

East Herts Council

**ANNUAL EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY AND
DIVERSITY REPORT**

1 APRIL 2011 – 31 MARCH 2012

1 Summary

This report provides a detailed analysis of the workforce by gender, ethnicity, age, disability status, religion/belief and sexual orientation. The Council is committed to promoting Equality and Diversity across all its services and continues to increase awareness and understanding through its policies, training and staff groups.

This report provides a detailed analysis of the available monitoring data for 2011/12.

2 Background

The Equality Act (2010) consolidated the legislation for groups protected by previous equalities legislation. Everyone has the right to be treated fairly and the Equality Act protects people from discrimination on the basic protected characteristics.

Protected characteristics include; age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require public sector bodies with more than 150 employees to publish data on equality in their workforces annually.

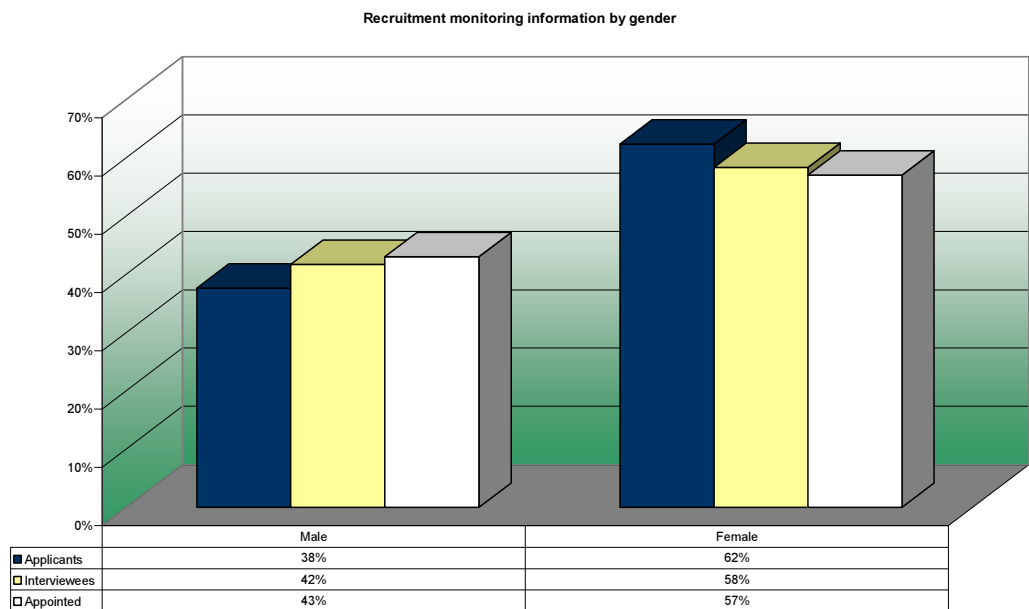
3 Recruitment

The Council's recruitment services were outsourced to Manpower on 1 April 2009. Equalities monitoring data is collected and collated by Manpower at the application stage of the recruitment process. It is monitored through short-listing to the appointment stage.

3.1 Gender

The Council's workforce is predominately female and this is reflected in the applicants. However by appointment stage men and women are more evenly represented (43% men, 57% women). This is an improvement on the 2010/11 outturn when 71% of appointees were female.

Figure 1



3.2 Ethnicity

East Herts District has a predominately white population (90% ‘white’ or ‘white other’, (Resident Population Estimates by Ethnic Group, All Persons, ONS, 2009).) and this is reflected throughout the recruitment process (see figure 2 and 3).

At the external application stage the percentage of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) candidates is greater than the district as a whole. At the external short listing stage the percentage of white and BME candidates reflects the district. However further analysis shows that within the BME group the interviewees are not reflective of the district as they are all within one category, the ‘other’ category (which is predominately used to mean ‘white other’ or mixed ethnicity) and therefore there is no representation from those in the Asian, Chinese and Black ethnic groups.

At external appointment stage (see figure 3) appointed candidates were white or white other. This pattern is similar to 2010/11. The reason for this is not clear and, whilst no discrimination has been identified, it should be explored further.

Figure 2

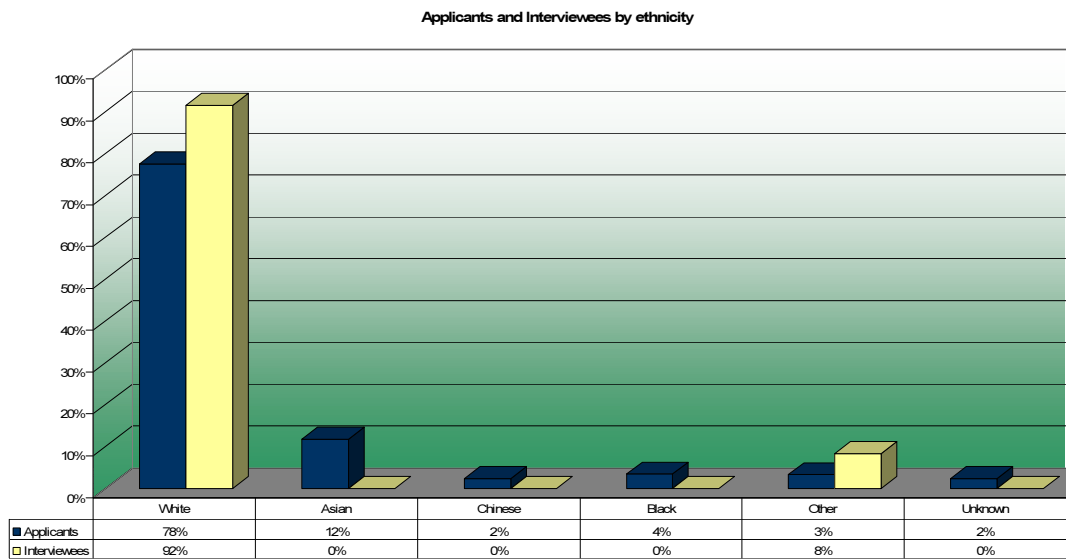
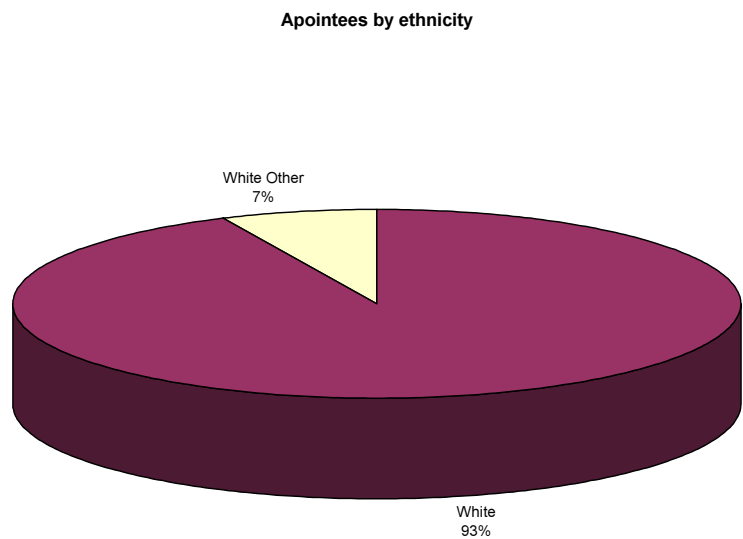


