

Staff Annual Equalities Report

2021/22



 @Eastherts

 EastHertsDC

 easthertscouncil

01279 655261

www.eastherts.gov.uk



Contents

Page

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Executive summary	2
3.	Achievements against July 2021–June 22 action plan	5
4.	Employee profile	8
5.	Recruitment	15
6.	Disciplinary, grievance and probation	24
7.	Training	24
8.	Leavers	25
9.	Action plan	31

Introduction

This report provides a detailed analysis of the council's workforce and external applicants applying for jobs, by the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. This report relates to staff and employment only. The council's responsibility for wider equalities issue sits under the Communications, Strategy and Policy service.

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 basis of protected characteristics.

The Act sets out the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender), sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership.

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.

The council is committed to complying with the Equality Act 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 2021/22.

It covers five areas:

- Employee Profile
- Recruitment
- Discipline and Grievance
- Training
- Leavers

Executive Summary

Employee Profile

The council's employee profile as at the end of March 2022 is broadly reflective of the profile of the working population in East Hertfordshire and the East of England in terms of ethnic origin, religion and belief, disability and sexual orientation.

The areas where the employee profile is not as closely reflective are sex (gender) and age. The council has a considerably higher percentage of females than males (73%:27%) compared to the working population of East Hertfordshire (51%:49%), however this is common in the public sector and is further impacted at East Herts by many of the more traditionally male areas of work such as refuse and grounds maintenance being contracted out.

The council has a considerably higher proportion of employees aged between 50 and 64 compared to East Herts residents. The size and structure of the council means that there are a limited number of entry level posts meaning that the majority of posts require experience and are likely to be filled by older individuals who have the required experience. In recent years the council has introduced more trainee and career graded posts which require less experience and support staff developing in the role to both increase the younger age profile and provide succession planning but these posts can also be filled by career changers. The council also has a significant number of long serving employees which also impacts on the workforce age profile. The percentage of employees under the age of 20 (0.3%) is lower than East Herts residents in this age group (5.9%) however it must be noted that it is compulsory to remain in full time education or training until the age of 18.

Recruitment

The report identifies an issue with the recruitment data for 21/22 in that equalities data for almost 50% of applicants is unknown as they either did not complete the equalities monitoring form (this the main reason) or chose not to disclose their equalities data. This makes the data analysis much less reliable and not statistically significant. The application form in use for the data in this report was a Microsoft Word application form which had a separate equalities monitoring form which many candidates chose not to complete or missed. We have now procured and implemented an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) which has the equalities form as an automatic next step on from the application form. This should improve recruitment equalities data for the next

report although the system was not introduced until August 2022 so we will not see a full year's benefit until the 23/24 report.

From the data that we do have however, in 2021/22 the council was successful in attracting a diverse range of external applicants in terms of most of the protected characteristics. The council was particularly successful in attracting applicants from the 20-29 age group, from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups and applicants who are lesbian, gay or bisexual, when compared with the overall East Herts population.

At the shortlisting stage, the conversion from application to shortlist is closely aligned for males (29% to 30%) and increases slightly for females (36% to 42%). There is an increase in the percentage of white applicants from application to shortlisting (39.1% to 46.5%). For applicants from BAME groups, there is an increase from application to shortlisting (14.3% to 17.2%). For the 20-29, 30-39 and 40-49 age groups the percentages of those applying compared to those shortlisted stayed fairly closely aligned. For the Under 20 and 60-64 categories the percentage decreased to 0% at the shortlisting stage but this equated to just 4 applicants in total. In 2021/22, there were 7 applicants (2.7%) who stated that they have a disability. Of these, 4 met the essential criteria and were shortlisted for interview. 3.9% of applicants were lesbian, gay or bisexual and 4% were shortlisted.

At the interview stage, there is an increase in 5 percentage points between the number of females being shortlisted to appointed and a reduction of 11 percentage points between the number of males being shortlisted to appointed. This may indicate some potential bias, however the change is based on just 36 appointments and the gender of 35% of the appointees is unknown. The conversion from shortlisting to appointment drops slightly for both white applicants (46.5% to 44.4%) and BAME applicants (17.2% to 13.9%) but increases for 'Unknowns'. In terms of age, from the shortlisting to appointment stage the percentage reduced in the 20-29 and 40-49 age categories and increased in the 30-39 and 50-59 age categories. Of the 4 disabled applicants who met the essential criteria and were shortlisted for interview, unfortunately none were appointed. The percentage of lesbian, gay or bisexual applicants decreases from 4% at shortlist to 2.8% at interview stage.

Discipline & Grievance and Training

There was one formal disciplinary case and one formal grievance in 2021/22. We are unable to report on equality data due to the possibility of the individuals being identifiable.

We are satisfied that training and development is provided on a fair and equal basis across the council and allows all employees to take advantage of the opportunities.

Leavers

The report found that there were no concerns regarding leavers in terms of gender, ethnic origin, religion and belief, and sexual orientation.

There were 4 times the percentage of leavers in the 65-75 age group but this is due to employees in this age group taking retirement. The percentage of leavers in the 20-29, 30-39 and 40-49 age groups were higher than the percentage of employees in these age ranges. This is most likely to be for career progression and due to the small teams at the council employees may have to seek this progression outside of the council.

The percentage of leavers with a disability (6.8%) was slightly higher than the percentage of employees with a disability (4%). HR have reviewed exit questionnaires which has also not indicated any concerns regarding disability.

Action plan

All actions in the 21/22 action plan have either been progressed or rolled forward into the 22/23 action plan.

Achievements against July 2021 – June 22 staff & employment equality action plan

Action	Progress
Employee Profile	
To complete the required annual Gender Pay Gap report for 2021.	This was published in March 2022
Develop guidance on supporting employees who are changing gender so that best practice is available to both staff and managers where required. This will be supported by the HCC Equalities Officer.	This has not been progressed due to other work priorities and the Equality Officer leaving and not being replaced. This will be carried forward to the action plan for 22/23.
Send all staff a reminder to check and update their personal details on MyView ahead of the data being analysed for the next annual equalities report to ensure we have fuller rather than partial data (especially religion, sexual orientation and disability) reminding staff that we are not interested in their individual data but global percentages.	This was carried out in February 2022 ahead of the report being run.
Recruitment	
Continue to require managers to return all recruitment paperwork before an offer letter can be sent out to ensure HR have full shortlisting data to be able to report on	This has been in place since October 2019 and has improved the shortlisting data. However despite data now being consistently collected from shortlisting panels, a significant number of candidates are still choosing not to complete the equalities form or choosing 'Prefer not to say'. In August 2022 we launched our new Applicant Tracking System (ATS) which includes the equalities form as an automatic next step on

	from the application form to improve recruitment equalities data (as opposed to a separate form which we had before which candidates often missed or did not complete).
Each interview panel chair to give consideration to the diversity of the interview panel and where possible try to ensure the panel is as diverse. Where this is not possible try to ensure that other elements of the panel show staff diversity, for example 'meet the team' sessions to demonstrate the diversity at East Herts and to appear as welcoming as possible to applicants of all backgrounds.	The HR team have been encouraging managers to try to ensure that interview panels are as diverse as possible and some 'meet the team' sessions have taken place. Ultimately some teams are limited in terms of how diverse they are so it is not always possible to demonstrate a full range of diversity in every recruitment process.
Work with Shaw Trust to advertise our jobs with them to attract more disabled applicants.	This has not been progressed due to other work priorities and will be carried forward to the action plan for 22/23.
Finalise staff case studies that demonstrate diversity in our workforce and use them as part of our recruitment literature	The case studies were finalised and are on the council's careers site which is included with our package with the ATS provider. This is where all of the council's jobs are advertised.
Implement an ATS that will include an electronic application form which automatically directs applicants to the equalities monitoring form and also enables name blind recruitment	This was implemented in August 2022, later than planned due to delays with IT and name blinding. Unfortunately, the system has had to be implemented without name blinding as the system was losing key data from the CVs in the name blinding process. We are waiting for an alternative solution from the ATS providers.
Discipline, Grievance and Probation	
Continue to monitor equalities data for all disciplinary, grievance and formal probationary cases.	This data has been collected and is contained within this report.
Training	
Continue to ensure that all staff complete the equality and diversity module as part of the mandatory e-learning training programme. Offer further equalities based training as identified	All staff were expected to complete the equality and diversity module as part of the mandatory e-learning programme run in November 2021.

<p>by annual training needs analysis undertaken by the OD and HR Co-ordinator.</p>	
<p>Continue to ensure that managers are briefed in the PDR process and that effective and appropriate personal development plans are put in place for all employees, including those rated as 'exceeding expectations' and above.</p>	<p>Managers are provided with guidance on the PDR process and HR Officers provide a briefing to new managers in the service areas they support. PDR training for all managers has been delivered. The HR and OD Manager reviews PDRs to inform the annual training plan. PDRs for 21/22 have been recorded and the training plan is in development.</p>
<p>Continue to develop both wellbeing programmes/guidance and maintain sufficient Mental Health First Aiders to support staff experiencing mental health issues.</p>	<p>The Live Well Work Well Programme for 2022-23 includes support for staff in relation to mental health. Training and refresher training was delivered in September 2021 for new and existing Mental Health First Aiders.</p>

Employee profile

Introduction

This section provides information on employees employed by the council as at 31 March 2022. Casual employees, agency workers and contractors are not included. The total number of employees employed by the council as at 31 March 2022 was a headcount of 313. This has decreased from 333 in the previous year.

The data has been analysed using 6 of the 9 protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 as follows:

- Sex (Gender)
- Ethnic origin
- Age
- Religion or Belief
- Disability status
- Sexual orientation

Although marital status data is recorded this is not reportable from the HR system.

Pregnancy is not a permanent characteristic but a state in time. 6 employees took maternity leave in 2021/22 and it should be noted that no concerns have been raised regarding this protected characteristic.

Although the HR system has capacity for employees to indicate if they are transgender the new starter forms do not request this and instead the council has focused on the current gender and not the past in line with our recruitment forms. It is worth noting there have never been any complaints in this area. The council does employ staff who have changed gender without any complaints being made and HR are going to develop guidance on supporting employees who are changing gender so that best practice is available to both staff and managers where required.

Various comparison data has been used to understand how the employee profile of the council compares to the wider context in which it operates and to identify whether there are any areas of concern which the council needs to take action on.

Where possible, comparisons have been made at the most local level (i.e. with East Herts residents) and using the most recent data available. However where this data

has been unavailable at this level, comparisons have been made with East of England residents. Most of the comparison data has been taken from either the Nomis or Office for National Statistics (ONS) websites.

