

#BETHE DIFFERENCE



Workforce Monitoring Report

2023 – 2024

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<p>উইরাল কাউন্সিল সকলের কাছে তথ্য পৌছে দেওয়ার জন্য দায়বদ্ধ। আপনি আমাদের ওয়ান-স্টপ-শপে ভিজিট করতে পারেন বা আমাদের কল সেন্টারে (0151) 606 2020-এই নম্বরে সাহায্য ও পরামর্শের জন্য ফোন করতে পারেন যদি আপনি তথ্য অনুবাদিত, অন্য রুন্নম্যাটে, বড়ো হরফে ছাপায় বা ব্রেইল লিপিতে পেতে চান।</p> <p>(Bengali)</p>
<p>偉盧鎮議會致力為所有人士提供資訊。如果您需要某些資料翻譯成其他語文或編制成其他模式的版本（如大字體、凸字或錄音帶），您可以到就近的「一站店」或致電「傳訊中心」（0151606 2020）查詢。</p> <p>(Mandarin)</p>
<p>Tá Comhairle Wirral tiomanta le heolas a chur ar fail do gach duine. Is féidir leat cuairt a thabhairt ar an ionad ilfhreastail is áitiúla duit nó glaoch a chur ar an lárionad glaonna s'againn ar (0151) 606 2020 chun tacaíocht agus comhairle a fháil má tá eolas de dhíth ort aistrihe nó i bhfoirm éigin eile, mar shampla, cló mór, Braille nó ciosmheáin.</p> <p>(Gaelic)</p>
<p>विरल कौंसिल, सभी लोगों के लिए जानकारी को पहुंचयोग बनाने के लिए वचनबंध है। यदि आपको किसी जानकारी के हिन्दी में अनुवाद की या किसी और रूप में जैसे कि बड़े अक्षरों में छपाई, बरल में या कैस्टि के रूप में अवाश्यकता हो तो सलाह और मदद प्राप्त करने के लिए आप अपनी स्थानीय वैन स्टॉप शॉप में जा सकते हैं या इस नम्बर पर (०१५१) ६०६ २०२० पर हमारे किसी भी एक काल सेंटर में टैलीफोन कर सकते हैं।</p> <p>(Hindi)</p>
<p>Rada Miejska Wirral stara się, aby informacje były dostępne dla wszystkich. Mogą Państwo odwiedzić miejscowy ośrodek informacyjny (one stop shop) lub zadzwonić do naszego biura obsługi klienta pod numer telefonu (0151) 606 2020 po wsparcie i porady, jeśli informacje wymagane są w innym języku lub formacie, np dużym drukiem, w wersji audio lub w alfabecie Braille'a.</p> <p>(Polish)</p>
<p>ਵਿਰਲ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪਹੁੰਚਯੋਗ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਵਚਨਬੱਧ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਤਰਜਮੇ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਛਪਾਈ, ਬਰਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਂ ਕੈਸਟਿ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਸਲਾਹ ਅਤੇ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਲੈਣ ਲਈ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਸਥਾਨਿਕ ਵੈਨ ਸਟਾਪ ਸ਼ੌਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ ਜਾਂ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ (0151) 606 2020 ਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਕਾਲ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ।</p> <p>(Punjabi)</p>
<p>Gollaha Wirral waxa uu isku xil-saarey in uu wargelinta ka yeelo wax uu qof walba heli karo. Waxa aad booqan kartaa Dukaanka Hal-Mar-Joogsiga ah ee xaafadaada ama sooba wac xarruuntayada soo wicitaanka oo laga helo (0151) 606 2020 si aad tageero iyo la tallin uga hesho haddii aad u baahan tahay in wargelinta luqad kale loogu turjumo ama looga soo dhigo qaab kale sida far waaweyn, farta ee Braille ama cajallad maqal ah.</p> <p>(Somali)</p>
<p>ویرال کونسل معلومات کو ہر ایک کیلئے قابل رسائی بنانے کیلئے پابند عہد ہے۔ اگر آپ کو معلومات ترجمہ شدہ یا کسی دیگر شکل جیسے بڑے حروف، بریل یا آڈیو کی شکل میں مطلوب ہو تو آپ مدد اور مشورے کیلئے اپنے مقامی ون اسٹاپ شاپ پر آسکتے ہیں یا ہمارے کال سنٹر کو (0151) 606 2020 پر فون کریں۔</p> <p>(Urdu)</p>

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Foreword

Our purpose is to work together to promote fairness and opportunity for people and communities. '[Wirral Working Together](#)' is the Council's key plan which sets out our main priorities between 2023-27. A key part of the plan sets out our ambition to create an inclusive borough where nobody is left behind.

