

DOCUMENT ONE

SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME (Draft)

2013 - 2015



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This document (1) is accompanied by:

**Document 2 Equality Impact Assessments
Corporate Guidance Notes**

**Document 3 Equality & Diversity Monitoring
Corporate Guidance Notes**

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formats please contact**

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1. Foreword

Welcome to Halton Borough Council's Single Equality Scheme for 2013 – 2015. It outlines the action that the Council will be taking to ensure equality of opportunity for all who may use and wish to use the extensive range of services that it provides, including residents of Halton, businesses based and operating in Halton, visitors to the area, and to the existing and potential employees of Halton Borough Council.

For some time all public bodies have had general duties towards the elimination of discrimination and the promotion of equality of opportunity in relation to race, gender and disability. However, as we identified within our 2009-2012 Single Equality Scheme it is our stated intention in Halton to ensure that in providing services to the community no individual or group of individuals will be treated any less favourably as a result of their personal circumstances and status.

This scheme provides a commitment that both Elected Members and Council Officers will work together and with our partners to ensure that equality, diversity, and the cohesion of our community remain at the heart of everything that we do.

Our focus remains not upon the delivery of services that assumes a 'one size fits all' approach, but upon the provision and future development of services that are consistent with the actual and potential needs of all service users.

We will ensure that equality issues will remain an integral element in the way we plan and deliver services, how we review and redesign existing services and in developing new approaches, both as an organisation and with our partners.

We will also continue to gather and use social and demographic information to ensure that our decision making processes remain intelligence led and that across Halton people are provided with equal life chances and that our communities remain free from discrimination, enjoy shared values and offer mutual respect.

Rob Polhill
Council Leader

David Parr
Chief Executive

2. Introduction

The development of this single equality scheme is a demonstration of the Council's ongoing commitment, as a provider of services, an employer and as a community leader, and as a partner of other local agencies such as the Police and the Clinical Commissioning Group, that we will do all that we can to ensure that equity and fairness remain the cornerstones of our action planning and decision making processes.

This Single Equality Scheme contains information about the work of the Council in relation to equality issues and the action that we have taken, and will be taking, to ensure equality of opportunity for both employees and service users.

The Council intends, through its ongoing work on equality issues that this document will become the focus for promoting equality across the Council. This will mean integrating equality into all aspects of our functions, policies and services. This Scheme sets out a process for long-term and sustainable improvements.

The Council has undertaken a wide consultation of the Scheme including key partner agencies, Elected Members and Council staff. In addition, the Scheme has been publicised in the local press and a draft added to the Council's Internet.

3. Policy Statement

The Council seeks to create a culture where people of all backgrounds and experience feel appreciated and valued. It is committed to achieving equality of opportunity in both its service delivery mechanisms and employment practices. Service users, job seekers and employees will be treated fairly and without discrimination. Discrimination on the grounds of race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, transgender, marital status, sexuality, disability, age or any other unjustifiable reason will not be tolerated.

The Council is opposed to unlawful and unfair discrimination (including harassment of any kind). The Council will take appropriate action wherever instances of discrimination and harassment occur, in the delivery of services and in the course of employment. It will work with its partners to develop effective procedures and policies to combat all forms of discrimination and to share good practice.

4. Vision and Purpose

The Council's vision is simply to do all within our power to create, promote and sustain an equal society and an environment that fosters positive interactive relationships where people are treated with respect, dignity and fairness.

In pursuit of this vision we have adopted the following aspirational definition of equality based upon the idea of equal life chances¹

'An equal society protects and promotes equal, real freedom and opportunity to live in the way people value and would choose, so that everyone can flourish. It recognises people's different needs, situations and goals and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and can be.'

In order to realise this vision we have to take practical steps to promote diversity and equality of opportunity and this scheme has been produced primarily to:-

- Provide leadership, accountability and direction in promoting equality and diversity and eliminating discrimination in service delivery and employment practices to all staff and Elected Members of the Council, its partner organisations and the community.
- Make clear the Council's commitments in fulfilling its legal obligations² and organisational aspirations to achieve equality of opportunity in the areas of race, gender (including gender reassignment), disability, sexuality, religion or belief, age and other socio-economic disadvantage.
- Draw together the different strands of equality work into one comprehensive scheme that identifies our equality priorities over the next three years and ensure that these are widely understood and consistently applied through regular and periodic monitoring, review and evaluations processes.
- Facilitate the mainstreaming of equal opportunities into our business decisions by further developing systems and processes that are accessible and transparent and involve meaningful engagement with minority groups to ensure that our policies remain intelligence led needs driven and effective.

5. The Legislative Context

The Equality Act 2010 strengthens and brings together into one Act all previous legislation around Equality and Diversity. The Act also introduces the concept of 'protected' characteristics and all have equal rights and protection from discrimination under legislation, regardless of: -

- Age
- Gender
- Disability
- Faith/religion
- Race/ethnicity
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy/maternity
- Gender reassignment
- Marital/civil partnership status

In Halton two further vulnerable groups have been identified: -

- Carers
- Socio – economic disadvantage

In order to ensure this protection the Act also introduced, in April 2011, the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Duty comprises the General Duty and the Specific Duties.

The General Duty

Under this Duty a public authority must, in carrying out its functions, must have *due regard* to the need to: -

- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conflict that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

This applies to all protected groups.

The Specific Duties

The specific duties require public bodies to:

- Publish information to show their compliance with the Equality Duty at least annually; and
- Set and publish equality objectives

The information published must include;

- Information relating to employees who share protected characteristics (for public bodies with 150 or more employees); and
- Information relating to people who are affected by the public body's policies and practices (for example service users). This is demonstrated by equality analysis.

This information was published by the Council on 31 January 2012 (schools April 2012) and then must be published annually. Information about objectives must be published annually in April and reviewed every four years.

Halton's Compliance with the Duty

To demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) the Council has:

- Undertaken a survey of its employees and analysis of the results of the survey to determine the composition of its workforce and to enable a comparison with the community of Halton. This will be updated annually.
- Undertaken equality analysis (Equality Impact Assessments) of a wide range of its policies, services and functions. This is an ongoing process and the published list of completed assessments will be updated regularly and published annually.

Schools also have a duty to comply with the Duty, in that the specific duties require schools to: -

- Publish information about how they are complying with the PSED – this information must include, in particular, information relating to people who share a protected characteristic; and
- Prepare and publish equality objectives.

Equality is integral to the schools OFSTED inspection framework and the promotion of opportunity for all underpins the framework. It encourages high quality provision that meets diverse needs and promotes not just equality of opportunity but improving outcomes for all pupils regardless of background.

Other relevant legislation includes:

- Human Rights Act 1998 - which has six Articles of the European Convention on Human Rights, also has implications for the provision of public services and functions.

- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Power of Wellbeing (Local Government Act 2000) - In areas where there are no legal duties placed on a public authority, the council may exercise its Power of Wellbeing to benefit the community.
- Requirement to consult under the Local Government and Public Health Act 2007.
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – An Act to make provision for protecting persons from harassment and similar conduct.

6. Background and Context

In July 2002 the Council adopted its first Race Equality Scheme which was later revised in 2004 to broaden the concept of equality to other groups that may face disadvantage.

Since then the Council has made significant progress in taking forward equality issues and in 2008, following a self-assessment and peer review, was accredited with reaching level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG)³.

This Scheme updates and supersedes the Single Equality Scheme 2009 – 2012. The delivery of appropriate and responsive services has to take account of the existing and future context in which the Council and its partners operate.




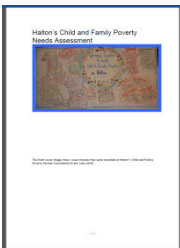
However we recognise that isolation of minority groups can exacerbate the difficulties that individuals may face in terms of the accessibility of services and in achieving their potential. We therefore remain mindful of the fact that the accessibility of information, transportation, and support, as well as direct local service provision, can play an important part in the delivery of our equality agenda.

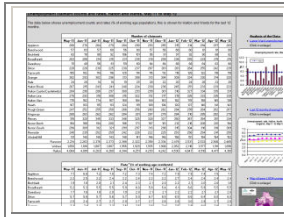
Along with those nationally recognised equality groups there is also a need, given our local context, to consider the needs of carers and other groups who may be disadvantaged and whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. The table below identifies each of the primary equality groups relevant to the borough.

Age	Carers	Disability
Sexual Orientation	Socio economic	
Trans - gender	Gender	Race
Marital Status	Pregnancy/maternity	Religion/Belief

Equality and Diversity Context in Halton

There are a number of websites and profiles available covering information regarding Equality and Diversity. The main ones are listed below with a brief indication of what information they cover.

Screen shot	Name	Comments
	Ethnicity and Migration Summary: www.halton.gov.uk/research	Contains a range of ethnicity and migration information for Halton along with links to further sources of data
	Gypsy and Traveller Caravan statistics: http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/caravancountjan2012	Official statistics on the number of gypsy and traveller caravans down to borough level, including location of sites. Provided by Communities and Local Government.
	Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA): http://www3.halton.gov.uk/healthissocialcare/healthandmedicaladvice/healthjointstrategicneedsassessment/	A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) is a means by which NHS Halton and St Helens and the Council describe the future of health and wellbeing needs of local people and the strategic direction of service delivery to meet these needs
	North West RSMP website: http://www.northwestsmp.org.uk/	North West Regional Strategic Migration Partnership provides advice, development and consultation services to organisations whose work is affected by migration from overseas
	Index of Multiple Deprivation: www.halton.gov.uk/research	Contains detailed data and information on issues of deprivation within Halton and highlights where the most deprived areas are.
	Child and Family Poverty Needs Assessment: http://sdrv.ms/Ux9sao www.halton.gov.uk/research	Halton Borough Council's first Child and Family Poverty Needs Assessment draws heavily on both quantitative and qualitative intelligence, as well as information from other local needs assessments to provide a comprehensive picture of poverty in Halton.



Monthly unemployment summary:
www.halton.gov.uk/research

Contains a range of unemployment, youth unemployment and worklessness data for Halton, Wards, North West and England (updated monthly).

More information can be found at www.halton.gov.uk/research, for further information contact research@halton.gov.uk.

The following diagram (page 14) illustrates many aspects of the above information graphically and provides a summary of the features of Halton's population.

Equality & Diversity summary...

- ❖ In the long term, the older people age group (65+) are projected to grow by 33% from 17,300 in 2010 to 25,700 in 2025.
- ❖ Halton has a largely white population.
- ❖ From the 2011 School Census the main first language apart from English was Polish.
- ❖ As at January 2012, Halton had 82 Gypsy and Traveller Caravans.
- ❖ Christianity is the main religion in Halton, well above the national average.
- ❖ We have a very small percentage of same sex couples, 0.1% according to the 2001 census.
- ❖ Halton has a higher % of DLA claimants than England. It also has a higher % of carers than England.
- ❖ Deprivation is a major issue in Halton, 21 of the 79 'Super Output Areas' fall in the 10% most deprived areas in England. Over a quarter of children – 6,950 – live in poverty.
- ❖ Around 1 in 5 working age people are claiming an out of work benefit in Halton.

If you want further detail or to see if data can be mapped at a local level please email research@halton.gov.uk

Domain	Indicator	Halton	England average	England worst	England range	England best
Population	1 Population Growth 2001-11	6.4%	7.9%	-4.0%		29.6%
	2 0-14 age group	18.6%	17.7%	8.1%		24.6%
	3 15-64 age group	66.7%	66.0%	56.0%		78.4%
	4 65+ age group	14.6%	16.3%	6.1%		29.6%
Ethnicity	5 % white	98.8%	90.9%	39.4%		99.7%
	6 % non white	1.2%	9.1%	0.3%		60.6%
	7 % of live births to non-UK born mothers	4.8%	25.9%	3.1%		76.4%
	8 % of pupils whose first language other than English (primary)	0.9%	16.8%	0.9%		77.8%
	9 % of pupils whose first language other than English (secondary)	0.9%	12.3%	0.4%		70.4%
Religion	10 % Christian	83.8%	71.7%	38.6%		86.9%
	11 % Buddhist	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%		1.3%
	12 % Hindu	0.1%	1.1%	0.0%		19.6%
	13 % Jewish	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%		14.8%
	14 % Muslim	0.1%	3.1%	0.0%		36.4%
	15 % Sikh	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%		9.1%
	16 % Other religions	0.1%	0.3%	0.0%		2.0%
	17 % No religion	8.7%	14.6%	5.8%		27.8%
Marital Status	18 % Single (never married)	30.3%	30.2%	18.1%		55.8%
	19 % Married	43.7%	43.5%	24.8%		53.7%
	20 % Re-married	6.6%	7.4%	2.5%		11.7%
	21 % Separated (but still legally married)	2.3%	2.4%	1.6%		4.4%
	22 % Divorced	8.9%	8.2%	5.3%		12.3%
	23 % Widowed	8.2%	8.3%	4.9%		12.5%
Carers & Disability	24 Disability Living Allowance claimants	9.0%	5.1%	11.0%		1.4%
	25 % Carers	11.5%	10.1%	6.7%		13.1%
	26 % Carers: good health	53.4%	55.7%	46.2%		66.2%
	27 % Carers: fairly good health	32.3%	32.6%	26.8%		37.9%
Deprivation	28 % Carers: not good health	14.3%	11.7%	16.9%		5.7%
	29 IMD deprivation score	32.5	19.2	43.4		4.5
	30 % under 16s child poverty	28.0%	21.9%	50.9%		3.0%
	31 % out of work benefit claimants	19.0%	12.1%	23.0%		3.0%

