

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Council

Workforce Equality Report April 2021 – March 2022



Listening Learning Leading



Introduction

Background

South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council aspire to create an environment where everybody feels that they belong and have a voice which will be heard. We embrace our differences, the unique talents, beliefs, backgrounds, and abilities of all our staff. We strive to make our councils a place where no-one experiences discrimination or feels disadvantaged because of their individual characteristics when working for us.

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duty) and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, the councils are required to publish equality information to show our compliance with the general equality duty. The councils must also publish information on pay for employees; we do this as separate Pay Policy Statements which are available on the councils' websites. This Workforce Equality Report forms part of our response to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Our workforce monitoring data is collected, monitored, and published to help us understand who our workforce is; and to show the impact of our employment policies and practices and how we are meeting our responsibilities as an employer in regard to equality. This report covers the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Data reporting and interpretation

Much of the information in this report relies on employees self-reporting and providing their information through the councils' 'MyView' system. Over the course of the reporting period (April 2021 to March 2022) we have seen an increase in the number of staff who are providing this information although we still have many instances where data is 'unknown' across the following protected characteristics: Disability, Race/Ethnicity, Religion and Belief, and Sexual Orientation. Currently due to the limitations of our reporting system we do not have local information relating to: Gender Re-assignment and Pregnancy and Maternity.

Unless otherwise stated, analyses presented in this report are based on 'known data'. This means only data that employees have self-disclosed and therefore is held on the councils' integrated information system, is included. Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100. Table 1 shows the percentage of total employees for which equality data is known and recorded.

Table 1: Known data for staff

Protected Characteristic	Head Count		Percentages	
	Known	Unknown	Known	Unknown
Age	532	0	100.0	0.0
Disability	337	195	63.3	36.7
Gender reassignment				
Pregnancy and maternity				
Race (ethnicity)	457	75	85.9	14.1
Religion and belief	384	148	72.2	27.8
Sex	532	0	100.0	0.0
Sexual orientation	435	97	81.8	18.2

Local information

To understand the impact of employment policies and practices, our workforce data is compared with local demographic information and national population data where this is available. In most instances this data was collected as part of the latest Census in 2021.

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts

- The estimated working age population (those aged 16-74 years) is 106,413 in South Oxfordshire and 99,191 in Vale of White Horse.
- 13.7% of South Oxfordshire and 14.6% of Vale of White Horse residents have a limiting long-term illness, health problem or disability that affects their day-to-day activities.
- 14.2% of South Oxfordshire and 16.8% of Vale of White Horse population is from an ethnic minority community (are non-'White British').
- 52.9% of South Oxfordshire and 52.2% of Vale of White Horse residents consider themselves to have a religion or belief.

Policies and initiatives

Disability Confident Employer

The councils have been certified as a Disability Confident Employer under the Government's Disability Confident Scheme. The scheme is designed to help employers recruit and retain disabled people, and people with health conditions, for their skills and talent.

The scheme supports the councils in making the most of the talents that disabled people can bring to the workplace. Through Disability Confident, the councils challenge attitudes towards disability, increase understanding of disability, and remove barriers to disabled people and those with long-term health conditions, ensuring that disabled people can fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.

People & Culture policies and guidelines addressing equality issues

The councils have in place various agreed policies providing support and covering all aspects of employment law, employee relations and recruitment. The following policies and guidelines explicitly address issues relevant to the councils' Public Sector Equality Duty responsibilities:

- Equality in Employment
- Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Surrogacy
- Shared Parental Leave
- Sickness Absence
- Employee Conduct
- Organisational Change
- Redundancy

Equality and diversity training

The councils regard training as a key component in supporting equality, diversity and inclusion. All new starters undertake mandatory Equality and Diversity training as part of their induction with the aim to ensure a better understanding of what equality legislation means for service planning and delivery, to increase awareness of equality in the workplace and to identify expectations in terms of behaviour.

Diversity & Inclusion Champions Network

As part of the agreed actions of our Joint Diversity & Inclusion Strategy we have in place a Champions Network. The Network provides a safe space for colleagues from across the councils to share experience relevant to diversity and inclusion and to act as champions for diversity and inclusion in their respective service areas.

Mental Health Group

The Mental Health Wellbeing Group is made up of council employees with a shared passion for promoting wellbeing in the workplace. These are our “Wellbeing Champions”, who meet regularly to arrange upcoming activities and provide feedback on how previous activities have been received. The group of volunteers work to provide a range of activities and events staff can attend both virtually and in person to accommodate the way we are all now working.