Our communities are our greatest strengths with people of many different backgrounds and life experiences living side by side. Supporting all our communities to thrive is a core strand running through all our priorities and fundamental to how we work as a council. The Council Plan helps demonstrate our commitment to be a fair and inclusive employer, to build an inclusive culture and to lead a Borough where diversity is celebrated, people have equal opportunities and where inequality is actively tackled.

The Public Sector Equality Duty helps public authorities like ours to consider how our policies or decisions affect people, including our employees, who have a protected characteristic under the Equality Act, which are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

I'm pleased to publish our Workforce Equality Report for 2023-24, which provides equalities information on our workforce in accordance with the Equality Act (2010) and Public Sector Equality Duty (2011).

This report helps us to monitor our progress and performance in respect of workforce equalities and gives us insight to engage with our people to identify improvements that can be made and to address imbalances between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.



Paul Sator
Chief Executive Wirral Council

1. Executive Summary

This report draws upon the key findings and actions from analysis of our workforce data in 2023-2024* as required by the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The data we collect and what we do with the information is detailed in the council's Workforce Monitoring Policy. All comparable datasets contained within this report relate to Wirral population figures taken from the Census 2021, and Public Health profiles.

1.1. Summary Findings

- We continue to be one the largest employers in the borough with 79% of our people living locally. This is an increase of 2% from the previous year, rebalancing the 3% downward trend from the previous year.
- Our workforce demographic remains relatively stable with a headcount of 3,578. An increase of 190 from last year. Given several transfers of staff from other organisations known as a TUPE in and out of the organisation.
- *It is important to note this headcount may vary from other published reports e.g., our Gender Pay Gap report, due to statistical requirements and data extract date requirements.*
- We have continued to take steps to increase our people's confidence in providing equalities information through awareness raising campaigns and direct communication. 96% of our people have provided information regarding their protected characteristics, including people who declared that they would 'prefer not to say (PNTS). This is a 3% decrease from the year and is likely to be because of recent TUPE.
- We will closely monitor this in the coming year and continue to strengthen our people's confidence in providing this information. However, recognising and respecting that the provision of such information is a personal and optional choice for our people.
- For some protected characteristics, the proportion of our people who declared they would 'prefer not to say' has decreased but still remains higher than for others. Most notably:
 - 19% of our people indicated they would 'prefer not to say' in respect of sexual orientation (an improvement of 2% from last year)
 - 20% of our people indicated they would 'prefer not to say' in respect to religion and belief (an improvement of 3% from last year).

We have continued to see the narrowing of gaps in these areas overall in the last three years. We will continue to closely monitor this in the coming year and continue to strengthen our people's confidence in providing this information. However, recognising and respect that the provision of such information is a personal and optional choice for our people.

- Like other local government organisations our workforce is ageing, with 59% of our people aged 46 years and over. This is the same as last year and is in keeping with Wirral's population rates at 59.2%. Apart from those aged 55 and over which makes up 34% of our workforce compared to the local population which stands at 42.5%.

Whilst we continue to support the needs of an ageing workforce, we are also taking steps to strengthen our approach to address the challenges of an ageing workforce. We have developed our new talent strategy which launched in summer 2023.

The strategy has three themes, that when delivered together will help us attract, develop and retain talent so we have the right people, with the right skills and behaviours at the right time to meet our challenges and make the most of the opportunities we will face over the coming years. We are exploring and developing pipelines to enable people furthest removed from employment to apply and gain roles in the council as well as creating career pathways and aspiring leaders programme for our internal workforce.

- 65% of our workforce is female, which is higher when compared to Wirral's population rates of 52%. Around 18% of this workforce cohort are within the 46-55 age group. We know that this age group is most likely to be experiencing perimenopause or menopause and are more likely to have caring responsibilities. In recognition of this we have:
 - Staff network groups for women, menstrual health, working carers and perimenopause / menopause
 - A 'Menopause in the Workplace' guidance that also takes account of trans men and non-binary staff who may experience the menopause and menstrual health, supported by a series of employee workshops
 - A menopause related absence category for recording menopause-related absences
 - A Working Carers Policy with associated training for managers.
 - A Carer's Passport Scheme
 - A Menstrual Health conditions guide developed by our Menstrual Health staff network.
- 3% of our workforce identify as being from an ethnic minority background, which is comparable to the previous two years, but lower compared to 7.6% of the Wirral population (an increase of 2.2% from the last census). Whilst this is a similar trend across the Liverpool City Region (LCR) we are working with our LCR partners to improve this, particularly with the new Race Equality Hub. This is also reflected at Chief Officer level at 3%, (which is a reverse in trend from last year) when there was 6% representation from an ethnic minority background. However, as this cohort is a relatively small group, this can be attributed to one or two people.