It is noted that the Census data is over 10 years out of date but we have been unable to source more up to date data for religious belief, ethnic origin and disability as the 2021 Census data is not available yet for these areas.

Sex (Gender)

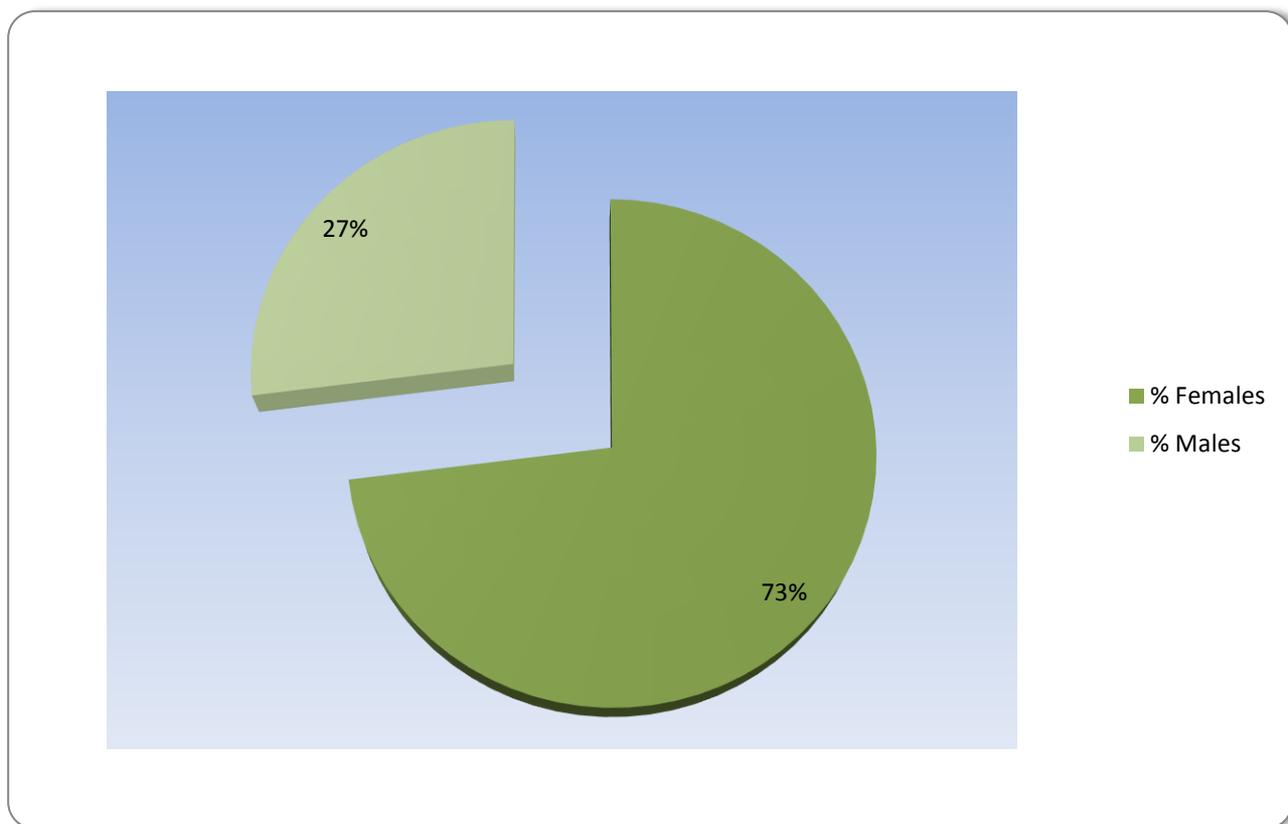


Figure 1.0 Employee profile by sex

Figure 1.0 shows the sex profile of employees at the council. The profile does not closely reflect that of the East Herts working population. The council has a considerably lower percentage of male employees (27%) compared to the overall male population in East Herts (49%) (Census 2021).

A high female to male workforce ratio is common in public sector with 68% being female and 32% being male (ONS: Public sector employment by gender (2015)). In addition, the council has contracted out many of the more traditionally male dominated

areas of work such as refuse, grounds maintenance and IT which has affected the male to female ratio further. The percentage of males working at the council has increased by 1 percentage point this year.

Ethnic origin

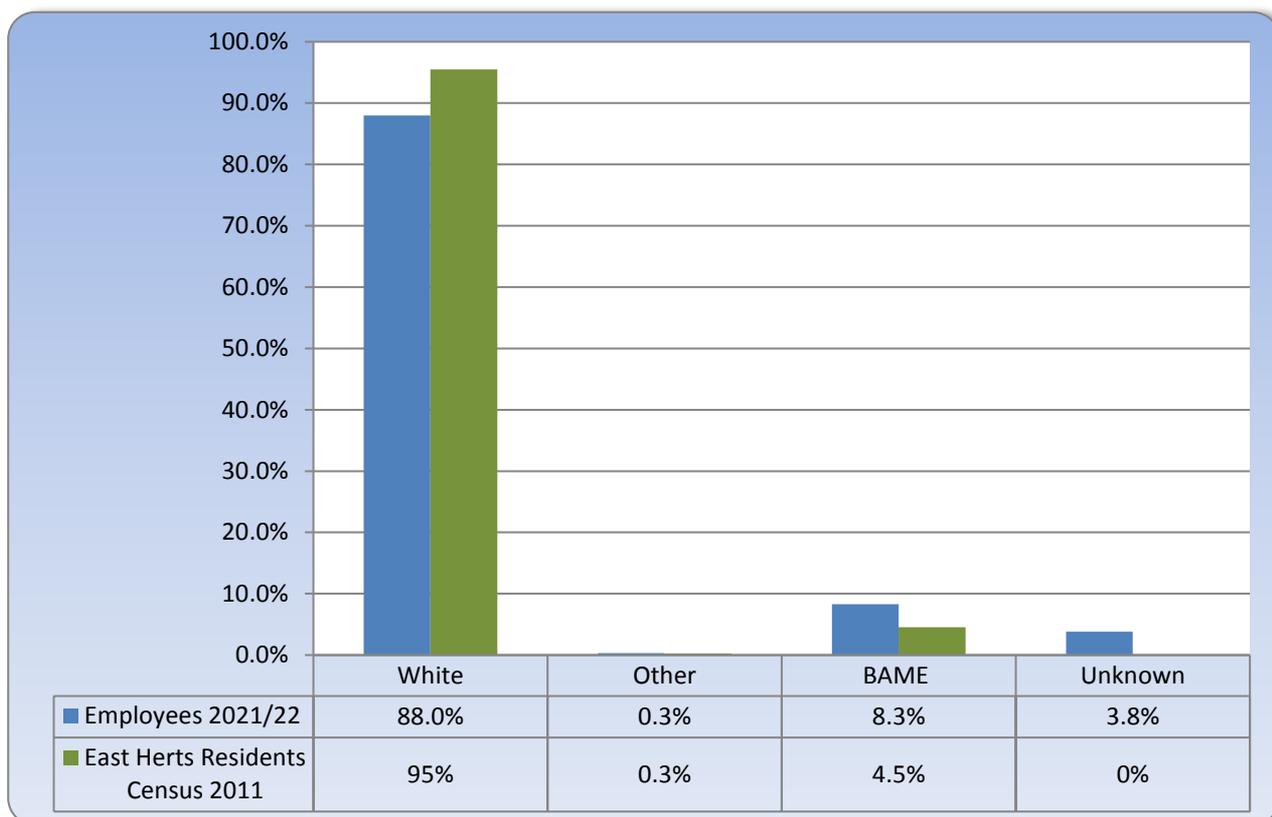


Figure 2.0 Employee profile by ethnic origin

Source: ONS Census 2011 - Ethnic Group by Measures

Figure 2.0 shows that the percentage of black and minority ethnic employees is above that of East Herts residents as at the Census in 2011. The EHC White origin compared to the census is 7 percentage points down, 3.8% of staff are unknown, unfortunately this has not improved since last year despite asking staff to refresh their equalities data. There is no more recent data available from ONS for East Herts, Hertfordshire or the East of England for comparison purposes. There should be some data available from the 2021 Census when the next report is run. The total percentage of BAME employees has increased from 6.9% in 2020/21 to 8.3% in 2021/22 and is higher than the BAME residents in East Herts (4.5%). It is positive to see that the council is attracting and retaining a wider diversity of staff in terms of ethnicity.

Age

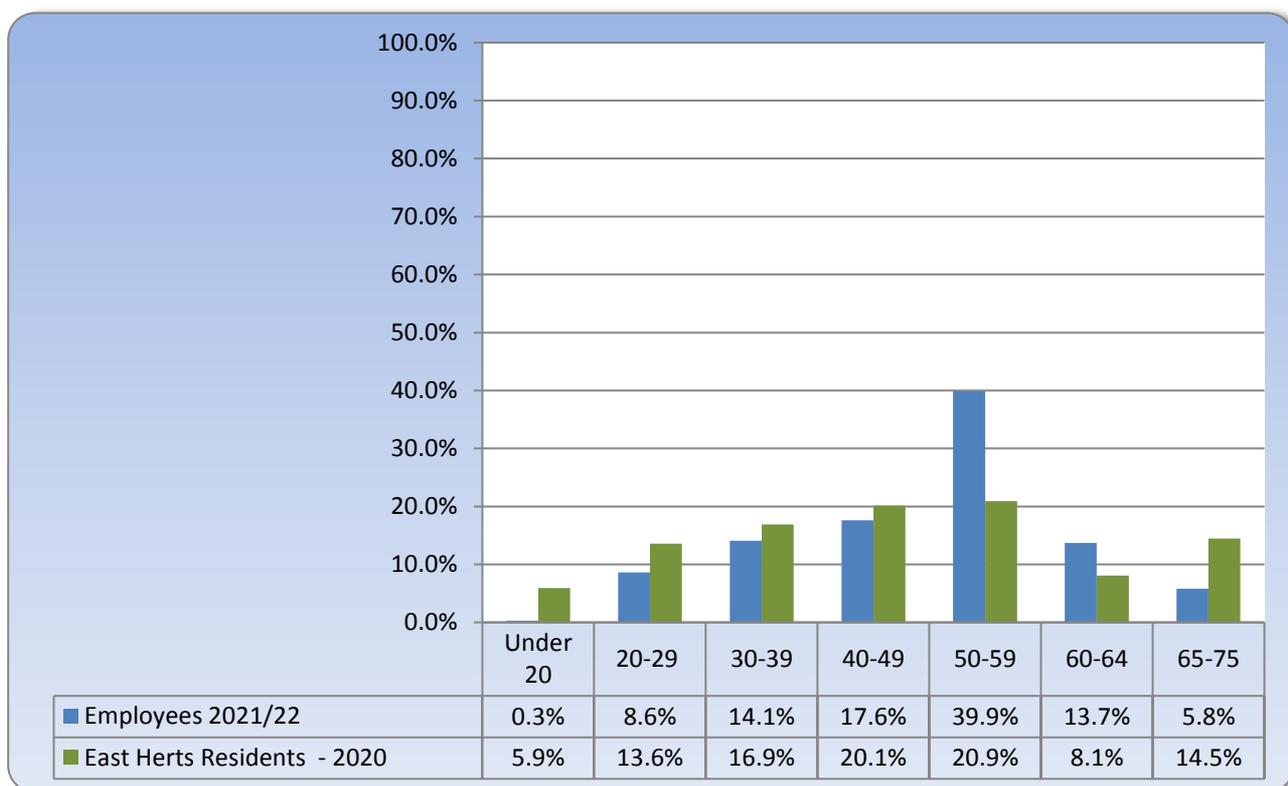


Figure 3.0 Employee profile by age

Source: Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics – Population Estimates in East Herts (2020)

Note: The percentages shown for East Herts residents are the percentage of 16-75 year olds, not the total population.

