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Ashfield Workforce Report 2024

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The Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty requires all public authorities to publish equality information on their workforce to demonstrate that they are compliant and transparent in their practices. This report builds on the previous year’s reporting and forms part of the information that we collate, monitor, and publish to help us ensure that equality considerations are embedded within our employment policies and practices, and they meet our responsibilities under the duty.

## Executive Summary

Ashfield District Council workforce has decreased over the past year, in January 2024 there were 582 employees at the council, a slight decrease from 585 in 2023, in January 2022 there were 566.

57% of the workforce is male and 43% female, an increased ratio of females to the previous year. There has been a notable increase in part time workers from 89 to 114 although part time working remains predominately female.

Just under half of the work force, 45%, falls within the age range 45 – 59, a smaller proportion than last year. There has been an increase in the number of over 65’s and a small decrease in those aged 16-24.

The proportion of the workforce who consider themselves disabled has increased over the past year. The proportion of the working age in in Ashfield receipt of disability has incresed substantially.

The ethnic profile of Ashfield from the Census 2021 remains predominately White British (91.8%). At 96.6% White British, the Ashfield workforce profile has increased but the largest change in 2024 came from those whose ethnicity was not stated during recruitment; 16.8% of those who applied, 25.5% of those appointed.

Those identifying as Christian have increased to 40% with an increase in other religions. Religion not stated or no religion has stayed roughly the same at 55.2%.

The BME proportion of the council’s workforce is 2.6%, a decrease from 3.1% the previous year. It does not adequately represent the BME profile of the district which has become more diverse in the Census 2021. The Council is aware that the recruitment process should continue to encourage and enable employees from minority ethnic and religious belief groups to join the workforce.

## Actions for 2024

Following the completion of a comprehensive independent audit and review of the Councils Recruitment and Retention strategy in 2022; implement a revised action plan that seeks to increase applications and appointments across all demographics.

Continue to brand and promote the Council as an attractive employer of choice especially for young people.

Fundamentally review the methodology and approach to recruitment to advertise vacancies as widely as possible so that they are accessible to all possible candidates.

To further strengthen the improvements within 2022 to encourage a more diverse workforce within the organisation and ensure BME representation across all levels of the organisation.

## Ashfield Workforce

In January 2024 there were 582 employees at the council, in 2023 there were 585 employees, an increase of 3.4% from 2021. The full-time permanent workforce has decreased from the previous year.

The proportion of males and females working for the council has remained relatively static with males at 57.4%, females 42.6%, slightly more females in 2024. The proportion of female
part-time employees has increased since 2023 from 14% of the workforce to 16%. Male part-time working has stayed the same.

Most people working for the council fall within the 45 – 59 age range although it has decreased in 2024. The proportion of employees 16-24 has decreased and 65+ has increased over the past year.

The chart above shows the working age resident population of Ashfield from Census 2021 and Ashfield Council 2024 employment figures.

## Workforce Diversity

The DLA figure refers to Ashfield working age residents in receipt of a Disability Living Allowance or a Personal Independence Payment.

The proportion of people claiming these benefits has increased from 9.2% in 2022.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ethnicity | % of Workforce 2024 | % of Workforce 2023 | % of Workforce 2022 | Ethnicity all ages Census 2021 |
| White | 96.6% | 96.1% | 96.3% | 95.1% |
| Asian  | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.4% | 1.3% |
| Black  | 0.9% | 1.2% | 0.7% | 1.2% |
| Mixed  | 1.4% | 1.4% | 1.6% | 1.6% |
| Chinese | 0% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.03% |

Ashfield’s population is predominately White British. The BME working age population of the district from the Census 2021 was 4.4%. The BME proportion of the council’s workforce is 2.6%, a decrease of 0.5% from the previous year.

This will continue to be a key action; encourage applications from minority ethnic groups.

The nature of immigration into the district has changed over recent years with the majority no longer arriving from Eastern Europe. Instead, they originate largely in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. The number are small, 700 NiNO registrations in Ashfield in 2023.

The Census 2021 gives the ‘Other White’ category of Ashfield as 3% The table below shows the change in National Insurance Registrations of Nationals from Overseas (NiNO) over the past 3 years.

*DWP*

The proportion of employees who do not state their religions has declined slightly in the past year with the ‘No Religion’ increasing. The proportion who states a religion has stayed roughly the same with an increase in ‘Other’.

The results for all beliefs in the district from the Census 2021 can be seen in the table below.

|  |
| --- |
| **Religion - Census 2021 - Ashfield District** |
| No Religion | Christian | Buddhist | Hindu | Jewish | Muslim | Sikh | Other religion |  Not answered |
| 50.3% | 42.0% | 0.2% | 0.3% | 0.0% | 0.6% | 0.2% | 0.5% | 5.8% |

A new question regarding sexual orientation was asked in the Census 2021

|  |
| --- |
| **Census 2021 - Sexual Orientation in Ashfield District** |
| Straight or Heterosexual | Gay or Lesbian | Bisexual | All other sexual orientations | Not answered |
| 90.7% | 1.4% | 1.0% | 0.2% | 6.8% |

## Maternity/Paternity

In 2024 seven employees were on maternity leave, two employees took paternity leave and 2 took parental leave.

## Pay

There has been decrease in the proportion of females within the top 5% of earners. The proportion of BME employees in the top 5% of earners continues to increase to 10.7%, a small increase of 0.4 % from last year. The proportion of disabled has also increased to 17.9% from 10.3% in 2023.

The above figures of the top 5% of earners excludes CEO, Directors, and Assistant Directors, they are NJC posts only. For JNC posts including CEO, Directors, and Assistant Directors; 45% are female, an increase from last year but a significant decrease from 61.5% in 2021.