In addition, a commitment within our new talent strategy is to continue to strengthen our engagement with ethnic minority community groups to ensure our

selection processes are inclusive. Including developing a range of early opportunity talent pipelines, and relationships with partners, that support and give a real chance for those furthest removed from employment and those under-represented within our workforce to join us. This has helped see a 5% increase in job applications from people from an ethnic minority background this year.

- 8% of our people declared a disability, compared with 10.6% of the population. The number declared has broadly remained the same over the last 3 years within the Council. 15% (a decrease of 1% since last year) of our people have 'preferred not to say' in respect of this protected characteristic. We will continue to take steps to close the gap by increasing our people's confidence to enable people to feel more confident in declaring a disability to ensure we can support them in the workplace.

We are a Disability Confident employer and are committed to advancing opportunities for disabled candidates. With prospective disabled candidates automatically guaranteed an interview providing they have met the essential criteria for a role. Based on the applications received this year, there is minimal difference between the numbers applied vs appointed, with 9.1 % of all disabled applications being successful in comparison to 9.8% of all non-disabled applications being successful. However, 21% of candidates preferred not to say, which may have some bearing on the overall rates.

We will continue to strengthen our commitment to hosting supported internships that support and give a real chance for those furthest removed from employment to join us.

- We have an overall healthy approach to workforce management when we consider the range and depth of activity and actions outlined in this report ranging from employment practices like performance management, disciplinary, attendance management etc. to internal promotion, apprenticeship and graduate schemes and staff engagement.

Whilst we hold data in relation to our employment practices e.g., exit interviews, staff survey etc. it has previously been limited by the type, range, and methods of collection. We have implemented an improved approach to enhance our ability to collect, identify, understand, and act on insights, hotspots, barriers, and opportunities.

1.2. What We Have Achieved this year (2023/24)

During the reporting period we have:

- Undertaken our annual organisation wide staff survey. 50% (1,663 staff) responded, which helped us gain insight into 'what we do well'; 'what matters most to staff'; and 'how we can work together to make Wirral an even better place to work'. This is an improvement of 11.5% in relation to responses to the previous survey.

- With involvement from the workforce, we launched a range of opportunities for our people to engage, explore and understand the corporate vision and plan which included:
 - Our interactive 'We Are Wirral Experience' which aims to give our people the opportunity to reflect on the important role we all must play to #BeTheDifference for our Wirral residents.
 - Leadership conferences and Chief Executive Roadshows with the aim of exploring the Leadership Behaviour Framework and the vision for the council and focus of the year ahead.
- Our Inclusion Group (made up of representatives from all our Staff Network groups) has evolved since inception. It has gained greater recognition within the organisation and influences strategic decision making.



This year the group has:

- Played a key role in the design of our new council office building to ensure the building is as inclusive as possible including gender neutral facilities, separate prayer rooms, provision for quiet areas, breastfeeding / expressing facilities, appropriate lighting / colours for our neurodiverse colleagues
 - Co-designed and reviewed key employee related strategies, policies, and processes, including the Talent Strategy, staff survey
 - Developed an inclusive email signature guide including the use of pronouns, neurotype and #mynameis
 - Led staff awareness and engagement campaigns, including women's health month, International Women's Day, race equality week, charity football match with colleagues across the region for world mental health day, introduced rainbow lanyards as part of Pride to name but a few
 - Members of the group have also shadowed the Chief Executive, become a panellist for the Race Equality Matters Trailblazers programme, applied to represent Wirral on the Liverpool City Region Race Equality panel, presented at a Manager Network about the importance of updating personal information on self-serve, use of volunteering opportunities to help plant trees and wrap presents at Christmas
 - Increased its reach to employees across the organisation to over 300.
- The number of staff network groups has grown, and we now have 12. We will continue to support and encourage more networks and groups as required.
- In conjunction with other councils within the Liverpool City Region, we have completed the first phase of our EmbRACE training programme for our workforce. This is part of the regions commitment to tackle systemic injustice and inequality and drive forward positive change for our Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic employees and residents. The full rollout of this programme will be from 2022 until 2025 and reach 17,000 employees.

