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HR Policy Committee (virtual meetings from June 2020 due to Coronavirus)

Tuesday 19 January 2021
2.00 pm

SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA

To: The Members of the HR Policy Committee (virtual meetings from June 2020 due to Coronavirus)

We are now able to enclose the following information which was unavailable when the agenda was published:

Item 6	Annual Equalities Report (Pages 3 - 60) To receive a verbal update from Strategic Manager – HR Business Relations.

Democratic Services, County Hall, Taunton

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SOMERSET County Council

Somerset County Council Workforce Equalities Report 2019/2020

Last updated

Date: 22nd December 2020
By: Michelle Anderson, Equalities Employment Officer - Human Resources & Heather O'Dwyer, HR Policy and Projects Officer

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Introduction

''The County Council promises not to discriminate against anyone because of race, colour, ethnic or national origins, nationality, religion, disability, age, sex, marital status, caring responsibilities, sexual orientation, political or trade union activity"

Equality is a core value of the Authority and underpins the way in which we deliver services. We are working to embed equalities into all of our services and employment practices so that we can meet the aims of the Authority's Equalities Promise Statement and our internal Equal Opportunities Policy.

The County Council has made an additional commitment to ensuring equality in four other areas outside of the protected characteristics. These are rurality in recognition of the rural nature of Somerset and the impact that has on the Council's ability to provide services to all; military service in recognition of the fact that Somerset is home to Service Personnel and their families and a signatory to the Armed Forces Covenant; low income in recognition of the fact that Somerset has more limited opportunities for high incomes than some of the more urban counties and the deprivation indices show that Somerset has some significant challenges; and Carers, who often need additional support when you consider this role is often combined with another factor such as rurality or low income.

This report forms part of the overall reporting requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED places a specific duty on the Council to publish information about its employees (where the organisation exceeds 150 staff) and service users broken down by relevant protected characteristic to show how the Council is:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering good relations between people

This report provides both, an overview of the Council's performance in terms of equalities in relation to employment as well as an outline of the work, projects and initiatives around equalities within the Council.

Our work in Behaviours and Culture in 2019/2020 continued within the Improving Lives Programme. The focus was on raising the profile of the Somerset People Attributes, which are a set of behaviours that the Council has signed up to. They are focused on developing leaders at all levels of the organisation. Workshops have been run with various teams across the Council enabling exploration of different aspects of leadership within a given context. One of the underpinning principles of the People Attributes is that we develop our leaders to have a greater understanding of inclusion in the workplace. This is broader than the protected characteristics and

recognises the fact that we all have barriers that hold us back, but in the right environment and with the right leadership there are no limits to opportunity.

During 2019/20 the Council introduced various employee support networks hosted in Microsoft Teams. The employee support networks are designed to offer peer to peer support in a safe and non-judgemental environment.

Sex

County Profile – not collated within census (Sex and Sexual Orientation are the two areas that are not collected under the Census).

SCC Profile
The Council's workforce is 72.5% female and 27.5% male (compared to 71.2% female and 28.9% male in 2019). The gender profile of the top 5% earners is 57.5% female and 42.5% male (compared to 57.6% female and 42.4% male in 2019).

The data shows females continue to make up almost three quarters of the workforce. There has been no change in the number of women in the top 5% of earners.

The reason for the higher level of female employees in the organisation is a higher proportion of female workers within social care and caring roles. This reflects the national picture in local government employment.

Training
Of those who attended training 25% were male and 75% were female. These figures are broadly in line with the workforce profile in terms of sex.

Supportive Policies
Somerset County Council is committed to supporting parents and offers enhanced contractual maternity and adoption pay and maternity support leave.

Shared Parental Leave (SPL) is also available to staff and enables eligible mothers, fathers, partners and adopters to choose how to share time off work after their child is born or placed. It also applies to surrogacy where there is a Parental Order. It is designed to give parents flexibility in how to share the care of their child in the first year following birth or adoption.

Recruitment

- The data shows that applicants who did fill in the sex data were significantly more successful at being both shortlisted and appointed. However, it should be noted that this group of applicants was relatively small accounting for 5.9% of all applicants.
- The data did not show any indication of bias.

Age

County Profile

- At the time of the 2011 Census 61.1% of the County's population were of working age, 16-64.
- The relative size of the working age population is below the national average in all Somerset districts.
- The highest concentrations are in major towns and in areas housing military personnel (40 Commando, Norton Fitzwarren, and RNAS Yeovilton).
- In some areas of Burnham-on-Sea, Minehead and Frome less than half the population are of working age.

Between 1984 and 2014 those aged 85+ increased by 170%. The number of 85+ is projected to double in the next 2 decades. With this increase in those aged 85 and above we can confidently assume we will see an increase in those providing non-paid caring support. This has the potential to change the profile of employees working within the organisation and an increase in those requiring working flexibly and/or part time.

SCC Profile (see appendix 2 for full data)

The data shows that the age profile of the Council is broadly the same when compared to that of 2019 with around 75% of the workforce being above the age of 36.

Those aged 16-25 account for 6.2% of the Council's employees, a slight increase when compared to 2019. The hope is that continued work through the apprenticeship scheme, pathways to employment and graduate programmes we will see this figure continue to rise. The County lacks an established university which continues to reduce our ability to retain young people coming to study in the area. This is then also true for those young people that go and study outside of the County and remain in their area of study.

This age breakdown is similar to other authorities with a similar geographical makeup.

Training

The age profile of those attending corporate training was broadly in line with the workforce age profile showing no bias in training.

Recruitment

- The data shows that applicants aged 56+ were more successful at being appointed than other age groups. However, it is important to note that only 5.8% of applicants were in age groups of 56+.

- The data shows that applicants who did not state their age were more successful in being shortlisted and appointed than those who declared their age.
- The data shows that just over a quarter of applicants do not declare their age.

Disability

County Profile - Data from the census 2011 tells us that 18.8% of the population of Somerset said they had a long-term condition or disability.

Almost 12.7% of them were aged 16-64. The proportion is on a par with both regional and national averages.

SCC Profile

- The percentage of top 5% earners declaring a disability was 2.2% compared with 3.1% in 2019.
- The percentage of employees declaring a disability has increased to 6.8% in 2019/20 from 6.49% in 2018/19.
- The number of employees declaring their disability status has decreased to 93% in 2019/20 compared to 96.7% in 2018/19.

We continue to use an annual prompt for staff to update the data we hold on them in order to capture more accurate information. This year's figures continue to indicate that this has improved the accuracy of our data and our expectation that this figure will increase year on year as people become more comfortable with recording their information. It should be noted that this declaration is not mandatory and where a member of staff does not require additional support, they may not feel the need to declare a disability.

Training

The number of employees attending training mirrors that of the workforce at large. All training is run in accessible venues and we ask applicants when booking on training if they need adjustments to assist them.

Reasonable Adjustments

As an employer we actively seek to provide reasonable adjustments for employees with disabilities in order to enable them to carry out their role. Such adjustments are identified through a range of mechanisms including the government's Access to Work Scheme, Occupational Health and Health and Safety assessments. Each case is individual and the types of adjustments the Council puts in place vary significantly according to need.

The Council involves both, internal and external equality and diversity specialists in key projects relating to office space, work premises and their use to ensure accessibility for all.

