

Staff Annual Equalities Report

2019/20



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Introduction

This report provides a detailed analysis of the council's workforce and external applicants applying for jobs, by the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. This report was produced by relates to staff and employment only. The council's Equalities Officer sits outside of HR and has responsibility for wider equalities issues, of which this is just one element.

The Equality Act (2010) consolidated the legislation for groups protected by previous equalities legislation. Everyone has the right to be treated fairly and the Equality Act protects people from discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics.

The Act sets out the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender), sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require public sector bodies with more than 150 employees to publish data on equality in their workforces annually.

The council is committed to complying with the Equality Act across all its services and continues to increase awareness and understanding through its policies, training and staff groups.

This report provides a detailed analysis of the available monitoring data for 2019/20.

It covers five areas:

- Employee Profile
- Recruitment
- Discipline and Grievance
- Training
- Leavers

Executive Summary

Employee Profile

The council's employee profile as at the end of March 2020 is broadly reflective of the profile of the working population in East Hertfordshire and the East of England in terms of ethnic origin, religion and belief, disability and sexual orientation.

The areas where the employee profile is not as closely reflective are sex (gender) and age. The council has a considerably higher percentage of females than males (72%:28%) compared to the working population of East Hertfordshire (51%:49%), however this is common in the public sector and is further impacted at East Herts by many of the more traditionally male areas of work such as refuse and grounds maintenance being contracted out.

The council has a considerably higher proportion of employees aged between 50 and 64 compared to East Herts residents. The size and structure of the council means that there are a limited number of entry level posts meaning that the majority of posts require experience and are likely to be filled by older individuals who have the required experience. In recent years the council has introduced more apprenticeships and trainee posts which require less experience and support staff developing in the role to both increase the younger age profile and provide succession planning but these posts can also be filled by career changers. The council also has a significant number of long serving employees which also impacts on the workforce age profile. The percentage of employees under the age of 20 is lower than East Herts residents in this age group (6.2%) however it must be noted that it is compulsory to remain in full time education or training until the age of 18. The percentage of employees in the 20-29 age range has decreased from 9.7% in 2018/19 to 8.8% in 2019/20. This is likely to be due to many of the posts at the council being experience based, as mentioned above.

Recruitment

The report shows that in 2019/20 the council was successful in attracting a diverse range of external applicants in terms of most of the protected characteristics. The council was particularly successful in attracting applicants from the 30-39 age group, from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups and applicants who are lesbian, gay or bisexual, when compared with the overall East Herts population.

At the shortlisting stage, the percentage of males and females being shortlisted for interview closely reflects the percentage of applicants and the male to female ratio at the council overall. Applicants from the 30-39 age group were slightly less successful than the other age groups and those in the 40-49 were slightly more successful. There are some concerns around the conversion of applicants from BAME groups from application to shortlisting (18.2% to 11.6%) although it is positive to note there is a very close alignment in the percentages of applicants from BAME groups moving from the shortlisting to the appointment stage because it is at this stage that the applicant's ethnic origin can be easily identified and there is therefore more opportunity for bias to occur. There is an action in the 20/21 action plan for all managers to undertake unconscious bias training.

At the interview stage, the percentage of females being appointed (52%) is broadly in line with the percentage who applied (58%) and the 7% of unknowns at the application stage might explain some of the increase in males applying (35%) to those being appointed (48%). The number of applicants from BAME groups being appointed has remained the same as last year at 5% compared to white applicants which has increased from 6% to 11%. Also at the interview stage in terms of age, applicants in the 40-49 age group were slightly less successful at interview compared to other groups.

Discipline & Grievance and Training

Due to the small number of disciplinary and grievance cases (3 - from a workforce of 339) any analysis will be limited and not statistically significant. The 3 cases do not demonstrate any pattern in terms of specific protected characteristics.

We are satisfied that training and development is provided on a fair and equal basis across the council and allows all employees to take advantage of the opportunities.

Leavers

The report found that there were no concerns with regard to leavers in terms of religion and belief, disability and sexual orientation.

There was however a disproportionate percentage of male leavers (39%) when compared to the percentage of male employees (28%). HR have reviewed exit questionnaires which has not indicated any gender related points. It is worth noting that the council in part has more female employees due to the flexible working arrangements offered and whilst this can also benefit men it does tend to mean

female employees stay longer whereas men in predominately full-time roles are more able to move on to similar full-time roles in various sectors.

There was a disproportionate percentage of leavers aged 40-49 (33.3%) when compared to the percentage of employees in this age group overall (19.8%) which is likely to be due to the size and structure of EHC meaning that staff may leave for promotional opportunities externally and this age group is likely to be more experienced meaning a promotion is more likely to be suitable.

There was a higher percentage of BAME leavers (18.2%) when compared to the percentage of BAME employees (7.1%). This is higher than 2018/19 where only 1.6% of leavers were from BAME groups and is not therefore indicating any trend but will be kept under review. HR have reviewed exit questionnaires which has not indicated any concerns regarding ethnic origin. Of the 6 BAME leavers, all left the council voluntarily and two chose to leave because of personal reasons – one for family reasons and one regarding location of work.

Action plan

All actions in the 19/20 action plan have either been progressed or rolled forward into the 20/21 action plan.

Achievements against 2019/20 staff & employment equality action plan

Action	Progress
Employee Profile	
To complete the required annual Gender Pay Gap report for 2019.	The Council's Gender Pay Gap report for 2019 was published in February 2020.
Develop guidance on supporting employees who are changing gender so that best practice is available to both staff and managers where required.	Some initial work has been produced to feed into the Equality and Diversity policy which is being updated by the Policy Officer in the Communications, Strategy and Policy service. This has been delayed due to the pandemic and the Officer's availability. Will be carried over into the 20/21 action plan and will be supported by the Equality Officer from HCC who is due to begin in November/December.
Send all staff a reminder to check and update their personal details on MyView ahead of the data being analysed for the next annual equalities report to ensure we have full rather than partial data, reminding staff that we are not interested in their individual data but global percentages.	The report is run with effect from 31 March. As the HR team were dealing with COVID-19 from February and the closing of the offices around this time it was not possible to prioritise to request staff check their data before 31/3/2020 but this will be actioned this year. A data refresh will be prompted in February 2021 and undertaken before the next report.
Review the exit questionnaire with the intention of including equalities based questions going forward.	The Trainee HR Officer has undertaken an initial broader review of exit questionnaire to improve the level of information collected, including views on equality/diversity that can be reflected in future reports. HR are seeking to implement the revised questionnaire being sent automatically from the HR system. This will be carried over into the 20/21 action plan with the new questionnaire being rolled out in November 2020.

Review the questions in the next staff survey to include a range of equalities questions and analyse these in future equalities reports as data becomes available.	The revised staff survey is due to go out to staff in December 2020. Following the success of the in-house Wellbeing Survey in terms of significantly higher response rate it may be also run in-house to support further analysis and follow up.
Recruitment	
Require managers to return all recruitment paperwork before an offer letter can be sent out to ensure HR have full shortlisting data to be able to report on	This was implemented in October 2019 and has improved the shortlisting data. However this is only a partial impact into this year and despite data now being consistently collected from shortlisting panels, a significant number of candidates are still choosing not to complete the equalities form or choosing 'Prefer not to say'. Communications are developing online forms and the application form will be developed into an online form during 20/21 which will improve completion of the currently separate equality monitoring form.
Review introducing 'name-blind' recruitment (where names are removed during the shortlisting process to avoid sex and ethnicity bias).	It has not been feasible to introduce name-blind recruitment with the current manual system that the HR team use for recruitment. A refund in relation to the Recruitment module of the main HR system (which has proven not to be suitable) has been achieved by the Head of HR and OD and an online recruitment system will be progressed in 20-21 that provides name blind applications. All managers/recruiters will also receive further unconscious bias training, please see the 20/21 action plan for more information.
Include a guidance document on bias when sending managers job applications.	This has been introduced and is sent out to managers with all job applications for each selection process. See Appendix A.
To develop links with Disability Advisors at the Jobcentre to make them aware of our vacancies.	Initial links have been developed and work is progressing.
Performance	
HR to continue to undertake spot checks on PDR documentation to ensure that they are of	This is an ongoing task, any quality concerns have been actioned but it should be noted that generally forms are in line with expectations especially in

good quality and provide sufficient evidence to justify the rating given.	relation to ratings being consistent with the content of the form and there have not been any concerns raised by staff to HR over ratings given.
Disciplinary and Grievance	
Continue to monitor equalities data for all disciplinary and grievances.	This data has been collected and is contained within this report.
Training	
Continue to ensure that all staff complete the equality and diversity module as part of the mandatory training programme.	Equality and Diversity E-Learning is required of new starters and all staff on an annual basis. The course was run as part of mandatory e-learning for staff and was also provided to Members. The course is currently being updated and developed for 20/21. All mandatory staff training must be signed off by line managers as part of the annual PDR process to ensure completion – a box is being added to PDR form to ensure this is easily identifiable.
Continue to ensure that managers are trained in the PDR process and that effective and appropriate personal development plans (PDPs) are put in place for all employees, including those rated as ‘exceeding expectations’ and above.	Managers are provided with guidance on the PDR process and HR Officers provide a briefing to new managers in the service areas they support. The OD and HR Co-ordinator reviews PDPs to inform the annual training plan.
Continue to develop Mental Health First Aiders to support staff experiencing mental health issues.	The council’s trained Mental Health First Aiders meet every two months to discuss any cases they have had (anonymised) to learn from each other’s experiences and to discuss best practice. A mental health first aid course and refresher is planned for 2021. In addition, 37 managers attended mental health training in March 2020 as part of the Management Development programme.

Employee profile

Introduction

This section provides information on employees employed by the council as at 31 March 2020. Casual employees, agency workers and contractors are not included. The total number of employees employed by the council as at 31 March 2020 was a headcount of 339. This has increased from 329 in the previous year.

The data has been analysed using 6 of the 9 protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 as follows:

- Sex (Gender)
- Ethnic origin
- Age
- Religion or Belief
- Disability status
- Sexual orientation

Although marital status data is recorded this is not reportable from the HR system.

Pregnancy is not a permanent characteristic but a state in time. 2 employees took maternity leave in 2019/20 and it should be noted that no concerns have been raised regarding this protected characteristic.

Although the HR system has capacity for employees to indicate if they are transgender the new starter forms do not request this and instead the council has focused on the current gender and not the past in line with our recruitment forms. It is worth noting there have never been any complaints in this area. The council does employ staff who have changed gender without any complaints being made and HR and the Equalities Officer are going to develop guidance on supporting employees who are changing gender so that best practice is available to both staff and managers where required.

Various comparison data has been used to understand how the employee profile of the council compares to the wider context in which it operates and to identify whether there are any areas of concern which the council needs to take action on.

Where possible, comparisons have been made at the most local level (i.e. with East Herts residents) and using the most recent data available. However where this data has been unavailable at this level, comparisons have been made with East of England residents. Most of the comparison data has been taken from either the Nomis or Office for National Statistics (ONS) websites. It is noted that the Census data is now almost 10 years out of date but we have been unable to source more up to date data for religious belief, ethnic origin and disability.

