

#BETHE  
DIFFERENCE



# Workforce Monitoring Report

## 2024 – 2025

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<p>مجلس ویرال Wirral ملتزم بیامكانية توفير المعلومات ليتمكن الحصول عليها بواسطة كل فرد. يمكنك الذهاب الى وحددة الخدمات المتعددة او اتصل تلفونيا على مركزنا للاتصالات على الرقم 0151 606 2020 للمساعدة والنصح إذا ترغب في المعلومات مترجمة او في شكل آخر كالكتابة بخطوط كبيرة، بكتابة بريل او شريط كاسيت.</p>
<p>(Arabic)</p>
<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 রুপমাণ্ডে, 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 aistrithe 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 वचनबद्ध है। यदि आपको किसी जानकारी के हिन्दी में अनुवाद की या किसी और रूप में जैसे कि बड़े अक्षरों में छपाई, बरेल में या कैसिट के रूप में अवश्यता 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 formie, 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, ਬਰੇਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਂ ਕੈਸਿਟ 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 آ سکتے ہیں یا ہمارے کال سنٹر کو 0151 606 2020 پر فون کریں۔</p>
<p>(Urdu)</p>

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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 2024-25, 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.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'PS', written next to the portrait photo.

Paul Satoor  
Chief Executive Wirral Council

## 1. Executive Summary

This report draws upon the key findings and actions from analysis of our workforce data in 2024-2025\* 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 77% of our people living locally. This is a decrease of 2% from the previous year, rebalancing the 2% upward trend from the previous year.
- The below table and supporting narrative describe our workforce composition as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 in line with reporting requirements. *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.*

	2024/2025	Previous year
Headcount	3,709	3,578
Turnover	12%	12%
Average length of service	12 years	12 years
Average age of employee	55 years old	55 years old
Sex	66% female 34% male	65% female 35% male
Ethnic Minority Background	4%	3%
Declared disability	8%	8%
Colleagues providing information including 'prefer not to say'	97%	96%

- Our workforce demographic remains relatively stable with a headcount of 3,709. An increase of 131 from last year. There have been no staff from other organisations known as a TUPE transferred in or out of the organisation.
- We have continued to take steps to increase our people's confidence in providing equalities information through awareness raising campaigns and direct communication. 97% 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 1% increase from the previous year. This was highly commended in the recent Corporate Peer Challenge.
- 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:



- 18% of our people indicated they would 'prefer not to say' in respect of sexual orientation (an improvement of 1% from last year)
- 19% of our people indicated they would 'prefer not to say' in respect to religion and belief (an improvement of 1% 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 with a staff confidence campaign in June 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 33% 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. As set out in our talent strategy, 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.

- 66% of our workforce identify as female, which is higher when compared to Wirral's population rates of 52%. Around 27% of this cohort are within the 46-55 age group, which is 12% less than last year. 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' guide 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.

- 4% of our workforce identify as being from an ethnic minority background, which is an increase of 1% from the previous three 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 Race Equality Hub. There is strong representation at Chief Officer level at 8% (which is an increase of 5%

from last year) 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 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 4% 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. 16% (an increase 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 6% of all disabled applications being successful in comparison to 8% of all non-disabled applications being successful. However, 8% 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. In April 2024 we introduced protected characteristic demographic questions to our internal staff survey, enabling us to better understand experience based on protected characteristic. This has enhanced our ability to collect, identify, understand, and act on insights, hotspots, barriers, and opportunities.