Recruitment

- Only 15.2% of applicants who declared having a disability were shortlisted compared to 21.1% of applicants who declared they had no disability.

- Whilst the number of applicants who declared having a disability was relatively small, the expectation would be that a greater percentage would be offered an interview under our commitments as a Disability Confident Employer. Under the scheme we commit to offering an interview to all candidates who declare a disability and meet the minimum criteria for the job. One action should therefore be to conduct further analysis of this data.

Case Study:

I have always been aware, through my studies and work since, that I put in far more hours than others, just trying to 'keep up with the recording of notes/write assessments etc' the main of which I have done in my own time, evenings, weekends and even on annual leave.

After having a period off work, I had a return to work meeting with my Manager and Consultant Social Worker, who was supporting me through my ASYE. They queried why I could not fit in the work needed in the hours I am contracted for? I remember replying somewhat in desperation, as well as frustration in my own ability, something along the lines of... 'I don't know, I wish I knew myself! and believe me.. I do not like having to use up my own time to complete things'.

At the time the CSW wondered whether there an underlying reason? However, being in my 50's, and having just completed 2 degrees back to back, I didn't think this a possibility, otherwise, surely, I would know of this by now, wouldn't I?

I then spoke to a colleague and good friend about my situation as I was worried, although it had never been suggested, I might lose my job, with reason given that I can't manage it? or have to hand my notice in where I could not physically or mentally sustain the hours I was putting it. My colleague suggested I call HR, something I did and that was the start of the next journey in my life.

Having met the HR representative, she asked lots of questions. I was able to say that my case notes are lengthy, and found it difficult to summarise; that I re-write most sentences a couple of times; that if I even leave a simple note for my son, that I would probably rewrite this 2-3 times, with all ways still having the same meaning but with words in different order, that seemed to make more sense to me.. well at least**, I** thought they did.

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I was able to say I could not skim read.. and explained throughout my study, I literally needed to read every single word on a page or even a whole book, and highlight so much more than others with varying colours of marker pens and sticky notes, and then when needing to write assignments, I would go through it all again literally word for word. This can be the same situation around trying to keep on top of new reading and policies and procedures in work.

I was able to advise, although usually pretty organised, this can come at a price, as it takes me a lot of time. For example, I will check my work bag each evening in readiness for the next day, then again in the morning and still find myself getting halfway up the road to realise I have forgotten something.

HR said I had demonstrated, through my study, that I was capable of doing the job and suggested, *I had the ability, but not the processing skills* – i.e being able to transfer information from my brain on to paper/computer. She thought I had Dyspraxia, a neuro-diverse condition, that means my brain is wired differently to others.

Fast forward…an assessment was arranged and 'Yes', 'I do have Dyspraxia'.

Having previously had cancer, and able to recognise others have far more concerning disabilities and health issues than Dyspraxia, I feel quite shallow to say this, but my diagnosis hit me like a brick and it is still something I struggle to get my head around. It is good however to realise I am not just 'useless' and that there is a reason for not always being as quick as others.

HR arranged reasonable adjustments and I now have Dragon and Read & Write software on my laptop. I also have a live scribe pen and am just completing 10 sessions of strategy coaching.

I am persevering with the adaptions, however lockdown meant all training

had to be virtual which has not been great as my assessment recommended any learning should be face to face, as that is the way I learn best. I will, however, keep trying to master these as I really do want these adaptions to work for me and therefore hopefully make my recording quicker and thus impact less on my own time.

The strategy coaching has however proved very productive for me. This has been helped by my coach also having Dyspraxia. Having her support, with her being able to explain more about the condition, as well as identifying further support through social media, has been really helpful and I now have a greater understanding of how neuro diversity has, and continues, to affect my life.

My managers have always been very supportive; however, I am not sure how much they, or others, understand the impact a neuro-diverse condition can have on a persons' work. I would hope therefore more awareness can be made available in this area in the future, if nothing else because research suggests neuro diversity is not an unusual trait in social workers.

As a last note, I want to thank the person from HR, for the understanding and support she has given me and I can honestly say she probably not only saved me chucking in my career, something I have worked hard for, but also my sanity.

Anon.

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Case Study:

I have suffered with varying levels of anxiety for some years. In early 2018, following a period of being stuck at home with a badly broken ankle, my anxiety reached an extremely severe level. I spent the next 6 months on and off work, trying different medication and sleeping barely 2 hours a night. I wish I could say exactly why such an extreme relapse occurred, in hindsight, I think it was a combination of feeling very isolated after my ankle injury, along with spending most of 2017 trying to come off a really effective antidepressant. I had, in my infinite wisdom, decided to come off it as my husband and I wanted to try for a baby.

Those 6 months in 2018 were pure hell. Along with anxiety I suffered severe depression (leading to 3 suicide attempts), OCD and insomnia. The turning point and the start of my recovery in August 2018 came with the right combination of antidepressants, anti-anxiety medication and the referral by my GP to the Mental Health Team at Somerset Partnership. Under the Mental Health Team I was appointed a Care Co-ordinator and a Psychologist who I began intensive therapy sessions with.

I had tried to come back to work on and off during the spring and summer of 2018, but I was just too unwell. Once the medication and therapy had begun to work their magic, I felt strong enough to try a few hours a week on a very long phased return basis. My Service Manager was open and supportive (she had visited me a few times during my illness) and that really helped. My Line Manager was extremely lovely and even drove me to Doctors appointments occasionally. He also checked in with me every day in the office and made sure I knew I could get extra support or go home if things became too much.

After steadily recovering over the next 12 months I even applied for and got a new job in a different team. My new Line Manager was great and suggested I could receive extra support at work from SCC's Equalities in Employment Officer. This was extremely helpful and gave me an extra person at work who I could ask for support and help if I needed it.

Work was such an important part of my recovery and now that my anxiety and depression is being managed, it helps to know there is a lot more understanding and support available at work as and when I need it.

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Case Study:

2020 The year of the pandemic, my 57th birthday and the year I had an assessment which showed I am dyspraxia.

I have had a lot of comments from those I have told about the dyspraxia. Why would you want to find out at your age? You are brave?! My sister dismissed it, my Mum read the assessment and said it was interesting. My Dad didn't want to read but then did. He remarked he could see both my Mum and himself in the report. He then went on to tell me that when he was working his manager would say at his annual appraisal that his written work needed to be improved. He is 90 years old, had gone to grammar school and I never knew that he struggled with things like that. For me it helped me make sense of my life and explained a lot of things that happened in those 57 years. I don't know my right from my left. Couldn't learn the alphabet until they changed the tune. Fall over regularly (I thought this was because I had small feet!). The assessments also showed my strengths too so it was a positive experience. My visual problem solving is well above average which suggests that I have pursued the right career as an Occupational Therapist. I have had an access to work assessment and with some equipment and coping strategies so life and work have improved.

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Advanced DSE Assessments – to support employees with medical conditions.
We have a number of individuals fully trained to carry out advanced DSE assessments which continues to improve financial efficiencies as well as improving timescales in offering employees this support. In 2019/20 we have completed 62 assessments which has saved the Council over £15,500.