2. Workforce Composition

- This report provides data on our workforce profile for 2023-2024. We collect, publish and monitor our people's diversity data to:
- Check how representative we are according to the local population, wherever possible.
 - Consider and review the impact of our employment policies and processes, including the identification of areas which appear to have a disproportionate impact on certain groups of employees.
 - Show 'due regard' to the Public Sector Equality Duty, a legal requirement under the Equality Act 2010.
 - Identify opportunities to further embed Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in the workplace, so that all our people feel included, listened to, supported, and developed to reach their full potential.

3. Organisational Composition

➤ As of 1 April 2023, our:

- Total headcount equalled 3,578.
- Total employees working full time equalled 2,443.
- Total employees working part-time equalled 1,135 (of which 80% are women).

These figures do not include school employees, councillors, consultants or agency staff (unless they have line management responsibilities).

➤ In terms of length of service, we have 499 employees with up to 1 years' service (14%), 930 with between 1-5 years' (26%), 457 with 6–10 years (13%), 814 with 11 – 20 years (23%) and 878 with 20+ years (25%).

Whilst we acknowledge we have an ageing workforce, many of which have long service, it should also be noted that around 40% of our workforce now have less than 5 years' service, which is an increase of 5% from the previous year.

➤ Overall, there has been no significant changes to the demographic of our workforce over the last three years. We remain female dominated, have an ageing workforce and are under-representative of our ethnic minority communities. The average length of service is 17 years plus.

4. Equality Monitoring Information

4.1. Age

- Like other local government organisations our workforce is ageing, with 61% of our people aged 46 years and over. This remains the same as last year:
 - Employee level 59%
 - Manager level 79%
 - Senior manager and chief officer level 88%.
- Around 34% of our overall workforce are aged over 55. In comparison to the local population which stands at 42.5%.
- Around 18% of our female workforce are aged between 46-55 years. When we look at the local population, this is 7%.
- We are 17% overrepresented in the 51–60 age bracket and 8% under-represented in the 16-25 age bracket in comparison to the latest census data.
- Whilst we continue to support the needs of an ageing workforce, we are also taking steps to strengthen our approach to address the challenges of an ageing workforce. Our new Talent Strategy launched summer 2023 and has key actions to support improvements in this area.

The strategy has three themes, that when delivered together will help us attract, develop, and retain talent so we - have the right people, with the right

skills and behaviours at the right time to meet our challenges and make the most of the opportunities we will face over the coming years.

We know that talent is everywhere in our organisation so we are taking an 'inclusive' rather than 'exclusive' approach to talent development where everyone will have equal opportunity to think, create, learn, grow, network, progress and thrive.

4.2. Sex

- We have a predominantly female workforce (almost two thirds) which remains when compared to Wirral's population rates of 52%. consistent over previous years, which is higher.
- At Assistant Director and Chief Officer level the male / female split is 56% / 44%.
- In relation to pay, women are continuing to maintain representation at assistant director / chief officer level.
- At manager and senior manager level, the male / female split of 35% men / 65% women shows an increase of female representation of 4% from last year (when previously there was an increase of 18%).

4.3. Ethnicity

- The response rate from our people declaring their ethnicity has remained the same.
- 3% of our people identifying as being from an ethnic minority background compared to 7.6% of the Wirral population. Matching a trend across the Liverpool City Region. This is also reflected at Chief Officer level at 3%. Whilst this is a decrease of 2.8% from last year, this cohort is a relatively small group, and 1 or 2 people can significantly alter the statistics.
- Comparisons have been made across the Liverpool City Region with Liverpool having the highest ethnic minority employee representation at 5.9% (with ethnic minority population of 16%).
- We will continue to work with the Liverpool City Region Race Equality Forum to support and develop appropriate interventions. We have developed a Race, Religion and Belief staff network group in respect of the race equality agenda across the region.

In addition, a commitment within our new talent strategy is to continue to strengthen our engagement with ethnic minority community groups to ensure our selection processes are inclusive. Including developing a range of early opportunity talent pipelines, and relationships with partners, that support and give a real chance for those furthest removed from employment and those under-represented within our workforce to join us.