Notes for chart:

1 % total population growth from 2001 Census to 2011 Census. 2-4 given as % of total population, Census 2011. 5-23 2001 census. 24 % of total population claiming DLA Feb 2012 25-28 2001 Census 29 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation 30 2009 HMRC 31 % of 16-64 year olds claiming out of work benefits Feb 2012

Sexual orientation

There are no official statistics on the numbers of Halton residents who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual (LGBT), as this is not part of the information collected by the Census. However at Halton all characteristics are included in the questions on the staff survey to enable a full workforce profile to be obtained. Furthermore this information is requested on Halton 2000 surveys and general and service specific public surveys (in both cases an option not to disclose is included). In addition figures, based on estimates produced by the Department for Work and Pensions, suggest that 6% of the population fall into this category. Stonewall, the lobbying and support organisation for lesbians, gay men and bisexuals, agree with the Government's estimate, putting the figure at somewhere between 5% and 7%.

Lesbian, gay and bisexual people experience a number of health inequalities, and research suggests that discrimination has a negative effect on the health of LGB people in terms of lifestyles, mental health and other risks.

Many people are reluctant to disclose their sexual orientation because they fear discrimination or poor treatment.

It is commonly assumed that LGB people's needs are the same as those of heterosexual people, unless these needs are related to their sexual health. It is important to understand that LGBT people can be younger, older, from BME communities, from any faith group and/or disabled and we must not assume that they form one homogenous group with common needs.

Transgender, Marital Status/Civil Partnerships, Pregnancy and Maternity

The Council recognises that people in these groups can also face similar inequality and discrimination issues. This can be due to a lack of understanding, or because of intolerance. The new Equality Duty will require public bodies to advance equality of opportunity for all.

To date the Council has undertaken a significant number of initiatives to further enhance the quality of life experienced by all of those within the community.

Workforce Information - Main Survey Summary

Workforce Summary	
Gender	
Male	28%
Female	72%
Ethnicity	
White British	96%
Other	4%
Disability	
Yes	4%
No	93%
Prefer not to say	3%
Place of Residence	
Within the borough	70%
Outside the borough	30%
Sexual Orientation	
Heterosexual	88%
Other	2%
Prefer not to say	10%
Religion	
Christian	71%
Other	3%
No religion	19%
Prefer not to say	7%

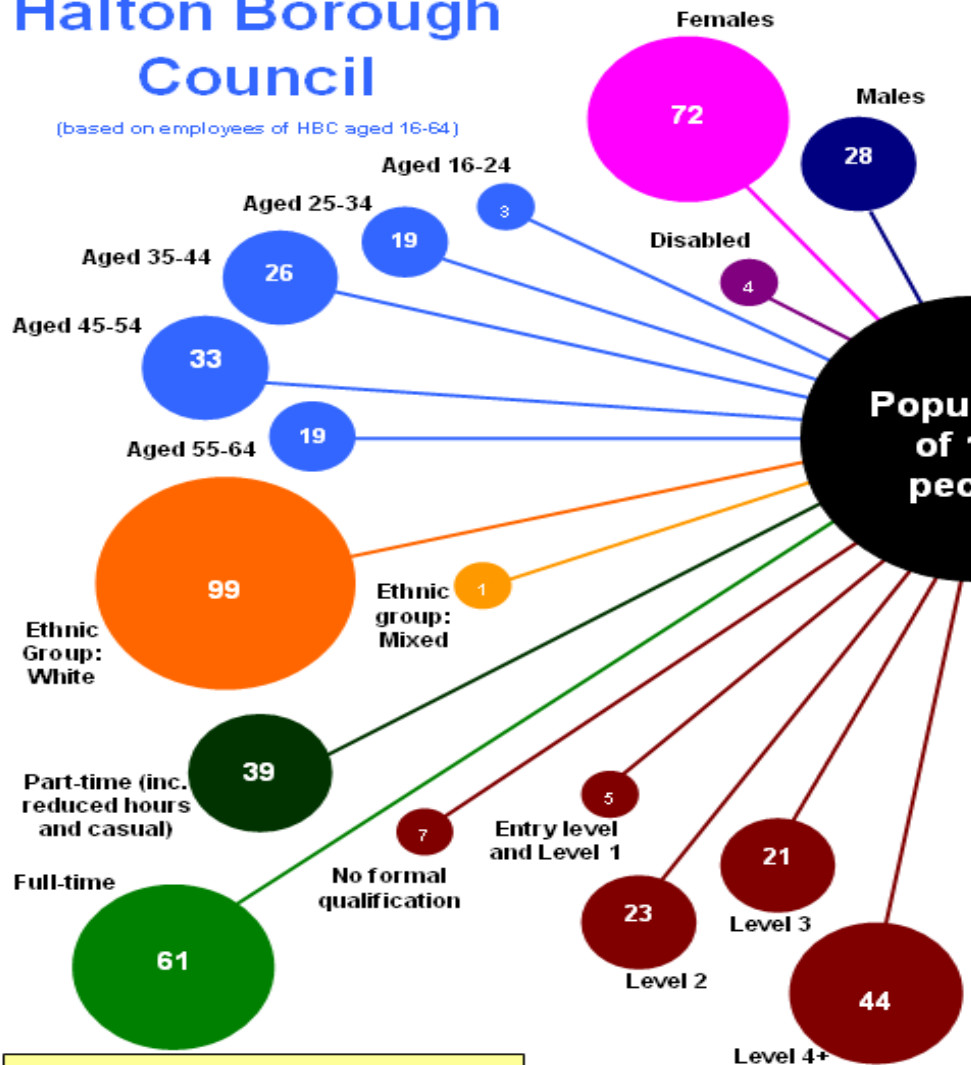
The workforce survey was carried out in 2011 to establish the profile of the Council's workforce and its range of diversity in order to provide the background knowledge necessary to formulate and inform the People Plan.

The following illustration compares the workforce profile to the overall profile of Halton. Detailed data regarding the Council's workforce is included at Appendix 3.

Comparison of Halton Borough Council's workforce (from the Workforce Profile 2011) to the overall profile for the Borough of Halton...