## 1.2. What We Have Achieved this year (2024/25)

During the reporting period we have:

- Heard from 2,086 colleagues in our 2024 staff survey. This equated to 60.8% of our workforce. This is an improvement of 10.8 % in relation to completion rates in the previous year and 22% increase in completion rates over the previous two years. In 2024, we introduced further demographic questions in this survey, which has enabled us to better understand experience by protected characteristic whilst retaining anonymity.
- 2024 insight has provided a baseline of experience by protected characteristic which we can compare in future years. Overall, there was no real disparities by protected characteristic to the overall survey results. However, there was a certain age range (56 +) where we saw less participation and we can see that those from black Asian minority groups have a more favourable experience compared to overall survey results. Our Inclusion Group are encouraged that we are committed to reviewing experience of different staff groups and taking action where needed.
- We have strengthened our staff recognition approach this year, to be more inclusive and to ensure staff feel valued and appreciated for the work they do.
  - In Spring 2024 we introduced long service certificates for those reaching their 25-year Wirral Council service milestone, with 55 of our staff receiving a certificate in 2024.
  - 34 of our colleagues were invited to our Long Service Celebration in January 2025, which recognises those reaching their 40-year Wirral Council service milestone.
  - In 2024 we introduced our first One Council Staff Celebration recognising the contribution of staff across a variety of award categories. This included the Inclusive Culture category recognising individuals who champion inclusive practices and help colleagues and/or residents feel their voice is heard, listened to and valued. The Rising Star award also recognised employees at the start of their local government careers who are excelling in their roles.
  - The Wellbeing Community was established in April 2024 and is a staff group for people who feel passionately about driving a positive culture of wellbeing across the organisation. There are currently 35 members of the Wellbeing Community who meet on a bi-monthly basis to discuss wellbeing initiatives and themes. This year some key achievements of the group have been:
    - Producing and launching a quarterly staff led wellbeing newsletter, shining a light on the importance of looking after our own wellbeing
    - Producing a 'Wellbeing kit' for the wellbeing room in the office, equipped with mindful colouring and supportive messages from the Wellbeing Community for any staff who may be looking for some words of encouragement.
- 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.

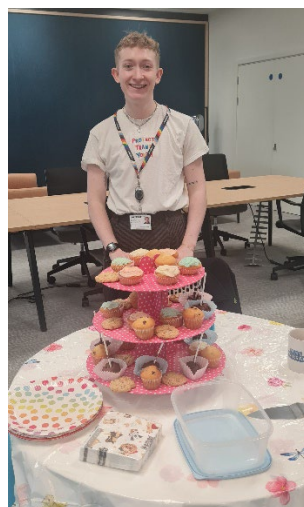
This year the group has:



- Co-designed and reviewed key employee related strategies, policies, and processes, including our staff survey and glossary of terms in relation to Neurodiversity.
- Led staff awareness and engagement campaigns, including International Women's Day (including hearing from the Mayor of Wirral), Race Equality week (interviews with SLT), Neurodiversity celebration week, Wear it pink fundraiser, Transgender Day of Remembrance awareness and cake sale fundraiser for Wirral Pride, held an event at Mallory for Carers Right's Day and invited WIRED and Wirral Carers Alliance to name but a few.
- Members of the group also met with the CQC panel as part of Adults Social Care inspection and the Corporate Peer Challenge team.
- Increased its reach to colleagues across the organisation to over 380 that are part of various diverse staff networks and groups.
- Played a key role in shortlisting nominations received for 2024 staff celebration event.



Inclusion Group and Paul Satoor, Chief Executive 2023



Transgender Day of Remembrance – November 2024.



- The number of staff network groups has grown to 12, which represents around 11% of our workforce. We will continue to support and encourage more networks and groups as required. In the next 12 months we will seek to evaluate our Inclusion Group and Staff Network Groups.
- 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 2025/26 and reach 17,000 employees. Phase 1 of the programme saw 461 employees complete the training which exceeded our initial target.

## 2. Workforce Composition

- This report provides data on our workforce profile for 2024-2025. 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 2024, our:
  - Total headcount equalled 3,709
  - Total employees working full time equalled 2,595
  - Total employees working part-time equalled 1,114 (of which 81% 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 380 employees with up to 1 years' service (10%), 1,112 with between 1-5 years' (31%), 572 with 6–10 years (15%), 729 with 11 – 20 years (19%) and 905 with 20+ years (24%).