Sex (Gender)

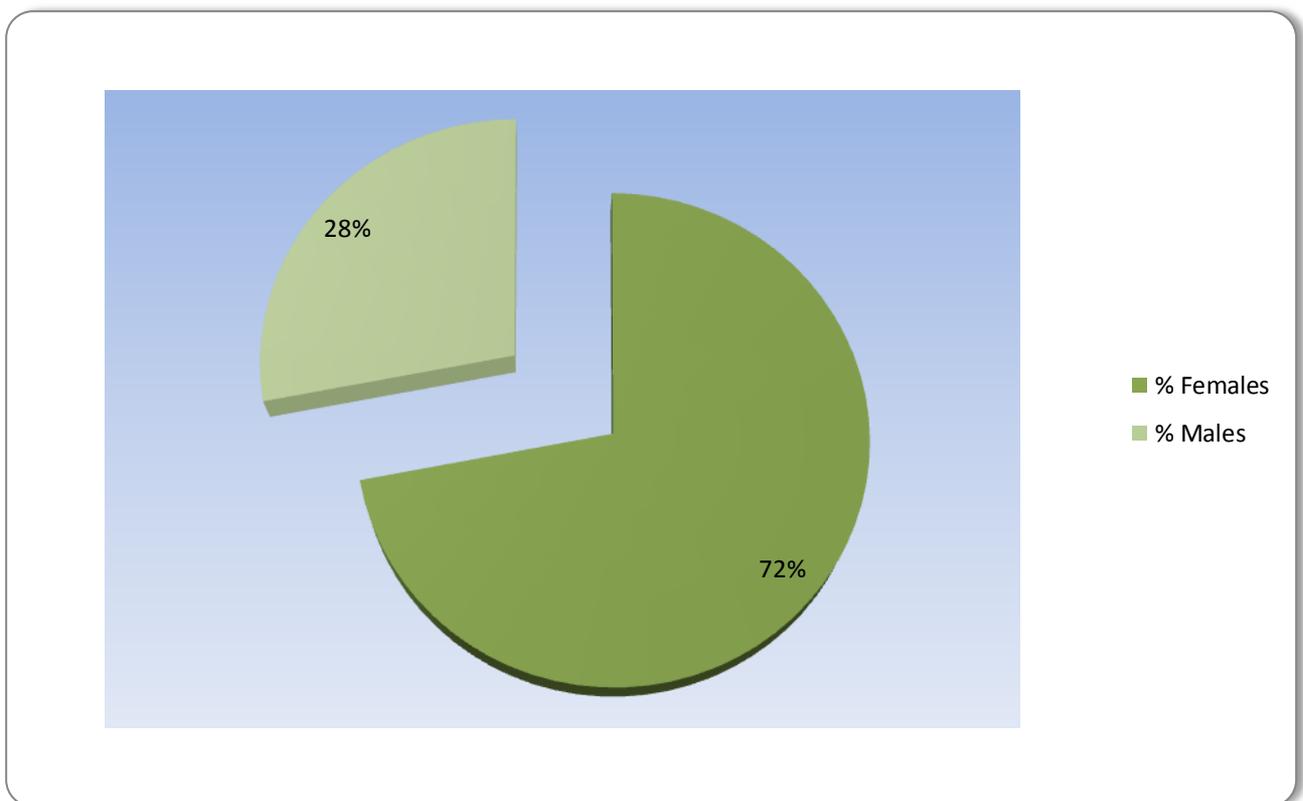


Figure 1.0 Employee profile by sex

Figure 1.0 shows the sex profile of employees at the council. The profile does not closely reflect that of the East Herts working population. The council has a considerably lower percentage of male employees (28%) compared to the overall male working population in East Herts (49%) (Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics (East Herts residents 2019)).

A high female to male workforce ratio is common in public sector with 68% being female and 32% being male (ONS: Public sector employment by gender (2015)). In addition, the council has contracted out many of the more traditionally male

dominated areas of work such as refuse, grounds maintenance and IT which has affected the male to female ratio further. The percentage of males working at the council has increased slightly by one percentage point from 2018/19 where 27% of employees were male, this figure was the same in 2017/18.

Ethnic origin

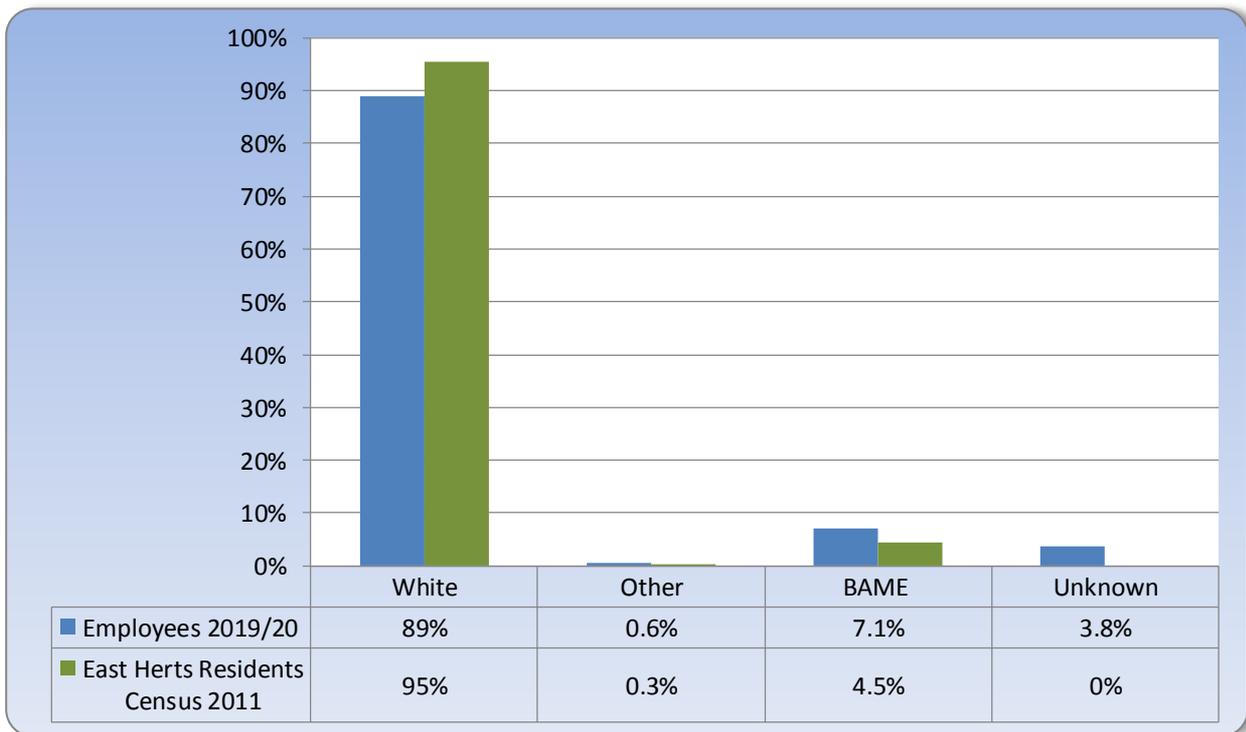


Figure 2.0 Employee profile by ethnic origin

Source: ONS Census 2011 - Ethnic Group by Measures

Figure 2.0 shows that the ethnic origin of employees is slightly above that of East Herts residents as at the Census in 2011. The EHC White origin compared to the census is 6 percentage points down, 3.8% of staff are unknown (EHC will seek to reduce unknowns by reminding all staff to review their details on the HR system). There is no more recent data available from ONS for East Herts, Hertfordshire or the East of England for comparison purposes. The census will be re-run in 2021. The total percentage of BAME employees has increased over the last 3 years (4.6% in 2017/18, 6.4% in 2018/19 and 7.1% in 2019/20) and is higher than the BAME residents in East Herts (4.5%). It is positive to see that the council is attracting and retaining a wider diversity of staff in terms of ethnicity.

Age

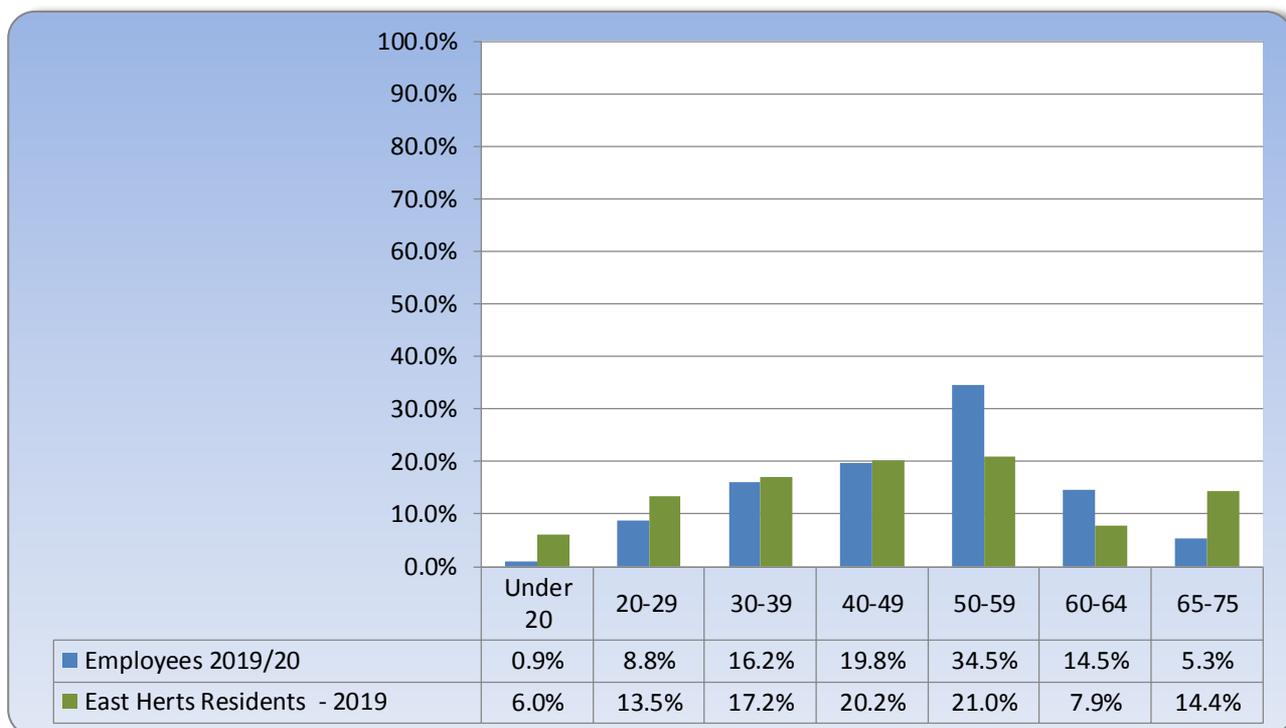


Figure 3.0 Employee profile by age

Source: Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics – Population Estimates in East Herts (2019)

Note: The percentages shown for East Herts residents are the percentage of 16-75 year olds, not the total population.