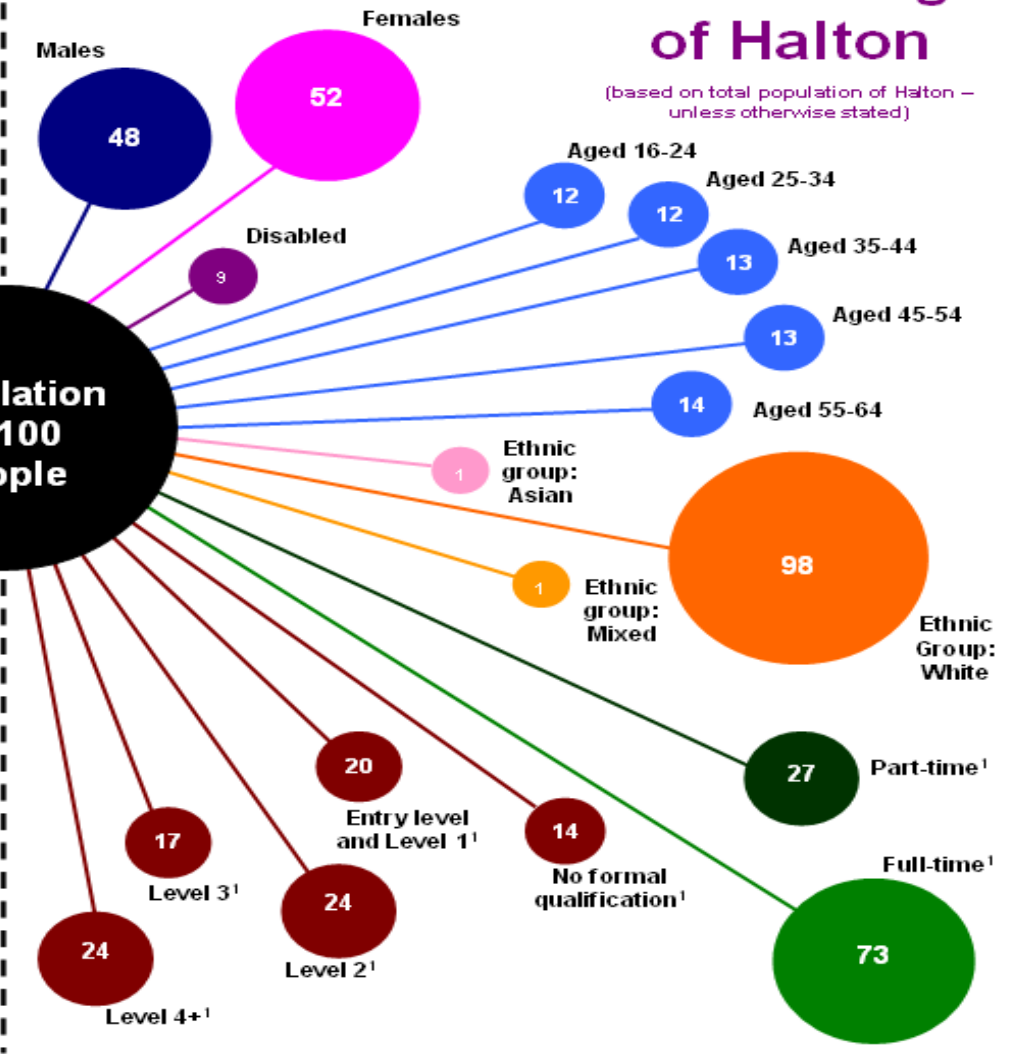
Halton Borough Council

(based on employees of HBC aged 16-64)



The Borough of Halton

(based on total population of Halton – unless otherwise stated)



Main Survey Results Summary Results and Analysis

The 'average' Halton employee, that is the most occurring characteristics found in the workforce profile, from the responses received: -

- Permanent position
- Full time (ie.37 hours)
- Length of service with organisation – 6 to 10 years
- Salary – HBC 4
- Female
- Married
- Age - 45-54
- Christian
- Heterosexual
- Live within the Borough
- Without a disability
- White British
- Level 2 Qualification

Gender & Salary

- Most occurring Female salary category: HBC1
- Most occurring Male salary category: HBC3
- Higher than HBC11 – Male: 34 in number / Female: 33 in number

Gender & Employment Type

- Top Male category: Full Time (88%)
- Top Female category: Full Time (50%)
- No. of Part Time: Female (45%)

Gender & Level of Qualification

- Top qualification level for Males: Level 7
- Top qualification level for Females: Level 2
- None & Basic level's – Male 162 (28%) Female 569 (37%)

Salary & Age

- Top age category (45-54) most common salary point across that age group: HBC1

Salary & Length of Service

- Most common Length of Service (6-10yrs), with most common salary: HBC4

Salary & Where you Live

- Most occurring salary for those living within the Borough: HBC1
- Most occurring salary for those living outside the Borough: HBC7
- Higher than HBC11
Living within the Borough: 20.9%
Outside the Borough: 79.1%

Where you Live & Qualification

- Within the Borough –
Most occurring level of qualification: Level 2
Least occurring level of qualification: Level 8&4
- Outside the Borough
Most occurring level of qualification: Level 7
Least occurring level of qualification: Level 8&1

Where you live & Age

- Biggest % re: Outside the Borough: 25-34 age group

This workforce profile will be updated regularly annually

A People Plan was produced late in 2011. The aim of the People Plan is to place the workforce at the heart of the organisation - endorsing the notion that this is the organisation's most valuable and recognised resource.

The Strategic Aims of the plan are: -

- To attract, develop and retain excellent people
- To promote organisational excellence
- To be an excellent employer
- To provide excellence in leadership and management development

Part of the development of the People Plan was to undertake a staff survey in 2011 and establish and up to date workforce profile.

Results of the 2011 staff survey were mainly positive with high levels of satisfaction across all groups and an action plan was developed to address any areas where further improvement could be secured.

7. Our Priorities

The Council's Vision

Halton will be a thriving and vibrant Borough where people can learn and develop their skills; enjoy a good quality of life with good health; a high quality, modern urban environment; the opportunity for all to fulfil their potential; greater wealth and equality; sustained by a thriving business community; and a safer, stronger and more attractive neighbourhood.

In order to deliver this vision the Council has identified the following 6 strategic priorities⁴ that will improve the lives of those within the community, regardless of their individual status, in the medium and longer-term.

A Safer Halton

To ensure pleasant, safe and secure neighbourhood environments with attractive, safe surroundings, good quality local amenities and the ability of people to enjoy life where they live.

A Healthy Halton

To create a healthier community and work to promote well-being, a positive experience of life with good health (not simply an absence of disease), and offer opportunities for people to take responsibility for their health with the necessary support available.

Halton's Urban Renewal

To transform the urban fabric and infrastructure, to develop exciting places and spaces and to create a vibrant and accessible Borough that makes Halton a place where people are proud to live and see a promising future for themselves and their families.