Length of Service Bands	Total	%
< 3 months	103	3%

3-5 months	75	2%
6-12 months	202	5%
1-2 Yrs	653	18%
3-5 Yrs	470	13%
6-10 Yrs	572	15%
11-15 Yrs	304	8%
16-20 Yrs	425	11%
21-25 Yrs	344	9%
25 Yrs +	561	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,709</b>	

- Whilst we acknowledge we have an ageing workforce, many of which have long service, it should also be noted that around 41% of our workforce now have less than 5 years' service, which is an increase of 1% from the previous year.
- Retention rates during the last 3 years are 91%, 90% and 89% respectively.
- In terms of employees leaving, those with less than one years' service were the highest numbers to leave at 68, followed by those with 1-2 years and 25 years plus were the next highest numbers to leave with 54 people leaving in each group. The next highest band is those with 3-5 years' service with 48 people leaving.

<b>Length of Service Bands</b>	<b>2024/25 no. of employees leaving</b>
< 1 year	68
1-2 Yrs	54
3-5 Yrs	48
6-10 Yrs	30
11-15 Yrs	19
16-20 Yrs	29
21-25 Yrs	16
25 Yrs +	54

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>318</b>
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- 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 we are under-representative of our ethnic minority communities. The average length of service is 12 years plus and turnover rate is 12%, consistent with last year.

## 4. Equality Monitoring Information

### 4.1. Age

- Like other local government organisations our workforce is ageing, with 60% of our people aged 46 years and over. This is in keeping with last year:
  - Employee level 58% (aged 46 years and over)
  - Manager level 67% (aged 46 years and over)
  - Senior manager and chief officer level 77% (aged 46 years and over)

<b>Age bands</b>	<b>Number of employees</b>	<b>%</b>
16 - 20	17	0.5%
21 - 25	120	3%
26 - 30	218	6%
31 - 35	337	9%
36 - 40	396	11%
41 - 45	407	11%
46 - 50	412	11%
51 - 55	560	15%
56 - 60	673	18%
61 - 65	418	11%
66 +	151	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,709</b>	

- Around 33% of our overall workforce are aged over 55. In comparison to the local population which stands at 42.5%.



- Around 27% of our female workforce are aged between 46-55 years. When we look at the local population, this is 7%.
- We are 15% overrepresented in the 51–60 age bracket and 8.5% 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 Talent Strategy launched summer 2023 and has key actions to support improvements in this area.

#### 4.2. Sex

- We have a predominantly female workforce (almost two thirds) which when compared to Wirral's population rates of 52% is higher, this remains consistent over previous years.
- At Assistant Director and Chief Officer level the male / female split is 57% / 43%.
- 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 34% men / 66% women shows an increase of female representation of 1% from last year (when previously there was an increase of 4%).

#### 4.3. Ethnicity

- The response rate from our people declaring their ethnicity has remained the same.

	2023/24		FY 2024/25		Last Census 2021	
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Ethnic minority	111	3%	133	4%	24,232	7.6%
Prefer not to say	213	6%	218	6%	N/A	N/A
White	3,058	86%	3,151	85%	295,967	92.4%
Unknown	191	5%	207	6%	N/A	N/A

- 4% of our people identifying as being from an ethnic minority background compared to 7.6% of the Wirral population. However, this is an increase of 1% from the previous 3 years which is positive. Matching a trend across the Liverpool City Region. This is positively reflected at Chief Officer level at 8%. This is a significant increase of 5% from last year, however 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 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 four years. With hidden disabilities being more prevalent, particularly mental health since and during Covid.

	2023/24		2024/25	
	No	%	No	%
No	2537	71%	2578	70%
Unknown	216	6%	236	6%
Prefer not to say	514	15%	594	16%
Yes	306	9%	301	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,573</b>		<b>3,709</b>	

- Around 16% of our people have 'preferred not to say' in respect of this protected characteristic (which is an increase 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 30 people who requested reasonable adjustment equipment and 42 items in total purchased following an Access to Work request and Health and Safety support.
- Training was provided to 27 people on specialist assistive technology software. Specialist workplace coaching strategy training was also provided to 7 people with a total of 103 sessions.
- Figures are likely higher where managers have sourced and procured equipment from their own budget which are not recorded centrally. This could be up to an additional 40%. The equipment comprised of Chairs, Mice, Keyboards, Desks, Specialist Footrest, Specialist Headsets, Software, & Hardware.