Mental Health Awareness Sessions & other bespoke disability related training
We continue to offer specific workshops covering reasonable adjustments in addition to a Mental Health Awareness course which is open to all staff and delivered on demand.

We have partnered with Mind to provide bespoke training to managers to help them to support their employees and manage difficult conversations and conflict with more awareness of mental health issues/illness.

We have also worked with Mind and our Public Health team to deliver 7 Mental Health First Aid courses to 53 employees during the period April 2019 to February 2020. We also facilitated employee led lunch and learn sessions on mental health awareness whereby over 100 staff members attended.

Our Children's Service also offer Mindfulness UK training to 2 cohorts of their employees per year.

Reuse of Equipment
The provision of reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 often involves the need to procure specialist equipment such as ergonomic chairs, keyboards and specialist software. Whilst the Council receives part funding for some items through the government's Access to Work Scheme it is still responsible for a significant financial contribution. In order to maximize efficiencies and significantly reduce cost, whilst ensuring the need of employees with disabilities requiring equipment is met, the Council continues to ensure equipment is stored centrally and reused wherever possible providing additional savings to the Council.

Short term product loans of ergonomic materials have been arranged and where these devices (e.g. mouse, keyboard, chairs etc) have provided added value to the employee and helped avert sickness absence, the service has purchased this item for permanent use. One such device that has had significant benefits to many staff has been the installation of yo-yo desks, enabling staff to sit/stand at their workplace. A tracker is being created to identify savings/expenditure on ergonomic equipment.

Disability Confident
The Council became a Disability Confident level two employer in September 2016.

The Disability Confident Scheme was introduced by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and replaces the Two Tick scheme which the Council had been

awarded for many years. The Council is continuing to look at working towards and achieving a level three under the scheme in 2020/21. The Council is linking with both DWP and other Disability Confident employers within the County to support this.

https://www.gov.uk/recruitment-disabled-people/encouraging-applications

Mindful Employer

The Council has recently signed up to the Mindful Employer Charter as we are committed to further improving our support for mental health within the workplace.

Details of the full charter can be found here:

http://www.mindfulemployer.net/charter/

Race

County Profile

- At the time of the 2011 Census there were 28,414 Somerset residents whose ethnicity was not White British, equating to 5.4% of the County's overall population
- 'White Other' relates to people who are White and not 'British', 'Irish' or 'Gypsy or Irish Traveller' and is the second largest ethnic group in Somerset, after 'White British' representing 2.8% of the population.
- Polish is the most common 'non-UK' ethnicity in all Somerset's districts, and Polish-born residents now account for 1% of Somerset's overall population. There are significant pockets of residents in parts of Shepton Mallet, Yeovil, Minehead, Taunton and Bridgwater.
- The size of the Portuguese population in Somerset has also increased markedly in the last ten years. There are now notable groupings of Portuguese residents in areas of Chard and Shepton Mallet.

The information on the Polish and Portuguese communities in Somerset mirrors trends with the rest of the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in Somerset. Whilst the numbers of residents are quite low, they are clustered together, predominately in the large towns.

SCC Profile (see Appendix 4 for full data)

- The percentage of employees from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities including White Other is 8.74%, an increase on 2019 which was 6.97%.
- The percentage of employees from BME communities excluding White Other is 2.9%, an increase on the figure for 2019 which was 2.44%.
- The percentage of top 5% earners who identify as BME is 1.1%, an increase compared to 0.9 % in 2019.

Whilst the data shows that BME representation in the workforce as a whole has increased the overall BME numbers are still relatively small therefore a slight change can have a disproportionate impact on the statistics.

Due to the low numbers of figures there is little additional information that can be gleaned from them. However, the current increasing BME employee figures are more reflective of the current ethnic profile of Somerset.

Training

The information available for those taking up training mirrors that of the workforce.

Recruitment

- 81.6% of applicants identified as White British.

- 88.2% of applicants identified as White Other.
- 6.3% of applicants identified as Black, Asian or Mixed, this is a higher percentage than the BME population of Somerset as at the 2011 census.
- Due to the small numbers of applicants from BAME backgrounds it is difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions from the data.

Case Study:

When I first moved to Somerset from Hampshire, I was immediately advised by colleagues that Somerset was not a very diverse locality. By diverse, I took it that they meant they were not many people of colour. However, diversity is more than about race, it encompasses culture, gender, age, faith beliefs, sexuality, disabilities etc. I have since realised that in most aspects of diversity, Somerset is just as diverse as any other area. I have been enriched by the experiences shared by the people I support as the older generation share their experiences during the war and how communities were very close and supportive of each other. The younger generation also share their experiences of how things have changed or changing and how they are embracing the older generation`s experiences and wisdom, as well as imparting their current experiences to the older generations.

Somerset is culturally rich and the people also proud of their culture, tradition and identity. I have also since discovered that the people are very proud of their locality and how each locality is culturally different from each other. People who live in Glastonbury are as proud of their heritage as the people who live in Watchet or Weston Super Mare. The diversity is quite enriching to me as a Social Worker.

However when it comes to racial diversity, Somerset is not as diverse as cosmopolitan cities like London, Birmingham or Bristol.

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They are fewer people of colour residing or working in Somerset. I was initially apprehensive as I was not sure how I was going to fit in or accepted as a black person. It is natural that people draw from their past experiences and use them analyse their situations. I was also anxious if I was going to get relevant and appropriate support from my employer and colleagues should I face challenges due to my race. Research states that there is a higher level of unconscious ignorance to racial issues in areas that are not very racially diverse, and Somerset is one such area. However, fortunately I have received tremendous support from my team, supervisor and manager. I feel so free to debrief after incidents whereby I feel there has been element of racial prejudice or discrimination. I have used supervision to discuss such issues they have a huge impact on emotional well-being when one is not properly supported, and for me to be able to support other people effectively I need to be emotionally, psychologically and mentally well. I am rather fortunate that I am in a very supportive team.

We also have the BME Now forum where we meet regularly to discuss issues that affect the BME workers. The BME Now is a brainchild of the Somerset County Council, aimed at supporting the BME employees as well as provide a platform to express views and share ideas. It is during these BME Catch up meetings that colleagues share ideas and experience, and apparently some colleagues do not feel as much supported as others.

Issues have been raised on support inconsistencies across teams and it seems it all depends on how the specific managers approach the issues. They are calls to have a consistent approach to support BME employees and a workshop to raise awareness on the need to understand BME people`s experiences, concerns and worries, especially at team managerial level. Colleagues also raised their concerns amidst the Covid pandemic that unlike other councils, we had no specific risk assessment tool for BME workers, especially after it was evidenced that BME were over-represented in the number of affected and death.

The BME Now initiative has been a good start to address and discuss issues as we now have a more racially diverse workforce than say 3 years

ago when I came to Somerset. We are definitely heading towards the right direction, though more still needs to be done, in the form of awareness and embracing diversity within our teams.

Mercy Mutanda rightly stated “It`s all about awareness and acceptance”

Eddie Dube, Social Worker (SAWS)

Sexual Orientation

Community Profile
Sexual orientation, along with sex, is not currently measured by the census and there is therefore very little data available regarding the size and profile of the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) population. Some data is however available from national surveys.