Figure 3.0 shows that the council has a considerably higher proportion of employees aged between 50 and 64 compared to East Herts residents. 49% of employees are in the 50-59 and 60-64 age groups compared to 28.9% of East Herts residents in these age groups. The size and structure of the council means that there are a limited number of entry level posts meaning that the majority of posts require experience and are likely to be filled by older individuals who have the required experience. The council has introduced more apprenticeships and trainee posts (in recent years) which require less experience and support staff developing in the role to both increase the younger age profile and provide succession planning but these posts can also be filled by career changers with appointment based on merit. The council also has a significant number of long serving employees which also impacts on the workforce age profile.

The percentage of employees under the age of 20 is lower than East Herts residents in this age group (4.5%) however this is likely to be due to it being compulsory to remain in full time education or training until the age of 18. The percentage of employees in

the 20-29 age range has decreased from 9.7% in 2018/19 to 8.8% in 2019/20. This is likely to be due to many of the posts at the council being experience based, as mentioned above. The percentages in the other age groups have not substantially changed from 2018/19.

Although there are differences in the age profile of the workforce to that of the East Herts residents there are no significant concerns or evidence of discrimination or bias.

Religion and Belief

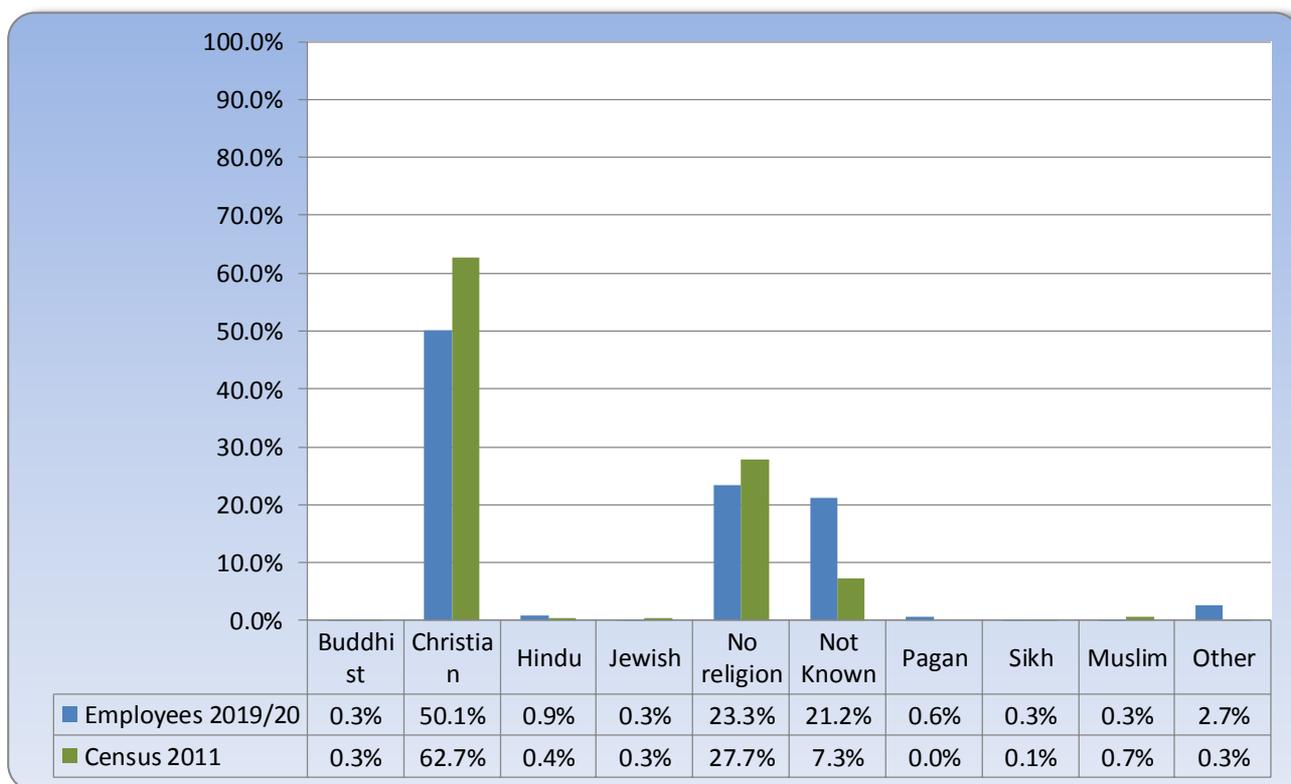


Figure 4.0 Employee profile by religion and belief

Source: ONS Census 2011 - Religion

Figure 4.0 shows that the religions and beliefs of employees are generally reflective of East Herts residents and therefore there are no suggested concerns in this area, although it should be noted that the census data is somewhat out of date. As is common with employment data on Religion (staff often do not wish to state) a significant amount of staff (21.2%) have not stated or have indicated they do not wish to. The percentages of staff under each religion remain very similar to the past two years.

Disability

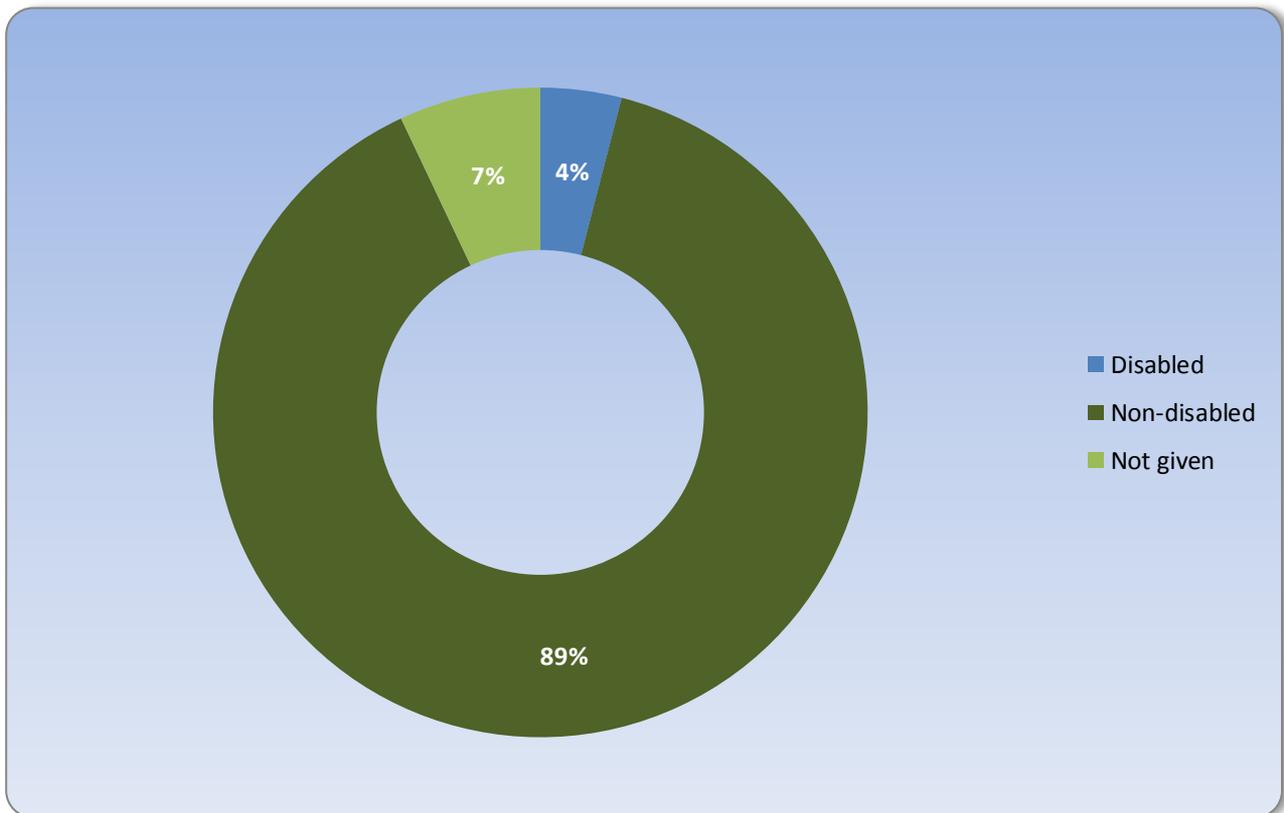


Figure 5.0 Employee profile by disability status

Figure 5.0 shows that as at 31 March 2020, 4% of employees had a disability, which is the same as 2018/19 and 2017/18. This is slightly lower than East Herts residents with a disability (5%) (ONS Census 2011 - Long Term Health Problem or Disability). It is worth noting however that the 2011 Census data was household based (not individual) and in addition people with a long term health problem may be unfit to work.

Sexual Orientation

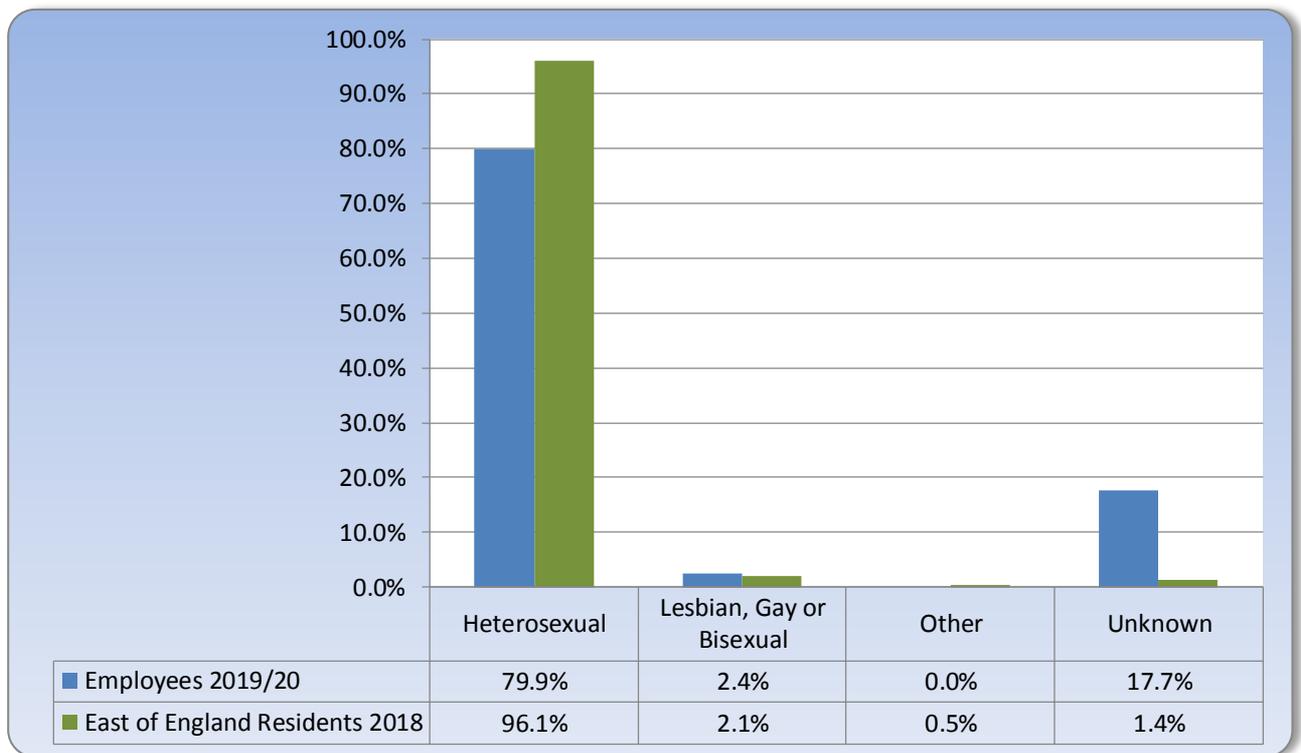


Figure 6.0 Employee profile by sexual orientation

Source: ONS – Sexual Identity by Region (East of England) – 2018

Figure 6.0 shows that there are no indicated concerns with regard to the council’s employee profile in terms of sexual orientation when compared to much more recent 2018 data. The council has less heterosexuals in terms of percentage but has a higher unknown percentage which would mostly close the gap. There is close alignment with lesbian, gay and bisexual employees where EHC had a very slightly higher percentage of 2.4% compared to residents in the East of England in 2018 (2.1%). The percentage of lesbian, gay and bisexual employees has increased this year; the figure was 1.7% and 1.8% in 2017/18 and 2018/19 respectively.

