




# Somerset Equality Impact Assessment

Before completing this EIA, please ensure you have read the EIA guidance notes – available from your Equality Officer or [www.somerset.gov.uk/impactassessment](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/impactassessment)

<b>Organisation prepared for (mark as appropriate)</b>						
<b>Version</b>	<b>V1.0</b>		<b>Date Completed</b>	<b>29/01/2023</b>		
<b>Description of what is being impact assessed</b>						
<p>Within the Council Transformation portfolio, the Workforce Reduction programme is designed as an enabler for wider Council Transformation and innovation. Detailed in the management case is a proposed Voluntary Redundancy (VR) scheme to commence in February 2024 to deliver c £40m of re-occurring pay-bill cost reductions in 2025/26, through a reduction of between 20-26% of the current workforce. The expected outcomes of the VR programme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Smaller, leaner organisation (reduction in establishment, increased productivity)</li> <li>▪ Contribution to the financial stability of the Council</li> <li>▪ A new organisational design and structure that is:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ flexible and agile</li> <li>○ smaller and leaner</li> <li>○ data driven and digitally enabled</li> <li>○ sustainable and resilient</li> <li>○ local, connected and inclusive</li> <li>○ values led</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>During the consultation period the EIA will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes. A further review and update will take place once the application window has closed.</p>						

This EIA covers the VR Programme only. Going forward, other parts of the Programme will require individual EIAs to make sure the impact is monitored and considered at all steps of the Programme. There will also be a cumulative EIA for the Programme once all individual EIAs are completed. This will be carried out, reviewed and updated throughout the duration of the Programme.

## Evidence

**What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups?** Sources such as the [Office of National Statistics](#), [Somerset Intelligence Partnership](#), [Somerset's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis \(JSNA\)](#), Staff and/ or [area profiles](#), should be detailed here

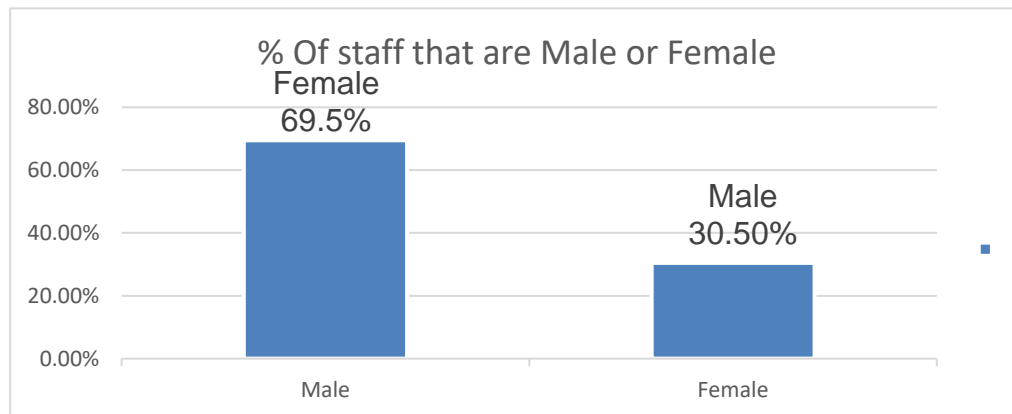
The VR Programme covers all directorates and services across Somerset Council. Therefore, it is likely that all staff employed by the Council will be impacted. There are some roles that will be exempt from the voluntary redundancy process due to the critical nature of the role and the ability to recruit and retain staff in these roles. These are set out in appendix 1 to this EIA.