Figure 3.0 shows that the council has a considerably higher proportion of employees aged between 50 and 64 compared to East Herts residents. 53% of employees are in the 50-59 and 60-64 age groups compared to 29% of East Herts residents in these age groups. The size and structure of the council means that there are a limited number of entry level posts meaning that the majority of posts require experience and are likely to be filled by older individuals who have the required experience. The council has introduced more trainee and career graded posts (in recent years) which require less experience and support staff developing in the role to both increase the younger age profile and provide succession planning but these posts can also be filled by career changers with appointment based on merit. The council also has a significant number of long serving employees which also impacts on the workforce age profile.

The percentage of employees under the age of 20 is lower than East Herts residents in this age group (5.9%) however this is likely to be due to it being compulsory to remain in full time education or training until the age of 18. The percentages of staff in the different age groups has not substantially changed from 2020/21.

Although there are differences in the age profile of the workforce to that of the East Herts residents there are no significant concerns or evidence of discrimination or bias.

Religion and Belief

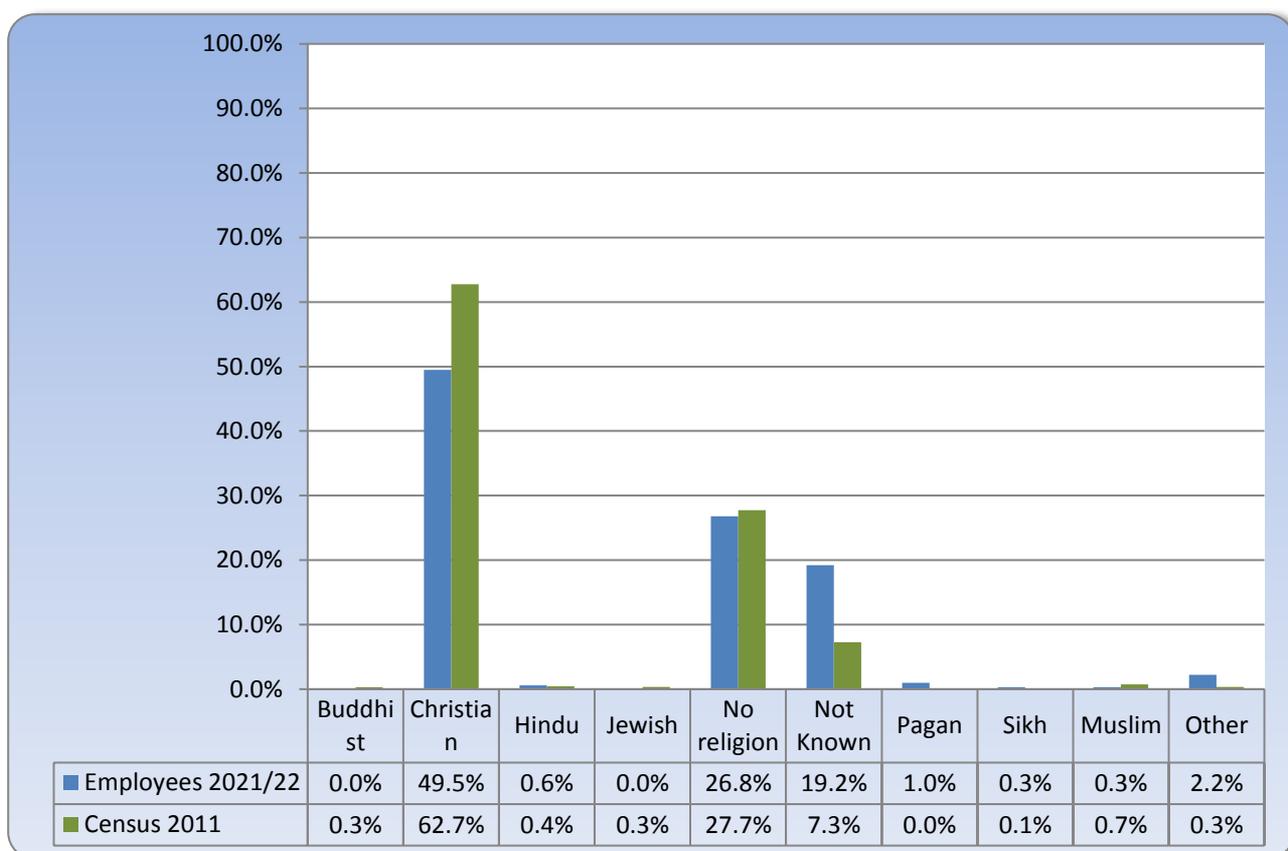


Figure 4.0 Employee profile by religion and belief

Source: ONS Census 2011 - Religion

Figure 4.0 shows that the religions and beliefs of employees are generally reflective of East Herts residents and therefore there are no suggested concerns in this area, although it should be noted that the census data is somewhat out of date. As is common with employment data on Religion (staff often do not wish to state) a significant amount of staff (19.2%) have not stated or have indicated they do not wish to. The percentages of staff under each religion remain similar to the past two years.

Disability

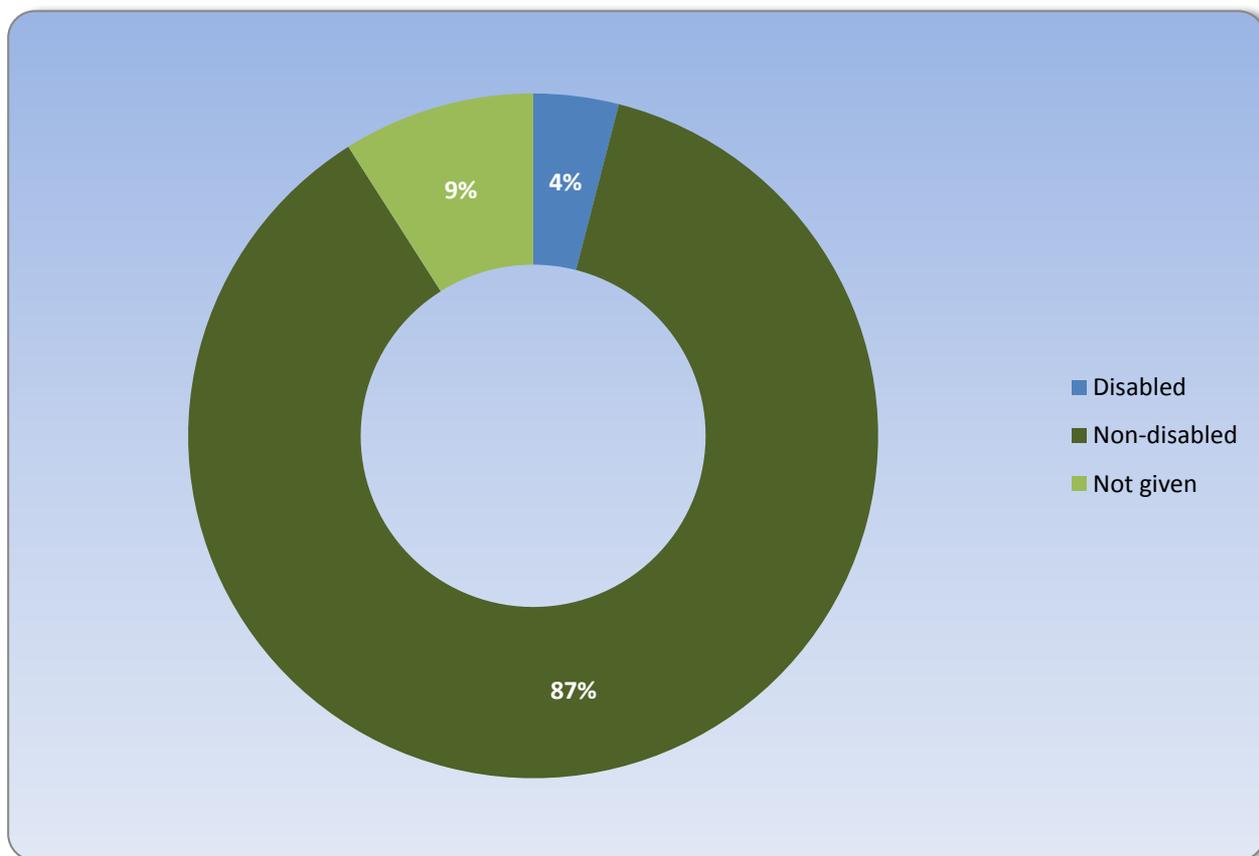


Figure 5.0 Employee profile by disability status

Figure 5.0 shows that as at 31 March 2022, 4% of employees had a disability, which is one percentage point lower than 2020/21. This is slightly less than the East Herts residents with a disability (5%) (ONS Census 2011 - Long Term Health Problem or Disability). It is worth noting however that the 2011 Census data was household based (not individual) and in addition people with a long term health problem may be unfit to work.