Recruitment

Introduction

This section provides information on external applicants who applied for jobs at the council between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020. Data has been collected at the application, shortlist and appointment stages. There were 49 external recruitment campaigns between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020. A total of 582 external applicants applied for jobs with the council.

Recruitment data has been analysed using 5 of the 9 protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010:

- Sex (Gender)
- Ethnic origin
- Age
- Disability status
- Sexual orientation

The council's position is that Transgender people should be respected as part of the gender they have chosen and therefore does not monitor separately in terms of their past gender or transition they have undertaken.

In terms of pregnancy and marital status these are not asked for at the recruitment stage. Regarding pregnancy, individuals may not wish to disclose this and by asking the wrong message maybe given to potential candidates and this also applies to a lesser extent to marital status (this is also a protected characteristic that can change and again could cause concern for candidate if asked based on previous discrimination in the employment market to newly married women re potential pregnancy/maternity in the future).

Although data is collected for religion or belief, this has not been reported on due to the low number of applicants reporting a religion other than Christian or not stated (4% in total across all other religions).

Due to the small numbers in each of the individual BAME groups, they have been combined and include:

- Mixed/Multiple Ethnic – includes White & Black Caribbean, White & Black African, White and Asian, Other mixed.

- Asian/Asian British – includes Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Other Asian.
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British – includes African, Caribbean, Other Black.
- Other – includes Arab, Any other ethnic group.

'White' includes English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British, Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Other White.

(Definitions of Ethnic Groups taken from the 2011 Census)

The data has been collected from the Equalities Monitoring Forms which are part of the application form and are detached before sending to managers. For candidates that were appointed, their equalities data has been taken from their new starter forms to ensure we have a full data set for those who were appointed this has reduced 'other' in most areas but although this provides some distortion the importance of showing the known data has taken precedence.

Comparisons have been drawn to the profile of the working population of East Herts to understand whether the council has been successful in attracting a diverse range of applicants that are reflective of the local population. Where possible, comparisons have been made at the most local level (i.e. with East Herts residents) and using the most recent data available. However where this data has been unavailable at this level, comparisons have been made with East of England residents. Most of the comparison data has been taken from either the Nomis or Office for National Statistics (ONS) websites. It is noted that the Census data is now almost 10 years out of date but we have been unable to source more up to date data for religious belief, ethnic origin and disability.

The equalities data of applicants reaching the shortlisting and appointment stages has been compared to the data of all applicants to understand whether certain groups are being disadvantaged and at what stage of the recruitment process. At the application stage applicants will drop out of the process where they do not meet the required criteria and at this stage in the process the recruiting manager does not have any equalities information regarding the applicants. Therefore it is particularly important to note the shortlisting to appointment data as it is at this point that there is more opportunity for bias to occur once the recruiting manager has met the applicants.

It should be noted that in October 2019 Leadership Team agreed to put in place a requirement for shortlisting and interview paperwork to be returned before a conditional job offer is made as we had large gaps in the equalities data at the shortlisting stage. As this was only implemented half way through the data period for this year (1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020) there are still some data gaps at the

shortlisting stage and candidates do not always provide the data or choose not to state.

Sex (Gender)

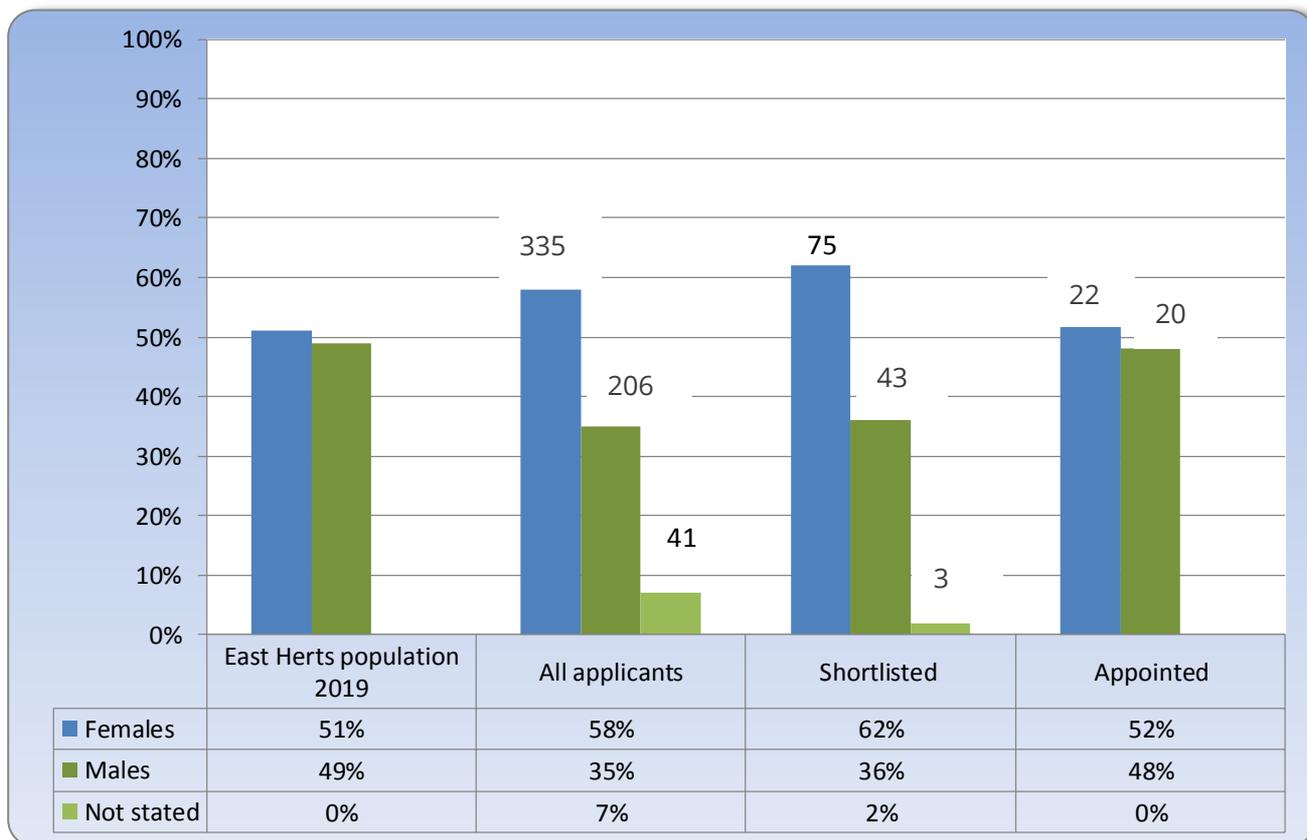


Figure 7.0 Applicant profile by sex compared to the population of East Herts

Source: Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics (East Herts residents aged 16-64 (2019))

Figure 7.0 shows that in 2019/20 the council attracted a higher proportion of female applicants than male applicants: 58% (335) of applicants were female and 35% were (206) male compared to the profile of the working population of East Herts (51% and 49% respectively).

This is a change from 2018/19 where 65% of applicants were female and 34% were male so it appears that a better balance of male and female applications was achieved in 2019/20 although the number of unknowns increased from 1% to 7%. It is pleasing to note that the percentage of male applicants (34%) has remained higher than the male EHC profile of 28% and this continues at the shortlisting stage and in fact increases to 48% at the appointment stage.

Figure 7.0 also shows that of the 121 applicants shortlisted for interview, 75 (62%) were female and 43 (36%) were male, with 3 (2%) unknown. Figure 4.0 shows that of the 42 applicants appointed, 22 (52%) were female and 20 (48%) were male. The conversion from application to shortlist are closely aligned for both genders (male 35% to 36% & female 58% to 62% with variation in 'not stated') and does not therefore indicate any gender bias (or support the benefit of name blinding applications to further protect gender indications). There is an increase of 13 percentage points between the number of males being shortlisted to appointed and a reduction in 6 percentage points between the number of females being shortlisted to appointed. This may indicate some potential bias, however the change is based on 42 appointments where each individual will affect the appointment percentage by 3 percentage points. The percentage of females being appointed (52%) is broadly in line with the percentage who applied (58%) and the 7% of unknowns at the application stage might explain the increase in males applying (35%) to those being appointed (48%).

