



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Workforce Diversity Report

April 2025

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Workforce Diversity Report – April 2025

The Equality Act 2010 requires Public Bodies to publish sufficient data to show how they are meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty – which includes workforce profile and other information.

The broad purpose of the equality duty legislation is to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the day-to-day business of public authorities. Therefore, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have ‘due regard’ to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The legislation states advancing equality of opportunity involves having due regard to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Having due regard to the aims of the general equality duty requires the Council to have an adequate evidence base for its decision-making. Collecting and using equality information should enable it to develop a sound evidence base and to understand the impact of its proposals and decisions on people with protected characteristics.

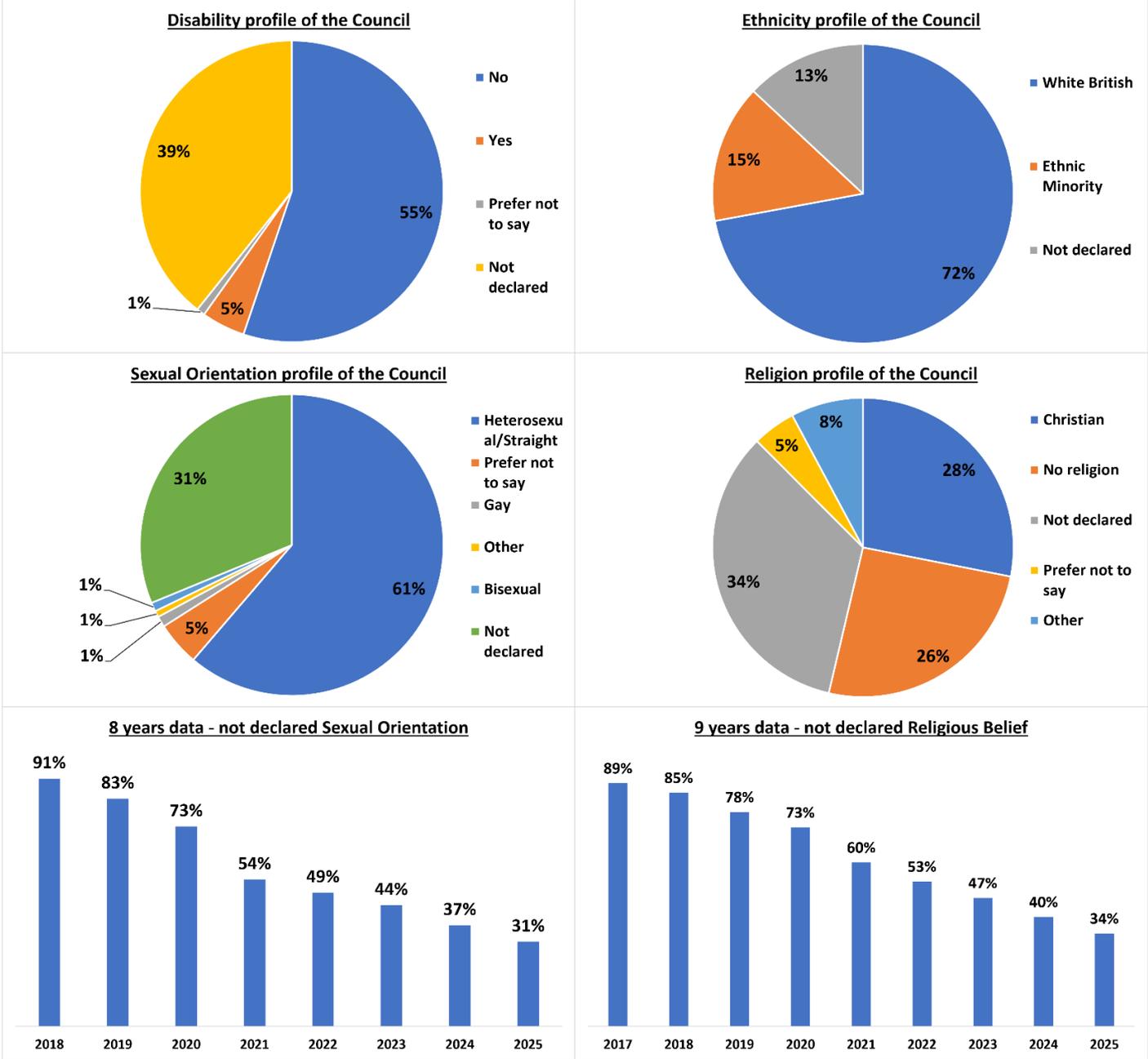
The quality of diversity data of Council staff has gradually been improving since 2017 as highlighted in the graphs below.