Sexual Orientation

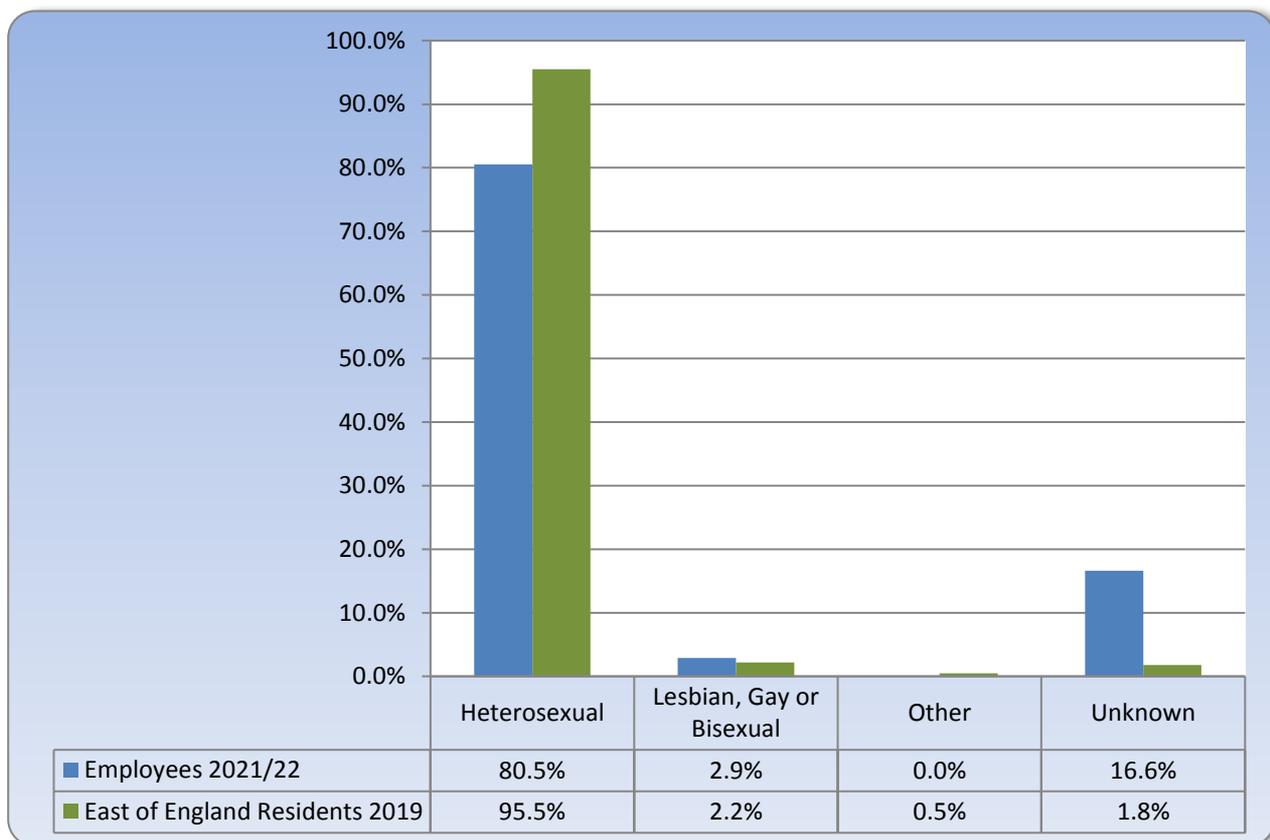


Figure 6.0 Employee profile by sexual orientation

Source: ONS – Sexual Identity by Region (East of England) – 2019

Figure 6.0 shows that there are no indicated concerns with regard to the council’s employee profile in terms of sexual orientation when compared to much more recent 2018 data. The council has less heterosexuals in terms of percentage but has a higher unknown percentage which would close the gap. There is close alignment with lesbian, gay and bisexual employees where EHC had a very slightly higher percentage of 2.9% compared to residents in the East of England in 2019 (2.2%). The percentage of lesbian, gay and bisexual employees has increased by 0.5 of a percentage point since 2020/21.

Recruitment

Introduction

This section provides information on external applicants who applied for jobs at the council between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022. Data has been collected at the application, shortlist and appointment stages. There were 49 external recruitment campaigns between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022. A total of 258 external applicants applied for jobs with the council.

Recruitment data has been analysed using 5 of the 9 protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010:

- Sex (Gender)
- Ethnic origin
- Age
- Disability status
- Sexual orientation

The council's position is that Transgender people should be respected as part of the gender they have chosen and therefore does not monitor separately in terms of their past gender or transition they have undertaken.

In terms of pregnancy and marital status these are not asked for at the recruitment stage. Regarding pregnancy, individuals may not wish to disclose this and by asking the wrong message maybe given to potential candidates and this also applies to a lesser extent to marital status (this is also a protected characteristic that can change and again could cause concern for candidate if asked based on previous discrimination in the employment market to newly married women re potential pregnancy/maternity in the future).

Although data is collected for religion or belief, this has not been reported on due to the low number of applicants reporting a religion other than Christian or not stated (4% in total across all other religions).

Due to the small numbers in each of the individual BAME groups, they have been combined and include:

- Mixed/Multiple Ethnic – includes White & Black Caribbean, White & Black African, White and Asian, Other mixed.

- Asian/Asian British – includes Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Other Asian.
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British – includes African, Caribbean, Other Black.
- Other – includes Arab, Any other ethnic group.

'White' includes English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British, Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Other White.

(Definitions of Ethnic Groups taken from the 2011 Census)

The data has been collected from the Equalities Monitoring Forms which are part of the application form and are detached before sending to managers. The application form in use for the data in this report was a Microsoft Word application form which had a separate equalities monitoring form which many candidates chose not to complete or missed. Unfortunately this means that the percentage of 'Unknowns' is as high as 49% in some areas. This makes the data analysis much less reliable and not statistically significant. We have now procured and implemented an ATS which has the equalities form as an automatic next step on from the application form. This should improve recruitment equalities data for the next report although the system was not introduced until August 2022 so we will not see a full year's benefit until the 23/24 report.

Although equalities data is mostly known for appointees we have chosen not to populate the data with this known data on our HR system for appointees and have used the original equalities monitoring forms for applicants. By adding data in for appointees this can distort the data when looking at the conversion of applicants from application through to interview and then appointment, particularly because the number of 'Unknowns' is so high.

Comparisons have been drawn to the profile of the working population of East Herts to understand whether the council has been successful in attracting a diverse range of applicants that are reflective of the local population. Where possible, comparisons have been made at the most local level (i.e. with East Herts residents) and using the most recent data available. However where this data has been unavailable at this level, comparisons have been made with East of England residents. Most of the comparison data has been taken from either the Nomis or Office for National Statistics (ONS) websites. It is noted that the Census data is 10 years out of date but we have been unable to source more up to date data for religious belief, ethnic origin and disability as the 2021 Census data is not available yet for these areas.

The equalities data of applicants reaching the shortlisting and appointment stages has been compared to the data of all applicants to understand whether certain groups are being disadvantaged and at what stage of the recruitment process. At the application

stage applicants will drop out of the process where they do not meet the required criteria and at this stage in the process the recruiting manager does not have any equalities information regarding the applicants. Therefore it is particularly important to note the shortlisting to appointment data as it is at this point that there is more opportunity for bias to occur once the recruiting manager has met the applicants.

Sex (Gender)

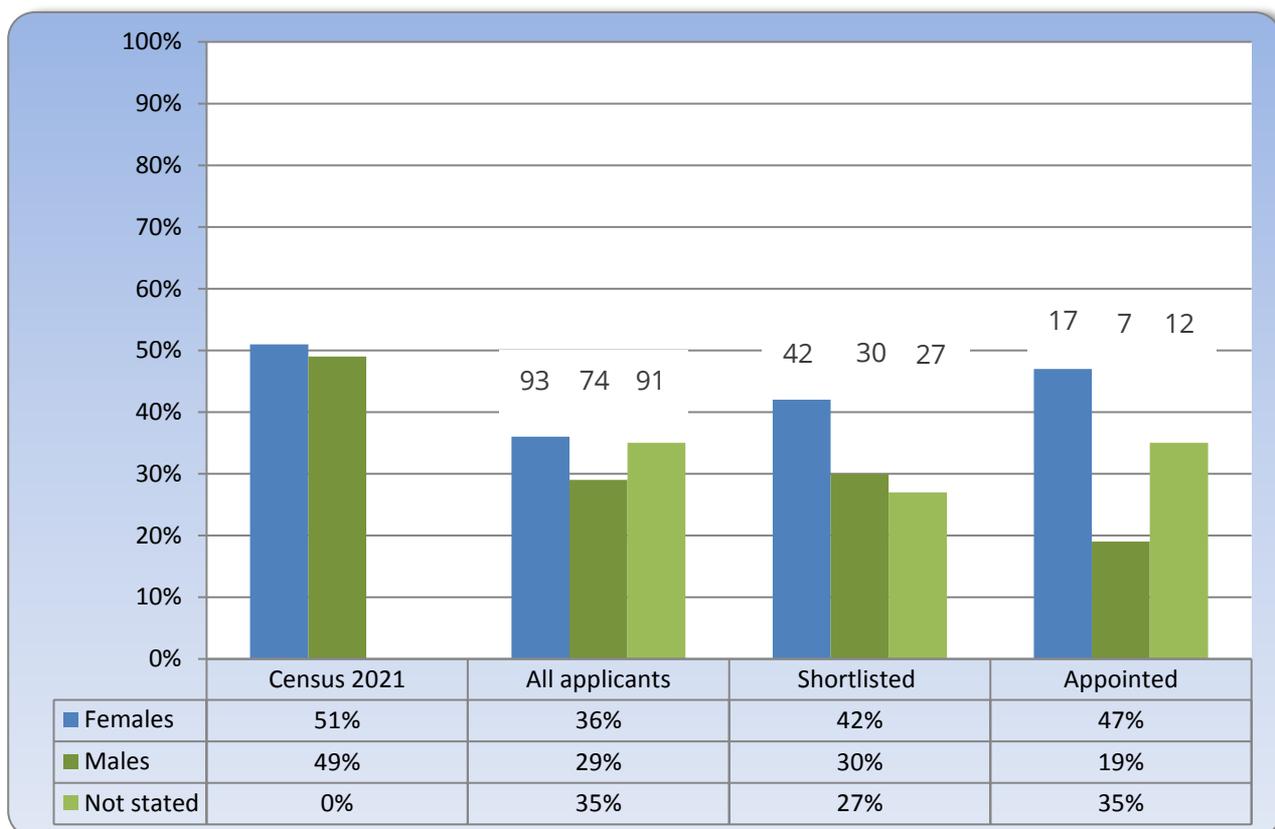


Figure 7.0 Applicant profile by sex compared to the population of East Herts

Source: Census 2021

Figure 7.0 shows that in 2021/22, of those that completed the equalities monitoring form, there was a higher proportion of female applicants than male applicants: 36% (93) of applicants were female and 29% (74) were male compared to the profile of the working population of East Herts (51% and 49% respectively). This is a change from 2020/21 where 31% of applicants were female and 24% were male. However, as can be seen from the data, 35% of applicants either did not complete the equalities form or did not disclose their data.