Our workforce

Overview of our total workforce

The data presented in this chapter is based on a snapshot date of 31 March 2022.

On 31 March 2022 the councils employed 532 members of staff. Of the total workforce, 519 were on fixed-hours contracts and more than three-quarters of these worked on a full-time basis.

Since the last report (based on 31 March 2021):

- 24 people have been offered a job with the councils.
- 79 people left the councils' employment.

Table 2: Overview of workforce

Overview	Headcount		%	
	2021	2022	2021	2022
Fixed hours contracts	527	519	97.8	97.6
Casual workers	12	13	2.2	2.4
Total	539	532		
Fixed hours Full/ Part time				
Full-time fixed hours	411	407	76.3	76.5
Part-time fixed hours	116	112	21.5	21.0
Total fixed hours contracts	527	519		

Our workforce by age

The age profile of employees is presented in Table 3. There has been little change from the previous year across all age bands. At the time of writing a detailed background of the latest Census data was not available. In terms of 'economically active' residents of our districts, 63.8% (South Oxfordshire) and 63.7% (Vale of White Horse) of the 16+ population was classed as in employment or actively seeking work. As the Census took place during the pandemic, which included national lockdowns and furlough measures, this will have affected the labour market.

Just over half (50.6%) of our workforce are aged 45 or over which is small increase on the previous year.

Table 3: Workforce by Age

Age Range	Workforce		%	
	2021	2022	2021	2022
16-24	24	25	4.5	4.7
25-34	118	117	21.9	22.0
35-44	128	121	23.8	22.7
45-64	252	252	46.8	47.4
65+	17	17	3.1	3.2
Total	539	532		

Our workforce by disability

The disability profile of employees is presented in Table 4. Data on employees' disability status is known for 63.3% of our workforce, a significant increase from last year. Based on known data, 4.1% of our workforce has declared a disability; this is a slight decrease from last year when this was 5% but is in part a reflection of a greater number of staff self-reporting this information.

Data from the latest Census in 2021 has so far only been released based on the total population of each local area relating to disability. For South Oxfordshire the number of people classed as disabled under the Equality Act is 13.7% of the total population, whereas for Vale of White Horse this figure is 14.6%. This would appear to indicate that disabled employees are under-represented in the workforce. However, as we still have nearly 200 staff who are not recorded this information, it is too early to draw definite conclusions.

Table 4: Workforce by disability

Disability	Number		%	
	2021	2022	2021	2022
No	190	311	35.3	58.5
Yes	27	22	5.0	4.1
Prefer not to say	3	4	0.6	0.8
Unknown	319	195	59.2	36.7
7 Total (known data)	220	337		

Our workforce by ethnicity

The ethnicity profile of employees is presented in Table 5. Ethnicity data is known for 85.9% of our workforce, an increase on last year as more staff have self-reported this information.

The latest Census data from 2021 is also included in Table 5. This shows that in both of our districts more than 80% of our populations identify as White British. Although our staff profile shows only 57.5% identify as White British, and 34.6% as White Non-British these figures are likely, in part, to be impacted by staff where this information is not known. We will continue to monitor these figures.

Table 5: Workforce by ethnic group

Ethnic Group	South	%	Vale	%	Councils	%
White British	127,890	85.8	115,517	83.2	263	57.5
White Non-British	10,895	7.3	10,587	7.6	158	34.6
Mixed/multiple ethnic	3,402	2.3	3,452	2.5	5	1.0
Asian or Asian British	4,263	2.9	5,490	4.0	11	2.4
Black or Black British	1,467	1.0	2,315	1.7	4	0.8
Arab or Other Ethnic Group	1,171	0.8	1,552	1.1	2	0.4
Not Known					4	
Not Provided					71	
Prefer Not to Say					14	3.1
	149,088		138,913		532	

Source: ONS – 2021 Census (TS021)

Our workforce by religion and belief

The profile of our workforce by religion and belief is presented in Table 6. Data on religion and belief is held for 72.2% of the workforce, an increase on last year. This is a result of the increase in the number of staff self-reporting this information. The number recorded as 'Not Provided' reduced from 226 in 2020-2021 to 88 in 2021-2022.

The latest Census data is also provided in Table 6. Discounting the staff where we do not know this information, the profile of our districts is similar to our workforce apart from the 'No religion' classification where there is a greater than 6% difference.