Ethnic origin

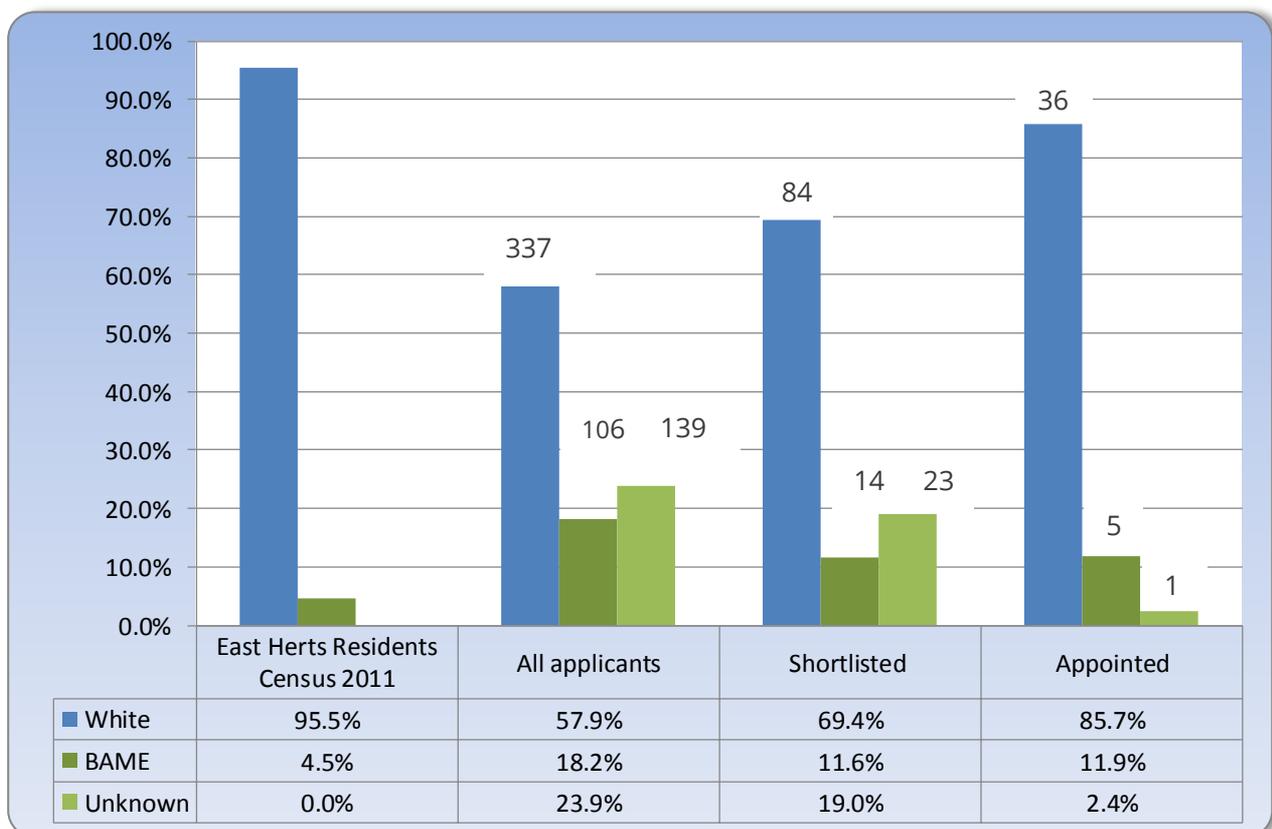


Figure 8.0 Applicant profile by ethnic origin compared to the population of East Herts

Source: ONS Census 2011 - Ethnic Group by Measures

Figure 8.0 shows that in 2019/20 the council attracted applicants from a diverse range of ethnic origins reflective of those of East Herts residents; 106 applicants (18.2%) were from BAME groups which is significantly higher than the percentage of East Herts residents in these groups (4.5%). However the figure is slightly lower than 2018/19 where 22.9% applicants were from BAME groups. There have been no changes in where we have advertised our jobs that could have caused this. The total percentage of BAME employees at the council has increased by a third since 2017/18 from 4.6% to 7.1% in 2019/20/ over the last 3 years.

There is a consistency in the percentages of applicants in the different ethnic groups at the application, shortlist and appointment stage. It is particularly pleasing to see that there is a very close alignment in the percentages of applicants from BAME groups moving from the shortlisting to the appointment stage because it is at this stage that the applicant's ethnic origin can be identified and there is more opportunity for bias to occur.

There is however an increase in the percentage of white applicants from application (57.9%) to shortlisting (69.4%) but this may be in part due to the number of Unknowns reducing at this stage. The increase for white percentage also sees a decrease for BAME applications shortlisted (6.5 point reduction), this indicates some potential bias but it should also be noted that there is very close alignment at shortlist to appointment where the opportunity for bias is more available. As reported, equality data is removed from applications, names are currently shared as the HR system cannot 'blind' these but no bias is suggested to gender from names being shared as outlined above. Managers are trained in equality and avoiding bias so there are sufficient measures in place (but this will be strengthened and remain an area of focus). There is a noticeable increase in the percentage of white applications from application (57.9%) to appointment (85.7%) but at this stage there is only 2.4% of Unknowns compared to 23.9% at application stage. The action plan below will include unconscious bias training for all managers.

In terms of progression within ethnic groups, of the 106 applicants from BAME groups, 14 (13%) were shortlisted for interview and of the 337 white applicants, 84 (25%) were shortlisted for interview. In 2018/19 11% of BAME were shortlisted for interview and 15% of white applicants were shortlisted for interview. So while there is an increase in both ethnic groups being shortlisted it is positive that the percentage of BAME applicants being shortlisted has increased this year. However with much smaller numbers of applicants from BAME groups, one individual can make a difference to the percentages. Of the 106 applicants from BAME groups, 5 (5%) were appointed compared to 36 of the 337 white applicants (11%). This gap between these

percentages has increased from 2018/19 where 5% of BAME applicants were appointed compared to 6% white applicants. However there were more Unknowns at the appointment stage in 2018/19 (25.5%) as this year we have populated any Unknowns at appointment stage from the new starter forms so although this looks like a worse picture than last year in reality it is likely that the Unknowns at the appointment stage were White as the percentage of BAME applicants being appointed has remained consistent at 5%. It is disappointing that the ratio of BAME applications to appointment drops however it should be noted that East Herts has not had challenge from a candidate suggesting any bias or discrimination over a shortlisting decision. The shortlisting process involves a panel scoring candidates against the job person specification criteria and these forms are collected by HR to evidence the merit based scoring undertaken. As covered above, all managers will receive unconscious bias training in 2020/21.

Age

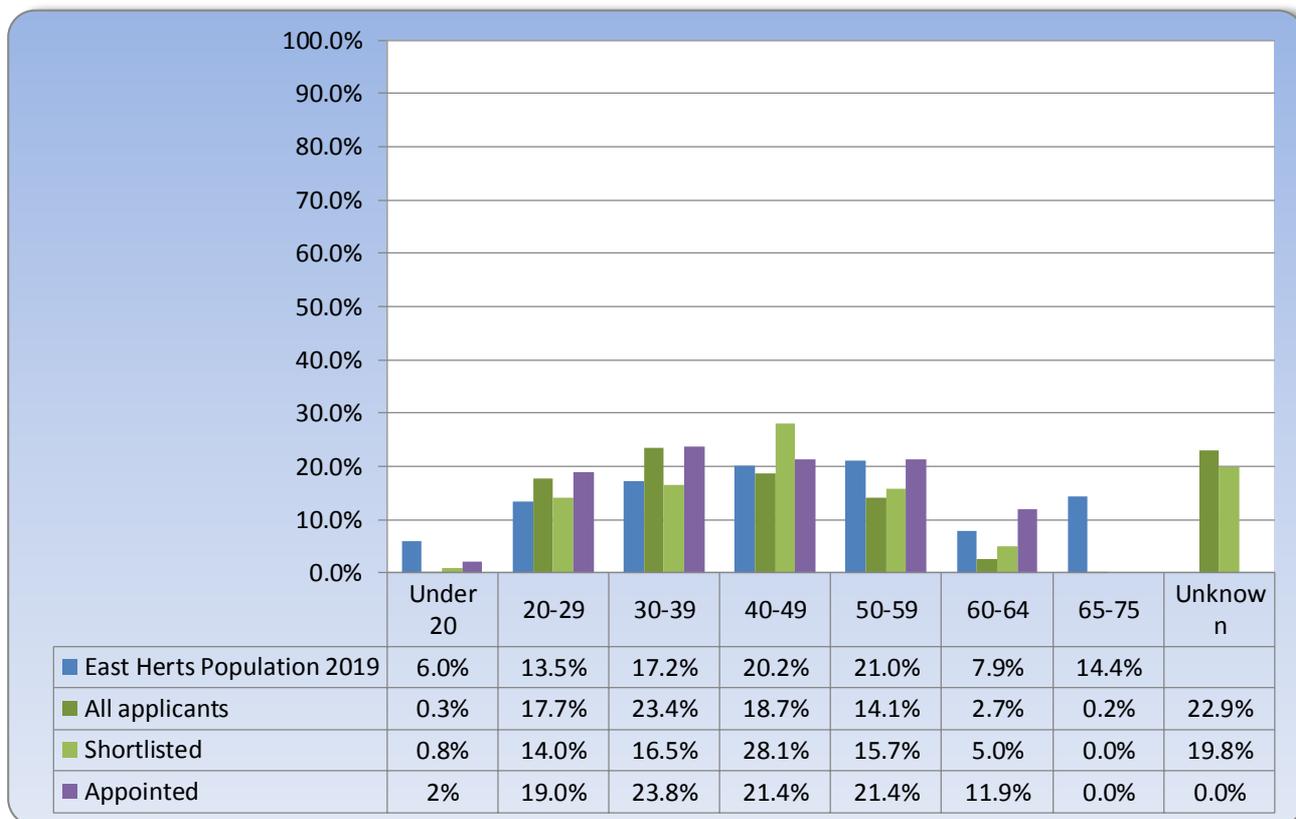


Figure 9.0 Applicant profile by age compared to the working population of East Herts

Source: Nomis Population estimates - local authority based by single year of age (2019).

Note: The percentages shown for East Herts residents are the percentage of 16-75 year olds, not the total population. Numbers could not be added to this chart due to the size of the columns.

Figure 9.0 shows that the council attracted applicants from a wide range of age groups broadly reflective of those of East Herts residents.

The percentage of applicants in both the 20-29 and 30-39 age groups are higher than that of East Herts residents in those age groups and then for all other age groups the percentage of applicants is lower than the percentages of East Herts residents in these age groups. In the older age groups this is likely to be due to people taking retirement.

The percentage of applicants under the age of 20 is particularly low (0.3%) compared to East Herts residents in that age group (6%), however this is likely to be due to it being compulsory to remain in full time education or training up to the age of 18.

There is some variation in the percentages of applicants at the various age groups and the percentage of those shortlisted. For the Under 20, 20-29, 50-59, 60-64 and 65-75 the percentages of those applying to those shortlisted are closely aligned. For the 30-39 group the percentage of applicants (23.4%) drops to 16.5% at shortlisting. For the 40-49 group the percentage of applicants increases from 18.7% to 28.1% at shortlisting stage.

From the shortlisting to appointment stage the percentages increased for all of the age groups apart from the 40-49 age group which decreased from 28.1% to 21.4%. The increases in all of the other age groups is due to the number of Unknowns reducing to 0% as this year we have populated any Unknowns at appointment stage from the new starter forms. Despite the slight variation at the different stages there are no obvious areas for concern.