Figure 7.0 also shows that of the 99 applicants shortlisted for interview, 42 (42%) were female and 30 (30%) were male, with 27 (27%) unknown. Figure 7.0 shows that of the 36 applicants appointed, 17 (47%) were female and 7 (19%) were male. However with such a high percentage of 'Unknowns' it is quite likely that the percentage gap between male and female appointees will be smaller in reality.

The conversion from application to shortlist are closely aligned for both females (36% to 42%) and for males (29% to 30%). There is an increase in 5 percentage points between the number of females being shortlisted to appointed and a reduction of 11 percentage points between the number of males being shortlisted to appointed. This may indicate some potential bias, however the change is based on just 36 appointments and the gender of 35% of the appointees is unknown. Although equalities data is mostly known for appointees we have chosen not to populate the data with this known data on our HR system for appointees and have used the original equalities monitoring forms for applicants. By adding data in for appointees this can distort the data when looking at the conversion of applicants from application through to interview and then appointment, particularly because the number of 'Unknowns' is so high.

Ethnic origin

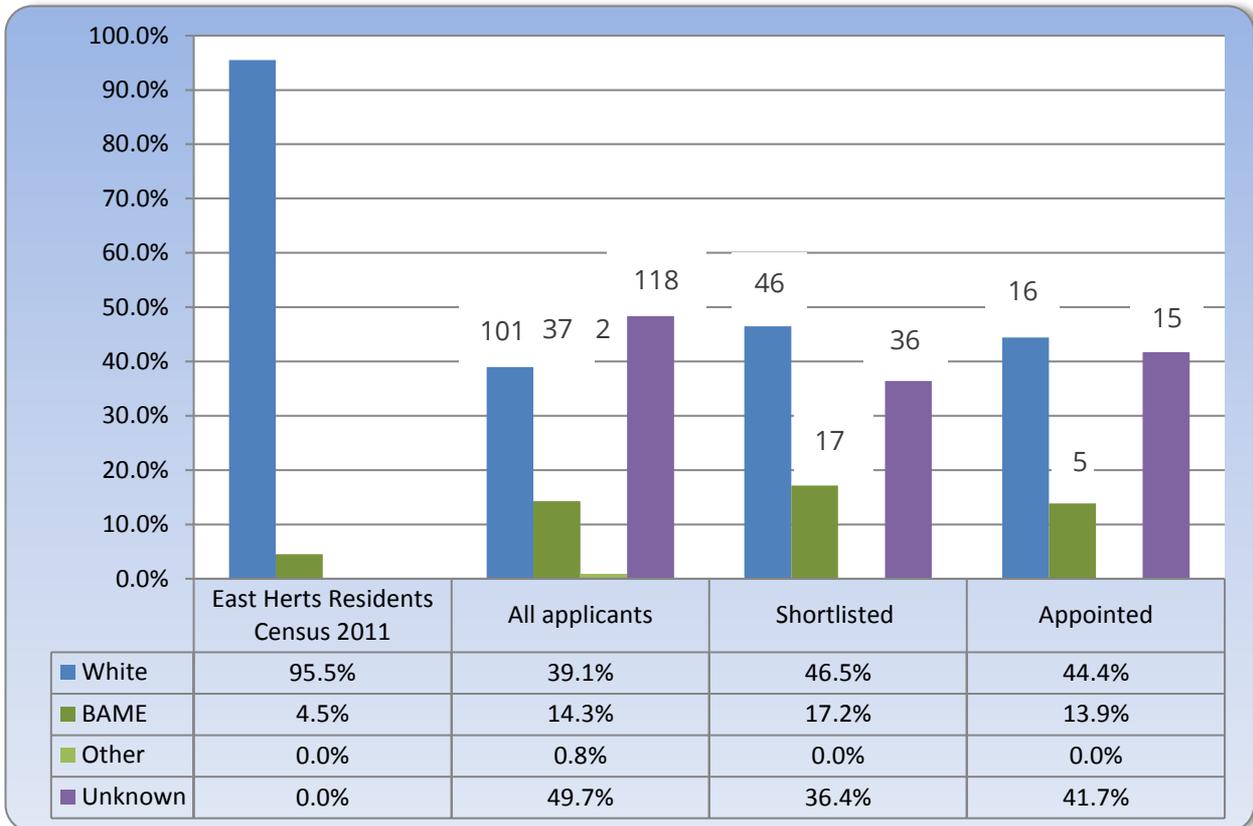


Figure 8.0 Applicant profile by ethnic origin compared to the population of East Herts

Source: ONS Census 2011 - Ethnic Group by Measures

Figure 8.0 shows that in 2021/22 the council attracted applicants from a diverse range of ethnic origins reflective of those of East Herts residents; 37 applicants (14.3%) were from BAME groups which is significantly higher than the percentage of East Herts residents in these groups (4.5%). The figure is also slightly higher than 2020/21 where 13.8% applicants were from BAME groups. However, with the number of 'Unknowns' being at almost 50% of applicants this does make data analysis unreliable.

There is an increase in the percentage of white applicants from application to shortlisting (39.1% to 46.5%) but between shortlisting and appointment it drops (46.5% to 44.4%). For applicants from BAME groups, there is an increase from application to shortlisting (14.3% to 17.2%) and then drops back down to 13.9%. The percentage between application and appointment is closely aligned for BAME applicants which is positive and is an improvement on the 2020/21 data. As reported, equality data is removed from applications, names are shared as the HR system cannot 'blind' these,

managers are trained in equality and avoiding bias so there are sufficient measures in place.

It should also be noted that East Herts has not had challenge from a candidate suggesting any bias or discrimination over a shortlisting decision. The shortlisting process involves a panel scoring candidates against the job person specification criteria and these forms are collected by HR to evidence the merit based scoring undertaken.

Age

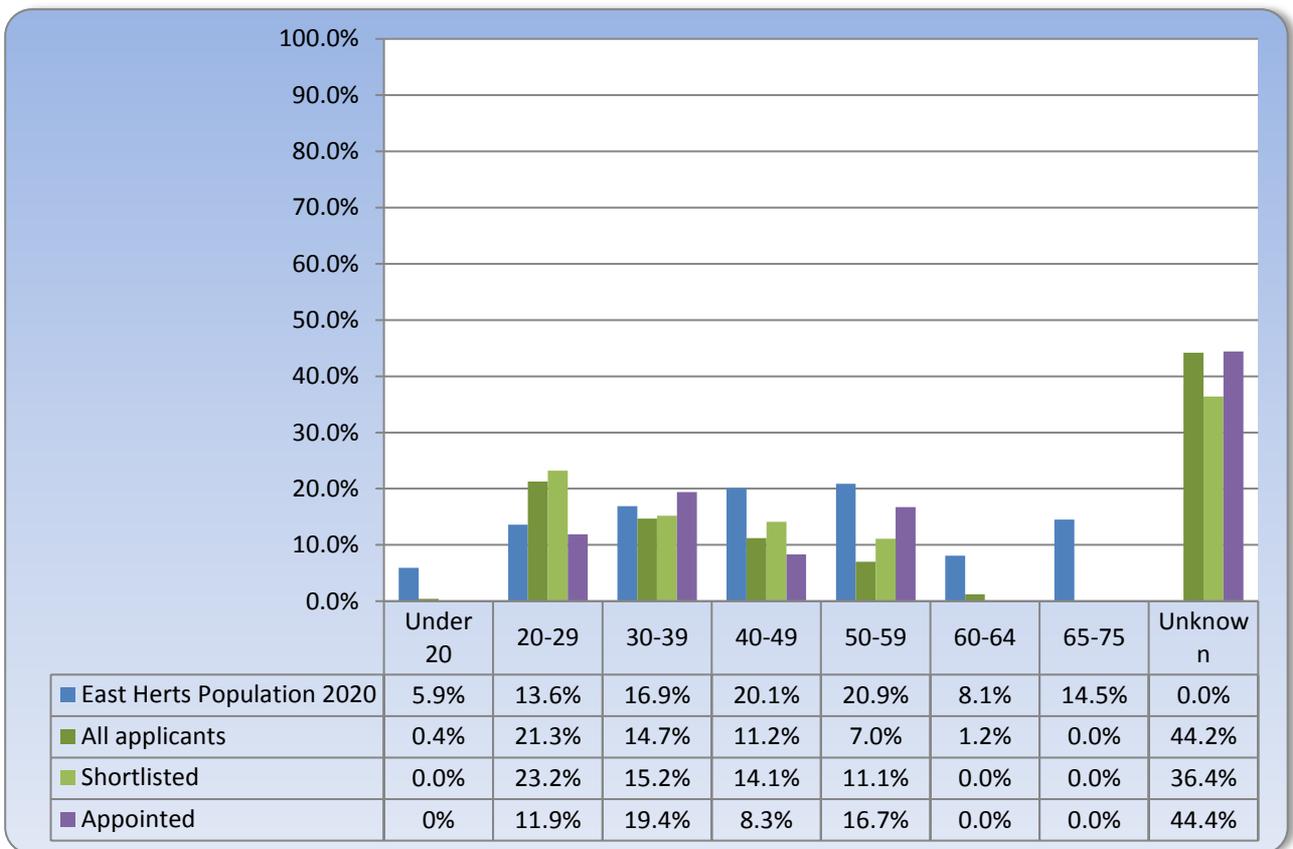


Figure 9.0 Applicant profile by age compared to the working population of East Herts

Source: Nomis Population estimates - local authority based by single year of age (2020).

Note: The percentages shown for East Herts residents are the percentage of 16-75 year olds, not the total population. Numbers could not be added to this chart due to the size of the columns.

Figure 9.0 shows that the council attracted applicants from a wide range of age groups broadly reflective of those of East Herts residents in the 20-29 and 30-39 age groups. Percentages of applicants in the other age groups are lower than that of East Herts

residents, however the age of 44% of applicants was unknown as they either did not complete the equalities form or did not disclose their data. This makes the data analysis very unreliable and it is likely that if the full data was known, the percentage of applicants in those underrepresented age groups would be higher. In the older age groups it is likely to be due to people taking retirement. There were fewer applicants under the age of 20 compared to East Herts residents in that age group (5.9%), however this is likely to be due to it being compulsory to remain in full time education or training up to the age of 18.