*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**

- 42% of our people declare as Christian (All Denominations), followed by 22% 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 the same as the previous 2 years). However, levels of prefer not to say remain consistent at 5%
- 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. This will be reviewed and refreshed following the Supreme Court Ruling in April once government guidance has been published in Summer 2025.

- 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 no change in the 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

<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>2024/25 % total Council Headcount</b>	<b>2023/24 % total Council Headcount</b>	<b>Latest Census (2021)</b>
<b>LGBTQ+</b>	4%	3.5%	2.9%
<b>Heterosexual</b>	70%	70%	90.7%
<b>Prefer not to say / Unknown</b>	18%	18%	6.5%

- 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 4% of employees that identify as LGBTQ+.
- There has been an increase in the number of our people declaring their sexual orientation at 4% (from 3.5% last year) including prefer to self-describe.
- The proportion of our people providing information regarding their sexual orientation has increased by just under 3.5% 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 18%. 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 2024-25, 63 of our people took maternity leave. 1 of these employees left the organisation before they were due to return.
- 1 employee reduced their working pattern after returning to work for six months.
- 18 people took Paternity leave with 3 employees accessing Adoption Leave (one male and 2 female).
- 2 employees accessed shared parental leave with another 2 accessing Parental leave.

## 5. Employment Practices

### 5.1. Working Carers

- 77% of carers within our workforce are women. This is higher than the national average (59%). Overall, 5% of our workforce have identified as working carers, which is a decrease of 1% 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 2024/25 was 8653. This is a significant increase for the number of applicants from last year at 6,008.
- Of these applications, 28% were from an ethnic minority background, an increase of 4% from the previous year. This is extremely positive when comparing the overall composition of our ethnic minority employees at 4%.
- The number of candidates shortlisted and then appointed were 18% and 12% respectively from an ethnic minority group. In addition, 4% of all applicants chose not to declare their ethnicity, which is 2% higher than the previous year. We can see a downward trend from the number of applications received, to those shortlisted, to those appointed from an ethnic minority background, in



contrast to experience of those from White English background. We will continue to monitor this over the next 12 months and take proactive steps aligned to our talent strategy.

Ethnicity	% of total applied	% of total shortlisted	% of total appointed
Ethnic Minority Background	28%	18%	12%
White – White English	68%	79%	86%
Prefer not to say	4%	3.5%	2.3%

- When job application success rate by disability and non-disabled, there is no disparity. 9% of all applicants declared a disability (this is in keeping with the previous year). 7% of all successful candidates declared a disability, this is in keeping with last year at 7.8%. Additionally, 2% 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.

% of applicants declared disability	% of applicants shortlisted declared disability	% of successful Candidates declared disability
9%	9%	7%

- The success rate of candidates that identified as Bi-sexual, Lesbian or Gay, and Pansexual was 6% which is higher than the workforce composition at 4%. Prefer to self-describe and Lesbian or Gay were more successful than candidates that identified as heterosexual. It is also noted that 4% of all applications preferred not to say in respect of their sexual orientation. Last year, 8% of applicants selected prefer not to say.

% of applicants identified as Bi-sexual, Lesbian or Gay and Pansexual	% of applicants shortlisted identified as Bi-sexual, Lesbian or Gay and Pansexual	% of successful Candidates identified as Bi-sexual, Lesbian or Gay and Pansexual
6%	7%	7%

- The highest number of applications (33%) were from age range 26–35-year-olds, a similar trend to last year at 29%. This age group also saw the lowest % of successful appointments, at 5%. The highest success rate of new starters was aged 66 plus, where there were 50 applications with a success rate of 16%.