Disability status

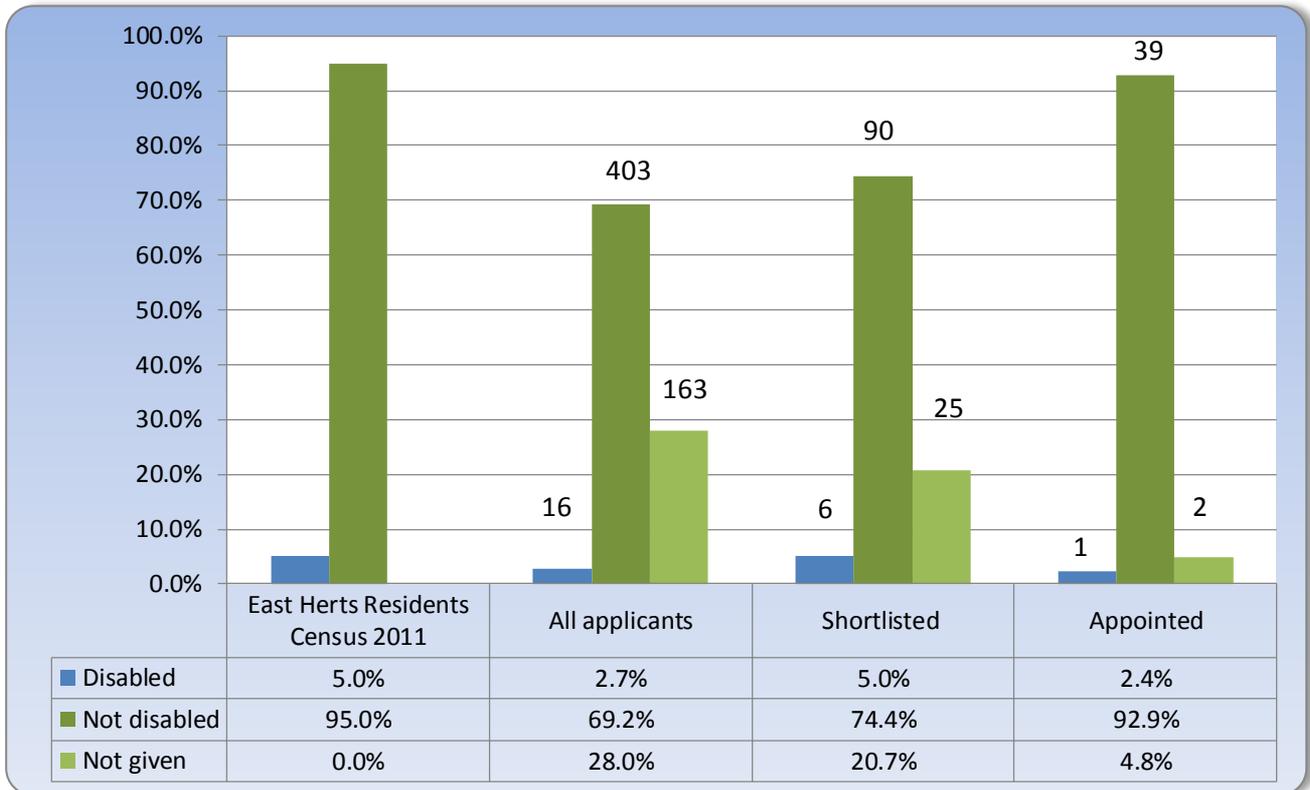


Figure 10.0 Applicant profile by disability compared to the working population of East Herts (Disability status)

Source: ONS Census 2011 - Long Term Health Problem or Disability

Figure 10.0 shows that 2.7% of applicants had a disability in 2019/20 which is lower than East Herts residents with a disability (5%) but is a slight increase from the 2018/19 of 2.4%. It is also worth noting the figure for East Herts residents includes those with a long term health problem which may mean they are unfit to work and is based on households rather than individuals. In addition, the disability status of over a quarter of those at the shortlisting and appointment stage was unknown.

The council would like to attract more applications from disabled people. An emerging move towards more agile working practices for relevant jobs may help to attract more disabled people, as well as the links created with job centre plus disability advisors. The council guarantees that disabled applicants under the Disability Confident Scheme will be invited for an interview if they meet the minimum essential criteria for the role (the Symbol is displayed on our recruitment messages and our website to help attract disabled candidates). In 2019/20, there were 16 applicants (2.7%) who stated that they have a disability. Of these, 6 met the essential criteria and were shortlisted for interview and 1 was appointed. This is positive, particularly at the

shortlisting stage, when compared to 2018/19 where out of 16 applicants only 1 met the essential criteria and was shortlisted for interview but they were not appointed.

Sexual orientation

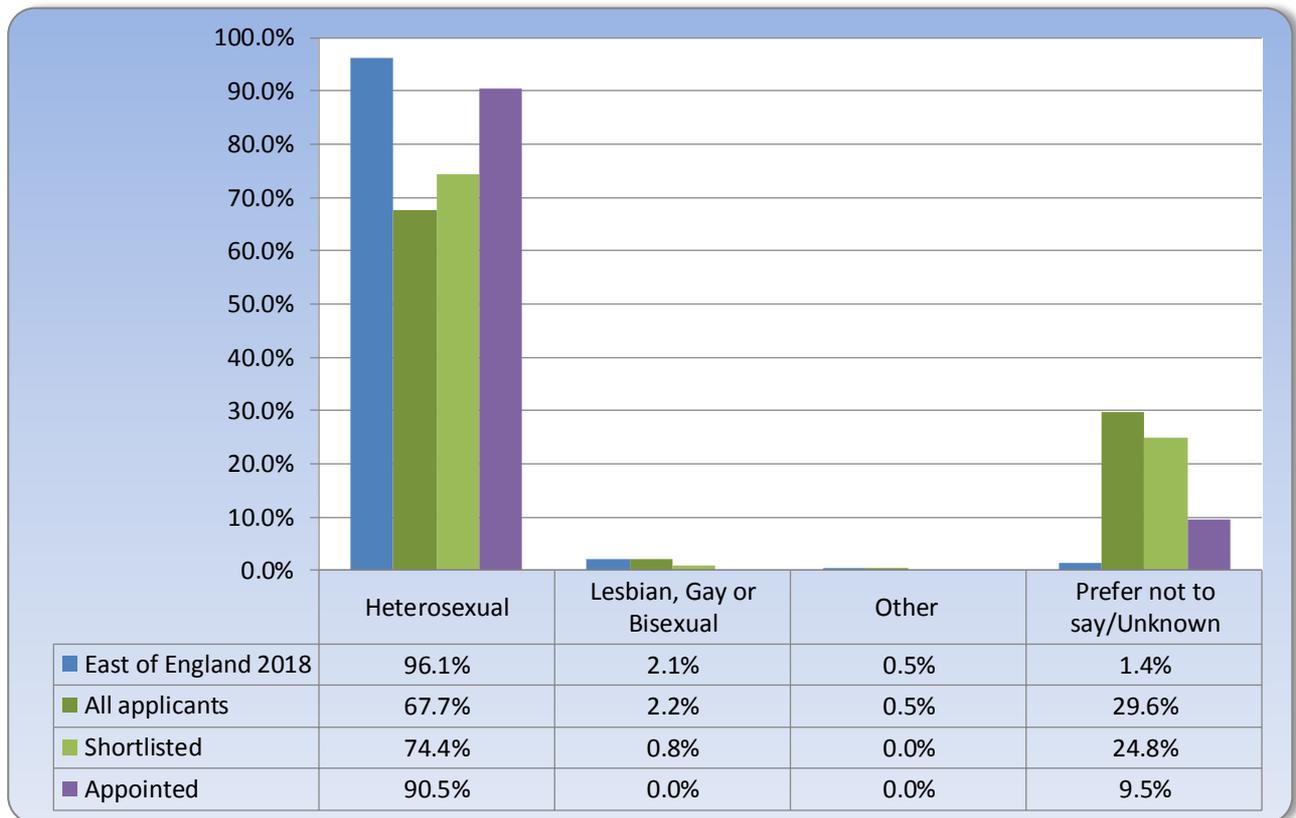


Figure 11.0 Applicant profile by sexual orientation compared to the East of England

Source: ONS – Sexual Identity by Region (East of England) – 2018.

Note: Numbers could not be added to this chart due to the size of the columns.

Figure 11.0 shows that 2.2% of applicants in 2019/20 were lesbian, gay or bisexual, This is slightly higher than the percentage for the East of England population (2.1%). Unfortunately this reduces to 0.8% (1 applicant) at shortlisting stage and 0% at appointment stage. However with much smaller numbers of lesbian, gay or bisexual applicants (only 13 in total), this reduction is not statistically significant or reliable.

The figure of applicants in 2019/20 who were lesbian, gay or bisexual has dropped slightly from 2.9% in 2018/19. In 2018/19 there was a better consistency between the percentages at the application, shortlist and appointment stages than this year but as stated above due to the very small numbers one applicant will have a big impact on percentages. In 2018/19 there were 19 applicants who were lesbian, gay or bisexual, 2 of those were shortlisted and 1 was appointed so the numbers are not very different but the percentages are impacted more significantly when the numbers are small.

Disciplinary and Grievance

(Grievance includes Bullying & Harassment complaints)

There was 1 formal disciplinary case and 2 grievances in 2019/20, compared to 4 formal disciplinary cases and 5 formal grievances in 2018/19. Full details of protected characteristics are not provided due to the sensitivity of the data and the small number of cases. However it is possible to state that 2 of the employees were white and 1 was black, 1 was female and 2 were male, and no employees stated they had a disability. Neither of the formal grievances were upheld and no appeals were raised. It is difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions but there is nothing to suggest that there is any bias or cause for concern.

Training

The 2019/20 Learning and Development Programme offered a range of learning and development opportunities designed to meet corporate, service and individual needs. Development needs were identified both corporately and through individual PDRs. Development opportunities were delivered by facilitated events, workshops, job shadowing, mentoring, coaching, webinars and e-learning. All employees are trained in equality and diversity as part of the mandatory training programme.

Corporate training courses are advertised to all staff via an email bulletin. Access to the courses is subject to manager approval and places are offered on a first come first served basis. Requests for funded professional and vocational training are approved by Leadership Team. No requests for professional or vocational training were refused in 2019/20.

We are satisfied that training and development is provided on a fair and equal basis across the council and allows all employees to take advantage of the opportunities.

Leavers

Introduction

This section provides information on employees who have left the council (both voluntarily and involuntarily) between the period 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020. The figures exclude casual employees who have left the council and those who are on a career break.

The total number of leavers during the period is 33. Of these, 30 left voluntarily and 3 left involuntarily. The involuntary leavers include those temporary contract had come to an end or dismissal e.g. as a result of compulsory redundancy or misconduct. Please refer to the Annual Turnover Report for 2019/20 (Human Resources Committee August 2020) for full details in terms of reasons for leaving, leavers by length of service, leavers by service area etc. This section looks at leavers in terms of equalities and protected characteristics but does not going in the same details as the Turnover Report.

Leaver data has been analysed using 5 of the 9 protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 as follows:

- Sex (Gender)
- Ethnic origin
- Age
- Religion or Belief
- Disability

Sexual orientation was not provided due to the small numbers of employees in some categories which may identify individuals. There are no concerns in this area.

Although marital status data is recorded this is not currently reportable from the system.

Pregnancy is not a permanent characteristic but a state in time. 1 employee took maternity leave in 2019/20 and it should be noted that no concerns have been raised regarding this protected characteristic.

Although the HR system has capacity for employees to indicate if they are transgender the new starter forms do not request this and instead the council has focused on the current gender and not the past.