Figure 3

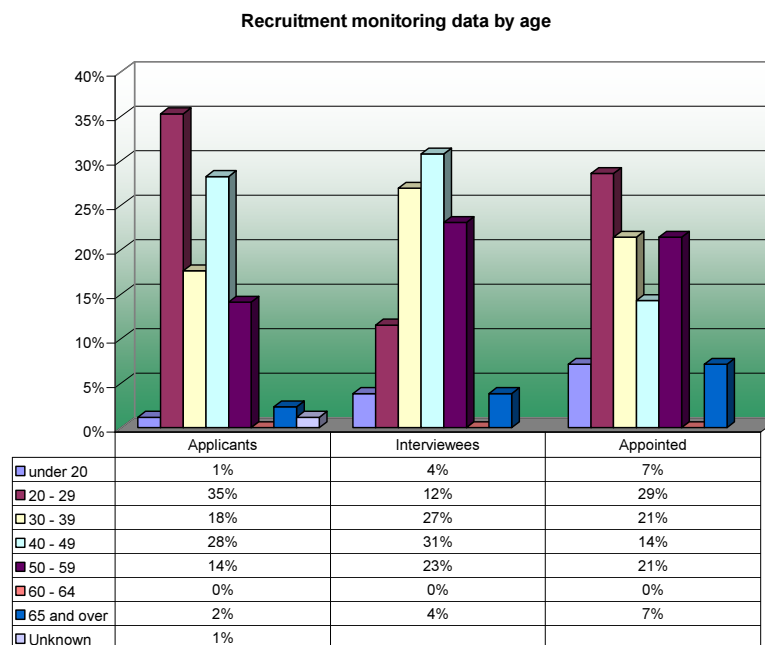


3.3 Age

The largest group of external applicants (35%) was in the 20 -29 year old category. This is consistent with previous years. However by appointment stage the percentage in this age group drops to (25%). To support this age group in being successful at appointment stage, the Council is working with JobCentre Plus on the voluntary work experience scheme to give those leaving school and university work experience which will assist them in gaining employment.

The most successful external candidates at appointment stage were those in the 50 – 59 and 65 and over categories. The 50 – 59 group represented 14% of applicants, 23% of interviewees and 21% of appointees. The 65 and over group represented 2% of applicants, 4% of interviewees and 7% of appointees.

Figure 4



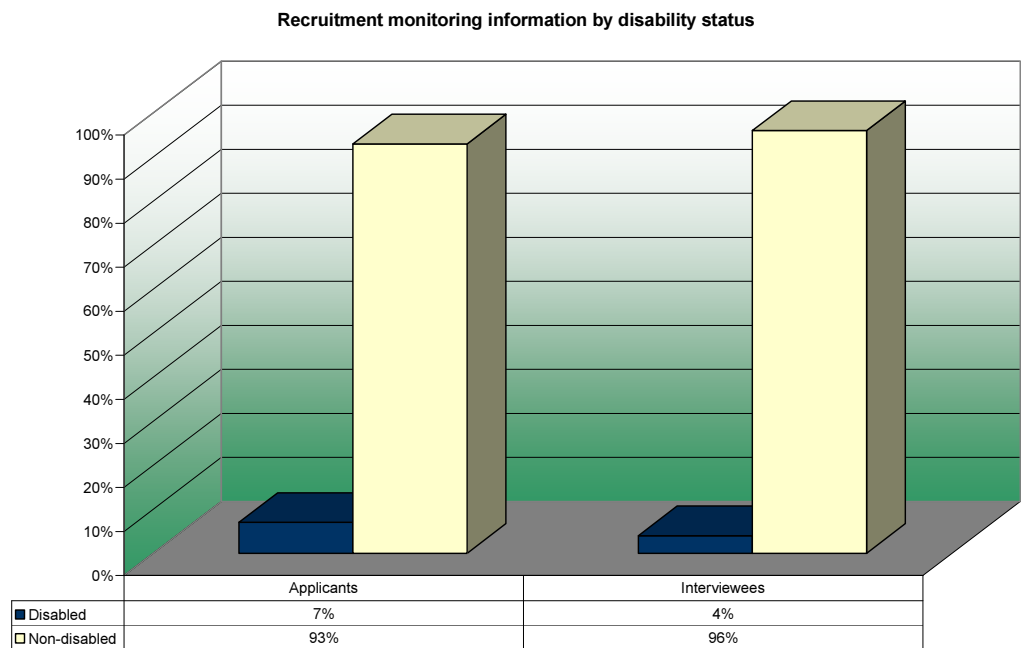
3.4 Disability Status

The Council is accredited with the Jobcentre Plus Disability Symbol Scheme, which was renewed in 2012. As part of the commitments under the scheme the Council guarantees to interview all applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a role.

Disabled candidates represented 7% of applicants and 4% of interviewees. There were no disabled appointees. This may be due to the low numbers involved.

The JobCentre Plus review the Council’s recruitment procedures annually and were satisfied that the Council meets all the criteria required under the Symbol Scheme.

Figure 5



3.5 Religion & Belief and Sexual Orientation

This data is not collected by Manpower at the appointment and short listing stage and therefore cannot be reviewed here.

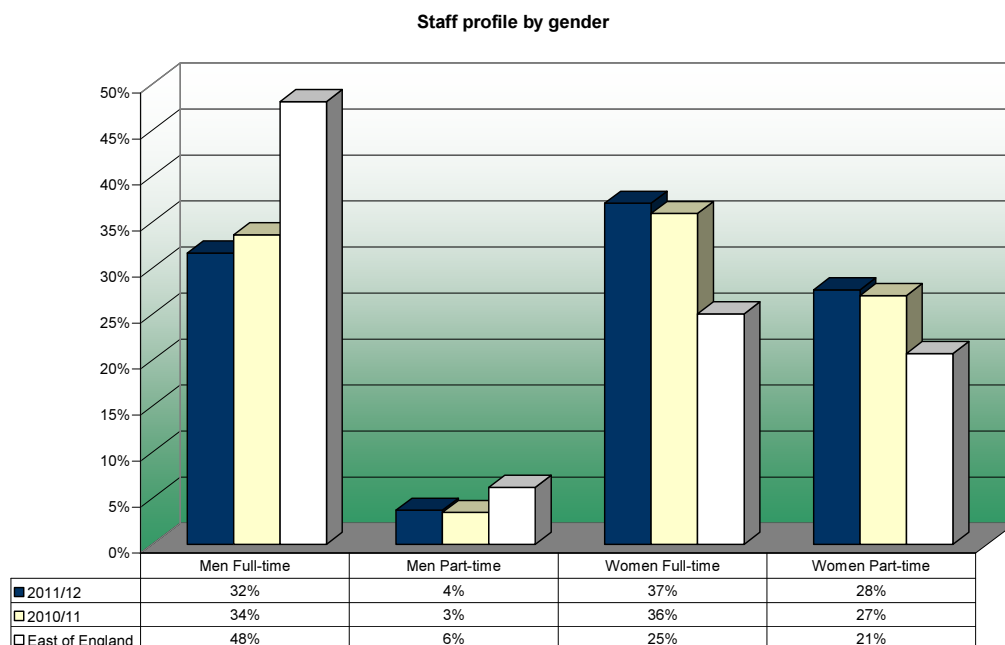
4 Staff Profile

4.1 Gender

Figure 6 compares the Council’s gender profile with that of the East of England’s working population. The Council has a much greater proportion of women employees (65%) than the region (46%). This is true for both full-time and part-time work. This is a

favourable outturn when compared to Local Authorities in general where 75% of staff are female with 53.55% of those working on a part-time basis (Local Government Workforce Demographics 2010) The flexible working options offered by Councils often attract female employees who may have caring commitments. The ratio of female to male workers at the Council has remained consistent over the last few years. There has been a slight increase in the number of part-time workers.