Children and Young People in Halton

To ensure that in Halton children and young people are safeguarded, healthy and happy, and receive their entitlement of high quality services that are sensitive to need, inclusive and accessible to all.

Employment Learning and Skills in Halton

To create an economically prosperous borough that encourages investment, entrepreneurship, enterprise and business growth, and improves the education, skills and employment prospects of our residents and workforce so they can share in all the opportunities Halton affords.

Corporate Effectiveness and Efficient Service Delivery

To create the maximum effect on the quality of life in the communities of Halton through the efficient use of the Council's resources.

Halton's approach to mainstreaming equality and diversity is based of five key aspects: -

Equality Mapping

Equality mapping is about knowing your community. It is the term used for collecting information about communities and individuals. It can be collected not only on the basis of race, gender, disability, religion/faith, sexual orientation and age, but increasingly other relevant equality demographics such as socio-economic circumstances, health and educational achievement.

Data will need to be understood, not just collected, and used as an important baseline for plans such as the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The profile of the community has been established by using research from census and other data. To ascertain the scale of irregularities in outcomes between communities the Council has regularly taken an economic, social and environmental audit since 2000 (the State of the Borough report).

The Council is currently further exploring and developing mapping systems for equality related measures. As example of this approach is the use of Hotspot Mapping which allows data to be analysed at a small area level and compared to local, regional and national data to determine any correlation between personal circumstances or commonality of status and outcomes. This will allow the Council to monitor and develop its policies and services to ensure that they remain accessible and needs driven.

Place shaping, leadership and commitment.

Place shaping may be summarised as a 'creating places where people can thrive. In fulfilling this role the Council will continue to develop arrangements for:

- Building and shaping the local identity;
- Representing the community;
- Maintaining community cohesiveness;
- Helping resolve disagreements;
- Working to make the local economy more successful;
- Understanding local needs in order to provide the right services
- Working with other bodies;
- Working with partners to set equality and cohesion priorities

The Council has a well established and effective Local Strategic Partnership, including the Equality, Engagement and Cohesion Group

At an organisational level the Equality and Diversity agenda is led by a Divisional Manager who is supported by a Corporate Equality and Diversity Group with officer representation from each of the four Directorates of the Council. At the operational level there are three Directorate Equality Groups each of which is led by the relevant Strategic or Operational Director. These groups provide both a feed up role into the development of strategy and a feed down role to staff who are involved in the implementation of policies and practices.

Community engagement and satisfaction

The Council has developed an audit and analysis framework to capture community engagement activity on four levels, information giving, consultation, deciding together and acting together.

The council recently undertook the audit and the framework is being shared with partner agencies. The audit provides a baseline for the Halton Partnership Community Engagement Strategy, ensuring better understanding of how the Council engages with Halton's residents and uses resources effectively.

Responsive Services and Customer Care

The Council aims to: -

- Be able to demonstrate greater cultural understanding on behalf of service users;

- Use Equality Impact Assessments and other assessment methods to ensure that the impact of service provision on different communities is understood.

The practice of undertaking regular Impact Assessments by all Council services has been developed and they are routinely undertaken for policies, functions and services.

To ensure that EIAs are integrated into all aspects of service planning and delivery the Council has:-

- Revised the guidance and procedures for undertaking EIAs;
- In accordance with the revised EIA process guidance, equality actions will be regularly monitored by Officers and Elected Members through both the Corporate Performance Management Framework and relevant Directorate Equality Groups;
- EIAs are published on the Council's website.

In the methods described above equality issues and objectives will be clearly integrated into service planning and performance management frameworks and encourage proactive policy making.

In order to ensure that the services the Council provides meet the needs of people from different backgrounds (including personalisation of services where appropriate) there will be regular Equality and Diversity Monitoring (see Section Three of this Toolkit). There are regular resident satisfaction surveys which can be disaggregated by equalities groups and the information from these will be monitored to identify areas for improvements and inform service development.

A Modern and Diverse Workforce

The Council aims to be an employer which ensures:-

- Fair employment practices that comply with the legislation
- Training on equality issues including EIAs
- That the workforce profile reflects the diversity of the community and that measures are in place to monitor diversity and promote equality of opportunity
- It has established targets against objectives

8. Achievements since adoption of the 2009 – 2012 Equality Scheme

During the lifetime of the preceding Single Equality Scheme the Council has taken a number of actions to ensure that at both an organisational and partnership service provision has been geared toward inclusivity and participation.

Although it would not be possible to identify all such actions within this scheme the following summary provides an overview of some of the activities and initiatives that have been undertaken.

Initiatives to improve outcomes for disabled people include:

- Establishment of day services centres for adults and older people with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities (PSD)
- Ensure accessibility all areas where there are Council meetings
- Full accessibility of all polling stations
- HHILS - service established to ensure fewer disabled people are waiting for adaptation's
- Support for the Halton Disability Partnership, whose membership consists of service users and sponsored organisations
- All Council buildings conform to the Disability Standard

Initiatives to improve outcomes for people from different ethnic groups include:

- A major Lottery funded project is being undertaken in partnership with the other councils in Cheshire, Manchester Metropolitan University and Cheshire Halton and Warrington Race and Equality Centre (CHAWREC) to establish the extent of, and recommend remedies to combat, racism in schools in Cheshire (Schools Stand up 2 Racism project). Findings and recommendations will be presented at a national conference in October 2013, along with the production of a number of training packages for schools.
- Partnership working to establish a formal, constituted BME Network and informal Faith Network; this is now supported by the HBC Community Development Team.
- The Council supports the Halton Strategic Partnership in annually facilitating a Faith Event

- Establishment of the BME Floating Support service (Supporting People) which supports 11 BME families, mainly with children; service users are encouraged to discuss issues that they face of equal opportunity/discrimination; this work is now undertaken on the Council's behalf by partners in the social housing sector
- Children's Trust Equality and Diversity Group monitors and acts upon reported racist incidents in schools. The Children's Trust has a dedicated Equality and Diversity Group and Equality Scheme.
- Revised guidance has now been produced to help schools record, monitor and deal with all types of prejudice based bullying incidents.
- Increased the number of sites and pitches for Gypsy and Traveller families and working in partnership with a consultative and support group
- The Communities Directorate has an 'Unmet Needs' policy, which provides a mechanism for delivery and assessment staff to record requests for services/equipment which we are unable to meet. This allows us to determine how to prioritise spend (for example by purchasing new equipment if there is sufficient demand) and keeps us up to date on the needs and requirements of our service users.
- The Welcome Audit which is carried out annually and has developed practitioners and young people's understanding of inequality and discrimination and has ensured that these have been addressed to ensure all young people can access the youth provisions. This has been rolled out across Halton Youth Service.
- Continued provision of day services centres for adults and older people with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities (PSD). This service also ensures equality of access and service provision for young LGBT people
- Support to the Youth Parliament
- Children and Enterprise Directorate has developed information systems enable disaggregation to vulnerable groups and geographically to measure health inequalities
- Halton BC is the lead partner on the Dignity Champions agenda in the area and there is an established a network consisting of independent, voluntary and statutory sectors.