There is some variation in the percentages of applicants at the various age groups and the percentage of those shortlisted. For the 20-29, 30-39 and 40-49 age groups the percentages of those applying compared to those shortlisted stayed fairly closely aligned. For the Under 20 and 60-64 categories the percentage decreased to 0% at the shortlisting stage but this equated to just 4 applicants in total. As previously mentioned the very high level of 'Unknowns' makes data analysis unreliable. The number of 'Unknowns' remains decreased slightly from application to shortlist (44.2% to 36.4%).

From the shortlisting to appointment stage the percentage reduced in the 20-29 and 40-49 age categories and increased in the 30-39 and 50-59 age categories. The number of 'Unknowns' increased slightly from shortlist to appointment. Despite the slight variation at the different stages there are no obvious areas for concern.

Disability status

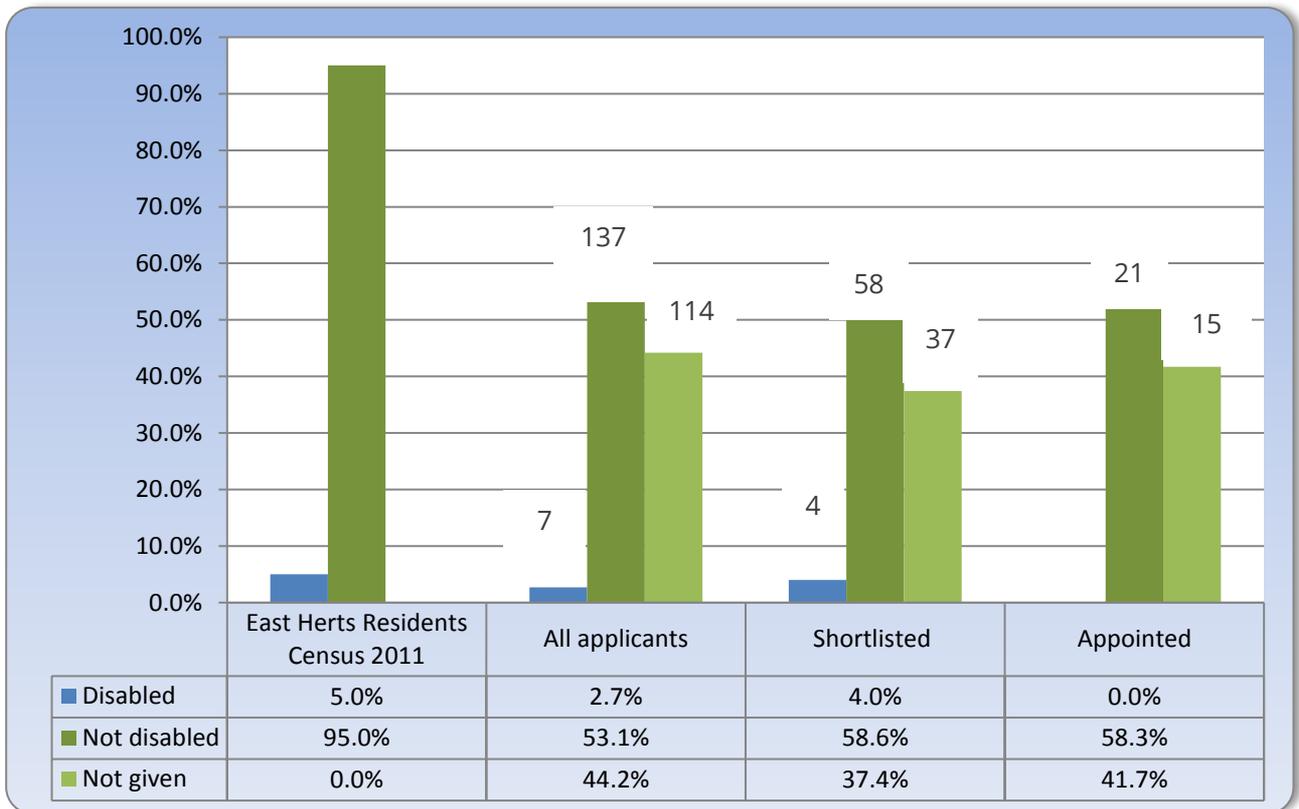


Figure 10.0 Applicant profile by disability compared to the working population of East Herts (Disability status)

Source: ONS Census 2011 - Long Term Health Problem or Disability

Figure 10.0 shows that, of those that completed the equalities monitoring form, 2.7% of applicants had a disability in 2021/22 which is lower than East Herts residents with a disability (5%) and is a very slight decrease from the 2020/21 figure of 2.9%. It is worth noting the figure for East Herts residents includes those with a long term health problem which may mean they are unfit to work and is based on households rather than individuals. In addition, the disability status of 44% of applicants was unknown.

The council would like to attract more applications from disabled people. The council's recent move to blended working may help to attract more disabled people. The council guarantees that disabled applicants under the Disability Confident Scheme will be invited for an interview if they meet the minimum essential criteria for the role (the Symbol is displayed on our recruitment messages and our website to help attract disabled candidates). In 2021/22, there were 7 applicants (2.7%) who stated that they have a disability. Of these, 4 met the essential criteria and were shortlisted for interview

but unfortunately no disabled people were appointed. As previously mentioned, the disability status of 44% of applicants was unknown as they either did not complete the equalities form or did not disclose their data which makes the data analysis unreliable.

Sexual orientation

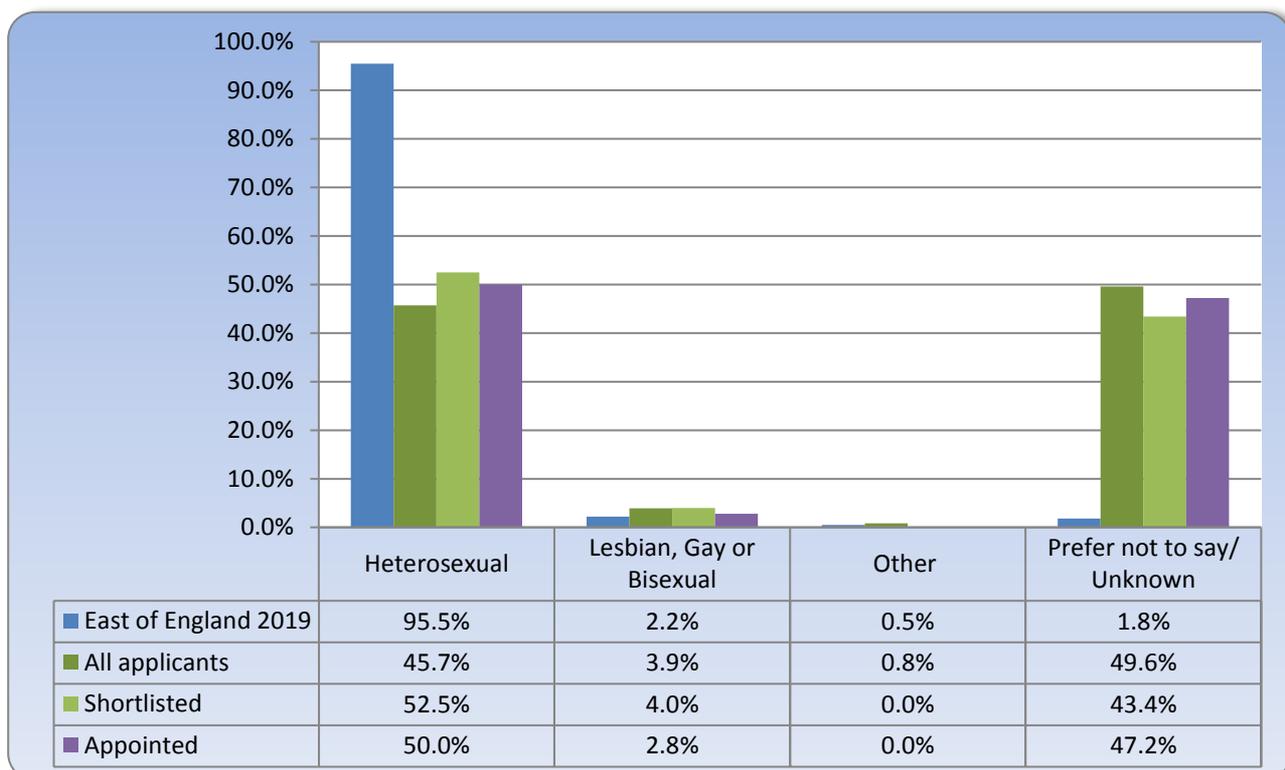


Figure 11.0 Applicant profile by sexual orientation compared to the East of England

Source: ONS – Sexual Identity by Region (East of England) – 2019.

Note: Numbers could not be added to this chart due to the size of the columns.

Figure 11.0 shows that 3.9% of applicants in 2021/22 were lesbian, gay or bisexual, this is slightly higher than the percentage for the East of England population (2.2%) and is higher than 2020/21 (2.5%). It is positive to see that this rises to 4% at shortlisting although it does drop back down to 2.8% at appointment.

Disciplinary, Grievance and Probation

(Grievance includes Bullying & Harassment complaints)

There was one formal disciplinary case and one formal grievance in 2021/22. We are unable to report on equality data due to the possibility of the individuals being identifiable.

Training

The 2021/22 Learning and Development Programme offered a range of learning and development opportunities designed to meet corporate, service and individual needs. Development needs were identified corporately and through individual PDRs. The delivery of development opportunities available for staff was adjusted to align with the move to hybrid working. Most training was delivered via facilitated virtual events, virtual coaching, webinars and e-learning. All employees were trained in equality and diversity, safeguarding, health and safety and data protection as part of the council's annual mandatory training programme.

Corporate training events are advertised to all staff via email bulletins or employees are contacted directly for specific events. Attendance is subject to manager approval and places are offered on a first come first served basis. Requests for funded professional and vocational training are approved by Leadership Team. No formal requests for professional or vocational training were refused in 2021/22.

We are satisfied that the training and development opportunities at the council are made available on a fair and equal basis cross the council which enables all employees to take advantage of the opportunities.

Leavers

Introduction

This section provides information on employees who have left the council (both voluntarily and involuntarily) between the period 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022. The figures exclude casual employees who have left the council and those who are on a career break.