This information is requested as part of the recruitment process and added to the ERP system (BWO) during the new starter onboarding process. There has been a campaign to support and promote declaring information about their ethnicity or other protected characteristics which has been supported by staff networks. This has resulted in an increase in disclosures providing us with more accurate information.

Current employees are able to view and update their diversity information via self-service access to BWO and they are reminded to review/add any missing information annually as part of the appraisal process.

Table 1 – Current snapshot of equality data declared

The graphs below give an overall snapshot of the equality data percentages currently declared.



Analysis by protected characteristic

High level summary:

- Analysis has taken place of the workforce make-up based on various protected groups, using data from a fixed date (31 March 2025), e.g. percentage of the workforce by ethnicity, age, sexual orientation and so on; with a view to understanding if the Council's workforce truly reflects the community it serves.
- Other analysis looks at equality data based on the year up to 31 March 2025 e.g. recruitment and leavers data; with a view to understanding if there are any inherent biases towards or against any protected characteristics, suggested by the data.
- As shown by the tables above significant improvements have been made in the percentages of employees declaring their equality data over the last 5+ years.

A full analysis is provided below.

Ethnicity

Table 2 – Ethnicity breakdown of the Council vs Wokingham Borough

The table below shows the ethnicity profile of the Council, Wokingham Borough along with Council leavers and new starters.

	White British	Ethnic minority groups	Prefer not to say	Not declared
Ethnicity profile of Wokingham borough (2021)	87%	13%	N/A	0%
Ethnicity profile of the Council	72%	15%	0%	13%
Ethnicity profile of new starters	63%	32.4%	2.8%	1.9%
Ethnicity profile of leavers	66%	21%	0%	13%

In 2025, we can see that 13% of employees have not declared their ethnicity, there has been a sustained improvement in this figure indicating action taken to encourage disclosure has been successful and we will continue to reduce this through working with staff networks and detailed communications to actively encourage people to declare their ethnicity.

Table 3 – Ethnicity breakdown by salary grouping

The table below shows the ethnicity profile of the Council by salary grouping.

	Non-Ethnic Minority Group	Ethnic Minority Group	Prefer not to say	Not declared
<£20,000	0%	0%	0%	0%
£20,000 - £29,999	12%	3%	0%	2%
£30,000 - £39,999	25%	5%	0%	4%
£40,000 - £49,999	19%	5%	0%	3%
£50,000 +	16%	2%	0%	5%
Overall Total	72%	15%	0%	13%

In 2025 we can see that employees who declared they had an ethnic minority group are earning more than in 2024 with those in the earning bracket of £20k to 29k falling from 4% to 3% but those in the 30k to 39k increasing from 3% to 5%. We are continuing to work with our staff networks looking at how we improve this further, some of the work we have done this year has included promoting the Amplify Programme which is a development programme that supports the development of diverse talent within local government leadership. This ground-breaking initiative is designed to nurture and uplift diverse talent, empowering them to ascend the ranks of local government leadership. All our staff networks have helped us to shape the new EDI Policy, and they have been involved in shaping questions for the recent Service Director recruitment, and we want them to help to shape the new aspiring managers programme.

We are also working with Adults and Children on the actions to support the Social Care Workforce Race Standard and have an action plan in place which joins up with corporate initiatives that we are working on together.

Gender

Table 4 – Gender breakdown of the Council vs Wokingham Borough

The table below shows the gender profile of the Council, Wokingham Borough along with Council leavers and new starters.

	Male	Female
Gender profile of Wokingham borough (2021)	49%	51%
Gender profile of the Council	25%	75%
Gender profile of new starters	20%	80%
Gender profile of leavers	29%	71%

The borough has an equal split of men and women, whilst the Council's workforce is predominantly female at 75%. This is broadly consistent with the gender profile across local government. Generally, across all organisations the variations can be accounted for on the basis of the following

- More women than men work part time and part time tends to be more prevalent at lower levels in the organisation
- More women, than men, take career breaks which can impact on their career progression or later career choices
- Local authorities have a wide range of functions and professions, however many of the lower graded roles tend to be dominated by women for example administration, customer services and libraries
- Some local authorities, as is the case for Wokingham, don't always have all services delivered in house and they are delivered by external partners for example DLOs and Waste and Recycling.

Table 5 – Gender breakdown by salary grouping

The table below shows the gender profile of the Council by salary grouping.

	F	M
<£20,000	0%	0%
£20,000 - £29,999	14%	3%
£30,000 - £39,999	28%	6%
£40,000 - £49,999	19%	8%
£50,000 +	15%	8%
Grand Total	75%	25%

There remains a variation in gender split based on salary. For instance, there are highest percentage of females in the lower salary groups and one of the smallest percentages of males – this can be explained by the fact that lower paid roles more traditionally occupied by males are outsourced to external organisations.