## Training

The council have delivered the following statutory compliance training to employees:-

* Health and Safety
* Fire Safety
* Safeguarding
* Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
* Cyber Security
* Data Protection
* Vulnerability
* Domestic Abuse
* Climate Change

## Recruitment

The Authority is committed to creating a diverse workforce that is fair and free from discrimination. Reasonable adjustments are made to support disabled people throughout the recruitment process and continue into their role if they are successful. The Authority retained its accreditation to the Disability Confident Scheme and the Mindful Employer Charter in 2022.

Turnover of staff across the year was 7.3% continuing the decrease over the past few years with turnover in 2023 at 9.2%.

The % of overall applications from under 30’s has decreased, but the largest group of appointments remain in the 30-44 age range with the next range 45-59.

The proportion of applications from candidates stating a disability have decreased; from 6.1% (2023) to 5.9% (2024), those appointed have increased from 3.1% (2023) to 7.8% (2024).

Recruitment continues to see a decrease within the White British cohort applications (69.7% to 65.3%) and percentage of those appointed (73.5% to 68.6%) with a mixed position in other ethnicities. The most marked change is with those who did not state their ethnicity, those appointed increasing from 16.3% to 25.5%.

Figures based on permanent staff voluntarily leaving the Authority.

## Disciplinary and Grievance

There were 4 disciplinary actions in 2023, all male and 3 grievances, 2 male and 1 female.

Whilst we would monitor and address any concerns with grievances that were related to the protected characteristics, we will not report on these cases as the small number may identify individual employees and same for disciplinary cases.

# Ashfield District Council - Gender Pay Gap Information – 2023

1. **Introduction**

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 the Council is required by law to publish an annual gender pay gap report. The information contained within this report is for the snapshot date of 31 March 2023.

**2.0 Summary of data**

* The mean gender pay gap is 0.08%
* The median gender pay gap is -4.57%

Table 1. Comparison to Female and Male in each salary range quartile

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Quartile** | **Females** | **Males** | **Salary range** |
| Lower | 44.38% | 58.62% | £23,114 - £25,979 |
| Lower Middle | 36.99% | 63.01% | £25,979 - £28,770 |
| Upper Middle | 52.05% | 47.95% | £28,770 - £35,745 |
| Upper | 38.62% | 61.38% | £35,745 and above |

Table 2. Breakdown splits of Female to Male across the Authority

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Quartile** | **Females** | **Males** | **Salary range**  |
| Lower | 24,39% | 25.30% | £23,114 - £25,979 |
| Lower Middle | 21.95% | 27.38% | £25,979 - £28,770 |
| Upper Middle | 30.89% | 20.83% | £28,770 - £35,745 |
| Upper | 22.76% | 26.49% | £35,745 and above |
| Total | 100% | 100% |  |

The mean is defined as the average of the figures and is calculated by adding up all the figures and diving by the number there are. The median is defined as the salary that lies at the midpoint and is calculated by ordering all salaries from highest to lowest and the median is the central figure. The quartile information is calculated by listing all salaries from highest to lowest and the splitting that information into four equal quarters to determine the percentage of male / female employees in each quartile.

All the figures set out above have been calculated using the standard methodologies used in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017. Although reporting of the salary ranges for the quartiles is not required, this has been provided for additional information.

1. **Analysis of data**

The mean gender pay gap figure has changed from 0.9% last year, reporting 0.08% this year. In monetary terms the hourly rate differential based on the mean is £0.15 pence per hour. This suggests the pay rates for females and males is about average and that ranges of pay are spread fairly equally across the organisation.

The quartile data indicates that there is a higher percentage of women in the lower quartile, as illustrated in table 2.

The quartile data also outlines that there is an increase in the percentage of males in the lower quartile, increasing by 2.99%. Traditionally roles in this quartile attract female applicants due to the flexibility and ability to fit in around caring responsibilities. Widely these responsibilities are generally undertaken by women but there has been a slight increase in males in this quartile.

The largest gender pay gap is in the lower middle quartile (female 44.38 % and male 58.62%). One of the key reasons for this is the roles that fall within this quartile which are traditionally male dominated roles within frontline services such as joiners, waste and environment etc. The Council recognises that although actions are in place to try to address this, it will take time to change these social and historical norms.

The Council remains committed to the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment for all employees and has a clear procedure to ensure employees are paid equally for the same or equivalent work, regardless of their sex or any other protected characteristic. In 2014 the Council implemented job evaluation and undertook a comprehensive review of pay and allowances to address a number of factors which significantly improved the gender pay gap position. As part of that scheme the Council also evaluates job roles as necessary to ensure a fair structure. In 2016 the Council brought the ALMO back into the Council which included the transfer of a large number of craftworkers. The vast majority of employees that have been TUPE transferred are now on ADC terms and conditions however there is a very small number remaining which are not likely to influence any major changes in the gender pay gap.

**4.0 Action to be undertaken to address the gender pay gap**

Although the gender pay gap is not significant enough to be a cause for concern the organisation will continue to implement actions as detailed below to address the disparities.

* Continue to use on line adverts and jobs boards to advertise vacancies as widely as possible so that they are accessible to all possible candidates and therefore not advertise via routes that could attract traditional genders.
* A review of the recruitment process has been undertaken within the last 12 months to ensure inclusive recruitment.
* The Council is still involved in initiatives to promote flexible working, including hybrid working in all posts that are viable and continues to build on the work of this initiative to ensure that all vacancies are advertised as flexible and hybrid where possible and encourage applicants to approach managers to discuss flexible working requirements at appointment stage.
* Policies associated with hybrid and flexible working are reviewed to ensure they continue to be fit for purpose.
* Officers from the Council attend career fairs to promote all careers within public sector.