One such survey was the Integrated Household Survey conducted by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) in 2014. 1.6% of those surveyed described their sexual identity as gay, lesbian or bisexual. It is however widely accepted that this figure is very likely to be an underestimation due to respondents not feeling able to or choosing not to disclose their sexuality.

SCC Profile (see Appendix 5 for data)
Asking questions about sexual orientation is part of our workforce self-reporting. The current data remains too small to report or draw any meaningful conclusions from.

For the purposes of assessing the impact of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 the Department for Trade and Industry made an assumption that 5% of the adult British population was lesbian, gay, or bisexual. If applied to the Somerset population, this would equate to around 22,000 adults in Somerset and 5% of the Council's workforce.

Training
We do not currently collate this information for training purposes.

Recruitment

- 91% of applicants declared their sexual orientation which is significantly higher than in previous years.
- Due to the small numbers of applicants who identified as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or Other it is not possible to draw any meaningful conclusions from the data.

Gender Reassignment

Community Profile
Whilst it is widely acknowledged that people going through the gender reassignment process is increasing, there is little statistical data to support this.

SCC Profile
Our data follows that of the national picture in that whilst the organisation is aware that we have employees either going through or having gone through the gender reassignment process, this is not evidenced in the data recorded on our employees.

Our employee data continues to be too small to draw any significant conclusion from.

Training
We do not currently ask members of staff specifically if they have been or are going through the gender reassignment process when they book on a training course.

Employee and Manager Support
Support and guidance are actively given to any employee identifying themselves as transgender. This support ranges from practical support such as how and where personal details need to be changed as well as emotional support.

The Council has a dedicated internal page for Gender Reassignment which holds numerous guides and includes both an employee and manager guide to gender reassignment, an FAQ document, sources for further support and advice and more.

Each case and support provided is dealt with individually and with guidance from the employee involved.

The LGBTQ+ network, as stated above, is also available as a means for support for staff.

Case Study:

Introduction
I transitioned in work in August 2019 from male to female after having worked for the council as a male for over 14 years. This is a daunting process in any trans-person's life especially with so many people having known me as male for so long.

Knowing SCC's strong equalities and diversities policies I knew I was working for the right employer when I decided to transition.

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My experience

I have a very good relationship with my line manager, but still felt a little nervous about having an initial conversation. I asked to speak to my manager in private and he made time for me that day, which he always does, he always puts staff first no matter how busy he is. When I told him, I was trans and I wanted to transition he was very caring and professional, I knew I wanted to transition 'at some point' but not sure when. I wanted some information on how it would work, who I needed to tell, what documents I would need, how long would it take for SCC to sort name changes etc. My manager (not surprisingly) didn't know all of the answers but said he'd investigate things for me, he agreed to make some anonymous enquiries as I wasn't ready anyone else to know just yet. As well as the work side of things we also chatted for a while about things and he made sure I knew he was there for a chat if ever I needed. Having suffered from anxiety and depression for many years previously I was already aware of help available via care first, but he did reiterate they were there should I need them.

My manager came back to me very quickly and I was impressed to find that the process of changing my name in work for email, name badge log-ins etc would be very straight forwards and didn't even need any paperwork. The deed poll certificate only being needed to change payroll. It was actually many months (probably almost six actually) between my initial conversation with my manager and me deciding that the time was right for me to transition. My manager was great during this period, he knew what was happening, kept it confidential and ensured I knew I could speak to him if needed. He was happy for me to leave things like that as long as a wanted and go at my own pace.

When I decided the time was right to transition, my manager got in touch with the equalities officer in HR as I wanted a little more advice on how to tell my colleagues. I met with the equalities officer, she gave me some advice on how I change my name legally and we also chatted through some

options and how other members of staff have approached the situation in the past. She was even able to put me in touch with another trans-lady who had transitioned at work a few years before. We met for coffee and a chat, we've since become friends.

When I did finally leave work for the last time in my male persona, I went on a week's annual leave. I emailed my immediate colleagues over the weekend to tell them what was going on, and also asking them to meet the 'new' me for lunch during my weeks leave. This was an idea from the equalities officer and also my new trans-friend. Lots of people came to my lunch, it was great to see so many of my colleagues and I felt very accepted. Because of this my first day back in the office after leave as the 'new' me seemed a lot less daunting.

During my weeks leave my manager sorted changing my name change on email, phone book, SAP and getting me a new ID badge. He also emailed out to some of the other managers in the wider work environment so everyone who needed to know about my name change knew.

My first day in the office presenting as female was fine, with the work my manager had done to sort my name change on the various systems and my immediate colleagues having already met my new persona I just came in and carried on with my work like any other day.

There were some teething issues on the IT side of things, my picture on outlook / office 365 would sometimes show as my old male picture and sometimes as my new female picture. My manager and IT worked together to sort this however it was rather embarrassing. I do understand this isn't something that IT would come across every day and obviously not an issue they could foresee.

My manager and the equalities officer were both in touch with me on my first day in the office to make sure everything was ok, I felt very well supported.

My manager continued to support me (as he always has) over the proceeding weeks and months ensuring I was ok. My colleagues have been nothing but kind and supportive of my transition.

Now just over a year on I think my transition has pretty much dropped off people's radar, they just see me as me. I never feel discriminated against, being trans has no impact upon my working life. I was very impressed with the support and advice I got from work during my transition and I'm very glad to work for SCC.

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Pregnancy and Maternity

SCC Staff Benefits

Wyvern Nurseries Ltd has been commissioned to offer workplace nursery provision to employees. Wyvern Nursery Ltd at Bishops Hull (Taunton), Wellsprings (Taunton), The Hollies Children's Centre (Taunton), Frome Community College, Victoria Park Children's Centre (Bridgwater) and, The Levels Children's Centre (Langport), provide care for children aged between 3 months and school age for all Council employees, subject to availability. Places are available for the over 2's at Littleoaks Nursery.

The salary sacrifice childcare voucher scheme was closed to new entrants in the Autumn of 2018. Details of the Government's replacement scheme, Tax Free Childcare can be found HERE.

The Council has a staff benefits scheme 'My Staff Shop' which provides discounts at many high street names, local offers, reduced price cinema tickets and days out, financial products, access to the Council's cycle to work scheme, other salary sacrifice benefits and other benefits that could save employees money.

Case Study:

I informed my manager that I was pregnant very early due to having to take time off with sickness. On a personal level, I could not have asked for more from my manager during my period of pregnancy. He was very supportive and I felt able to take time off whenever I felt unwell or particularly exhausted. He was also very flexible in allowing me to change my working arrangements so that I was working from home more or working a split day. This meant a great deal, as it meant I could take my pregnancy at a sensible pace rather than trying to take on more than I felt able to. I did however get the impression that he was unclear on what paperwork needed to be filled out, and I think we both found the official guidance from SCC a bit confusing and hard to follow. I know that I was the first member of staff he had line manged to go on maternity leave, and I think it was not a completely clear process for him.

I liaised with HR to change the start date of my maternity leave and that was all dealt with very easily and quickly. My maternity leave began about two weeks before baby arrived. Whilst on leave, I heard very little from work.