Figure 6



4.2 Ethnicity

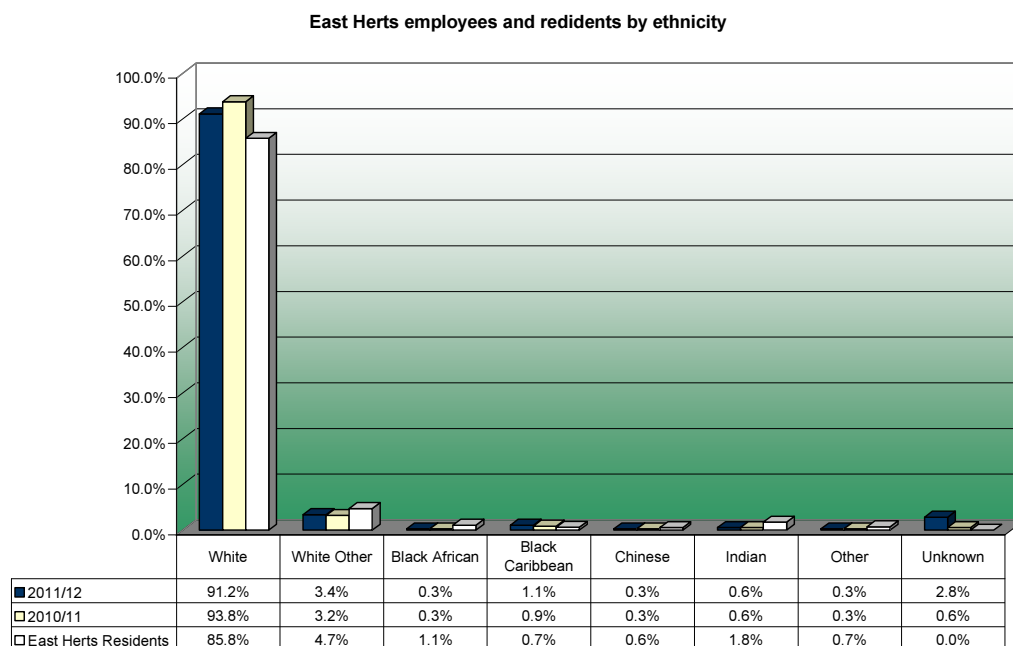
Figure 7 compares the Council's staff profile with that of the District's population (Resident Population Estimates by Ethnic Group, All Persons, ONS, 2009). Both the Council and the District are predominately white although the Council is overrepresented with 91.2% against 85.8%.

The Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population of the district is 9.6% compared to the Council where 6% of the workforce are within the BME category. This has increased slightly since 2010/11 when the outturn was 5.6%. All sections of the District's

population remain represented within the Council, albeit not in the same proportions as in the district.

The Council’ target for BME representation within the workforce is 2.30% (HR Management Statistics Report, Human Resources Committee July 2012). The Council current outturn is over this target. This target will be reviewed once the Census 2011 data is available to ensure it remains relevant to the district’s population.

Figure 7



4.3 Age

Figure 8 compares the staff profile by age with the age of East Herts residents.

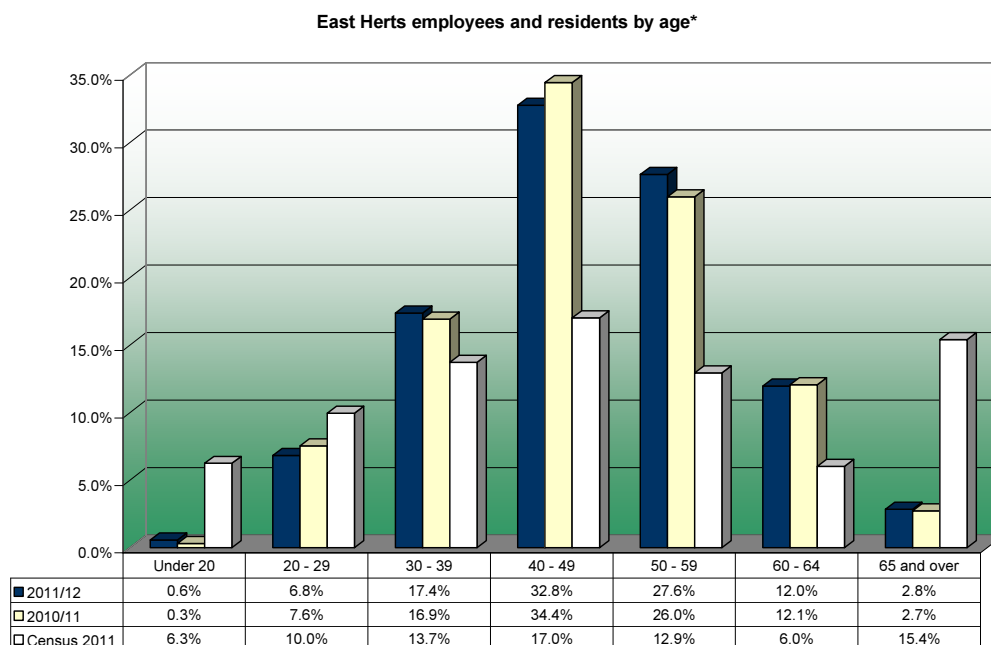
The Council’s workforce remains predominately within the 40 years and over categories with the largest proportion of the workforce within the 40 -49 age range (32.8%). This broadly reflects the district. The majority of residents are over 40 and the largest group of economically active residents are in the 40-49 age range (17.0%)

The removal of the Default Retirement Age in 2011 continues to have an effect on the Council’s workforce profile. Those in the 65+

age group continue to increase (2.7% in 2010/11 to 2.8% in 2011/12). Human Resources are working with the Community Engagement Team on the Council’s response to the national Ageing Well initiative to ensure the Council supports both its residents and employees as the national demographics change.

The Council’s apprenticeship schemes and work with the JobCentre Plus has resulted in a slight increase in those in the under 20 age group.

Figure 8



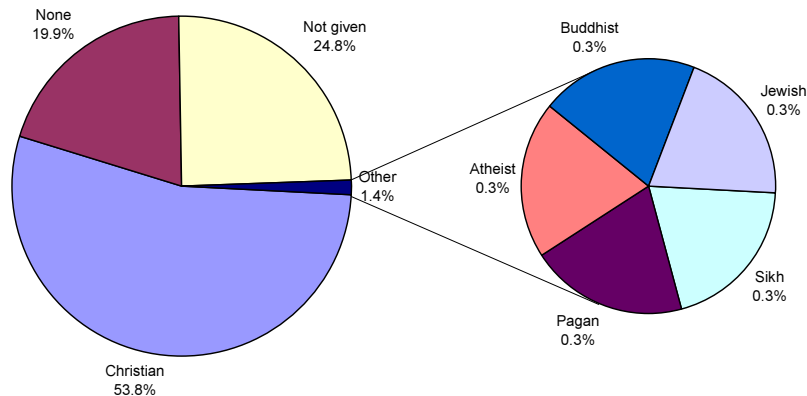
*Census data quoted in the Under 20 category is for the 15 – 19 age bracket as the younger age brackets are not economically active

4.4 Religion and Belief

Figure 9 outlines the religions and beliefs of the Councils workforce. Religion and belief has remained consistent within the Council since the data cleanse exercise in April 2011 which enabled more meaningful reporting.

