study – Religion and Belief in the Workplace (Observance) Facilities Survey

In order to gain an insight into the facilities used by employees for religion or belief observance purposes during the working day, a short survey was sent out to all core council staff in September 2010. The responses from the survey enabled informed decisions to be made on the provision of additional facilities to support employees who have a religion or belief.

Nearly 25% of our employees completed the survey, which was an encouraging response. This in itself gave an indication of interest, as presumably the employees who took the time to complete the survey were those most interested in or affected by its subject matter.

4.2% of the respondents stated that they needed to use a quiet place to practise their religion or belief during the working day.

Many of the people requiring facilities for religious observance were able to use specific prayer rooms such as in the Hub at Touchwood Shopping Centre. However, some had to travel to get to a prayer room. Other employees had to use more informal facilities, some more suitable than others.

The survey has provided the Corporate Equality & Diversity Group with valuable insight, and is a useful basis on which to assess current and future provision of quiet rooms that can be used for prayer in the absence of a dedicated facility.

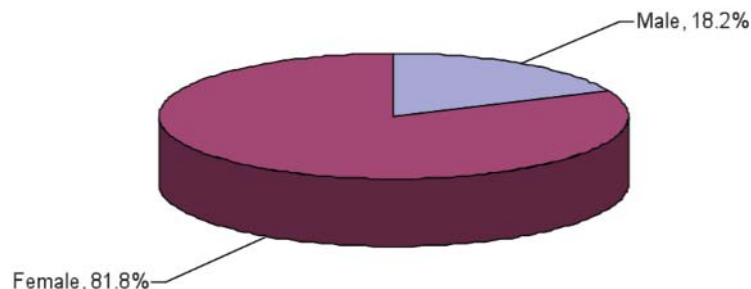
An FTA on the Council's accommodation was undertaken during 2011/12 and it pledged to ensure the findings from this survey were implemented wherever practicable.

Sex (or Gender)/Pregnancy and Maternity

Employee profile

This pie chart shows the distribution of our employees by gender:

Employee Gender Distribution at 30.09.11



According to ONS 2010 Population Estimates, 51.4% of the population of Solihull is female. There is every reason to believe that the Council's heavy reliance on caring work, plus its flexible and part time working arrangements have a strong influence on the high proportion of women employed within the Council.

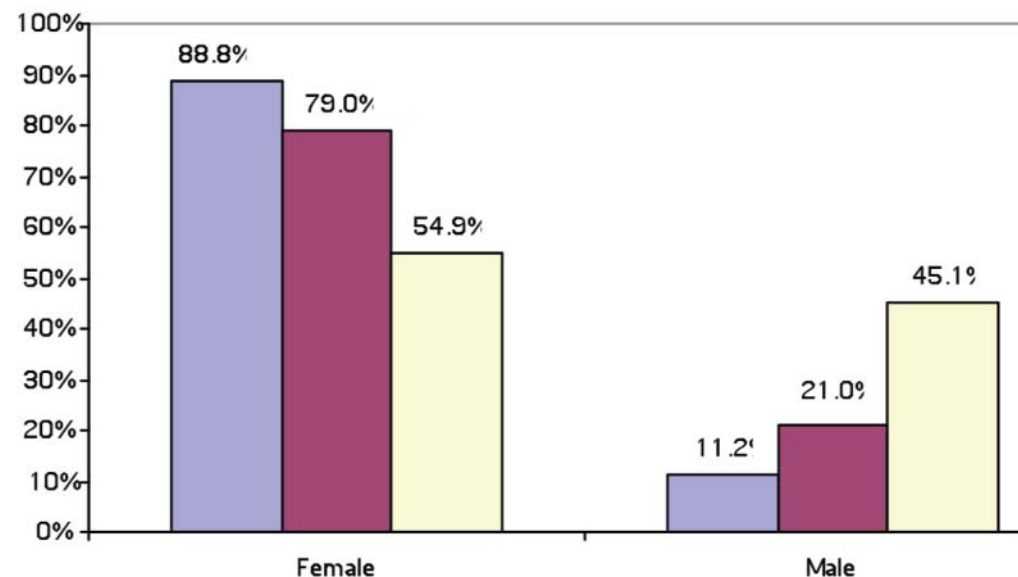
It is not possible to accurately state the number of pregnant women in our employ at any one time as it is policy that pregnant employees do not have to notify the Council until 15 weeks before the date when their baby is expected.

Working full and part time

A striking statistic is that 93% of part-time staff are female. It would be reasonable to assume that the high percentage of women employees in the workforce (81.8%) is due largely to the attraction of family friendly, flexible working arrangements, of which part time working is a key element.

Pay gap information

Pay Gap Analysis by Gender as at 30.9.11



Such is the high level of female representation in the workforce that women form the larger portion at all three salary levels. However, this table shows a step effect as the three levels are considered. The female to male proportion at the highest level (Band 3 - 54.9 to 45.1) is closer to that for the wider community of Solihull (51.4 to 48.6), although it means that only 5.0% of women are paid within this salary range compared to 19.1% of men.

The following two tables show the median salary of male and female employees in each salary band, i.e. the annual salary of the employee in 'middle' of the range for each band.

If you take the range of actual salaries, the median shows a discrepancy in favour of male employees at each of the lower two levels. Overall, it shows a median salary for women that is only 70% that of men:

	Median Salary		
	Male (£)	Female (£)	Female %
Grades A-J or equivalent	24,646	17,161	70
£18,453 and below	15,444	13,903	90
£18,454 - £38,041	27,052	24,646	90
£38,042 - £67,431	43,392	44,899	103

However, the Female Median Salary is heavily distorted by the fact that 93% of the part time workforce is female. In order to normalise the data, the following table establishes medians based on the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) of all the posts held:

	FTE Median Salary		
	Male (£)	Female (£)	Female %
Grades A-J or equivalent	28,636	27,625	96
£18,453 and below	16,054	16,054	100
£18,454 - £38,041	27,849	27,625	99
£38,042 - £67,431	43,392	46,161	106

It demonstrates that the medians are much more consistent when the data is normalised. This means that there is effectively no gender pay gap.