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I did join in with a team meeting about a month before I returned, but I did not receive pay for this as a KIT day. I suggested coming in for KIT days but this was not particularly encouraged. In retrospect I would have liked to have received more support to make this happen. I also communicated with my manager about my working pattern, deciding to return at 3.5 days instead of full time, and he was fully supportive in this. At no point did I feel pressured to work more, or less hours than I wanted to. Shortly before I returned, I also communicated with manager about needing to pump milk when I returned. The response I had from him and HR was very supportive, and I felt confident in being able to do this when I returned.

However, on my first day back, finding out exactly where I could pump milk was a bit chaotic and confusing, with a lot of emails having to be exchanged before finding a solution. Whilst this may seem like a small thing, it is actually very stressful as needing to pump milk with no-where to do it is extremely uncomfortable as well as potentially very embarrassing! Again, I think this issue came down to a lack of clear guidance for managers. I did also find it quite uncomfortable having to ask at reception if I could pump milk every time I wanted to use the room.

On an informal level, my return to work was a positive one and again I felt very supported by management . It was made very clear that I should take a gradual approach and not push myself too much. This was a huge relief as at the time I was still extremely sleep deprived. I had also been diagnosed with post-natal depression a few months previously, most likely due to sleep deprivation. I informed both my manager and head of service about this and both were sympathetic and supportive. They were also supportive in allowing me to cut my days down from 3.5 to 3, when it quickly became clear that 3.5 was too much. This flexibility was hugely appreciated.

However, all support was very informal, and I don't think I ever completed any formal 'return to work' meetings. I was also supported by the 'Returning Parents' group, which was a really nice addition.

Although again, this was a grass roots group and informal in its support.

In an ideal world, an additional support would have been to receive maternity pay that carried me up until 12 months. I returned to work when my baby was 8 months old as financially, I had no other choice. In truth though, neither of us were physically ready for this and I spent the first few months back at work only able to partially function as I was still too tired to do my job properly. My colleagues were all as accommodating of this as they could have been, but the best system would be one where parents felt financially able to return at a more sensible time.

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Marriage and Civil Partnership

Somerset County Council has introduced an option for staff to record their marital status. Currently only 10% of employees have declared their marital status and we are therefore unable to publish this data. However, employees continue to be encouraged to review and update their equalities information on an annual basis, so it is hoped that this will result in more meaningful data that we will be able to report on in the future.

Religion and Belief

Community Profile

- In line with the national trend, the proportion of Somerset people saying they were Christian has dropped sharply since 2001, from 76.7% to 64.0%. This is still one of the highest figures in the South West region.
- The proportion claiming no religious affiliation rose from 14.9% to 26.6%. Figures were particularly high in parts of Frome, Taunton and Bridgwater.
- Although overall numbers were relatively small, there were substantial increases in the number of Buddhist, Muslim and Hindu people in Somerset in the last decade.
- Based on 'write-in' responses, there are 1,147 followers of Paganism, more than the combined total of those of Hindu, Sikh and Jewish faith.
- Mendip had the fourth highest proportion of the population affiliated to one of the other religions of any Local Authority in England and Wales. It was number one for Paganism (0.4% of the population) as well as Mixed Religion, Shamanism and the Druid religion.

SCC Profile (see Appendix 6 for full data)

Whilst the number of employees reporting their religion and belief status is increasing, the current data remains small, and no meaningful conclusions can be drawn. Employees continue to be encouraged to review and update their equalities information on an annual basis, so it is hoped that this will result in more meaningful data that we will be able to report on in the future.

Training

We do not currently ask employees specifically about Religion and Belief when they book on a training course.

Recruitment

- Over 50% of applicants declared having no religion or belief.
- Due to the small numbers of applicants who identified as having a religion or belief other than Christian it is not possible to draw any meaningful conclusions from the data.

Chaplaincy Service

The County Hall Chaplain is available to all employees to offer support in dealing with personal and social needs while at work. The service is free, confidential, impartial and non-judgemental.

The Quiet Room

The Quiet Room is a space designated for prayer, relaxation and reflection for all employees. Without advocating or endorsing any particular religion or belief system, the Quiet Room provides a dedicated, comfortable space to enable employees to do this during the workday. The Council encourages managers to support reasonable use of the Quiet Room subject to business needs.

Religious Observance

The Council supports members of staff to observe key religious events. This is done through agreement with their Manager on a case by case basis and dependent on business need.

Rurality

Somerset is a predominantly rural county with around 48% of the population classified as 'rural' and 52% as 'urban'. Rural Somerset has an older population demographic, particularly in respect of people aged 45 and over. Linked to this, a higher proportion of rural residents provide unpaid care to friends or relatives.

The Council also supports a car share scheme. Further information can be found here:

https://www.travelsomerset.co.uk/using-your-car/

http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/profile-of-rural-somerset-from-the-2011-census.html

The Council does not collate specific data regarding employees and rurality.

Carers

The Council does not collate specific data regarding employees with caring responsibilities. The Council does however recognise that it has a number of employees who are also carers and has a number of supportive policies in order to meet the needs of these employees.

The Council also recognises that carers of dependants with a disability are fully covered by the Equality Act 2010 under disability.

In 2019/20 a Carers Employee Support Network was introduced which is hosted in Microsoft Teams. The employee support network is designed to offer peer to peer support in a safe and non-judgemental environment and connect staff with other carers within the Council.

Military Status

Somerset has a sizeable population of military personnel with a number of units based in the County. Further detail can be found here: http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/armed-forces.html

The Council commenced collating data regarding employees who are ex-military in 2019/20.

Somerset County Council coordinates the Somerset Armed Forces Covenant Partnership (SAFCP). The Covenant is a promise from the nation to those who serve. It says we will do all we can to ensure they are treated fairly and not disadvantaged in their day-to-day lives. This includes offering injured servicemen and women and bereaved families extra support where appropriate. Resources are available via the website to raise awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant and how you or your organisation can support it. They provide an understanding of the Armed Forces Covenant fund and more support available to the Armed Forces Community. Further detail about the partnership is available via: www.somerset.gov.uk/forcescovenant

We are in a partnership with Somerset West and Taunton Council, Cheddon Fitzpaine and West Monkton Parish Councils to create The Somerset Wood, to commemorate the county's fallen in World War One.

The Veterans' Gateway service provides a first point of contact for veterans seeking support. It aims to improve access to welfare services and speed up the time it takes for veterans to receive the support they deserve.

In 2019 we launched SCC Armed Forces employee network hosted via Microsoft Teams, which included an informal meet and greet with Cllr Rod Williams the Chair of the Somerset Armed Forces Covenant Partnership.

In 2019/20 we received the Bronze Award from the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (DERS). We also as part of developing evidence for the Silver Award, which we aim to achieve in 2020/21, undertook a survey of staff to identify their connection to the Armed Forces Community . Responses suggest at least 15 veterans working at SCC.

We have now started work on commissioning countywide voluntary and community sector infrastructure support to support groups in Somerset as part of the work we do with the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Strategic Forum.

We have also continued to promote armed forces related events with the Communications Teams.

Our aim for 2020/21 is to look to implement a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Veterans to support them in accessing employment opportunities.

The SCC Reservist policy was also refreshed in 2019/20.

Low Income

Whilst Somerset has a higher employment rate than the UK overall, 75.8% compared to 74.2%, average earnings in Somerset are consistently lower than the overall UK level (median annual earnings of a full time worker in Somerset is £26,532 compared to £28,758 for the UK overall).