4.4. Disability

- Disabled employees are well represented across the entire workforce. Around 8% of the workforce declared they have a disability; this is in keeping with the previous three years. With hidden disabilities being more prevalent, particularly mental health since and during Covid.
- Around 15% of our people have 'preferred not to say' in respect of this protected characteristic (which is a decrease of 1% from the previous year) therefore we will continue take steps to close the gap by increasing our people's confidence to enable people to feel more confident in declaring a disability to ensure we can support them in the workplace.
- There is limited directly comparable data for this characteristic in respect of the local population. However, it is useful to note that in the Census 2021, 10.6% of the Wirral population declared they experience a long-term health problem or disability that limits their day-to-day activity. This may suggest we are potentially underrepresented in comparison to the local population but there is insufficient comparable data to be certain.
- There were 54 requests for reasonable adjustments.
- Following Access to Work requests and Health and Safety support, a variety of other support measures such as specialist headsets and keyboards, sit/stand desks and chairs, specialist footrests and training were provided to 62 of our people.

Please note these are in relation to access to work requests via Health and Safety. Figures may be higher where managers have sourced and procured equipment from their own budget which are not recorded centrally.

4.5. Religion Or Belief

- There has been a slight increase in our people declaring their religion or belief, which is positive and suggests that our confidence campaigns have been successful and will be continued.
- The proportion of 'unknown/prefer not to say' for this characteristic is still higher than for most other protected characteristics at 20%, however, this is reducing (5% over the last 2 years). 42% of our people declare as Christian (All Denominations), followed by 21% declaring no religion. This follows the same trend in comparison to Wirral's population.

4.6. Gender Reassignment

- The number of our people declaring they are transgender has remained the same as last year at 0.2%.

- For the first time, gender reassignment has been included in the Census. Around 0.4% (955) were all other gender identities, including non-binary, trans women, trans men. However, this has caused concern within the LGBTQ+ community as non-binary relates to a person's gender identity and is not associated with gender reassignment. Therefore, may not be seen as comparable data.
- The 'unknown' category for this protected characteristic has increased by 4% since last year (which is a reverse in trend from the previous 2 years). We have a Gender Identity policy which was first introduced in 2009, but further steps are being taken to increase our people's confidence in providing information in relation to this protected characteristic.
- Including, we have developed a guide to explain why we ask for personal information, what we do with it, why it is important and who has access. We will continue to implement staff confidence campaigns to reassure employees.

4.7. Marriage And Civil Partnership

- There have been no significant changes in the number of recorded civil partnerships and same-sex marriages since last year.
- There has been a decrease of 1% in prefer not to say category. However, it is important to recognise and respect that the provision of such information is a personal and optional choice for our people.

4.8. Sexual Orientation

- The latest Census data tell us that 90.7% of the population identify as heterosexual, 2.9% identify as LGBTQ+, with a further 6.5% of unknown responses.
- In comparison to the workforce, we are well represented at 3.5% of employees that identify as LGBTQ+.
- There has been an increase in the number of our people declaring their sexual orientation at 3.5% (from 3.3% last year) including prefer to self-describe.
- The proportion of our people providing information regarding their sexual orientation has increased by just under 3% over the last two years, which is positive.
- However, the proportion of our people who have indicated they would 'prefer not to say' is still higher than for most other protected characteristics at 19%. The reasons are unknown, and we have updated self-serve to include pansexual and prefer to self-describe to be as inclusive as possible. Again, steps will be taken to increase our people's confidence in providing information regarding protected characteristics and more inclusive options available for our people to identify with.

4.9. Pregnancy, Maternity and Adoption

- In 2023-24, 50 of our people took maternity leave. 1 of these employees left the organisation before they were due to return.
- 2 employees reduced their working pattern after 6 months and a further 2 increased their working hours after 6 months (these were already part time).
- 13 people took Paternity leave with 3 employees accessing Adoption Leave (one male and 2 female).
- No one took shared parental leave.

5. Employment Practices

5.1. Working Carers

- The number of our people participating in the council carer passport scheme is 304, an increase of 47 from last year. The carers passport scheme formalises arrangements made between our employees, their manager and the organisation.
- 81% of carers within our workforce are women. This is higher than the national average (59%). Overall, 6% of our workforce have identified as working carers, which is an increase of 2% from last year. It is anticipated that around 12% of our people could be working carers based on regional statistics.
- Active steps have been taken to provide support to working carers and will further build upon this. Actions to date include the launch of a working carers policy, management training, the introduction of a Carers Passport scheme and the establishment of a staff network group. We will continue to work with the staff network groups to identify further measures and support where required.