Table 6: Workforce by religion and belief

Religion	SODC		VWHDC		Councils	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Christian	74,332	49.9	67,443	48.6	177	46.1
Buddhist	618	0.4	755	0.5	2	0.5
Hindu	1,095	0.7	1,193	0.9	4	0.8
Jewish	342	0.2	268	0.2	1	0.2
Muslim	1,441	1.0	1,982	1.4	2	0.5
Sikh	252	0.2	250	0.2	2	0.5
Other religion	671	0.5	686	0.5	12	3.1
No religion	61,344	41.1	57,894	41.7	184	47.9
Religion not stated	8,990	6.0	8,442	6.1	148	N/A
Total (known data)	149,085		138,913		532	

*Source: ONS – 2021 Census (TS030)

Our workforce by sex

The profile of our workforce by sex is presented in Table 7. The workforce split by sex has stayed similar to previous years, with approaching two thirds (63.8%) of the workforce being female and slightly more than one third (36.2%) male.

In comparison to the working age population, male employees are under-represented within the workforce; however, this sex split is typical for local authorities.

Table 7: Sex

Sex	Number	%
Female	340	63.9
Male	192	36.1
Total	532	

Our workforce by sexual orientation

The profile of our workforce by sexual orientation is presented in Table 8. Data on sexual orientation is held for 81.8% of our workforce (including staff who 'prefer not to say'), an increase from last year's report. There has been an increase in the number of staff who have told us they prefer not to disclose this information, from 43 in last year's report to 63.

The workforce split by sexual orientation remains similar to last year. The vast majority (82.8%) of our workforce self-disclose as heterosexual. Our workforce self-reporting as Lesbian, Gay or Bi-sexual (2.2%) is in line with the latest Census data for our districts. In South Oxfordshire 2.4% and in Vale of White Horse 2.7%, describe themselves as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Pansexual, Asexual or Queer.

Table 8: Sexual orientation

Sexual Orientation	2021		2022	
	Number	%	Number	%
Heterosexual	248	83.8	360	82.8
LGB	4	1.4	10	2.2
Prefer Not to Say	43	14.5	63	14.5
Prefer to Self-Describe	1	0.4	2	0.5
Unknown	243		97	
Total (known data)	539		532	

Our workforce by grade

Table 9 shows the number of staff across the grading structure the councils operate broken down into age bands. Our casual workers are all ungraded, however we have added the number of casual workers in the respective age bands. The largest group of our workforce is in the 45-64 age group on grades 4-6 (105 staff) followed by 72 staff on the same grades in the 25-34 age group.

Table 9: Workforce by Grade

Age Band	16-24 Count	%	25-34 Count	%	35-44 Count	%	45-64 Count	%	65+ Count	%
Grades 1-3 (111)	13	11.7	25	22.5	16	14.4	52	46.9	5	4.5
Grades 4-6 (251)	8	3.2	72	28.7	61	24.3	105	41.8	5	2.0
Grades 7-9 (120)			18	15.0	35	29.2	63	52.5	4	3.3
Grades 10+ (37)					8	21.1	28	73.7	2	5.3
Ungraded Casual (13)	4	30.8	2	15.4	1	7.7	5	38.5	1	7.7

Our workforce by grade and sex

Table 10 shows that we continue to have a higher proportion of female staff than male across most of our salary grades. The exception being in grades 10+ where we have 55.3% males and 44.7% females.

Table 10: Workforce by sex

Gender	Grade 1-3		Grade 4-6		Grade 7-9		Grade 10+	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Female	71	64.0%	168	66.9%	76	63.3%	17	44.7%
Male	40	36.0%	83	33.1%	44	36.7%	21	55.3%

Recruitment and Leavers

During 2021-2022, as shown in Table 11, 79 people left the councils. This figure is similar to the previous year when 85 left the councils. More than half of the leavers left due to a resignation.

As part of our workforce monitoring, we have been more proactive in capturing reasons for leavers and so this year we no longer have the category 'unknown' which is positive step.

Table 11: Leavers

Reason	Number	%
Better career prospects	1	1.3
Contract ended	3	3.8
Conversion	1	1.3
Other	2	2.5
Death in Service	3	3.8
Dismissal	2	2.5
Fixed-term contract ended	14	17.7
Mutual agreement	2	2.5
Non-return from maternity leave	1	1.3
Redundancy	1	1.3
Resignation	44	55.7
Retirement	5	6.3
Total	79	

Our recruitment by ethnicity

During 2021-2022 we received 801 applications and appointed 24 external candidates to positions within the councils. As the number of appointments is a relatively small number statistical trends are difficult to draw, however from this data the appointment of White British candidates was greater than the overall percentage of applications received.