Sex (Gender)

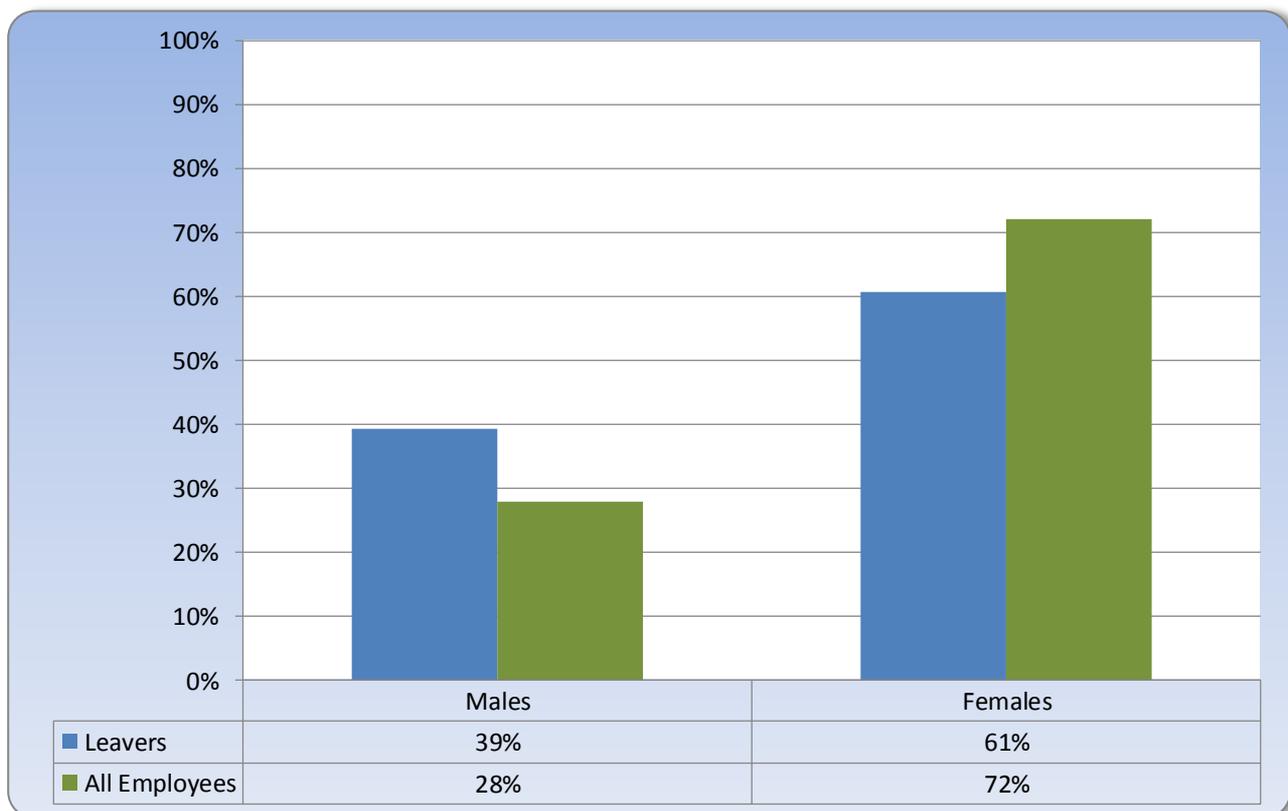


Figure 12.0 Leavers by sex

Figure 12.0 shows that there was a higher percentage of male leavers when compared to the percentage of male employees; 39% of leavers were male and 61% were female which is not reflective of the current employee profile (28% and 72% respectively). The percentage of male leavers has increased slightly since 2018/19, where 36% of leavers were male.

HR have reviewed exit questionnaires which has not indicated any gender related points, however it is also worth noting that the council in part has more female employees due to the flexible working arrangements offered and whilst this can also benefit men it does tend to mean female employees stay longer whereas men in predominately full-time roles are more able to move on to similar full-time roles in various sectors.

Ethnic Origin

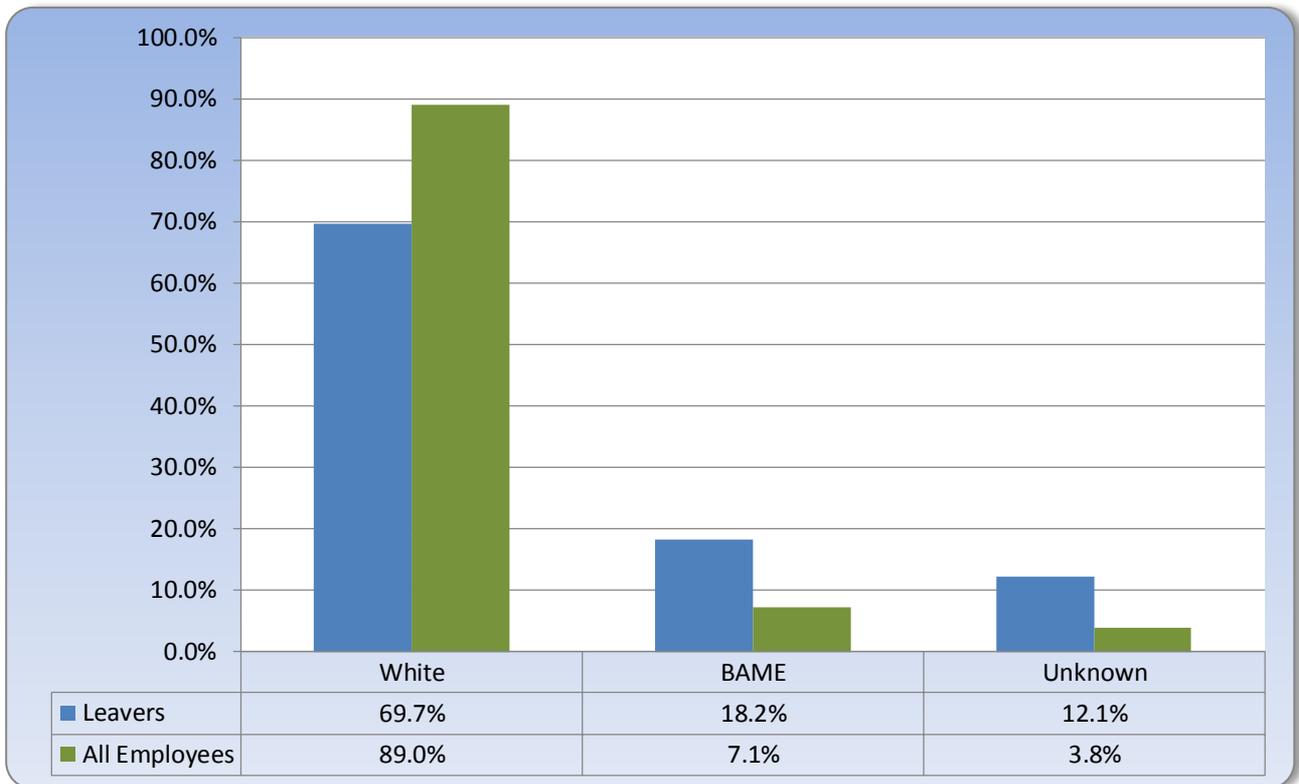


Figure 13.0 Leavers by ethnic origin

Figure 13.0 shows that there was a higher percentage of BAME leavers when compared to the percentage of BAME employees; 18.2% of leavers were from BAME groups and 69.7% were white which is not reflective of the employee profile (7.1 and 89% respectively). This is higher than 2018/19 where only 1.6% of leavers were from BAME groups and is not therefore indicating any trend but will be kept under review. HR have reviewed exit questionnaires which has not indicated any concerns regarding ethnic origin. Of the 6 BAME leavers, all left the council voluntarily and two chose to leave because of personal reasons – one for family reasons and one regarding location of work.

In addition due to the small numbers involved in terms of one leaver representing 3 percentage points and the number of BAME leavers was 6 out of 33 leavers in total the figures are not statistically significant as three leavers would represent 9.1% and there is also a high number of Unknowns.

Age

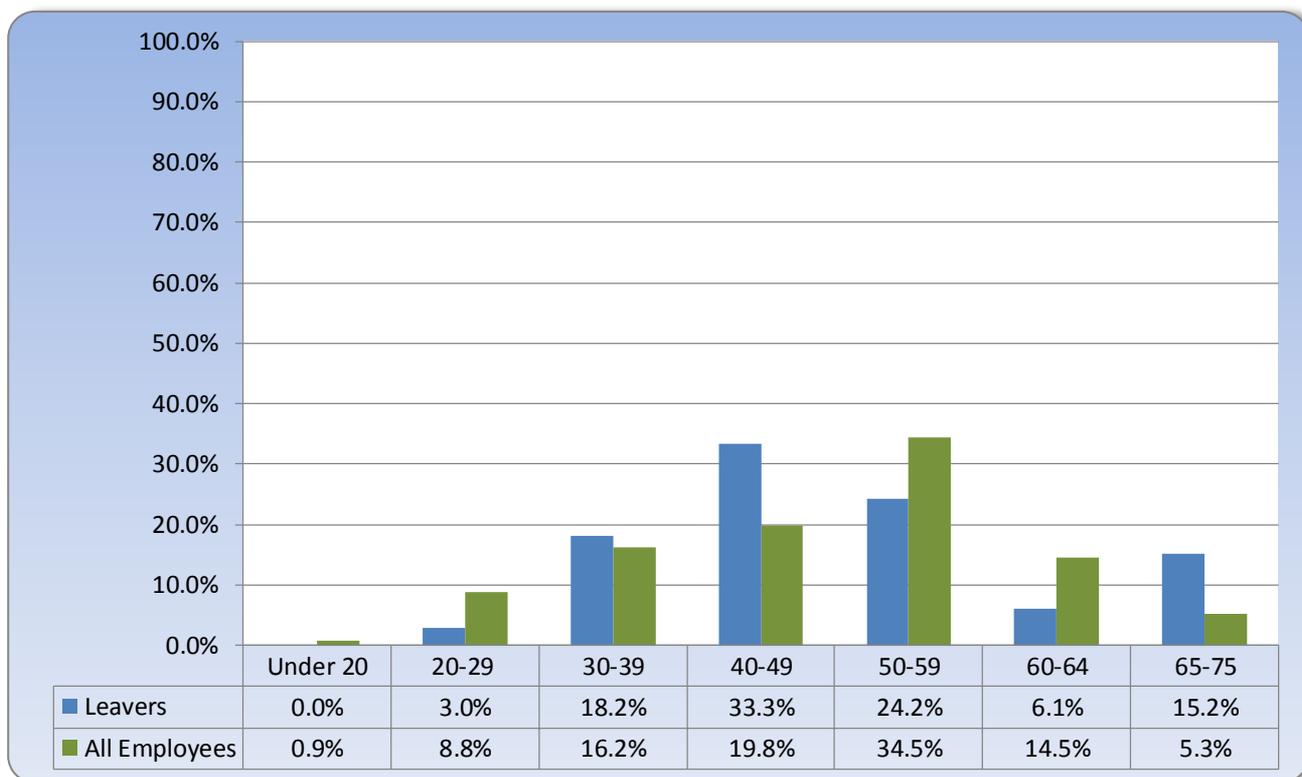


Figure 14.0 Leavers by age

Figure 14.0 shows that there was three times the percentage of leavers in the 65-75 age group than employees in this age range but this is due to employees in this age group taking retirement.