Communication campaigns will continue to ensure our people feel confident to identify as working carers and are aware of the Carers passport scheme. In addition, we will also include other support available such as the Working Carers Policy and the Working Carers network group.

5.2. Job Application Success Rates

- The overall number of job applications for 2023/24 was 6,008. This is a significant increase for the number of applicants from last year.
- We had a total of 6,008 applications in 2023/24 of which 24% were from an ethnic minority background, an increase of 5% from the previous year. The number of candidates shortlisted and then appointed were 16% and 11%

respectively from an ethnic minority group. In addition, 2% of all applicants chose not to declare their ethnicity, which remains the same as last year.

This is extremely positive when comparing the overall composition of our ethnic minority employees at 3%.

- Based on all applications, a total of 10% were appointed. When comparing this to disability and non-disability appointments there is no disparity. 9% of all applicants declared a disability. Additionally, 6% of total applications who were appointed, preferred not to say. This could have an impact either positively or negatively on the overall results for disabled candidates.
- Candidates that identified as Prefer to self-describe and Lesbian or Gay were more successful than candidates that identified as heterosexual. This is in keeping with last year. It is also noted that 8% of all applications preferred not to say in respect of their sexual orientation.
- The highest number of applications (29%) were from age range 26- to 35-year-olds, 7.6% of applicants from this age range were then appointed. However, the highest success rate of new starter was aged 46-55, where there were 954 applications (16% of all applications) of which 14% (134) applicants from this age range were then appointed.

5.3. Promotion Success Rates

- Last year we included, for the second time, insight in relation to promotion success rates. We have used this as a baseline for comparable information for this report. We aim to ensure there are no adverse disparities for any protected groups as we monitor this on an ongoing basis.
- Overall, 107 of our people received an increase in pay comprising of change of grade, promotion, re-grade and restructure. This equates to around 3% of the workforce. This is slightly higher than last year when 2.7% of our people received an increase.
- Of these, 4% were from an ethnic minority background, this is slightly higher than the overall composition of ethnic minority employees at 3%.
- Around 68% of our people promoted identified as female, this is in keeping with the overall composition of the workforce and similar to last year when 67% of all promoted employees identified as female.
- Around 7% of disabled employees were promoted. This is slightly lower than the overall make up of disabled employees at 8% and is a 5% decrease from the previous year.
- Approximately 54% of employees were aged over 46 years, this is lower when compared to the numbers of employees overall aged over 46 years (60%). However, this is an increase of 16% from last year.

- Around 2% of our people who declared they were lesbian, gay, or Asexual were promoted during 2023/24. This is a decrease of 5.6% from last year however around 22% of all employees promoted preferred not to identify their sexual orientation.
- We will continue to monitor this to ensure there are no adverse disparities for any protected groups.

5.4. Length Of Service

- A notable proportion of our people are over 46 years of age and have 25 years or more service (16%). We are taking steps to strengthen our approach to workforce and succession planning with a focus on addressing the challenges of an ageing workforce, hard to fill roles, skills gaps, improving diversity, having a flexible and agile workforce that supports progression of the talent already within the organisation.

5.5. Take Up of Training

- In January 2022, our new learning platform Flo was launched. This platform has been procured and developed to make it inclusive for all our workforce to access in a simple and easy way. Content can be in many forms, written, videos, podcast etc all with subtitles and aids. Creation of content is also owned and developed by everyone in the organisation. This helps strengthen our knowledge management of subject matter experts across the council. This is particularly important due to our age demographics as previously stated.
- Our data tells us that 67% of all our people accessed formal training (that is recorded centrally and includes essential e-learning). This is a decrease of 8% from the previous year, however this data does not capture/include all forms of blended learning and development, such as work-based learning. We are adapting our development offer to be more flexible in line with our hybrid working culture.
- Around 4% of people from an ethnic minority background accounted for staff accessing formal training, which is 1% higher than the overall composition of the workforce from an ethnic minority background.
- Approximately 81% of our people from a White British demographic accessed formal training, which is slightly lower than the overall make-up of this cohort at 85%.
- 8% of all disabled employees accessed formal training, which is in keeping with the overall composition of disabled employees.
- Around 4% of employees that identified as LGBTQ+ accessed formal training which is slightly higher than the overall workforce from this group.
- A review of the data in relation to age does not show any disparities for any age ranges.