The Council's lowest pay rate equates to £9.00 which is 79p above the national living wage.

National requirements for apprentices are that they are paid a minimum of £3.90 per hour.

The Council pays national minimum wage for age which is higher than the national requirement for apprentices. The lowest national minimum wage (under 18 rate) is £4.35 for apprentices at level 2 and 3. Higher level apprentices are paid more.

Redundancies

In 2019/2020 there were a total of 70 redundancies compared to 127 in 2018/19 (see appendix 7 for full data).

Summary of Redundancy Data

- The percentage of men and women that have been made/taken redundancy is broadly in line with the percentage of men and women in the overall workforce profile.
- The data showed no equality concerns.

Monitoring of Internal Procedures

This year we have continued to monitor cases supported by HR on an informal basis (for example where a complaint was made but informal action e.g. mediation or resetting of expectations was taken to resolve the issue) as well as formal ones where warnings may have been an outcome.

Please note all data excludes schools.

Dismissals
There were 4 dismissals during 2019/20. Due to this relatively small number further data will not be published in order to protect the individuals' identity.

Grievance Procedures
There were 4 formal grievances during 2019/20. Due to this small number further data will not be published in order to protect the individuals' identity.

Disciplinary/Performance
The data shows there were 7 formal cases in 2019/20.

All equality data has been thoroughly examined to ensure there was no bias in relation to matters of equality. No bias was found.

Sickness Absence
The data shows there were 4 formal cases on 2019/20.

All equality data has been thoroughly examined to ensure there was no bias in relation to matters of equality. No bias was found.

Internal Procedures Summary

- There was no evidence of disciplinary or dismissal cases being linked to Disability, Race or Age. One case was linked to sexual harassment.
- There were 1 case related to fraud.
- For Disciplinaries/Individual Performance/Fairness and Dignity/Sickness Absence and Dismissal cases there was no other evidence/trends found that highlighted equalities concerns.

Recruitment

We have an electronic recruitment (e-recruitment) system, to enable recruitment processes and the candidate experience to become more streamlined and move closer to a paperless process. As part of this, applications are submitted online, however candidates are still able to request an application and associated documentation in alternative formats, for example accessible PDF, large print, easy read, audio recording or braille. On the SCC Careers site, we have information available on how to obtain these if an individual is unable to access parts of the website. Candidates can submit either an application or CV. This recognises that people have different preferences in how they communicate information, and this offers a choice.

We have also been trialling a "gender bias decoder" to help us identify gendered words in our adverts and it has enabled us to make amendments to remove the bias. We recognise the research that exists that words with a hidden gender bias can affect how potential applicants respond to an advert. Further information can be found here; http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com/

We continue to promote that all applicants with a disability who meet the essential criteria are offered an interview, as well as our candidate packs highlighting that we are a 'Disability Confident Employer' and 'Mindful Employer'.

A new SCC careers website is currently being developed which is due to go live in September 2020. The new site will be built into our system which means it can be run through 'Site Improve' which is a system that checks any web page for readability/accessibility. Currently the council as a whole (which will include the careers site when it goes live) is at 93%, compared to 73% which is the average for other Local Authorities.

The Council has developed Somerset People Attributes which outlines the key competencies and behaviours sought at different levels of the organisation. Somerset People Attributes are used within the selection process and are available to candidates prior to interview, therefore providing candidates a basis for preparation for interview and other selection methods used. We believe this not only makes the selection process fairer to candidates but also supports bringing out the best in a wider and more diverse group of candidates.

We are increasing the use of social media and job boards to promote vacancies to attract a wider and more diverse group of candidates.

Supportive Policies and Practice

The Council continues to carry out Equality Impact Assessments for all new employment policies or where a significant change is being made.

Redeployment

One of the aims of the redeployment policy is to support and identify new roles for employees who are no longer able to carry on in their current role because of disability.

We continue to use a redeployment opportunities site. All employees can see the jobs available, but only those who are eligible can access the roles that are included on it. The changes have meant that employees can instantly see whether a role is something that interests them and that they have the appropriate skills for. This means that there is greater transparency and more opportunity for self-selection. We have successfully redeployed a number of employees with disabilities in the past year under this policy.

The Council has a number of supportive policies, guidance and schemes particularly in relation to the following areas:

Attendance and Leave	Equalities
Family	Health, Safety and Wellbeing
Leavers	Starters and Movers
Volunteering	Ways of Working

Consultation

Trade Union Consultation
The Council works closely with and consults regularly with recognised trade unions on employment policies, practice and equalities.

Staff Survey
The Council carries out three short surveys annually all of which include questions around equality and diversity. All responses are confidential and collated as a whole and by service area. Feedback from any equality-based questions is reviewed by internal equality specialists to identify any trends and inform any necessary actions.

Equality Impact Assessments
Equality Impact Assessments are carried out where there are significant changes made to policy or practice. As part of this process, relevant stakeholders are consulted in order to ensure we meet our obligations in giving due regard to equality matters.

Equality Network
The Council actively consults with employees through various means including through Employee Support Networks (see Employee Networks section).

Social Platforms
The Council uses social platforms including technological platforms, such as Yammer and Staff Roadshows as alternative means to consult with staff and reach a wider audience.

Employee Networks

The Council has set up a number of Employee Equality Support Networks using the Microsoft Teams platform, some of which are new and some which have been relaunched. These include;

There are currently 9 employee support networks available for employees to join;

- Armed Forces
- BME now (BAME, black and minority ethnic)
- Carers
- Disability
- Equality and Diversity Forum
- LGBTQ+
- Men's Health
- Wellbeing
- Women's Health

Should these continue to be successful, the long-term aim will be to open these up to other organisations, initially in the public sector but potentially to local private sectors businesses in the longer term.

In addition to the above Employee Networks, the Council facilitates a Returning Parents Support Group.

Projects and Initiatives

The Council actively embeds equalities within the work we do including all project work. Wherever appropriate the Council ensures that Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are carried out and that these remain working documents for the duration of the project. Below are some examples of projects that the HR and OD teams have been involved in from an equality perspective over the past year.

Working Well Initiative

The Working Well initiative is co-ordinated by a HR Officer, supported by many of the HR&OD team and a dedicated Communications Officer. The purpose of this initiative is to support employees with mental health issues, muscular skeletal issues and promote healthy lifestyles and good working practices.

There is a large network of volunteer Working Well Champions and Mental Wellbeing Ambassadors throughout the council who aid the promotion of key topics both within their teams and with a wider audience.

Along with the Working Well site, Yammer and Our Somerset are used to share messages about physical and mental health.

The Wellbeing Room continues to host regular activities during lunch time including Pilates, Polish classes, 'In Stitches' a crochet and knitting group and the Canticle, SCC in house choir.

This year senior leaders have supported the scheme by sharing case studies of their lived experience of Mental Health illness on the Working Well site and in Our Somerset.

Three employees have received Train the Trainer training for Connect 5, a Public Health course in Mental Health conversations and awareness. This course will be rolled out over the next 12 months, with an aim to also train a further three trainers.

Mental Wellbeing Ambassadors and Working Well Champions undertook various promotional activities during the year, both light-hearted and educational to raise awareness of issues that affect our employees and encourage an open and inclusive culture including Time to Talk Day, Domestic Abuse Awareness Week, and World Mental Health Awareness week.