Generic initiatives to improve equality

- The Partnership Equalities, Engagement and Community Cohesion (EEC) Group enables partnership working to deal with issues of equality and diversity
- Inclusion in Housing Needs Surveys, and Corporate Complaints forms, of questions about age, ethnicity, disability, also waiting list and grant applications. User surveys of Adult and Older People's services are disaggregated by ethnicity age gender disability.
- The profile of the community has been established by using research from the census and where appropriate data extracted from sources such as NOMIS, ONS, CLG and HMRC.
- To ascertain the scale of irregularities in outcomes between communities the Council has regularly taken an economic, social and environmental audit since 2000. The State of the Borough report provides this and contains a range of information along with links to up-to-date sources of data.
- The development and implementation of the Sustainable Communities Strategy
- The Communities Directorate has produced, in partnership with the Health Services, a 'Joint Strategic Needs Assessment' (JSNA) which documents detailed information about the Halton community with a specific focus on health inequalities, including physical and sensory disabilities and mental health issues. There are detailed population statistics, in most cases at ward level, which describe communities within Halton.
- The Council has met the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by collating and publishing a profile and analysis of its workforce. Equality Analysis of services, policies and functions was also published.
- In addition, and in accordance with the PSED, Executive Board agreed the Council's prime Equality and Diversity objectives; these were first published in April 2012 and progress will be published annually. The objectives will be revised every four years.
- The process of undertaking Equality Impact Assessments is now well established and has been refined to take into account all legislation and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

EIAs are undertaken at any of four major stages in the decision making process:-

- All new policies and functions and those which have been subject to major revision must now be accompanied by an EIA before gaining final approval;
- All services will be assessed over an agreed time period;
- EIAs will be carried out before final recommendations are made in budget reformulation; and/or
- At the 'to be' stage of the Efficiency Review programme.

The EIA guidance material has been improved and the standard template used to undertake EIAs has been adapted in order to further ensure that assessing whether services and policies are compliant with the Public Sector Equality Duty is embedded into the process.

- A Hate Crime Strategy has been produced, as a result of working with partners and extensive public consultation. Hate Crime Awareness sessions are held for HBC staff and other public and voluntary sector partners. A number of third party Hate Crime Reporting Centres have been set up in various establishments across the borough.
- Similarly, a Community Engagement Strategy has also been produced, focussing on hard to reach groups.
- Establishment of the Safer in Town scheme which enables vulnerable people to take safe refuge in town centre shops which have agreed to take part in the scheme, if they feel under threat or are suffering some form of victimisation or harassment so that a nominated helper can be contacted for assistance if needed.
- The Council will be working in close partnership with the Halton Clinical Commissioning Group to establish its equality and diversity support function.
- Equality and Diversity training, particularly around the Public Sector Equality Duty, is provided to teaching staff and school governors.

Initiatives to improve equality in the workplace include:

- Establishment of the Organisational Development Group and production of the People Plan. The People Plan can be accessed by the link below: -



People Plan 2012.pdf

- A survey to establish the profile of the Councils workforce; this will be updated annually.
- Conduct of the staff survey to establish views in the current climate of substantial organisational changes. The next survey will be carried out in 2015 as part of the evaluation of progress of the People Plan.
- Implementation of family friendly flexible working practices.
- A comprehensive organisation wide job evaluation process ensures that the pay grade for all jobs within the Council are evaluated based upon common criteria regardless of any predisposition of gender and other groups. This process is routinely applied to all new positions that may be created and ensures parity in terms of pay and condition.
- Equality awareness training for all staff is now included on the induction course. Training for all staff on Equality and Diversity is available to all employees and some partners, including the nationally recognised ILM Level 4 Certificate. There is also more advanced training for senior staff in managing diversity.
- The Council also facilitates BME awareness training for any employees, which is offered free of charge by a partner organisation.
- A significant number of senior staff have received in depth training in undertaking Equality Impact Assessments, which was provided by an E&D consultancy service.
- A number of major HR policies have subject to robust Equality Impact Assessments.

Suitable training ensures that: -

- Staff managing and delivering services are trained to provide an appropriate and informed response to all service users without unlawful discrimination by raising awareness of training in the community;
- Staff managing and delivering services are clear about their responsibilities to promote equal opportunities and good relations in accordance with Council policy;
- Managers have the knowledge and capacity to discharge the Council's duties around equalities specifically the requirements to monitor service provision and take up, carry out impact assessments and report the outcomes of this work to be able to make appropriate changes to service provision;
- Managers are equipped to manage a diverse workforce and implement the Council's Equality Policies;
- Staff have a clear understanding of the relationship between the various items of equal opportunities legislation and associated schemes and standards;
- Equalities issues are fully understood and taken account of in the Council's HR Policies in particular recruitment and selection practices and procedures and bullying and harassment policies;
- All new staff joining the Council are provided with an understanding of the Council's policies and understand how these are translated into procedures and codes of practice.
- Equality and Diversity is a part of the Council's Induction Programme.

Generic training in relation to issues of equality, diversity and cohesion are supplemented by context specific training for individual Directorates and Departments. This will ensure that those dealing with specific client groups are fully conversant with particular needs and expectations and that the information gained from experiences and interactions with such client groups on a day to day basis is used appropriately and effectively.

Halton Children's Trust

The Children's Trust is also committed to advancing equality and diversity and has been successful in making progress with the equality agenda. For further details please refer to the Children's

Trust Equality and Diversity Scheme by using the following link: -



Trust E&D Scheme
2013 - 2015.doc

9. Management and Monitoring Arrangements

The Council will manage and monitor the delivery of its equality objectives through the existing Corporate Planning framework and the strategic linkages between this Equality Scheme and other significant plans within the framework.

This alignment of plans ensures that the strategic priorities of the Council and its partners inform the day to day activities of departments and are informed by the information and intelligence that is acquired through the day to day interaction between individual services and the local community.

10.0 Equality Objectives 2012 to 2015

Background and Purpose

As part of its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty the Council has agreed a set of Equality and Diversity objectives, which were first published in April 2012. Progress towards achieving the objectives will be published annually, also in April, and they will be revised in 2015.