Age band	% of total applied	% of total shortlisted	% of total appointed
Under 25	17%	18%	15%
26 - 35	33%	27%	5%
36 – 45	23%	23%	8%
46 - 55	16%	17%	10%
56 – 65	8%	11%	14%
66+	0.5%	0.9%	16%
PNTS/Unknown	2%	2%	9%

More men than women applied for positions within the Council (when compared to the overall composition of men and women at 34% and 66%). Men were less likely to be shortlisted and appointed than women.

Sex	% of total applied	% of total shortlisted	% of total appointed
Female	55%	59%	65%
Male	42%	38%	34%
Non-binary	0.2%	0.2%	0.15%
PNTS / Unknown	2%	2%	1%

### 5.3. Promotion Success Rates

- We have now included 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, 22 of our people received an increase in pay comprising of change of grade, promotion, re-grade and restructure. This is a decrease from last year 107 people received an increase. This equates to around 0.6% of the workforce. This is much lower than last year when 3% of our people received an increase.
- Of these, 14% were from an ethnic minority background, which is much higher than the overall composition of ethnic minority employees at 4%.
- Around 68% of our people promoted identified as female, this is in keeping with the overall composition of the workforce and is a similar trend from last when 67% of all promoted employees identified as female.
- Around 9% of disabled employees were promoted. This is slightly higher than the overall make-up of disabled employees at 8% and is an increase of 2% from the previous year.
- Around 4.5% of our people who declared they were lesbian, gay, or Asexual were promoted during 2024/25. This is an increase of 2.5% from last year.

- As the numbers in this category are relatively low in comparison to previous years, there is nothing to indicate an adverse impact on any protected group. This could potentially be as a result of the spending freeze which came into force on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024.
- 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 (15%). 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 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 in 2024, 62% of all our people accessed formal training (that is recorded centrally and includes essential e-learning). This is a decrease of 5% 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.
- Insight from our 2024 staff survey told us that employee experience had increased with regards to learning and development opportunities. With regards to Wirral being a great place to develop, we saw experience had increased by 9.19% across the organisation.
- Around 4% of people from an ethnic minority background accounted for staff accessing formal training, which is in keeping with the overall composition of the workforce from an ethnic minority background.
- Approximately 82% of our people from a White British demographic accessed formal training, which is slightly higher than the overall make-up of this cohort at 81%. Around 12% of this cohort preferred not to say.
- 9% of all disabled employees accessed formal training, which is slightly higher than 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. There was 25% of prefer not to say in this cohort which could impact these figures.
- A review of the data in relation to age does not show any disparities for any age ranges. However, employees aged between 56 – 60 were more likely to access delivered training with those aged 66+ less likely to.
- Overall, employees with a protected characteristic are exceeding opportunities to access formal training which is extremely positive.
- Over the next 12 months, we will track the composition of participants in our aspiring leaders programme and leadership development programme.
- 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 2024/25, 317 of our people left the Council. The main reason for leaving was resignation, retirement and end of contract. This is relatively in keeping with last year when 335 people left.
- Around 8% of our people who left during 2024-2025 had declared a disability, this is a decrease of 4% from last year and is in keeping with the overall make-up of the workforce (8%). This is a positive reverse in trend from last year.
- The sex split of leavers is relatively comparable to the overall composition of the workforce with more women leaving at 61% (compared to 66% of workforce). This is a decrease of 9% from last year.
- Around 4% of all leavers identified as lesbian, gay, pansexual, bi-sexual and prefer to self-describe. This is in keeping with the overall make-up of the workforce and is also a positive reverse in trend from last year (4%). However, there were elevated levels of prefer not to say at 14% that could impact negatively / positively for this protected characteristic group.
- In terms of ethnic minority, 3% of all leavers identified as from an ethnic minority background. This is slightly lower than last year when 3.5% of all leavers were from an ethnic minority background.