The percentage of leavers in the 40-49 age group (33.3%) was higher than the percentage of employees in this age range (19.8%). There is no obvious reason for this although it is most likely to be for career progression and due to the small teams at the council employees may have to seek this progression outside of the council. This is an area the council continually tries to address but is ultimately limited by the overall size and structure.

Religion or Belief

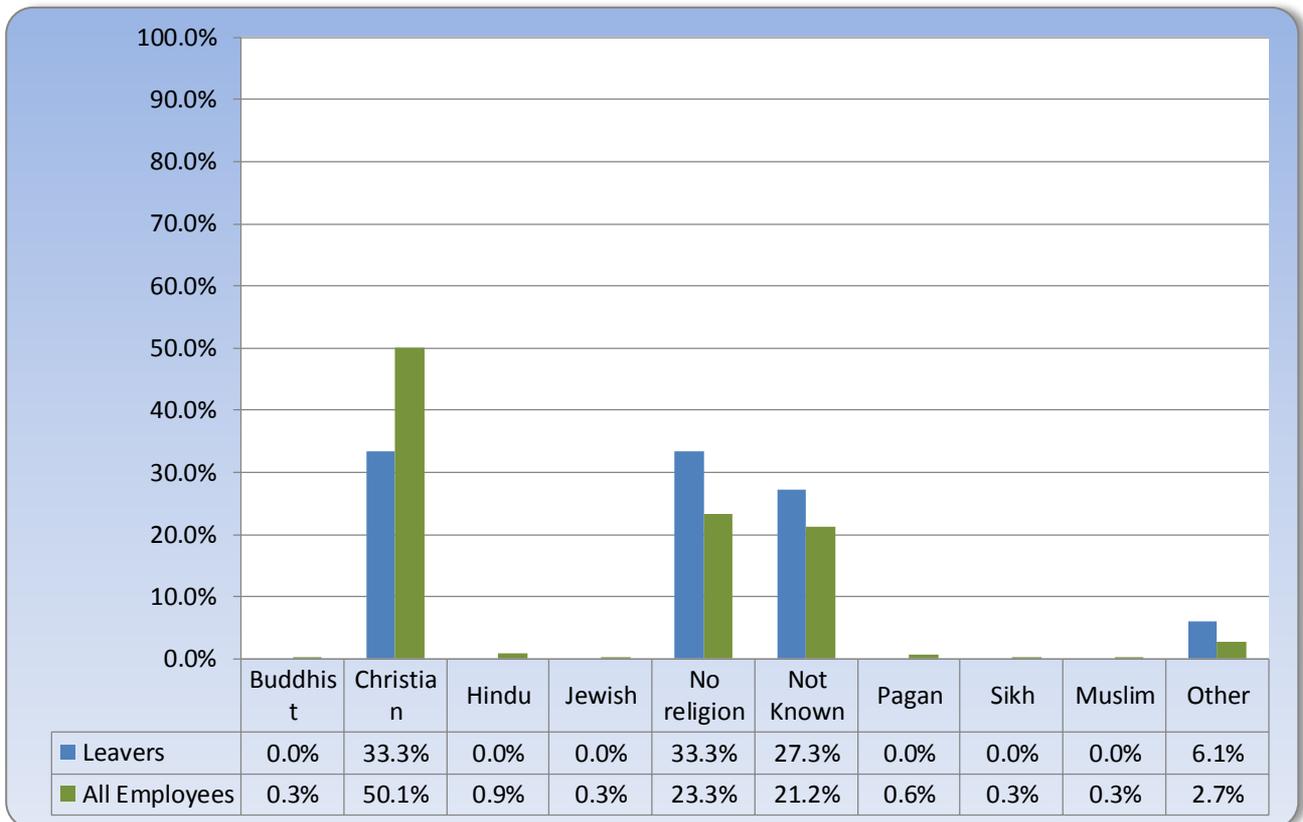


Figure 15.0 Leavers by religion

There are no concerns in this area, the religious belief of leavers in 2019/20 were generally reflective of the overall employee profile given the small numbers involved.

Disability

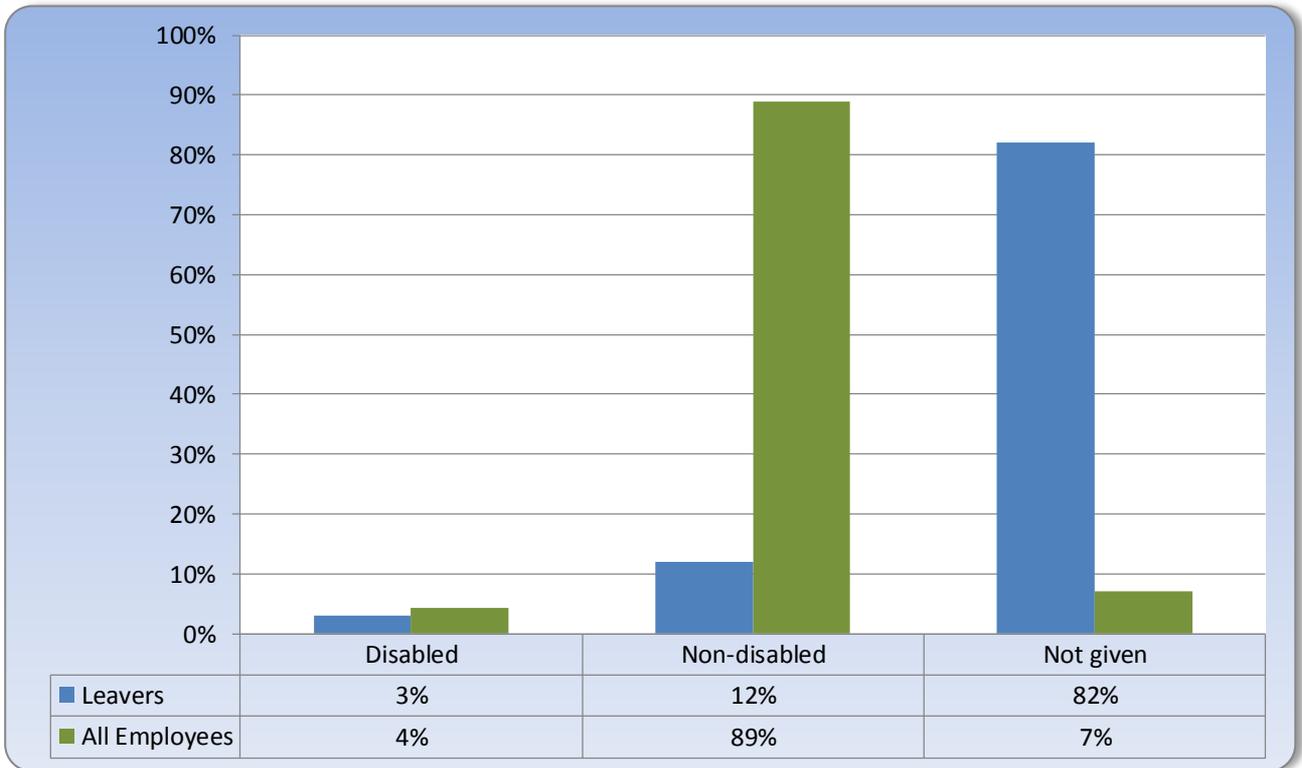


Figure 16.0 Leavers by disability

Figure 16.0 shows the percentage of leavers with a disability (3%) was slightly lower than the percentage of employees with a disability (4%). Therefore there are no indicated concerns in this area, however 82% of leavers are unknown. . Employees' disability status can change during the course of their employment and HR will be encouraging all employees to check and update their equalities details as necessary. This will be prompted in February 2021 for data to be up to date for 31 March 2021.

Staff and Employment Equality Action plan 1 July 20 – 30 June 21

The actions listed below refer to staff and employment only. The Council's Equalities Officer will be responsible for generating a general equalities action plan.

Action	Timescale
Employee Profile	
To complete the required annual Gender Pay Gap report for 2020.	Published by March 2021
Develop guidance on supporting employees who are changing gender so that best practice is available to both staff and managers where required. This will be supported by the HCC Equalities Officer.	January 2021
Send all staff a reminder to check and update their personal details on MyView ahead of the data being analysed for the next annual equalities report to ensure we have fuller rather than partial data (especially religion, sexual orientation and disability) reminding staff that we are not interested in their individual data but global percentages.	February 2021
Review the exit questionnaire with the intention of including equalities based questions going forward.	Initial review undertaken to include question on equalities at EHC as well as seeking more feedback on other areas, will be implemented in November 2020.
Review the questions in the next staff survey to include a range of equalities questions and analyse these in future equalities reports as data becomes available.	The revised staff survey is due to go out to staff in December 2020. Following the success of the in-house Wellbeing Survey in terms of significantly higher completion it may be also run in-house to support further analysis and follow up.

Recruitment	
Continue to require managers to return all recruitment paperwork before an offer letter can be sent out to ensure HR have full shortlisting data to be able to report on	Ongoing. Implemented November 2019.
<p>Investigate whether a link can be added to the new Application form that takes candidates straight to the Equalities Monitoring Form. If this is not possible look at setting up an auto reply on the HR inbox reminding candidates to submit their Equalities Monitoring Form if they have not already done so.</p> <p>HR will ensure that new recruitment (ATS) system spec will include an online form that can automate the separation of the equalities form to increase completion rates as well</p>	<p>November 2020</p> <p>In line with implementation – system, will be implemented by HR during 20-21 and therefore this will be completed no later than June 2021.</p>
Arrange for all recruiting staff to complete further mandatory unconscious bias training, this will be a joint task for the OD&HR Co-ordinator and the new Equalities Officer and will build upon the guidance already provided and the elements already covered by the current recruitment training. EHC will either source a suitable provider or develop a suitable in-house course which will be made mandatory for recruiters.	January 2021
Each interview panel chair to give consideration to the diversity of the interview panel and where possible try to ensure the panel is as diverse. Where this is not possible try to ensure that other elements of the panel show staff diversity, for example 'meet the team' sessions to demonstrate the diversity at East Herts and to appear as welcoming as possible to applicants of all backgrounds.	Ongoing
Continue to develop links with Disability Advisors at the Jobcentre to make them aware of our vacancies. Promote agile working practices where relevant.	Ongoing

Work with Communications to build a set of varied staff case studies that demonstrate diversity in our workforce and use them as part of our recruitment literature.	June 2021
HR have secured a refund for the recruitment module of the main HR system and will invest this money into an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) that will include an electronic application form and enable name blind recruitment.	By June 2021
Discipline and Grievance	
Continue to monitor equalities data for all disciplinaries and grievances. Extend this to include formal probationary cases.	Ongoing
Training	
Continue to ensure that all staff complete the equality and diversity module as part of the mandatory e-learning training programme. Offer further equalities based training as identified by annual training needs analysis undertaken by the OD and HR Co-ordinator.	Ongoing
Continue to ensure that managers are briefed in the PDR process and that effective and appropriate personal development plans are put in place for all employees, including those rated as 'exceeding expectations' and above.	Ongoing
Continue to develop both wellbeing programmes/guidance and maintain sufficient Mental Health First Aiders to support staff experiencing mental health issues.	Ongoing