The following objectives were agreed by Executive Board in March 2012: -

1. To share and evaluate good practice.

It is acknowledged that working with partners and sharing best practice can lead to improved outcomes in equality and diversity. An example may be closer working with Health partners as the Council gains responsibility for Public Health in Halton. The success of this objective could be measured initially by the number of joint initiatives.

2. To improve community safety

A rise in hate crime incidents has been a cause for concern nationally and the Council has been working closely with Cheshire Constabulary to address the issue locally. Some examples have been to facilitate the operation of a number of third party hate crime incident reporting centres and provision of hate crime awareness training to a number of colleagues and partner organisations. Following a series of extensive consultation events in late 2011 a Hate Crime Strategy was produced and an action plan agreed. The progress of this objective would be measured as the actions within the strategy are successfully implemented.

3. To ensure accessibility to services and information

The Council is committed to knowing its customers (equality mapping) and providing services that can be accessible to all. It will do this by having up to date demographic knowledge and using customer surveys and feedback to ensure that no member of the population feels excluded from using the Council's services.

4. Improve consultation and engagement

In order to ensure that the Council and the Halton Strategic Partnership can engage with hard to reach groups and those who may not normally take part in public life, following a major consultation event an Engagement Strategy was launched in 2011. In measuring whether the community feels engaged and

empowered the actions identified within the Strategy will be implemented over the period of this scheme.

5. To ensure equality of opportunity in employment

The Council aims, as far as possible, to have a workforce that is representative of the Halton Community. To this end, in line with the People Plan and the Public Sector Equality Duty the workforce profile will be updated annually. Progress towards the objective will also be achieved by implementing the actions specified in the People Plan and maximising the number of staff who benefit from equality and diversity training.

Equality Objectives

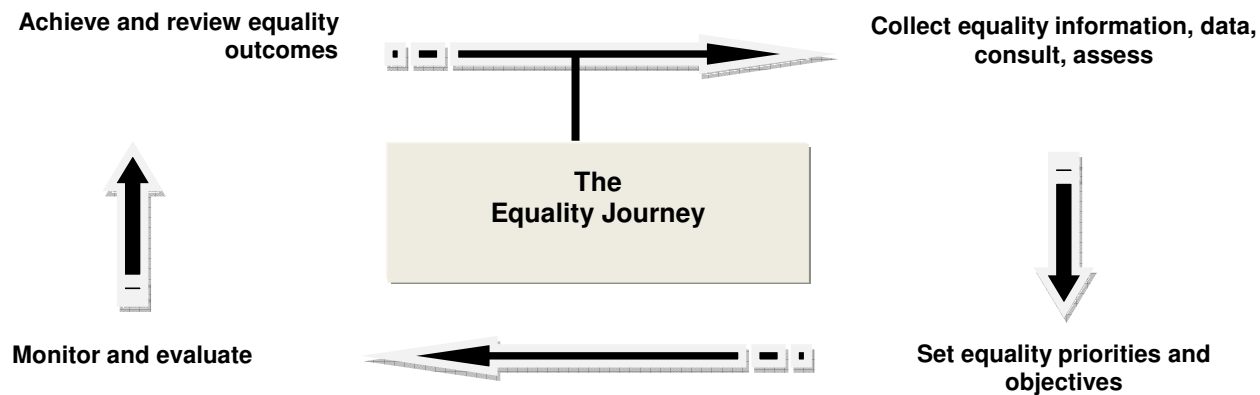
Objective 1 : To share and evaluate good practice					
	Actions	Outcomes	Measure of Success	Timescale	Responsibility
1.1	Identify elements of the Equality Act 2010 (general and specific duties) which can be developed with partners	EEC Group partners can demonstrate an improvement in equality and diversity in their organisations	Number of shared initiatives	March 2013 - March 2015	Council and, Equality, Engagement and Cohesion (EEC) Group Partners
1.2	Share learning in relation to local / national initiatives		Report demonstrating positive actions and good practice		
1.3	Joint EIAs with partners where appropriate		Evidence of positive service improvements		
Objective 2 : To improve community safety					
	Actions	Outcomes	Measures of Success	Timescale	Responsibility
2.1	Raise awareness of Hate Crime and support available	Reduced inequalities in personal safety	Increase in number of hate crimes reported, including at third party reporting centres. Numbers attending Hate Crime Awareness sessions	March 2013 - March 2015	HBC Policy and Strategy Safer Halton Partnership Reporting Centres

	Raise awareness of domestic violence and support available		Number of racist incidents in schools		
2.2			Number of domestic violence incidents		HBC Policy and Strategy CDRP
2.3	Partnership work to reduce anti-social behaviour	Reduction in ASB, in particular targets ASB	No. of ASB cases per year <i>NB it is the intention in all these circumstances to make the reporting process more effective. This may result in an initial; rise in the number, however it is also the intention to ensure that more incidents are dealt with effectively and also that by raising awareness there will be a resulting reduction in all types of incident.</i>	March 2013 - March 2015	HBC Policy and Strategy CDRP

Objective 3 : To ensure accessibility to services and information					
	Actions	Outcomes	Measure of Success	Timescale	Responsibility
3.1	Create an understanding of inequalities to service delivery and identify barriers	Reduction in equalities to access to information, services, buildings and the environment	Customer surveys Customer feedback	March 2013 - March 2015	HBC Policy and Strategy R&I EEC Partners
3.2	Improve and share knowledge of service users by effective monitoring				
Objective 4 : Improve consultation and engagement					
	Actions	Outcomes	Measure of Success	Timescale	Responsibility
4.1	Implementation of HSP Consultation Strategy	Community feels engaged and empowered	No of actions in Engagement Strategy implemented Number of consultations shared and published	March 2013 - March 2015	HBC Policy and Strategy, R&I, EEC Partners
4.2	Engage in engagement opportunities, including sharing events etc. with EEC partners				

Objective 5 : To ensure equality of opportunity in employment					
	Actions	Outcomes	Measure of Success	Timescale	Responsibility
5.1	Identify ways to ensure that the workforce is representative of the Halton community	Removing barriers to excellence in employment for all employees regardless of protected characteristic and a workforce that is representative of the community it serves.	Regular updates of staff workforce survey and self input of HR data, including all protected characteristics.	March 2013 - March 2015	HBC Policy and Strategy, Learning and Development, EEC Partners and other organisations as required
5.2	Ensure training in Equality and Diversity is available to staff at all levels, including joint training with partners and use of other organisations.		Implementation of Actions implemented in 'People Plan 2012 – 2015'		

The Equality Objectives Setting Process



Glossary of commonly used terms

Ageism

This is discrimination against people based on assumptions and stereotypes about their age (both young people and older people in particular)

Anti –Semitism

This refers to unfounded hostility towards the Jewish faith and people. It also refers to the practical consequence of such hostility in unfair discrimination against Jewish individuals and communities and to the exclusion of Jewish people from mainstream political and social affairs.