New starters and leavers

82.9% (or 266) of new starters were Female, which is a slight increase on the proportion of Female employees as a whole (81.8%).

Conversely, the proportion of leavers who are Male (22.3% or 118 individuals) is slightly high compared to their overall percentage in the workforce (18.2%). If this variation develops into a trend over future years, actions may need to be identified.

Staff survey

With the very high proportion of female employees in the workforce, it is as expected that satisfied and dissatisfied responses from female employees (83% and 8% respectively) largely match the rates of the workforce as a whole (83% and 9%). Male employees, on the other hand report less satisfaction and more dissatisfaction (79% and 10%).

Issues arising from 'due regard'

The Council's Maternity Scheme is consistent with the statutory rights of pregnant employees.

Six weeks before her maternity leave date, an employee based at Solihull Council House can request access to the car park area around the building. Any health problems requiring access prior to that date are accommodated.

Future actions

Develop approaches to get a better understand of any occupational segregation within the workforce.

Identify job types and service areas that employ comparatively low numbers of male or female applicants to identify whether any positive action initiatives could be developed to address occupational segregation.

Investigate ways in which information on the number of pregnant employees can be collected more accurately.

Sexual Orientation/Gender Reassignment

Employee profile

As with religion or belief, sexual orientation was only added to the Council's equality monitoring system in 2009/10, and the system is reliant on existing employees updating their own personal records.

Currently, we have limited completion of personal records in relation to sexual orientation, with no records completed for 4,068 of the 5,214 employees in this profile (78.0%). The following chart has been created using only the responses we have received, to minimise the distortion that 'unknowns' in the profile would create.

The ONS Integrated Household Survey, September 2011, identified from over 400,000 respondents across the UK that 1.5% identified themselves as Gay/Lesbian or Bisexual, which equates to the findings here.

Our employee profile shows no record of any transsexual employees. There are no records of concerns raised by transsexual staff.

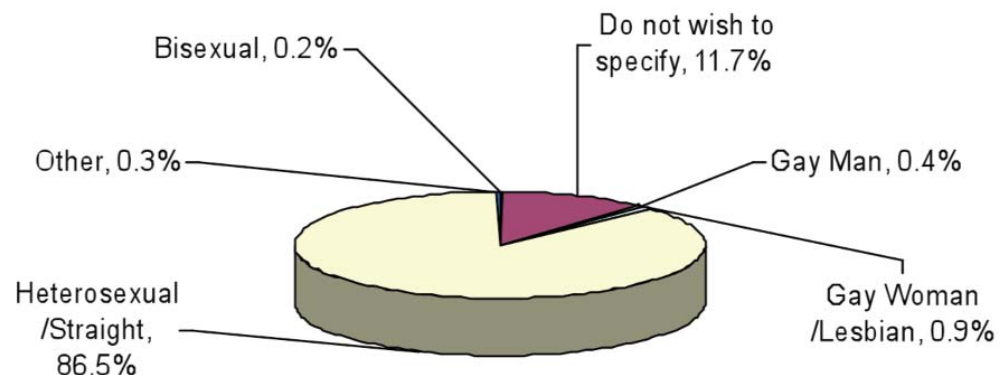
LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans)* employee network

In 2010, the Council launched a LGBT Employee Network for LGBT employees to feel valued as individuals and be able to influence policy development.

In 2011 we surveyed LGBT employees to ensure that the network was structured in a way that met their requirements.

***Note** – we use the term Trans as the preferred umbrella term used to describe anyone who feels that the sex that was assigned to them at birth incompletely describes or fails to describe them. This term includes people who are transsexual, are intersex, identify outside the female/male binary, or have a gender expression which differs from their perceived sex.

Employee Sexual Orientation Distribution* at 30.09.11



*Excluding those for whom Sexual Orientation is Not Known

Issues arising from 'due regard'

Consultation as part of the assessment of the Council's Code of Conduct highlighted that the need to declare relationships with other Council employees may put employees in a same sex relationship at a disadvantage. The requirement to make a declaration has therefore been removed, putting the responsibility on the employee to ensure that, if they are in a relationship with another Council employee, they are not directly involved in their appointment, promotion, discipline, appraisal or other employment decision.

Future action

Encouraging greater recording of sexual orientation monitoring information should form the basis of a published objective.

Research needs to be undertaken, including consultation with transsexual support organisations, to determine whether our equality profiling information should include gender reassignment as a classification, and, if so, identify the most appropriate way of undertaking it.

Case Study - 'Out in Public' Sub-Regional LGBT Equality Seminar

The chair of our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Employee Network worked with the chairs/secretaries of neighbouring authorities (Coventry City Council, Warwickshire County Council and Warwick District Council) to organise a seminar for our organisations to explore some of the issues currently facing LGBT employees and public bodies, especially in light of the 2010 Equality Act.

There was strong representation from members of the respective LGBT Employee Networks, as well as managers responsible for leading on equality from an employment perspective.

The seminar included a review of best practice in local government, an introduction to Trans equalities, and facilitated discussions on being “out at work” (i.e. colleagues being aware of your sexual orientation/gender identity) and Religion and Sexual Orientation.

The key messages from the seminar have since been reviewed and incorporated into our employment policies to ensure equality for LGBT colleagues, and address any areas of potential discrimination. For example, our equality and diversity training subsequently includes an example of bullying in the work place based on sexual orientation.