Figure 9

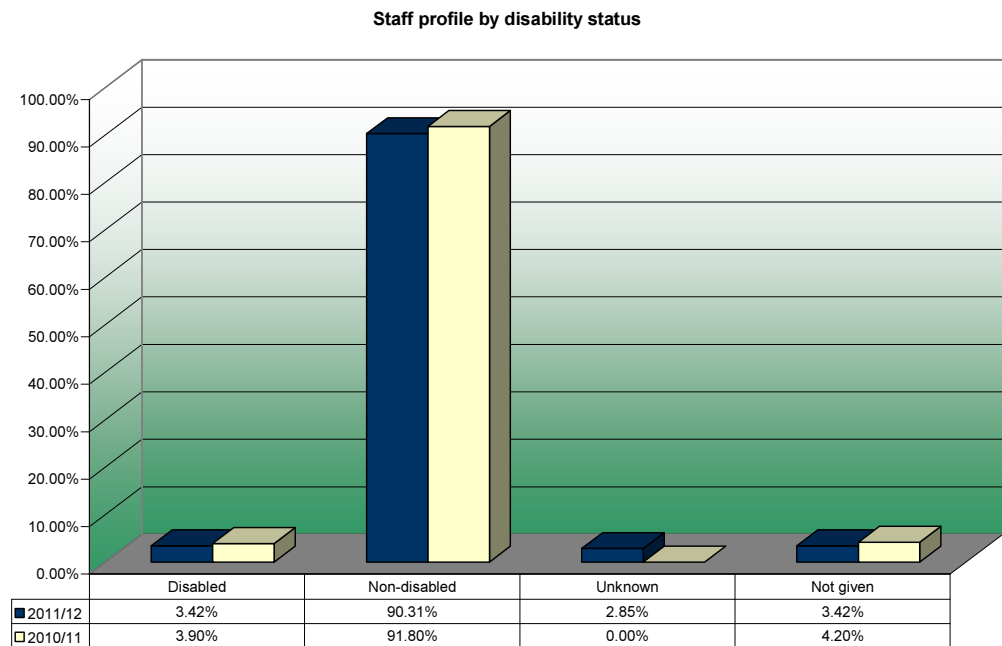
Staff profile by religion & belief



4.5 Disability Status

Figure 10 details the staff profile by disability status. (HR Management Statistics Report, Human Resources Committee July 2012). The current outturn is 3.42%; this is a decrease on the outturn 2010/11 of 3.9%. Currently the disability status of 6% of staff is not known. This is due to staff not wishing to disclose the information (3%) and staff whose data is currently unknown (3%). It is therefore not possible to ascertain whether the Council has met the target of 5.21% (HR Management Statistics Report, Human Resources Committee July 2012). Further training may be needed to explain why the Council asks for the information and encourage staff to disclose.

Figure 10

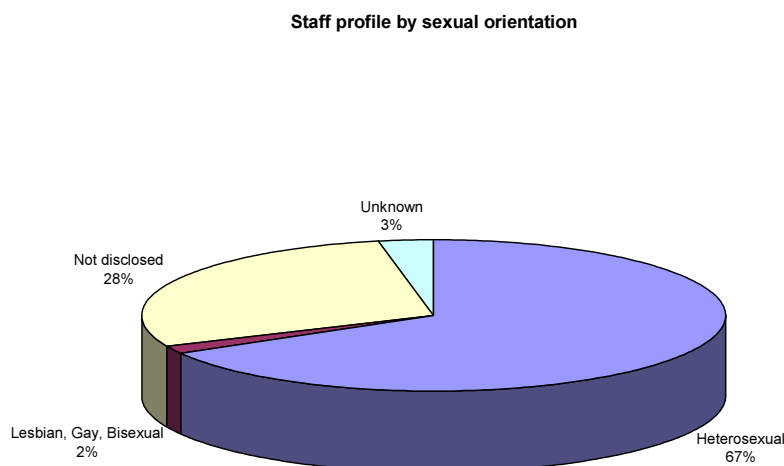


4.6 Sexual Orientation

As part of the data cleanse exercise in 2011 employees were asked to declare their sexual orientation or tick the ‘prefer not to say’ option. Staff responded well to the request with a 97% return rate.

2% of the Council’s workforce indentify as LGB (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual). The government estimates that between 5% - 7% of the UK population are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual.

Figure 11



5 Performance Management

The Council's performance management scheme was reviewed in 2011 and now has five grades:

Exceptional - Performance/contribution consistently exceeds the requirements of the role and all objectives are achieved.

Exceeding Expectations - Performance/contribution on occasion exceeds the requirements of the role and all objectives are achieved.

Meeting Expectations - Performance/contribution meets the requirements of the role and objectives are achieved.

Opportunity for Improvement - Performance/contribution is occasionally below the requirements of the role (some development and support needed).

Immediate Improvement Required - Performance/contribution is consistently below the requirements of the role and immediate improvement is required (development and support needed and being formally managed under the Managing Performance Policy).

All employees should receive an annual performance development review (PDR) in December/ January and a mid-year review. The data in this section is based on the 254 (77% of the workforce) PDRs completed in December/ January 2011/12.

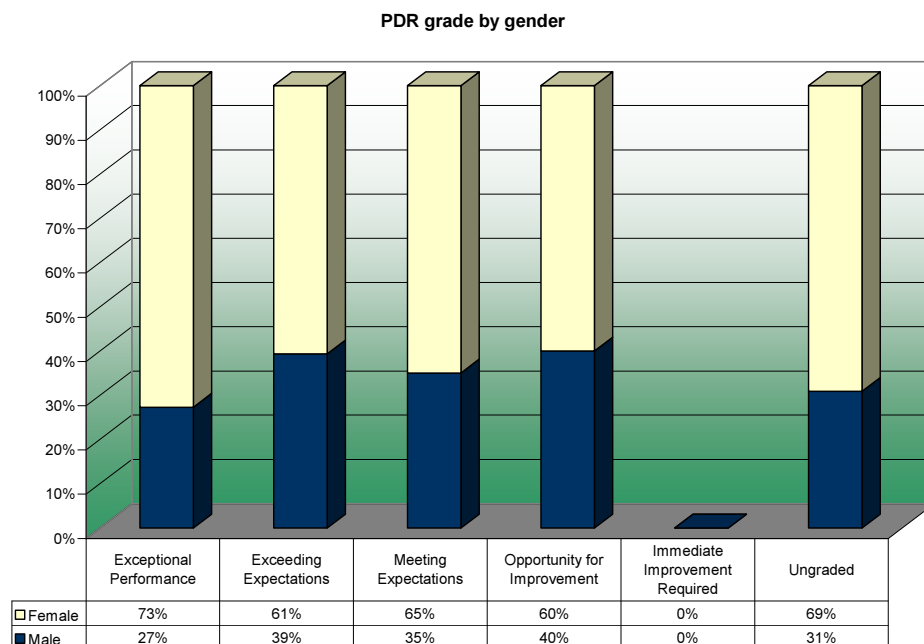
No employees received the ‘Immediate Improvement Required’ grading in 2011/12.