- Overall, employees with a protected characteristic are exceeding opportunities to access formal training which is extremely positive.
- We will continue to encourage a culture of continuous learning and development, empower our people to drive their own development, providing them with the tools and resources to do so. We will also emphasise the value of other forms of learning and development such as shadowing, mentoring, reverse mentoring, online resources, and structured on-the-job learning.
- We will continue to monitor trends and ensure development opportunities are accessible to all.

5.6. Reasons For Leaving

- During 2023/24, 335 of our people left the Council. The main reason for leaving was resignation, severance, and retirement. This is in keeping with the previous year.
- Around 12% of our people who left during 2023-2024 had declared a disability, this is an increase of 5% from last year and is 4% higher than the overall make-up of the workforce (8%). We will monitor this to ensure it is not a trend.
- The sex split of leavers is relatively comparable to the overall composition of the workforce with more women leaving at 70% (compared to 65% of workforce). This is an increase of 10% from last year.
- Around 5% of all leavers identified as lesbian, gay, pansexual, bi-sexual and prefer to self-describe. This is slightly higher than the overall make-up of the workforce (3.3%). However, there were elevated levels of prefer not to say at 23% that could impact negatively / positively for this protected characteristic group.
- In terms of race, 3.5% of all leavers identified as from an ethnic minority background. This is lower than last year when 5.6% of all leavers were from an ethnic minority background.
- Our approach to exit interview has been strengthened and now includes leaving conversations and a leavers survey. Managers are encouraged to understand our people's reasons for leaving, gather feedback for how their service area can improve, and celebrate what the employee has achieved during their time with us. We will continue to monitor qualitative leavers survey comments for any specific barriers or issues being raised by leavers in relation to protected characteristics.

5.7. Apprenticeship And Graduate Schemes

- During 2023/24 we had a total of 10 graduates still employed as part of our 2021 to 2023 graduate programme. All but 1 gained a role within the council.

- In Sept 2023 we have changed our approach to graduates in line with our new people and talent strategy. We currently have 3 graduate roles plus a further 3 vacancies.
- 5 new care leaver apprentices joined in Sept 2023 for a 2-year period. An additional 3 apprentices were taken on by Parks and Countryside.
- In addition, there were 154 of our people undertaking apprentice qualifications during this period.

5.8. Employee Relation Cases

- During 2023-2024 there were 711 employee relation cases relating to formal performance management (13), discipline (49), grievance (42) and absence management (607). This accounts for 20% of our workforce. The cases have been analysed in relation to protected characteristics.
- **Performance Management:**
 - 38% of our performance management cases were men. This is slightly higher when compared to the sex split of the workforce with men
 - 15% identified as being from an ethnic minority background
 - The age groups 51 – 60 account for 61% of all performance management cases.
- **Discipline:**
 - Based on our workforce profile, men were more likely to be subject to the disciplinary process (69%). This is higher than last year when it was 55%. This has been analysed further by our Employee Relations team and there is no rationale as to why men accounted for more disciplinary cases.
 - The age groups 56 – 65 accounted for 37% of overall disciplinary cases.
 - Of those employees that declared a disability (22%), none of disciplinary cases were as a direct result of an employee's disability.
 - There is a variety of resources available for employees including Health and Wellbeing, flexible working, Employee Assistance Programme, Dignity at Work advisors to support our people.
- **Attendance Management**
 - Around 77% of all attendance management cases were women, this is higher than the overall headcount at 65%
 - Around 55% of employees between the age groups 51- 55, 56 - 60 and 61 – 65+ account for people within the attendance management process. This is an increase of 3% from last year.
 - Approximately 11% employees declared a disability. This is higher than the overall headcount of disabled employees at 8% and is a decrease of 2% from last year.
- **Grievances**

- 52% of grievances were submitted by female staff.
- 14% of all grievances were made by disabled staff, a decrease of 7% from the previous year. One grievance related to a person's reasonable adjustments not being in place in a timely manner.
- 2% were accounted for staff from an ethnic minority, a decrease of 3% from the previous year.
- The age groups 51 – 55 and 56 – 60 accounted for 67% of all grievances.
- The data/numbers held in respect of reported cases of bullying and harassment is too small upon which to draw statistically significant inferences. However, the Council will continue to take any report of bullying and harassment very seriously and will act as appropriate. Any discrimination or bullying and harassment based on a protected characteristic will not be tolerated.

6. Final Comments and Next Steps

In conclusion, our workforce demographic has remained consistent over the last three years. We know where the gaps are, and this report and associated action plan (Appendix One) will contribute to the further development of the Council's workforce plans which support our wider people strategy. This will ensure that we have a diverse, engaged, and skilled workforce who deliver outcomes for Wirral residents and are representative of the communities that we serve.