The Ambassadors continue to offer supportive conversations to individual employees to signpost to further support in the early stages of mental health issues.

Working Well has a presence at new staff inductions and team meetings to ensure that all employees know where to find information and support.

Working Well works with Public Health to promote their healthy lifestyle campaigns throughout the organisation.

Working Well has consulted with a focus group of parents returning to the workplace following parental leave to lead the direction of policy changes and help us move towards our goal of reaching the Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative Gold Award.

The work of the group has been led by staff feedback and survey results and aims to make a better working environment for all.

Recent Successes

Graduates Programme
In 2018, a graduate scheme was reintroduced. The initial intake focussed on hard to fill vacancies in Economic & Community Infrastructure.

Receiving close to 300 applications across a dozen roles, applicants came from across the UK, but predominantly from Somerset and Devon. HR & OD envisage that the Graduate Scheme can provide opportunities to ambitious young people, keeping talent in the County. To provide the broadest accessibility, applications for graduate positions are accepted from those who have completed Higher Apprenticeships, as well as traditional university degrees.

Moving forward, we hope to launch an SCC Organisational Wide Graduate Scheme in September 2021 which will give all service areas the chance to recruit graduates into an organisational cohort who will then move through a 2 year programme within the Council focussing largely on their service areas but also taking part in regular Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions based on the Somerset People Attributes.

Apprenticeship Scheme
Since May 2017 the Council has been required to pay the equivalent of 0.5% of its salary bill into a levy which can only be utilised on apprenticeship qualifications. As of September 2020, the Council including maintained schools are supporting 285 apprentices through new employment and upskilling current staff.

There are no age barriers to completing an apprenticeship and one of the advantages of the levy is that it can be utilised on existing members of staff that 'up skill' via an apprentice qualification. These existing members of staff represent a range of pay grades and include former apprentices moving immediately onto a higher-level course, to staff returning to training after decades on the job.

Case Study:

"As mature students, we have appreciated the opportunity to be able to return to learning and be supported by our employers to upskill and develop our knowledge. We found the course to be family friendly and flexible so that we could maintain a work life balance.

Jemma - "The course empowered me to consolidate my existing knowledge and

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apply new skills giving me the confidence to apply for a new role internally."

Jo - "Completing this course has given me a wide range of new skills and the confidence to apply them in the workplace."

Joint case study – Level 5 Management Apprenticeship completed with Distinctions.

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Pathways to Employment Scheme

The Council continues to run the Pathway to Employment Scheme. Now in its third year, the Council has a specific budget to help support those young people from vulnerable backgrounds; such as those with a disability or those that have left care. To date around 160 young people have benefitted from the scheme in some way. Upon reviewing the scheme last year HR & OD service proposed a change in the way the budget is used to increase the number of young people that can be supported. Instead of solely using the budget to finance the salary of those young people offered fixed term contracts and apprenticeships, some bespoke programmes for those deemed not yet 'work ready' have been included. An example of one of these programmes was a week-long residential activity and employability weeks held at the Pinkery Resource Centre on Exmoor. 5 care leavers took part and completed a number of challenges whilst also learning new skills and meeting employers. All 5 were more 'work ready' upon completion of the week-long trip.

Organisational Development, alongside the Leaving Care teams across Somerset also worked together during 2019, to offer Trade Taster Weeks to care leavers which gave them the opportunity to 'try out' various careers such as hospitality, mechanics, care, hairdressing, IT and construction. Each day the care leavers would take part in a hands-on session with these sectors, gaining valuable skills and knowledge to help them plan for their futures.

Alongside these 3 initiatives, the Pathway to Employment Scheme also supports care leavers to access qualifications and gives match funding for equipment needed in order for them to gain employment.

Work Experience

In July 2019, the Council offered its third work experience week to fifteen, year 10 students at Bishop Foxes Academy in Taunton. This week was designed to give the students a breadth of experience at Somerset County Council and showcase the numerous careers on offer within the organisation. The students spend the week working with different service areas taking part in various hands on activities.

Alongside this specific week, we respond to various adhoc requests from individual Somerset students.

Going forward, we will work to set up service specific work experience weeks in hard to recruit to areas, targeting college students who will have already chosen their career path and will shortly be looking for job opportunities.

Future Initiatives

Internships

An 'internship' is a term used to describe the arrangement by which a person, traditionally a University student or post A-Level individual entering the marketplace, has a meaningful experience of the workplace. Whilst the individual benefits from improving their employability and skills, an employer may gain a new, motivated employee. You can hire someone on an internship for between 2-12 months and the HROD team will be able to provide advice on the process should you be interested.

Industry Placements

Industry Placements are a new type of work experience that is being offered as part of a new qualification for 16 to 19-year olds, known as T-Levels. The new T-Level qualifications are being officially rolled out in September 2020 and Somerset County Council are looking to establish themselves as a provider of the industry placements that students are required to complete as part of the qualification. Industry Placements involve a student partaking in a minimum of 315 hours (45 days) of valuable work experience which is linked to the course that they are studying. SCC has already trialled these placements in our Kilve team and will also be hosting a student in our IT team, ahead of a wider push later this year.

Partnership Working

The Council continues to work in partnership with a number of organisations in relation to matters of equality and diversity and employment. We work with public, private and voluntary sectors to raise expectations and to improve the lives of our staff and our residents. We can secure better outcomes through working together with individuals, communities and partner organisations.

Working with Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Throughout the year the Council has continued to work closely with advisors from Somerset Partnership's Employment Service in order to best support employees experiencing poor mental health.

Partnership working with Organisational Development
Organisational Development (OD) has maintained and extended relationships with a number of external organisations, spanning all sectors. The most common reason for these relationships is in support of the Council's Young People Strategy. The varying initiatives within the strategy mean OD have key contacts with Somerset's college and training providers in relation to our apprenticeship/training provision, with large contractors, with whom we run employability and work experience programme for our Care Leavers within the Pathway to Employment Scheme. In addition, we work with Somerset's District Councils with whom we run a rotational Graduate scheme and we are continuing to explore joint employment initiatives to benefit young citizens of Somerset.

The Council's substantive apprentice lead is currently seconded into a role within the Somerset Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) which means we now have more connections with the health sector, such as Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and the Somerset Hospitals.

OD and the Council's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) team have procured Mencap to support up to 15 apprenticeship roles across Somerset (with at least 6 at SCC) from April 2021 for young people with SEND.

Training

The Learning Centre

The Learning Centre is SCC's e-learning platform introduced into the Council in 2014. This learning platform has allowed us to be more flexible in the training we offer and enables broader access than when we only hosted one day face to face course. In 19/20 for example, we had over 3,400 equality and diversity related course completions registered on the Learning Centre. The site currently hosts a number of courses covering different areas of the Equalities Act 2010 which are accessible to all SCC employees. We continue to increase the range of subject areas in 19/20, for example, a course on Religion and Belief, Disability Awareness, and recently, a course about Black Lives Matter and Racism. The Council's new starter induction includes a mandatory module on Equalities and Diversity, hosted on the Learning Centre, and in addition many service areas, such as Public Health Nursing and the Family Intervention Service, have been including Equality and Diversity training as part of a programme of required learning for all staff within the service. The Council still offers face to face courses and briefings where appropriate. Until the Covid-19 lockdown prevented us from delivering face to face training, we had been rolling out a programme of compulsory face to face training on Equalities and Diversity. We are now looking at how we can move this training online, with some more specific training around each of the protected characteristics.