Table 12 – Recruitment Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Applications		Appointed	
	Count	%	Count	%
Asian/Asian British – any other	31	3.9	0	0.0
Asian/Asian British – Chinese	12	1.5	0	0.0
Asian/Asian British – Indian	41	5.1	0	0.0
Asian/Asian British – Pakistani	29	3.6	2	8.3
Black/African/Caribbean/British - other	70	8.7	2	8.3
Black/African/Caribbean/British	8	1.0	0	0.0
Mixed/Multiple-White & Asian	4	0.5	1	4.2
Mixed/Multiple-White & Black Caribbean	9	1.1	0	0.0
Other ethnic group-any other	5	0.6	0	0.0
White – any other	63	7.9	1	4.2
White – British	516	64.4	18	75.0
White – Irish	6	0.8	0	0.0
Grand Total	801		24	

Our recruitment by religion or belief

During 2021-2022 we received 801 applications and appointed 24 external candidates to positions within the councils. As the number of appointments is a relatively small number statistical trends are difficult to draw, however from this data the appointment of candidates who declared their religion as Christian was greater than the overall percentage of applications received.

Table 13 – Recruitment Religion/Belief

Religion/Belief	Applications		Appointed	
	Count	%	Count	%
Buddhist	6	0.8	0	0.0
Christian	295	36.8	11	45.8
Hindu	28	3.5	0	0.0
Jewish	3	0.4	0	0.0
Muslim	47	5.9	1	4.2
Sikh	4	0.5	0	0.0
Other	11	1.4	0	0.0
None	354	44.2	10	41.7
Prefer not to say	53	6.6	2	8.3
Total	801		24	

Our recruitment by sex, disability and age

During 2021-2022 we received 801 applications and appointed 24 external candidates to positions within the councils. As the number of appointments is a relatively small number statistical trends are difficult to draw, however as shown in Table 14, we appointed more female candidates than the proportion of applicants. None of the appointed candidates had declared a disability and the age profile of successful candidates did not follow those of our applicants. In terms of candidates who declare a disability at time of application and who meet the essential criteria for the post, will be offered an interview.

Table 14 – Recruitment by sex, disability, and age

Religion/Belief	Applications		Appointed	
	Count	%	Count	%
Sex				
Female	334	41.7	14	58.3
Male	463	57.8	10	41.7
Prefer not to say	4	0.5	0	0
Disability				
No	737	92.0	24	100.0
Yes	42	5.2	0	0
Unknown	22	2.7	0	0
Age				
16-24	130	16.2	1	4.2
25-34	262	32.7	11	45.8
35-44	203	25.3	3	12.5
45-54	204	25.5	9	37.5
65+	2	0.2	0	0

Training

During 2021-2022, despite the restrictions of the pandemic and the clear focus of many of our staff in supporting our communities, 55 employees accessed different training courses managed by the People & Culture team. The councils operate the LEAH platform which contains various training courses. Service specific training organised by and recorded within individual service areas is not included in this analysis.

Summary

The councils' workforce data for 2021-2022 shows that:

- More than three fifths (63.9%) of our workforce are female and one third is male (36.1%).
- Just over half of our workforce (50.6%) is aged 45 or over.
- 4.1% of workforce have declared a disability.
- Over half (57.5%) of our workforce identify as White British, which is less than the profile of our districts, whereas over one third (34.6%) as White Non-British which is much higher than the profile of our districts.
- Just under half (46.1%) of our workforce identify their religion or belief as Christian which is similar to the profile of our districts; and nearly half (47.9%) state they have 'no religion' which is greater than the profile within our districts.
- In terms of sexual orientation over 80% of our workforce identify as heterosexual and just over 2% as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual

This is the twelfth year that South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District councils have produced an annual workforce report. During the reporting year we actively encouraged staff to review their own equality data held on our internal system – MyView - and update if they felt comfortable doing so. We were pleased to see that many staff have done this.

For next year's report we will look to include more information on turnover and training. We will also further utilise Census data as it is released.

We will continue to develop and enhance working practices to promote and advance equality of opportunity and integrate fairness and equity into every aspect of our employment practices.