- 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, Graduate and other Schemes

- During 2024/25 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 September 2023 we have changed our approach to graduates in line with our new People and Talent Strategy. 2 were recruited via the National Graduate Programme. Both of these placements finish in September 2025, and we are actively looking at permanent roles for these candidates, we have also recruited via the National Graduate Pathways with 2 Planning schemes, this is due to finish in 2026. We currently have 3 graduates in the business and a further 5 vacancies to recruit to in 2025.
- 5 new care leaver apprentices joined in Sept 2023 for a 2-year period. We also have a further 4 apprentices.
- In addition, there were 95 of our people undertaking apprentice qualifications during this period.
- We have had our 1st T-Level in the business based in the Learning and Development Team. T-Levels are two-year technical-based qualifications in England that can be studied by 16–18-year-olds after finishing their GCSEs. They are an alternative to A levels, other post-16 courses or an apprenticeship. Each T Level is equivalent to 3 A Levels. T Levels are designed in collaboration with employers and businesses, with content that meets the needs of industry and prepares students for work, further training, or study.
- **Supported Employment** – We currently have 1 supported Employment Placement in the business (started in November 24).

Supported employment refers to service provisions that assist people with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities and mental health issues, in obtaining and maintaining employment. It involves ongoing support services tailored to individuals with significant disabilities to help them succeed in competitive, integrated employment. We have agreed for a single placement working within the SEND team.

- **Early opportunities pipeline** - as a major anchor employer in the area and a 'place leader' for diversity, 'fairness' and inclusion we have been working with our partners using innovative and modern approaches to target sustainable employment opportunities to those furthest removed from employment in Wirral and attract this potential talent into our organisation.



By introducing a range of talent pipelines that support, foster and help grow a diverse, talented, and inclusive workforce.

We have identified a number of key areas including, but not exclusive to:

Care leavers, young people who are not in employment or education (NEET), residents who use our commissioned Employment Support Service (ReachOut): Unemployed residents who are close to the labour market, economically inactive residents who are further from the labour market, Vulnerable groups e.g.: Learning Disabilities, neurodiverse

We have currently filled 15 roles via the pipeline across the business all local unemployed candidates.

- **Work experience** - we have created a process for Work Experiences and engaged with local schools, Universities, and the Careers & Enterprise Company to offer placements in 2024 we offered a total of 25 placements (12 to local schools, 11 to universities and 2 via Department for Work & Pensions).

## 5.8. Employee Relation Cases

- During 2024-2025 there were 679 employee relation cases relating to formal performance management (26), discipline (60), grievance (29) and absence management (564). This accounts for 15% of our workforce. The cases have been analysed in relation to protected characteristics.

Case type	Ethnic Minority Background	Disabled	Male	Female	Age groups
Disciplinary			67%		
Grievance	3%	10%		72%	Ages 51 and above accounted for 66%
Performance Management	8%		38%		Ages 51 – 60 account for 35%
Sickness Absence		13%		73%	Ages 51 and above account for 50% of absence

*\* in order to retain anonymity some information has been redacted as this relates to a small group*

- **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

- 8% identified as being from an ethnic minority background (which is 7% less than last year)
- The age groups 51 – 60 account for 35% of all performance management cases.
- An additional employee in the performance management system was pregnant, again this was highlighted in the OH report and was not as a result of the employee being pregnant.

➤ **Discipline:**

- Based on our workforce profile, men were more likely to be subject to the disciplinary process (67%). This is lower than last year when it was 69%. 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 28% of overall disciplinary cases.
- Of those employees that declared a disability (4%), none of disciplinary cases were as a direct result of an employee's disability.
- 3 employees had a health condition (not necessarily recorded as a Disability) however, their grievances were not in relation this but noted in OH report
- 10% of employees from an ethnic minority background were in the disciplinary process.
- Of those employees that declared a disability (18%), none of disciplinary cases were as a direct result of an employee's disability.
- 7 employees had a health condition (not necessarily recorded as a Disability) however, their grievances were not in relation this but noted in OH report
- There is a variety of resources available for employees including Health and Wellbeing, flexible working, Employee Assistance Programme, Dignity at Work policy to support our people.