The total number of leavers during the period is 44. Of these, 37 left voluntarily and 7 left involuntarily. There was also one death in service. The involuntary leavers include those whose temporary contract had come to an end, dismissal, ill health retirement or redundancy. Please refer to the Annual Turnover Report for 2021/22 (Human Resources Committee May 2022) for full details in terms of reasons for leaving, leavers by length of service, leavers by service area etc. This section looks at leavers in terms of equalities and protected characteristics but does not go in the same details as the Turnover Report.

Leaver data has been analysed using 5 of the 9 protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 as follows:

- Sex (Gender)
- Ethnic origin
- Age
- Religion or Belief
- Disability

Sexual orientation was not provided due to the small numbers of employees in some categories which may identify individuals. There are no concerns in this area.

Although marital status data is recorded this is not currently reportable from the system.

Pregnancy is not a permanent characteristic but a state in time. 6 employees took maternity leave in 2021/22 and it should be noted that no concerns have been raised regarding this protected characteristic.

Although the HR system has capacity for employees to indicate if they are transgender the new starter forms do not request this and instead the council has focused on the current gender and not the past.

Sex (Gender)

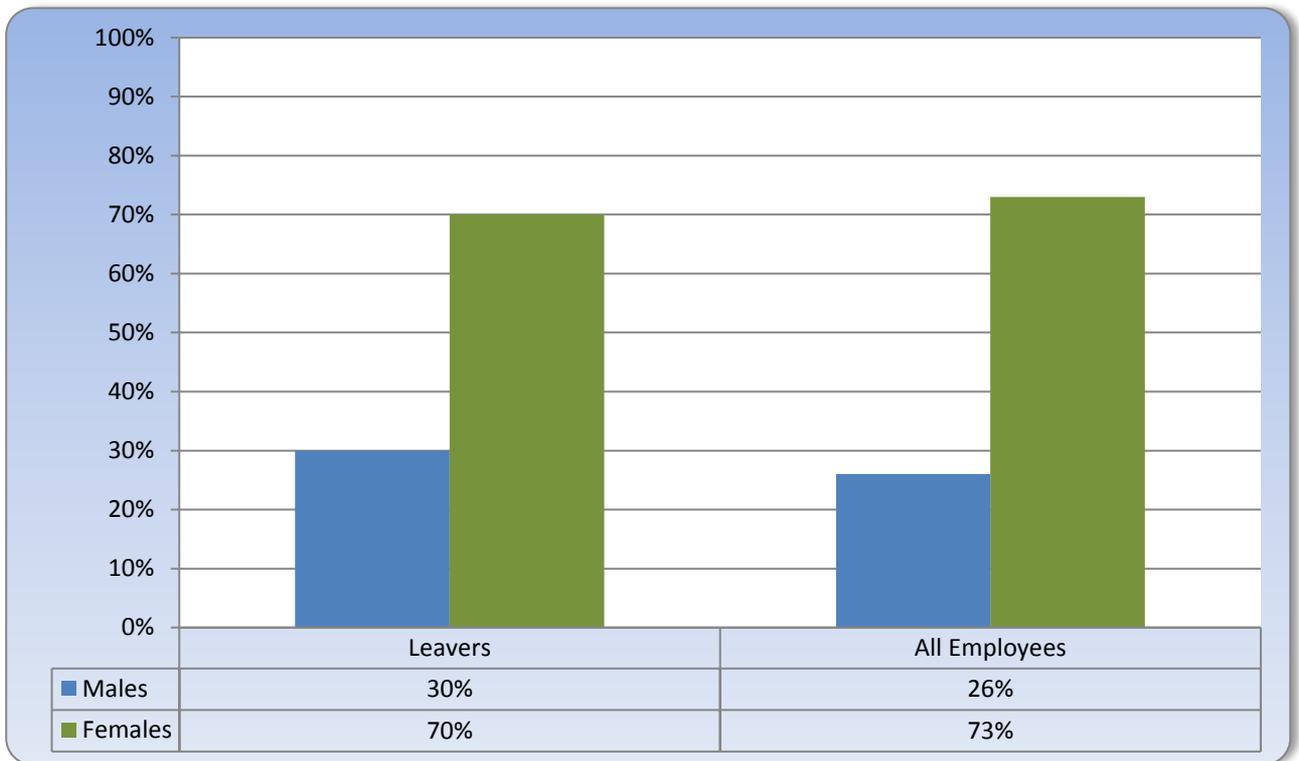


Figure 12.0 Leavers by sex

There are no concerns in this area, the gender of leavers in 2021/22 was generally reflective of the overall employee profile.

Ethnic Origin

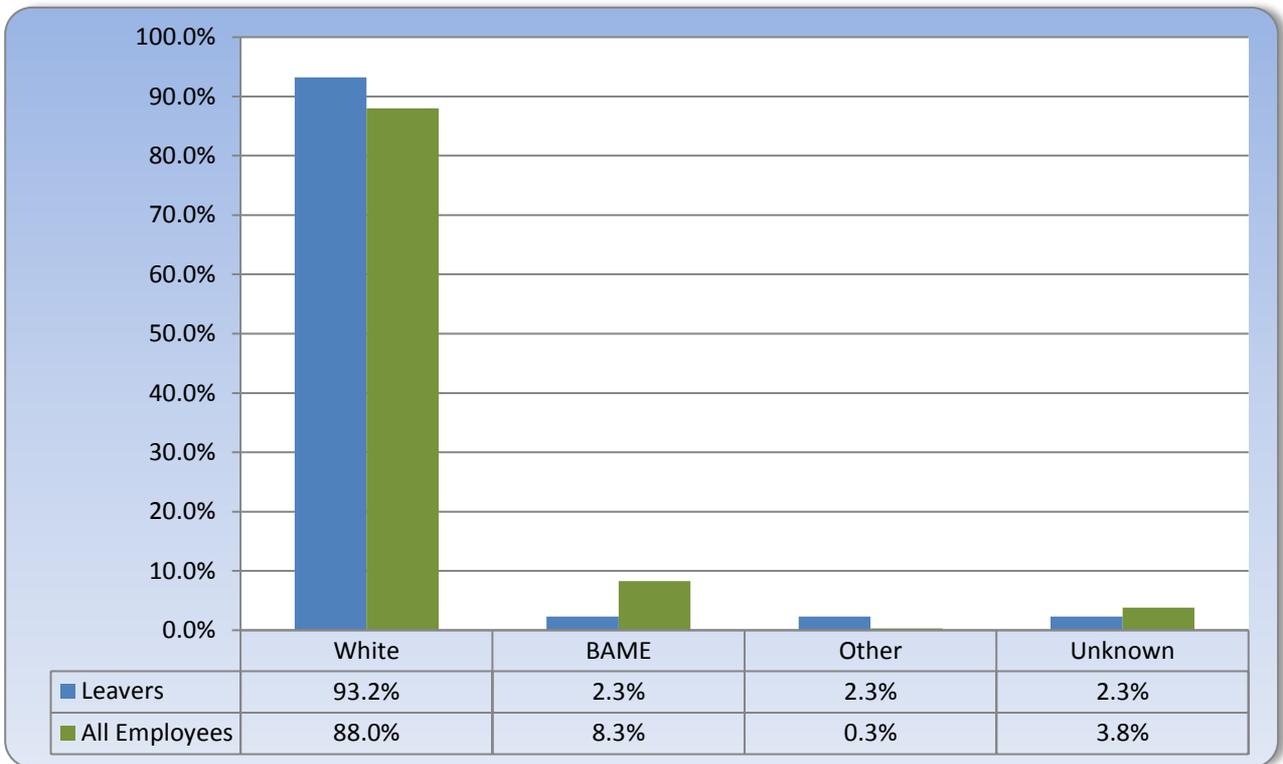


Figure 13.0 Leavers by ethnic origin

Figure 13.0 shows that there was a lower percentage of BAME leavers when compared to the percentage of BAME employees and the percentage of white leavers was higher compared to the percentage of white employees; 2.3% of leavers were from BAME groups and 93.2% were white compared to the employee profile of 8.3% BAME and 88% white. HR have reviewed exit questionnaires which has also not indicated any concerns regarding ethnic origin.

Age

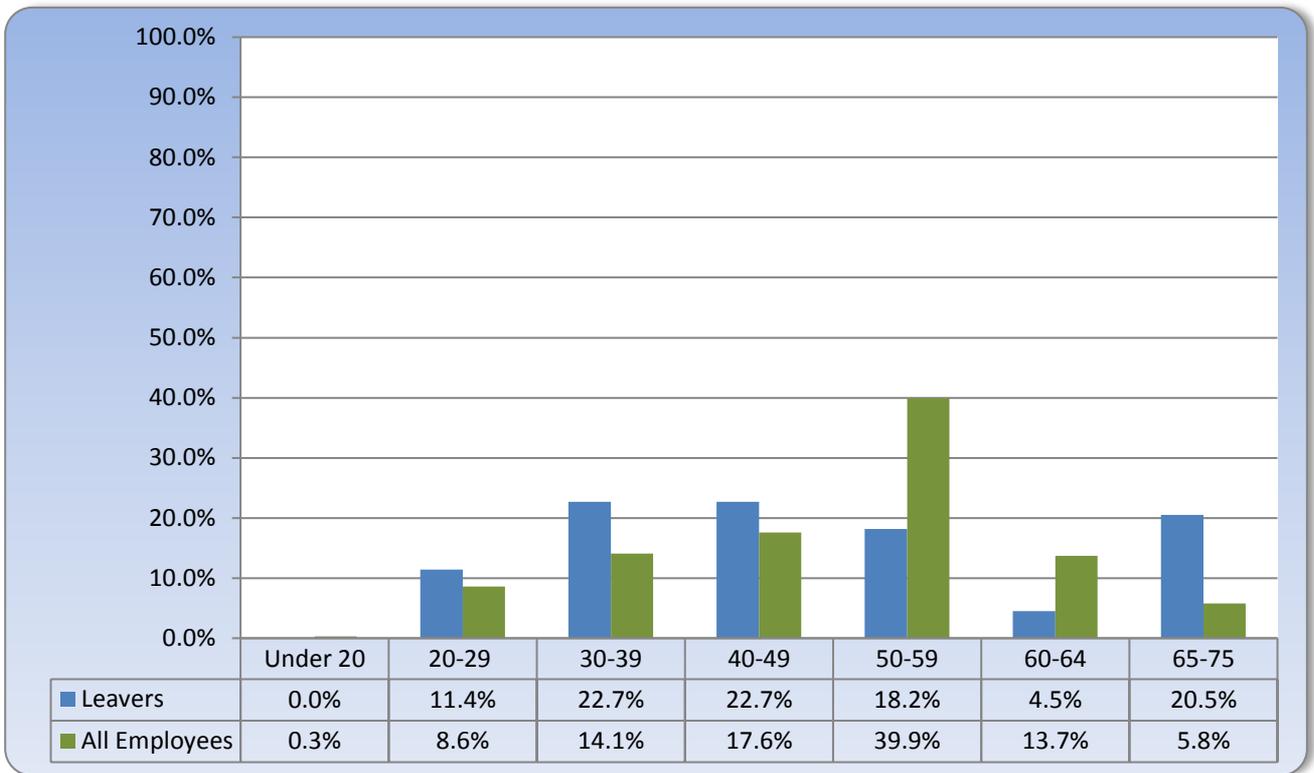


Figure 14.0 Leavers by age

Figure 14.0 shows that there was 4 times the percentage of leavers in the 65-75 age group but this is due to employees in this age group taking retirement.