A number of employees have not received a grade. This is for a variety of reasons and the ‘ungraded’ category includes new starters, those on maternity or sick leave and those employees PDRs were not returned to Human Resources on time.

5.1 Gender

‘Meeting Expectations’ grade, which is the rating most employees are expected to achieve, is representative of the Council’s workforce. Women are over represented in the ‘exceptional performance’ grading and men are over represented in the ‘Opportunity for improvement’ grading. However both these categories represent a very small number of employees (16 in total). No issues have been raised and the discrepancies are most likely due to the small sample size.

Figure 12

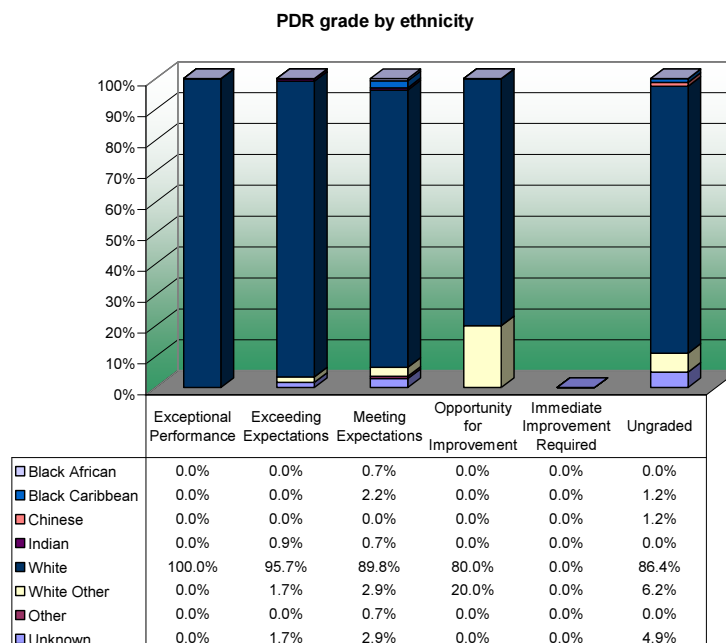


5.2 Ethnicity

Overall the outturns for 2011/12 follow a similar pattern to those in the 2010/11 report.

Once again the ‘Meeting Expectations’ grade, which most staff achieve is broadly reflective of the staff profile. The ‘Exceptional Performance’ grading was solely achieved by white employees but the small sample size may explain the outturn.

Figure 13

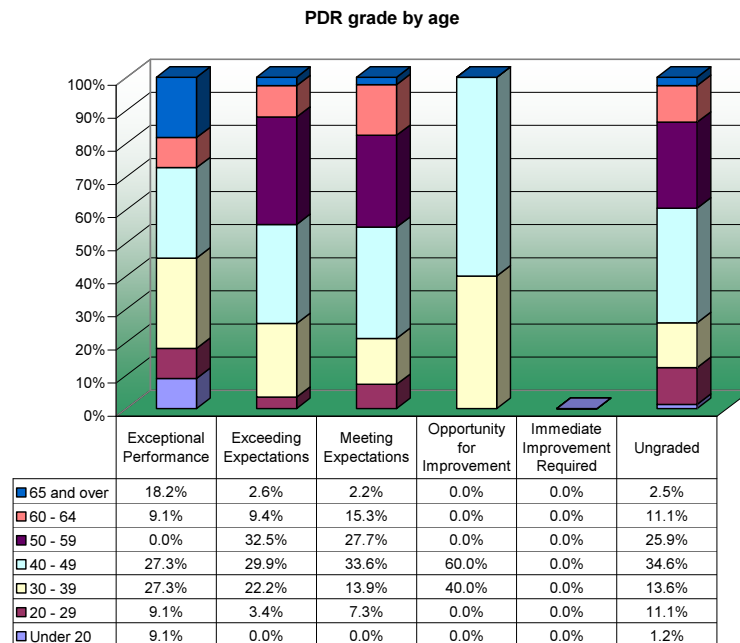


5.3 Age

Overall the distribution of grades is reasonably consistent across the age bands. The percentage of staff receiving ‘Exceptional Performance’ and ‘Opportunity for Improvement’ grades is relatively low and this is why the data appears more concentrated around certain age bands in these grades. As the grading system was reviewed in 2011 comparison with earlier years is difficult.

However in general the pattern is the same, with a more reflected spread around the common grades and more concentrated age groups receiving the highest and lowest grades.

Figure 14

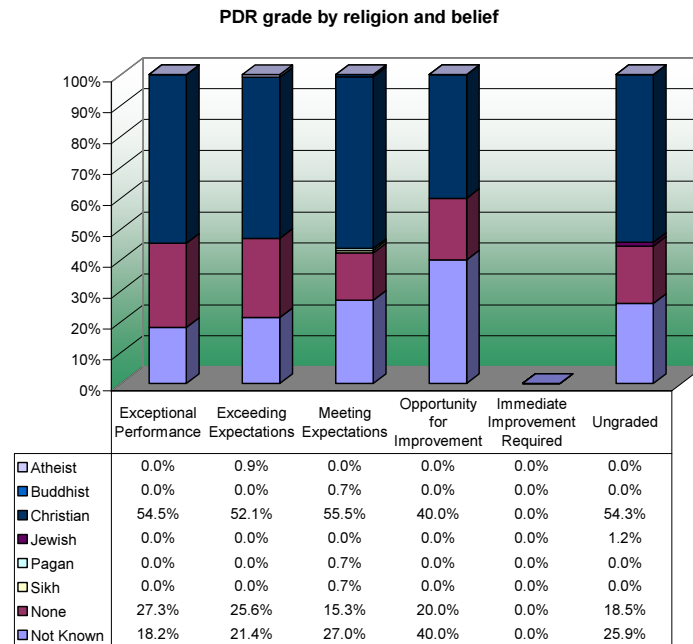


5.4 Religion & Belief

In general the percentages of staff are reflective of the staff profile, which is consistent with 2010/11. It is difficult to fully analyse the data as 24.8% of staff chose not to share their religion or belief. However the data does not give cause for concern.