Appendix One: Equality Improvement: Summary action plan

Action Plan 2023 to 2025

Action	Target date	Progress Update	Owner
To continue to deliver our Talent Strategy and action plan which supports the wider council people strategy and takes due regard to the workforce equality data and targets. Key themes will include talent attraction, development, and retention.	Summer 2023	Launched Summer 2023 with KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) set.	Talent and Resourcing
Develop a Workforce Inclusion Policy and plan based on the outcome of the published People Strategy and emerging Council Corporate Equality Plan.	April 2024	Revised to Autumn 2024	Learning & Inclusion
To deliver a Race Equality training programme with our partners in the Liverpool City Region.	April 2025	On target	Learning & Inclusion
Review and report on the Employee survey results summer 2023 against captured protected characteristics and identify trends and improvement areas.	April 2024	2023 survey did not capture protected characteristics (PC). This has now been moved to 2024 survey, with date of Autumn 24 for final reporting on PC.	Learning & Inclusion
In support of our Talent Strategy, strengthen our approach to workforce planning to address the challenges of an aging workforce, hard to fill roles, skills gaps, improving diversity and supports inclusive talent progression within the Council.	April 2025	On target	HR and OD
Continue to strengthen our engagement approaches with our inclusion forum and staff network groups via co-design and development.	Ongoing	On target	Learning & Inclusion
Continue to deliver specific learning programmes for Managers around recruitment and selection and other people policies to reduce unconscious bias and promote the value of good ED&I practices.	Spring 2024	On target	Learning and Inclusion/ with all HR

Action	Target date	Progress Update	Owner
Review and recommend what charter-marks / accreditations Wirral council should support in line with the wider Council strategy and benchmarking within the wider Liverpool City Region.	April 2025	New action	Learning & Inclusion
Engage with workforce, specifically those staff who have transferred into the Council to improve levels of data completion around protected characteristics.	Autumn 2024	New action	Learning & Inclusion
Continue to develop a range of early opportunity talent pipelines and relationships with partners, that support and give a real chance for those furthest removed from employment and those under-represented within our workforce to join us	Ongoing	New action	Talent and Resourcing

Appendix Two: Equality Improvement: Summary action plan Equal Pay Statement

Employers must ensure men and women are treated equally in the terms and conditions of their employment contract including pay, if they are employed to do:

- 'like work' - work that is the same or broadly similar
- work rated as equivalent under a job evaluation study
- work found to be of equal value in terms of effort, skill or decision making.

The equal terms can cover all aspects of pay and benefits, including:

- basic pay
- overtime rates
- performance related benefits
- hours of work
- access to pension schemes
- non-monetary terms
- annual leave entitlements.

The Pay Policy is reviewed annually and approved by Council. The Pay Policy for 2024/25 was presented to Policy and Resources Committee on 8 November 2023 and Full Council on 4 December 2023. Wirral Council is a Foundation Living Wage Employer and with effect from 1 April 2024 we will pay the revised national Living Wage of £12 per hour.

The Local Government Transparency Code 2014 under the Department for Communities and Local Government requires that all local authorities publish certain information related to the organisation, salaries and fraud including senior salaries over £50,000.

Appendix Three: Workforce Profile: Gender pay gap reporting – 31 March 2024

Wirral Council is required by law (The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017) to publish an annual gender pay gap report.

What is a gender pay gap?

The gender pay gap report shows the average difference between the earnings of women and men. It has several contributory factors, most of which are more about the kinds of industries and jobs open to women than about the ways in which men and women are paid.

Just because there is a gender pay gap does not make it unlawful. Having a gender pay gap does not mean the council is discriminating against women. A gender pay gap is not solely the result of pay practices. It is about much broader influences. Gender pay gaps are the outcome of economic, cultural, societal, and educational factors.

Gender pay is not about equal pay. Unequal pay means that individual women and men are not getting equal pay for doing equal work.

Reporting Requirements

The report is in relation to a snapshot of the workforce in scope as of 31st March 2024 in line with the legislative reporting requirements. The scope of the council's report includes all employees (excluding schools) who are in receipt of base pay and allowances at this date.

The council must report on and publish the mean and median pay gaps and pay quartiles.

Appendix Four: references list

- Census 2021
- [Sexual orientation, UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk)
- Wirral Intelligence hub
- [Public health profiles - OHID \(phe.org.uk\)](https://www.phe.org.uk)