Community Cohesion

Community Cohesion incorporates and goes beyond the concept of equality and social inclusion. It describes a situation where:

- There is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods

Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disability as 'a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

Discrimination

Is to treat an individual or group differently and less favourably than others under the same or similar circumstances. The result of discrimination is that it has an unfavourable impact on a specific group.

Discrimination can be direct or indirect

- Direct discrimination means treating one person less favourably than another on the grounds of a personal characteristic such as gender, race or sexuality.

- Indirect discrimination happens where a rule or condition, which is applied equally by everyone:
 - Can be met by a considerably smaller proportion of people from a particular group
 - Is to the disadvantage of that group
 - Cannot be justified by the aims and importance of the rule or condition

Positive discrimination means treating one person more favourably than another on the grounds of a personal characteristic, for example sexuality, gender or race. Positive discrimination is not legal and should not be confused with Positive Action

Diversity

The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means acknowledging and understanding that each individual is unique, and recognising and respecting our individual differences. These differences can be with regard to race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, socio-economic status, age, disability, religion or belief, marital status or physical appearance.

Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

The EHRC has 'a statutory remit to promote and monitor human rights; and to protect, enforce and promote equality across the nine "protected" grounds - age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation and gender reassignment'.

Equality (of Opportunity)

No individual or group receives less favourable treatment on the grounds that are not justifiable, for example, race, disability or gender, or any other protected characteristic.

Ethnicity

A group of people that share ethnicity share a common identity, which can be culture, values, language, ancestry, social norms.

- Ethnic Majority – The ethnic group that is the dominant group in the society
- Ethnic minorities – Ethnic groups that are smaller than the dominant group in their society

- Black and Minority Ethnic, or Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BME or BAME) – the term used to identify minority ethnic groups in the UK. These groups include bi-racial/mixed heritage people, Asian, Chinese, Black, Gypsy/Traveller and other ethnicities

Genuine Occupational Qualifications (GOQs)

Some jobs are likely to restrict certain people from applying because they require GOQs. People who apply for such jobs must possess the personal characteristics that are necessary for the job, for example female care worker providing personal care.

Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation or any other protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of either violating the claimant's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Hate Crime

Any incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by the offenders' prejudice against any person because of their: -

- Disability;
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Transgender identity

(Home Office nationally agreed definitions)

Heterosexism

This is when a person or persons believe that heterosexuals are naturally superior to gay men, lesbians, and bi-sexuals or make the assumption that everybody is heterosexual. It equally applies to men or women who believe they have the right to dominate the smaller minority.

Homophobia

Is an irrational fear and dislike for individuals who identify as gay men, lesbian or bi-sexual. This fear usually results in judgemental, discriminatory or even violent aggressive behaviour.

Islamophobia

This refers to unfounded hostility towards Islam. It also refers to the practical consequences of such hostility in unfair discrimination against Muslim individuals or communities and to the exclusion of Muslims from mainstream political and social affairs.

Transgender

This is a blanket term for any person whose internal gender identity differs from their physiological gender.

Transsexual

A transsexual person is a person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process (or a part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing their physiological or other attributes of sex.

Appendix 3

The Council's workforce profile (excluding school based employees) is as follows: -

Employee Status	Number	%
Permanent	1968	86.9
Temporary / Fixed Term	210	9.3
Casual	79	3.5
Secondment	8	0.4

Employment type	Number	%
Full time i.e. 37 hours	1365	60.6
Part time i.e. up to 30 hours	781	34.7
Reduced hours	32	1.4
Casual	74	3.3

Length of service	Number	%
Less than 2 years	201	9
2 - 5 years	475	21.2
6 - 10 years	665	29.6
11 - 15 years	423	18.9
16 - 20 years	176	7.8
21 - 25 years	155	6.9
26 - 30 years	72	3.2
31 years +	76	3.4

Salary	Number	%
HBC 1	247	12.1
HBC 2	207	10.1
HBC 3	227	11.1
HBC 4	282	13.8
HBC 5	231	11.3
HBC 6	238	11.6
HBC 7	222	10.8
HBC 8	134	6.5
HBC 9	77	3.8
HBC 10	61	3
HBC 11	54	2.6
Higher than HBC 11	67	3.3

Gender	Number	%
Male	632	27.7
Female	1638	71.8
Prefer not to say	11	0.5

Marital Status	Number	%
Single	463	20.4
Married	1284	56.6
Civil Partnered	20	0.9
Co-habiting	206	9.1
Divorced	148	6.5
Separated	36	1.6
Widowed	38	1.7
Prefer not to say	75	3.3

Age Group	Number	%
Under 18	6	0.3
18 - 24	70	3.1
25 - 34	416	18.5
35 - 44	576	25.6
45 - 54	720	31.9
55 - 64	422	18.7
65+	44	2

Religion	Number	%
No religion	431	19.2
Buddhist	8	0.4
Christian (all denominations)	1582	70.5
Hindu	7	0.3
Jewish	2	0.1
Muslim	3	0.1
Other	47	2.1
Prefer not to say	163	7.3

Sexual Orientation	Number	%
Bisexual	12	0.6
Gay Man	8	0.4
Lesbian	7	0.3
Heterosexual	1903	88.3
Prefer not to say	224	10.4

Where you live	Number	%
Within the Borough	1568	70.3
Outside of the Borough	663	29.7

Disability	Number	%
Yes	74	3.7
No	1855	93.1
Prefer not to say	64	3.2

Ethnic Group	Number	%
British	2173	95.7
Irish	14	0.6
White other	29	1.3
Indian	3	0.1
Pakistani	1	0
Bangladeshi	1	0
Chinese	5	0.2
Caribbean	2	0.1
African	1	0
Black other please tell us	1	0
White & Black Caribbean	4	0.2
White & Black African	3	0.1
White & Asian	3	0.1
Mixed other please tell us in the box below	2	0.1
Other ethnic group please tell us	2	0.1
Prefer not to say	26	1.1

Level of qualification	Number	%
1	97	4.5
2	488	22.8
3	457	21.3
4	108	5
5	215	10
6	319	14.9
7	296	13.8
8	5	0.2
1 2 3	16	0.7
88	143	6.7

Other qualifications	Number	%
First Aid	281	12.3
IT qualification	169	7.4
Coaching / Mentoring	147	6.4
Teaching	126	5.5
Other please tell us in the boxes below	124	5.4
Nursing / Care work	121	5.3
Catering	108	4.7
Social Work	103	4.5
HGV, Agricultural or other driving licence (please	73	3.2
Counselling	71	3.1
Languages	34	1.5
Occupational Therapy	4	0.2