The percentage of leavers in the 20-29, 30-39 and 40-49 age groups were higher than the percentage of employees in these age ranges. This is most likely to be for career progression and due to the small teams at the council employees may have to seek this progression outside of the council. This is an area the council continually tries to address but is ultimately limited by the overall size and structure.

Religion or Belief

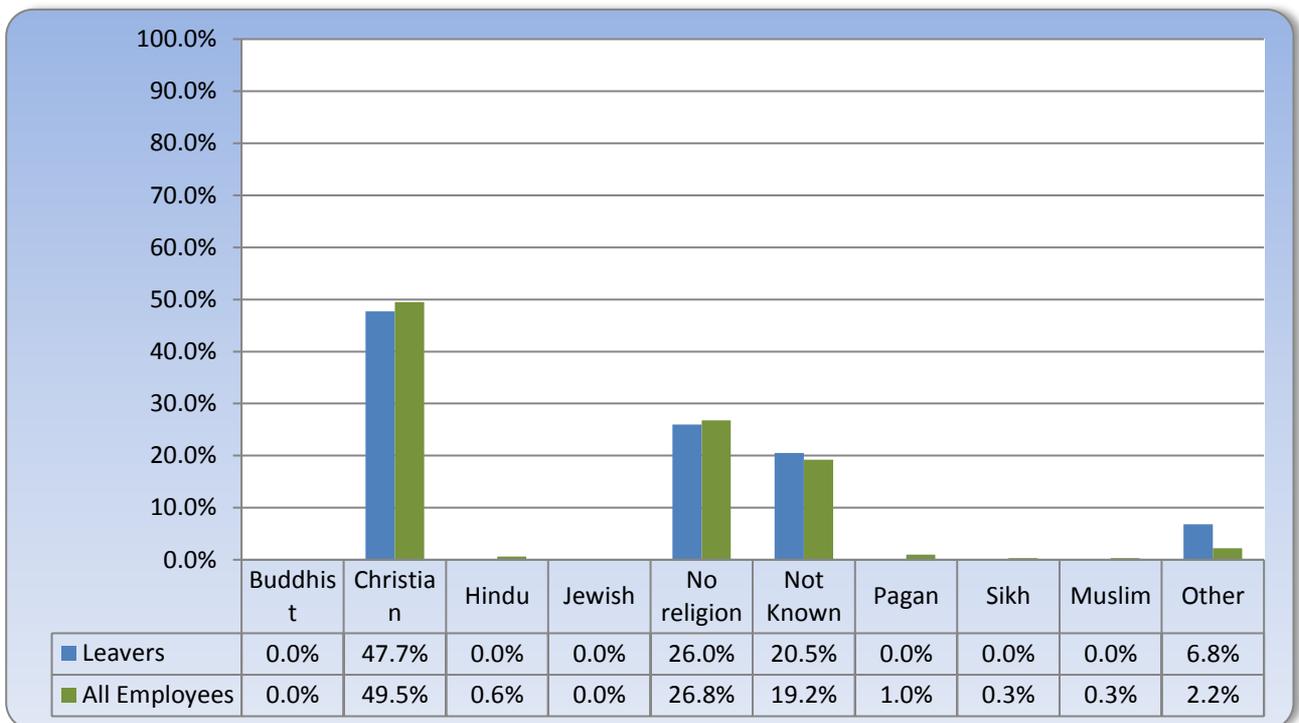


Figure 15.0 Leavers by religion

There are no concerns in this area, the religious belief of leavers in 2021/22 were generally reflective of the overall employee profile given the small numbers involved.

Disability

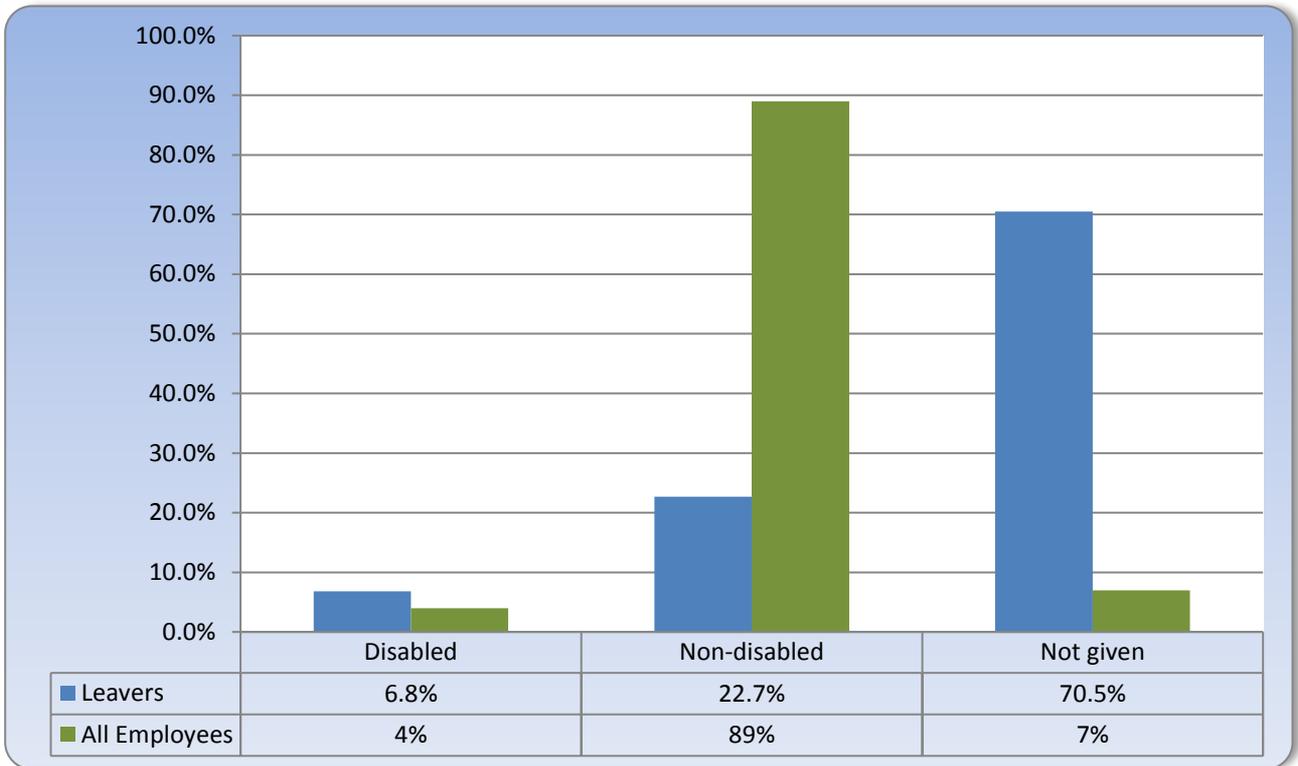


Figure 16.0 Leavers by disability

Figure 16.0 shows the percentage of leavers with a disability (6.8%) was slightly higher than the percentage of employees with a disability (4%). HR have reviewed exit questionnaires which has also not indicated any concerns regarding disability.

Staff and Employment Equality Action plan 1 July 22 – 31 June 23

The actions listed below refer to staff and employment only.

Action	Timescale
Employee Profile	
To complete the required annual Gender Pay Gap report for 2022.	Published by March 2023
Develop guidance on supporting employees who are changing gender so that best practice is available to both staff and managers where required.	January 2023
Send all staff a reminder to check and update their personal details on MyView ahead of the data being analysed for the next annual equalities report to ensure we have fuller rather than partial data (especially religion, sexual orientation and disability). Provide staff with more detailed information about what constitutes a disability as some employees may have developed a disability since joining the council and not updated HR and may also not be aware that their condition could be classed as a disability.	February 2023
Leadership Team to promote diversity and equality and awareness weeks.	Ongoing
Recruitment	
Continue to require managers to return all recruitment paperwork before an offer letter can be sent out to	Ongoing

ensure HR have full shortlisting data to be able to report on	
Each interview panel chair to give consideration to the diversity of the interview panel and where possible try to ensure the panel is as diverse. This will include using panel members outside of their own service areas where appropriate. HR will publish a list of recruitment trained staff once the management training has taken place. Where this is not possible try to ensure that other elements of the panel show staff diversity, for example 'meet the team' sessions to demonstrate the diversity at East Herts and to appear as welcoming as possible to applicants of all backgrounds.	Ongoing
Work with Shaw Trust to advertise our jobs with them to attract more disabled applicants.	December 2022
Look into working with Inclusive Employment at HCC who organise work tasters for disabled people to help them get into work.	December 2022
Continue to investigate with the ATS provider how to name blind CVs without losing key data.	Dependent on ATS provider
Audit a selection of recruitment decisions to ensure there is no bias and shortlisting and appointment decisions are based on merit.	January 2023
Discipline, Grievance and Probation	
Continue to monitor equalities data for all disciplinary, grievance and formal probationary cases.	Ongoing
Training	
Continue to ensure that all staff complete the equality and diversity module as part of the mandatory e-	Ongoing

<p>learning training programme. Offer further equalities based training as identified by annual training needs analysis undertaken by the HR and OD Manager.</p>	
<p>Continue to ensure that managers are briefed in the PDR process and that effective and appropriate personal development plans are put in place for all employees, including those rated as 'exceeding expectations' and above.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Continue to develop both wellbeing programmes/guidance and maintain sufficient Mental Health First Aiders to support staff experiencing mental health issues.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>