Our mean gender pay gap is 11.49% and our median pay gap is 11.60%. The median gap is a more accurate measure of a gender pay gap as it discounts very high or low rates of pay that can confuse and skew the overall average.

Our mean ethnicity pay gap is 5.83% and our median ethnicity pay gap is 0.00%.

Disability

Table 6 – Disability breakdown of the Council vs Wokingham Borough

The table below shows the disability profile of the Council, Wokingham Borough along with Council leavers and new starters.

	Yes	No	Prefer not to say	Not declared
Disability profile of Wokingham borough	13 %	87 %	N/A	N/A
Disability profile of the Council	5%	55%	1%	39%
Disability profile of new starters	1.4%	25.5%	0%	73.1%
Disability profile of leavers	4%	51%	1%	44%

In the 2021 census, 13% of WBC residents reported a disability. Current data shows 5% of employees have declared a disability whilst 1% of employees have actively opted to select the 'prefer not to say' option. This has decreased from 1% in the previous report, it is worth noting that 39% of employees had not declared the information at all.

Along with improving the Councils data the Disability Confident Scheme is in place so that the Council can ensure that it encourages potential candidates with a disability to apply for roles.

Sexual orientation

Table 7 – sexual orientation breakdown of the Council

The table below shows the sexual orientation profile of the Council.

Bisexual	1%
Gay	1%
Heterosexual	61%
Prefer not to say	5%
Not declared	31%
Other	1%

2% of employees have declared themselves to be gay or bisexual, compared to national estimates of around 6%. 31% employees have not declared this information, however it is worth highlighting that this figure has shown a steady reduction since 2018 when it was 91% of employees that had not declared this information.

As above due to the small numbers of declarations this characteristic is not broken down by salary range.

Religion and belief

Table 8 – religious/belief breakdown of the Council

The table below shows the religious/belief profile of the Council.

Christian	28%
No Religion	26%
Other Religion	8%
Prefer not to say	5%
Not declared	34%

34% of employees have not declared this information, however it is worth highlighting that this figure has shown a steady reduction since 2017 when it was 89% of employees.

As above due to the small numbers of declarations this characteristic is not broken down by salary range.

Age

Table 9 – Age profile of the Council vs Wokingham Borough

The table below shows the age profile of the Council compared to the borough.

Age range	2025	Wokingham Borough (2021)
16-19	0.3%	5.8% (15-19)
20-24	3.3 %	4.5%
25-34	16%	10.5%
35-49	40.1%	22.1%
50-64	37.4%	19.6%
65+	2.9%	17.7%

The workforce profile remains older in comparison to the community (based on the 2021 census), however the Council is changing its approach to recruitment trying out new methods for example attending job fairs, using different social media platforms, using short videos to promote jobs, and running an apprenticeship first scheme and improved work experience scheme. Though it should of course be remembered that a working population will not include anyone under 16 and fewer at the higher and lower age ranges, which means there will be proportionally more in the age groups in between.

Recruitment

An audit of recruitment activity from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 has been undertaken. A summary is shown below.

Table 10 – Gender/Ethnicity/Disability profile of applicants to the Council

The tables below show the gender profile, ethnicity profile and disability profile of people applying for jobs at the Council through the various stages of recruitment.

Sex	Applicants		Shortlisted		Appointed	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Female	4533	62%	767	71%	173	80%
Male	2679	37%	294	27%	43	20%
Other	32	0%	7	1%	0	0%
Prefer Not to Say	94	1%	8	1%	0	0%
Not Declared	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	7339		1076		216	

Ethnicity	Applicants		Shortlisted		Appointed	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
White British	2809	38%	579	54%	136	63.0%
Ethnic Minority Groups	4273	58%	463	43%	70	32.4%
Prefer Not to Say	256	3%	34	3%	6	2.8%
Not Declared	1	0%	0	0%	4	1.9%
Total	7339		1076		216	

Disability	Applicants		Shortlisted		Appointed	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Yes	473	6%	94	9%	3	1.4%
No	6711	91%	961	89%	55	25.5%
Prefer Not to Say	155	2%	21	2%	0	0.0%
Not Declared	0	0%	0	0%	158	73.1%
Total	7339		1076		216	

This data will be produced on an annual basis to compare and highlight trends. Some initiatives to further improve the workforce profile for individuals with protected characteristics will be actioned in the coming year.

These include a review of advertising methods and consideration of a pilot of anonymised application forms. A new recruitment policy is also being written to standardize our approach to recruitment and we will be introducing management training for Unconscious Bias across the Council.