Equality and Diversity Training

As part of the Council's statutory duty to make sure all our employees understand their requirements under the Equality Act 2010 we provide mandatory face to face training. We deliver the training at venues throughout the County to ensure all employees are able to attend. The training provides employees with a basic understanding of equality legislation and what it could mean in their job. The sessions are interactive and provide opportunities to ask questions and understand the legislation. During 2019/2020 we had 485 people attend one of these sessions.

Appendix 1 - Sex Data

Gender	Number of Employees March 2020
Female	72.5%
Male	27.5%

Sex Data for training

Gender	Number of Employees Trained 2020
Female	75.05%
Male	24.95%

Recruitment Data

2019/20 Application by Sex	Number of Applicants	% Shortlisted	% Appointed from shortlisted	% Appointed from applicants
Female	3,252	20.3%	60.5%	12.3%
Male	1,378	21.7%	60.1%	12.8%
In some other way	10	60%	100%	60%
Prefer not to say	53	15.1%	57.1%	15.1%
Not stated	191	79.6%	63.2%	50.3%
Total	4,884	22.3%	62.8%	14%

Appendix 2 - Age Data

(please note figures have been rounded to one decimal place)

Age	Number of Employees March 2020 %
16-25	6.2%
26-35	18.2%
36-45	22.4%
46-55	29%
56-65	21.3%
66+	2.9%

Age	Number of Employees March 2019 %
16-25	5.9%
26-35	19.2%
36-45	22.8%
46-55	29.6%
56-65	20.4%
66+	2.2%

Training

Age	Number of Employees Trained 2020 %
16-25	4.8%
26-35	16.6%
36-45	23.8%
46-55	27.6%
56-65	23.4%
66+	3.8%

Recruitment Data

2019/20 Application by Age	Number of Applicants	% Shortlisted	% Appointed from shortlisted	% Appointed from applicants
16-24	732	14.6%	57%	8.3%
25-35	1072	17.3%	47.6%	8.3%
36-45	738	19.2%	51.4%	10.3%
46-55	758	15.7%	52.9%	8.3%
56-65	268	19.7%	64.2%	12.7%
Over 65	15	40%	66.7%	26.7%
Not stated	1301	36.8%	74.9%	27.6%
Grand Total	4884	22.3%	62.8%	14%

Appendix 3 - Disability Data

Disability	Number of Employees March 2020%
No	86.2%
Not Known	2.9%
Prefer not to say	4.1%
Yes	6.8%

Training Data

Disability	Number of Employees March 2020%
Yes	6.8%
No	70.2%
Not assigned	20.2%
Prefer Not to Say	2.8%

Recruitment Data

2019/20 Application by Disability	Number of Applicants	% Shortlisted	% Appointed from shortlisted	% Appointed from applicants
Yes	328	15.2%	54%	8.2%
No	4187	21.1%	62%	13.1%
Not stated	191	61.8%	63%	50.2%
Prefer not to say	162	14.2%	56.5%	50.3%
Grand Total	4884	22.3%	62.8%	14%

Appendix 4 - Race Data

Ethnic Groups	Number of employees March 2020 %	Number of Employees March 2019 %
White	85.9%	87.3%
Asian	0.67%	0.62%
Black	0.9%	0.91%
Mixed	0.93%	0.91%
Other	0.03%	0%
White other	6.21%	4.53%
Not known	0.52%	0.53%
Prefer not to say	4.85%	5.2%

Training Data

Ethnicity	2020
White	85.81%
Asian	0.68%
Black	0.68%
Mixed	0.92%
White Other	6.32%
Prefer not to say	4.48%
Not known	0.88%

Recruitment Data

2019/20 Application by Race	Number of Applicants	% Shortlisted	% Appointed from shortlisted	% Appointed from applicants
White British	3,986	22%	62.4%	12.8%
Asian	100	11%	54.5%	6%
Black	143	18.2%	23%	4.2%
Mixed	67	7.5%	40%	3%
White other	322	11.2%	47.2%	5.7%
Other	26	19.2%	40%	7.7%
Prefer not to say	49	20.4%	70%	14.3%
Not stated	191	61.8%	81.4%	81.4%
Total	4,884	22.3%	62.8%	14%

Appendix 5 - Sexual Orientation Data

Sexual Orientation	Number of Employees March 2020 %
Bisexual	1%
Gay or Lesbian	1.7%
Heterosexual	70.6%
Not Known	17.1%
Prefer Not to Say	9.6%

Recruitment Data

Application by Sexual Orientation 2019/2020	Number of Applicants	% Shortlisted	% Appointed from Shortlisted	% Appointed from applicants
Bisexual	114	12.5%	50%	6.3%
Gay	42	26.2%	36.4%	9.5%
Lesbian	63	20.6%	53.8%	11.1%
Heterosexual	4202	21%	60.7%	12.8%
Other	30	23.3%	85.7%	20%
Prefer not to say	247	18.2%	57.8%	10.5%
Not stated	191	61.8%	81.4%	50.3%
Grand Total	4,884	22.3%	62.8%	14%

Appendix 6 - Religion and Belief Data

Religion	No. of Employees March 2020 %
Buddhist	0.4%
Christian	35.6%
Hindu	0.03%
Jewish	0.15%
Muslim	0.23%
None	34.9%
Not Known	17.4%
Other	2.3%
Prefer not to say	8.9%
Shi'a Muslim	0.03%
Sikh	0.06%

Training
Religion and Belief

Religion	Number of Employees Trained 2020 %
Buddhist	0.48%
Christian	34.39%
Hindu	0%
Jewish	0.04%
Muslim	0.24%
None	32.39%
Not Known	8.76%
Other	2.56%
Prefer not to say	21.11%
Shi'a Muslim	0.04%
Sikh	0%

Religion and Belief Recruitment Data

Religion/Belief	% of applicants 2019/20
Buddhist	0.45%
Christian	37.2%
Hindu	0.43%
Jewish	0.06%
Muslim	0.9%
Sikh	0.12%
Any Other Religion	1.23%
Prefer not to say	4.24%
No Religion	51.5%
Not stated	3.91%

Appendix 7 - Redundancy Data

In 2019/2020 there were a total of 70 redundancies

	Profile of redundancies made (compulsory & voluntary)		
Gender	**Female**	**Male**	**Grand Total**
2019/20	**80%**	**20%**	**100.00%**

Ethnic Group	White	Prefer not to say	White Other	Asian	Mixed	Black	Grand Total
2019/20	**82.9%**	**14.2%**	**2.9%**	**0%**	**0%**	**0%**	**100.00%**

Disability	No	Prefer not to say	Yes	Not Known	Grand Total
2019/20	**75.7%**	**5.7%**	**2.9%**	**15.7%**	**100.00%**

Age	16-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	65+	Grand Total
2019/20	**4.3%**	**8.6%**	**25.7%**	**44.3%**	**17.1%**	**100.00%**