Figure 15

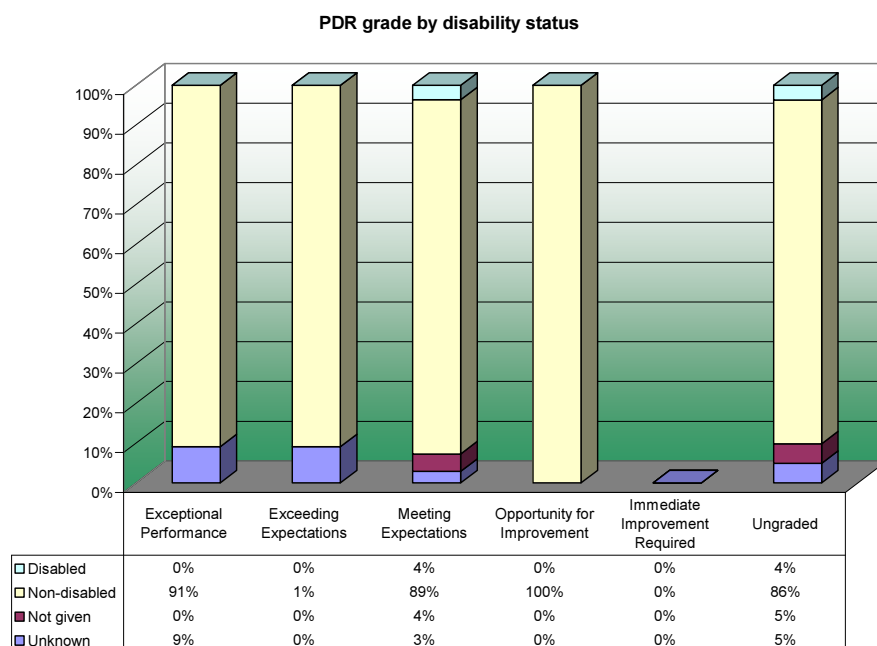
Essential Reference Paper “B”



5.5 Disability Status

The outturns are reflective of the staff profile. As the disability status of 9% of staff in the 'Exceptional Performance' category is unknown it is difficult to analyse this group.

Figure 16



6 Training

The data for training and development is based on staff attendance on in-house training courses. Overall figures 17 – 21 show that training attendees are broadly reflective of the overall staff profile.

Figure 17 shows that women are slightly over represented when compared to the staff profile (73% against 65%)

Figure 22 shows the breakdown of training attendees by full-time/ part-time status. In 2010/11 part-time workers were underrepresented (24.1% of part time attending training compared to 30% of the workforce being part-time). In 2011/12 part time workers attending training was reflective of Council employees as a whole (32% of part time attending training compared to 32% of the workforce being part-time).