➤ **Attendance Management**

- Around 73% of all attendance management cases were women, this is higher than the overall headcount at 66%.
- Around 50% of employees between the age groups 51- 55, 56 - 60 and 61 – 65+ account for people within the attendance management process. This is a decrease of 5% from last year.
- Approximately 13% employees declared a disability. This is higher than the overall headcount of disabled employees at 8% and is an increase of 2% from last year.
- Around 3% of all attendance management cases were employees from an ethnic minority background

➤ **Grievances**

- 72% of grievances were submitted by female staff (an increase of 20% from last year).
- 10% of all grievances were made by disabled staff, a decrease of 4% from the previous year, which in itself is positive.
- 3% were accounted for staff from an ethnic minority, an increase of 1% from the previous year.

- The age groups 51 – 55 and 56 – 60 accounted for 66% 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.
- More insight from the 2025 staff survey will garner more data along with anonymous reporting as part of the Workers Protection Act.

## 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.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launched Summer 2023 with KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) set.</li> <li>Significant activity achieved in year 1. (1<sup>st</sup> April 24 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 25).</li> <li>Further activity to take place 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 26).</li> </ul>	Learning and Inclusion / Organisational Development
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 2025  This has been delayed pending Council Corporate Equality Plan.	Learning & Inclusion
Review and report on the Employee survey results summer 2024 against captured protected characteristics and identify trends and improvement areas.	April 2024	<p>Achieved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2024 survey captured protected characteristics (PC) and is a baseline for future surveys.</li> <li>Presented to Inclusion Group Autumn 2024.</li> <li>Embedded as standard feature of annual staff survey.</li> </ul>	Organisational Development

Action	Target date	Progress Update	Owner
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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Including actively increasing representation of workforce under 30 years of age. 2024 saw 9.5% of our workforce aged 30 and below.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	This is an ongoing piece of work, which will continue over the next 12 months.	People and Culture Service
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.	May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment and selection learning in development</li> <li>EDI learning for managers to be developed along with EIA training for all employees and Members</li> </ul>	Learning and Inclusion/ Recruitment
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	Review complete but no outcome.	Learning & Inclusion
Engage with workforce, specifically those staff who have transferred into the Council to improve levels of data completion around protected characteristics.	Autumn 2025	This will form part of staff confidence campaign planned for June 2025	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. Update provided in this report	Learning and Inclusion
Monitor the promotion success rate of women during the coming year as around 41% of our people promoted identified as female, this is not in keeping with the overall composition of the	May 2026	New action	Learning and Inclusion / Recruitment



Action	Target date	Progress Update	Owner
workforce and is a reverse in trend from last when 68% of all promoted employees identified as female.			
Continue to actively support our ageing workforce	May 2026	New action	Learning & Inclusion / Organisational Development
Monitor success rates of shortlisted and appointed applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds.	May 2026	New action	Recruitment / Learning & Inclusion
Monitor success rates of shortlisted and appointed applicants in age ranges 26 – 45 which saw a significantly lower success rate in appointment during 2024.	May 2026	New action	Recruitment / Learning & Inclusion
Monitor workforce composition of Aspiring Leaders and Leadership Development Programme participants.	May 2026	New action	Learning & Inclusion
Monitor turnover of colleagues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2024 saw 32% of leavers with under 2 years' service and 53% of leavers with under 5 years' service.</li> </ul>	May 2026	New Action	Learning & Inclusion
Evaluate our Inclusion Group and Staff Network Groups	May 2026	New Action	Learning & Inclusion

## **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 2025/2026 was presented to Policy & Resources Committee on 6 November 2024 and Full Council on 2 December 2024 and with effect from 1 April 2025 we will pay the revised national living wage of £12.60

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 2025**

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 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 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://ons.gov.uk)
- Wirral Intelligence hub
- [Public health profiles - OHID \(phe.org.uk\)](https://phe.org.uk)