Figure 17

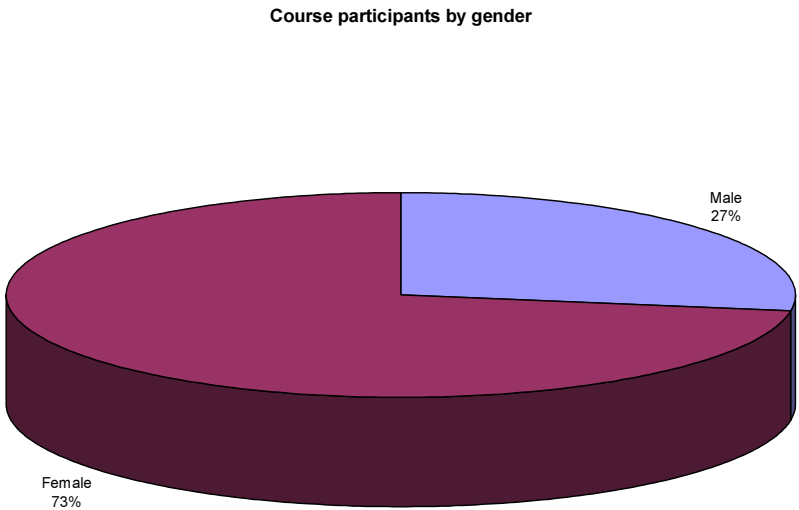


Figure 18

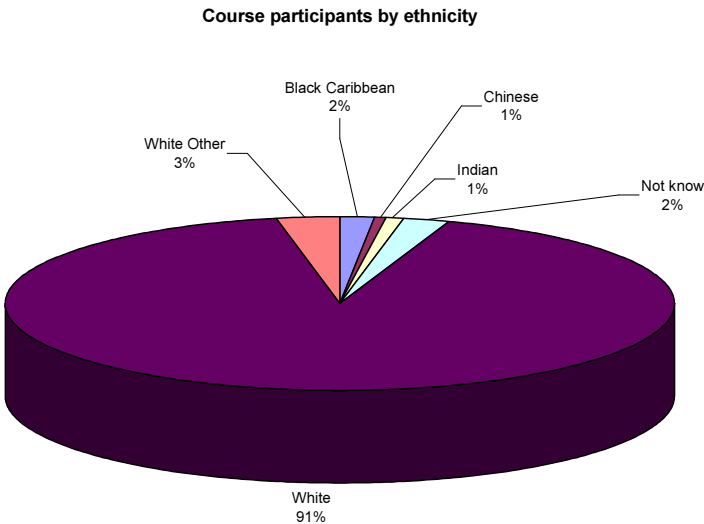


Figure 19

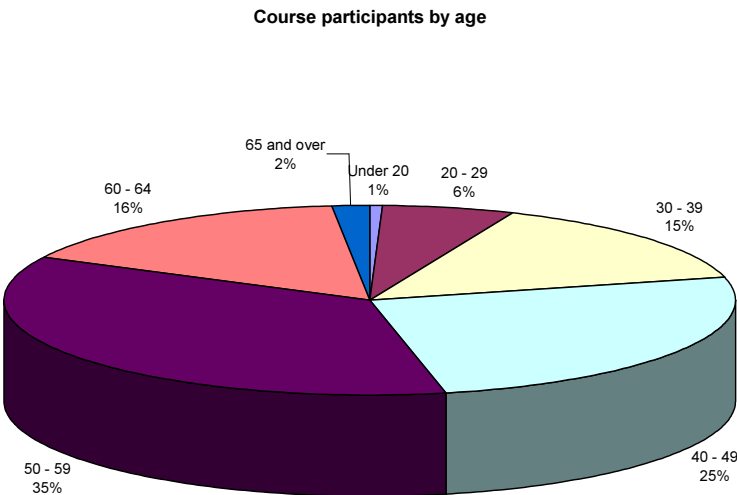


Figure 20

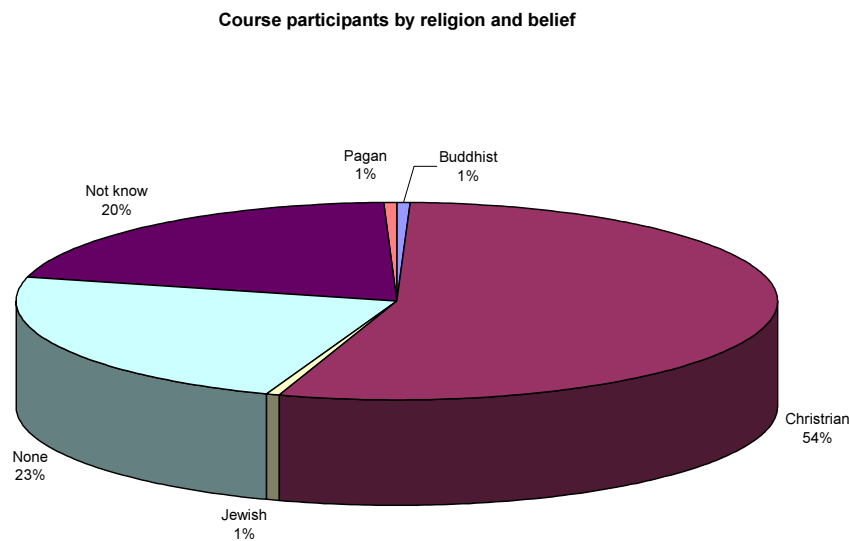


Figure 21

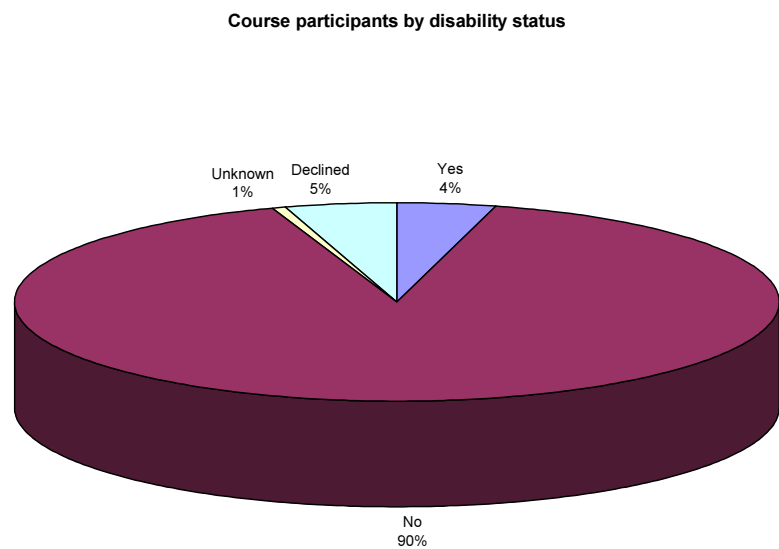
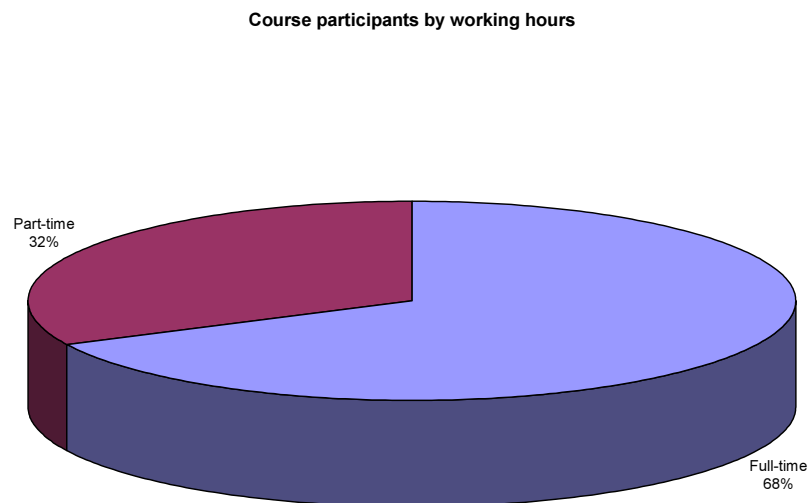


Figure 22



7 Disciplinary & Grievance

The number of disciplinary and grievance cases in 2011/12 were very small and therefore are not representative of the staff profile. The profile of those who took out grievances was 100% female, white and non-disabled and within the 30 – 39 age group.

Of those who were disciplined 67% were female and 33% male. 33% were white, 33% from BME groups and 33% have not declared their ethnicity. 67% were in the 30 - 39 years age group and 33% were in the 50 – 59 years age group. 100% were non disabled.

The Council has clear guidance in its Equality and Diversity Policy, Disciplinary Policy, Grievance Policy and Harassment and Bullying Policy to ensure there is no discrimination within the Council. Staff undergoing disciplinary action or submitting grievances will be continue to be monitored, however there is currently no evidence, through monitoring, staff survey or feedback to suggest that any one group is being disadvantaged.

8 Leavers

This section details leavers (both compulsory and voluntary) by gender, ethnicity, age, religion and belief, disability status and sexual orientation. Some categories (for example disability) are reflective of the staff profile, whereas others are less so (gender). Reasons for leaving were analysed in the Turnover Report for 2011/12 (Human Resources Committee July 2012). This did not raise any causes for concern. Where the percentages below are not reflective of the staff profile this is may due to the small sample size or other factors. For example the percentage of leavers in the 60 – 64 and 65 and over age brackets are far greater than the percentage of employees within these groups. However as many staff choose to retire at this point this overrepresentation is expected.

Figure 23

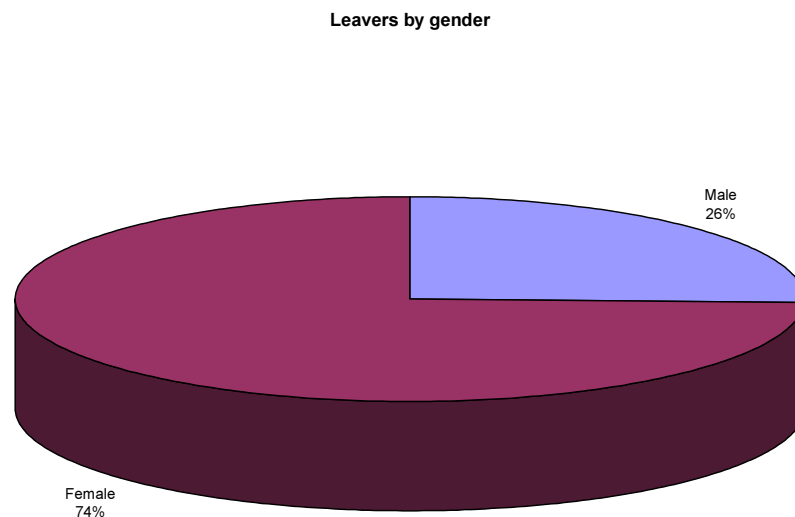


Figure 24

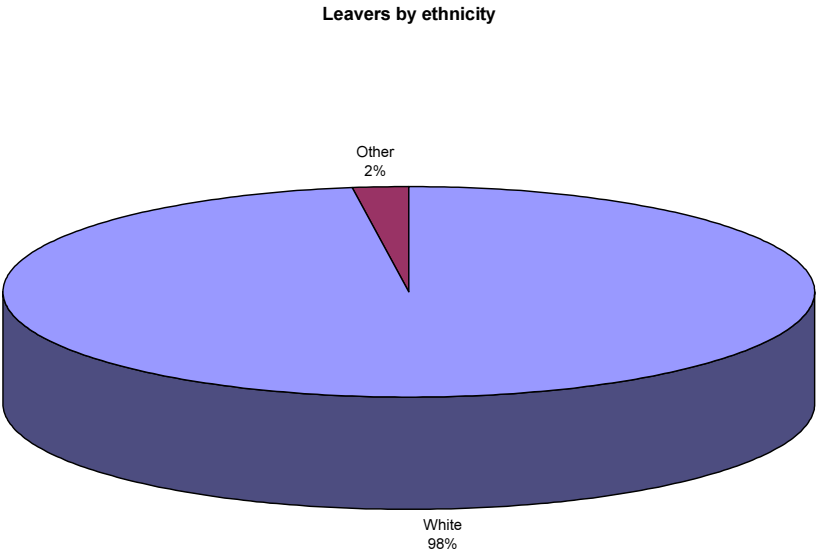


Figure 25

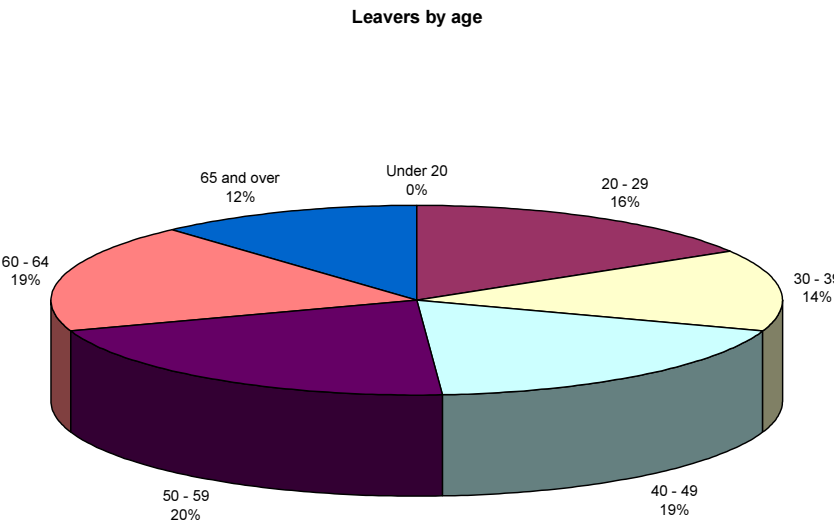


Figure 26

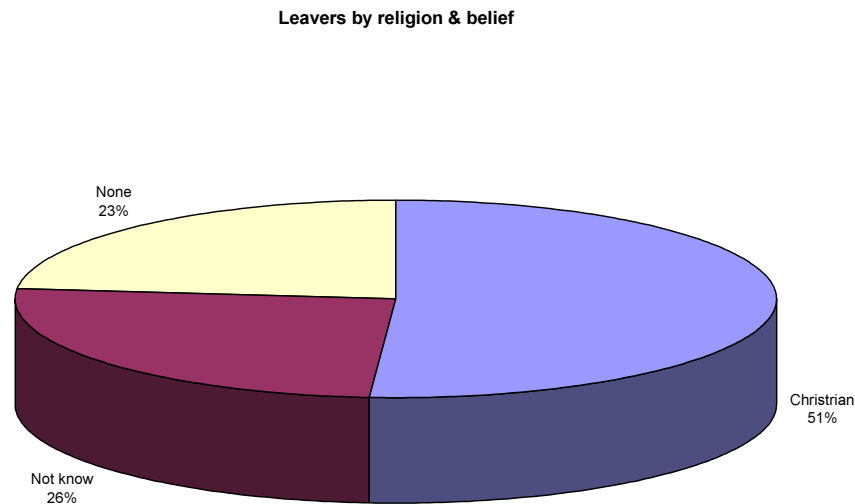


Figure 27

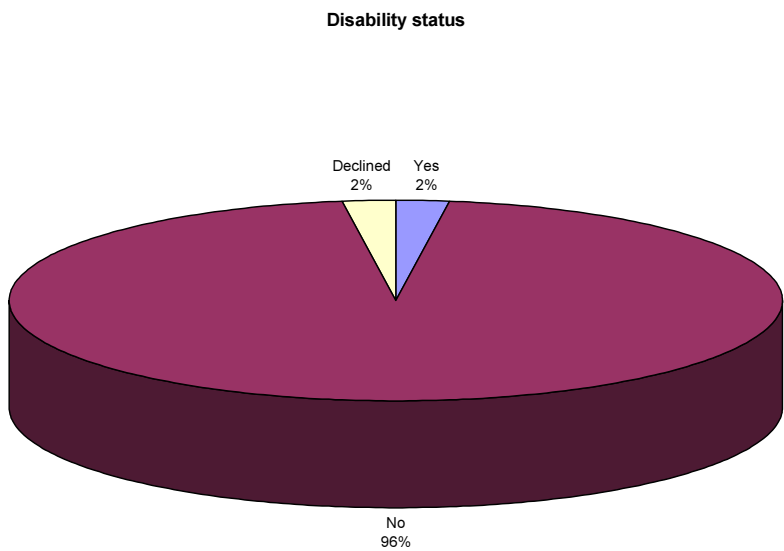
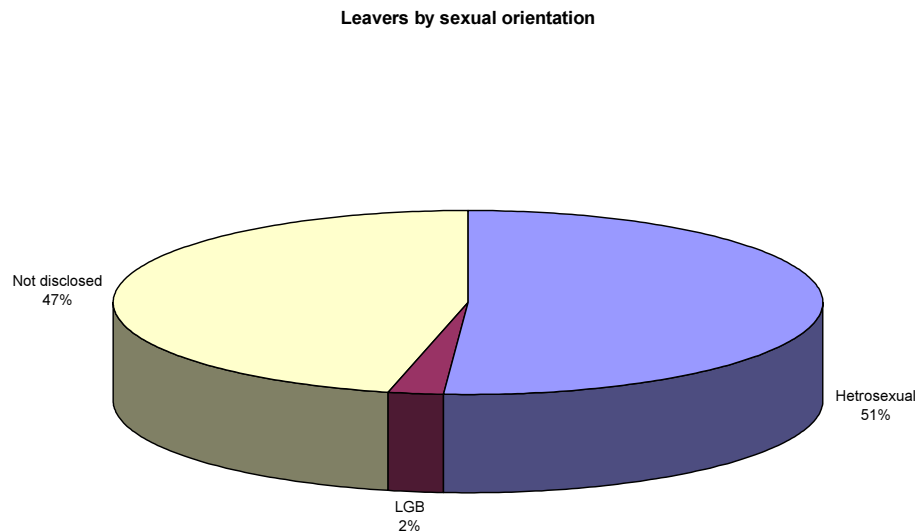


Figure 28



9 Review of earlier recommendations

The following recommendations were put forward to the Human Resources Committee in the 2010/11 Equalities Report:

- 9.1 This report is published on the Council's internet to ensure the Council complies with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) requirement to publish data on equality in the workforces by 31 January 2012.

The report was published on the equality pages of the Council's internet site by 31 January 2012.

- 9.2 The recruitment processes are reviewed to ensure they are not indirectly discriminating against any of those within the protected characteristic groups.

The Council's recruitment policy was reviewed and no evidence was found of indirect discrimination in the recruitment practices. A new policy was adopted in July 2012.

- 9.3 Attendance at training courses should be reviewed to ascertain why part-time workers are underrepresented.

The training timetable was reviewed to ensure courses were at times suitable for part-time workers. The number of part-timers attending training has increased in 2011/12.

- 9.4 A programme of internal Equality Impact Assessments continues for 2012/13 incorporating policy reviews, service restructures and relevant HR procedures.

The programme of Equality Impact Assessments has continued during 2012/13.

10 Recommendations for 2012/13

- 10.1 The Council has a number of equalities monitoring targets for disability and ethnicity. These should be reviewed once the relevant Census 2011 data becomes available.

- 10.2 The data cleanse performed in 2011 should be refreshed again as part of the HR and Payroll system upgrade. Disability status should then be refreshed every two years to ensure the data for employed staff remains accurate.

- 10.3 The recruitment contract with Manpower ceases in April 2012. Any new arrangements for recruitment (in-house or external) should be reviewed to ensure relevant checks are in place for recruitment monitoring and the Council's commitment under the Jobcentre Plus Disability Two Ticks scheme

- 10.4 Employees who undertake training through their services or via the Council's Professional and Vocational training policy should be monitored to enable this information to be reported in the 2012/13 equalities report.