## Workforce data January 2024.

**Total headcount: 5168**

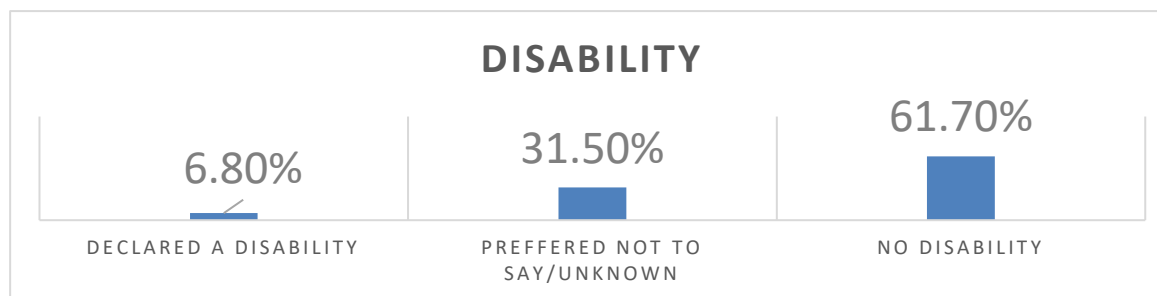
### Sex

<b>Female</b>	69.5%
<b>Male</b>	30.5%



### Disability

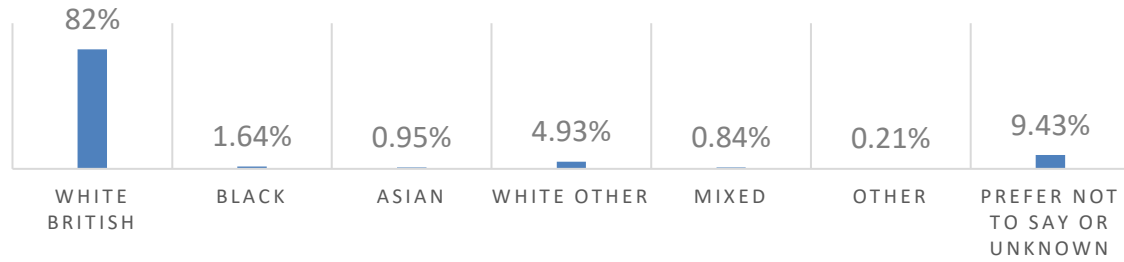
<b>Declared disability</b>	6.8%
<b>Preferred not to say/unknown</b>	31.5%
<b>No Disability</b>	61.7%



### Ethnicity

<b>White British</b>	82%
<b>Black</b>	1.64%
<b>Asian</b>	0.95%
<b>White Other</b>	4.93%
<b>Mixed</b>	0.84%
<b>Other</b>	0.21%
<b>Prefer not to say or unknown</b>	9.43%

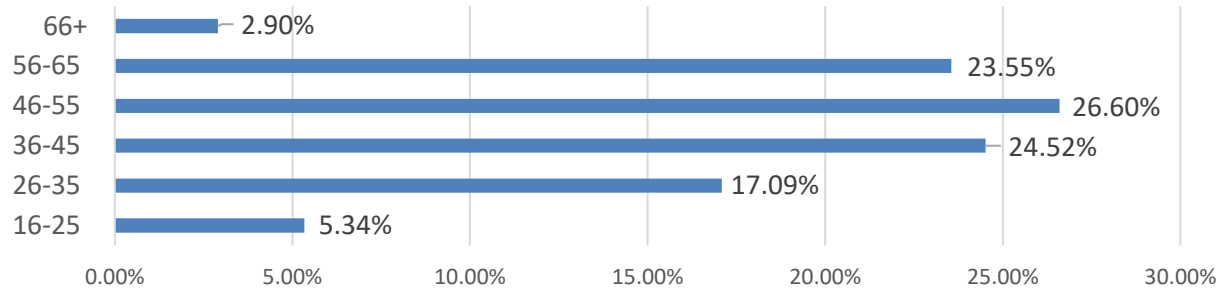
## ETHNICITY



## Age

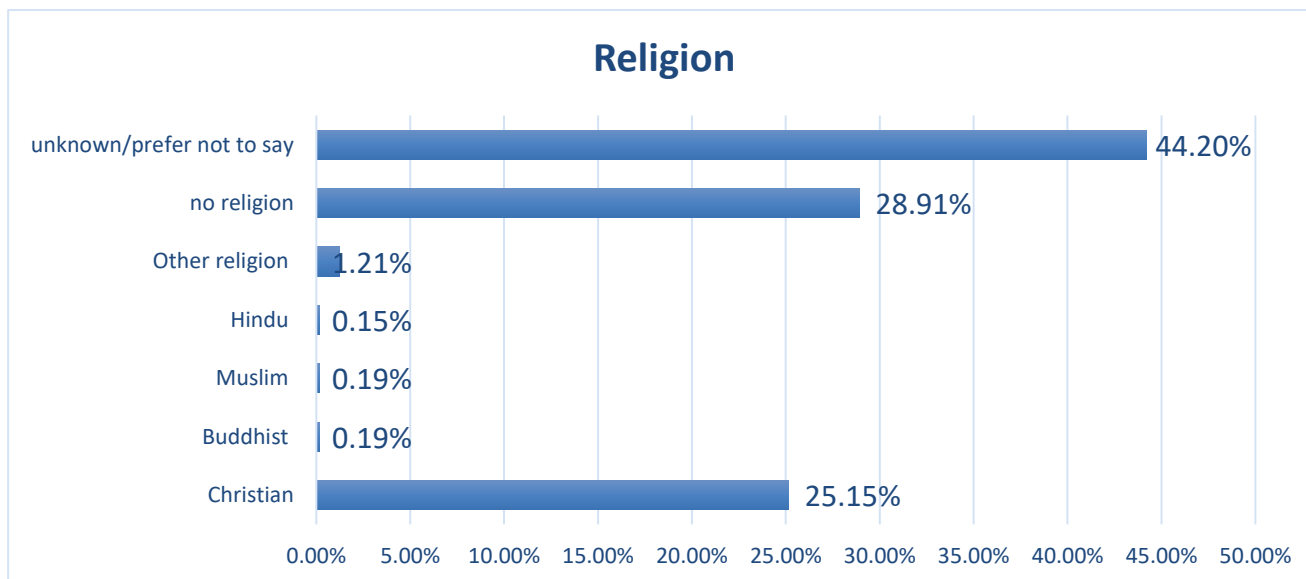
16-25	5.34%
26-35	17.09%
36-45	24.52%
46-55	26.60%
56-65	23.55%
66+	2.90%

## Age



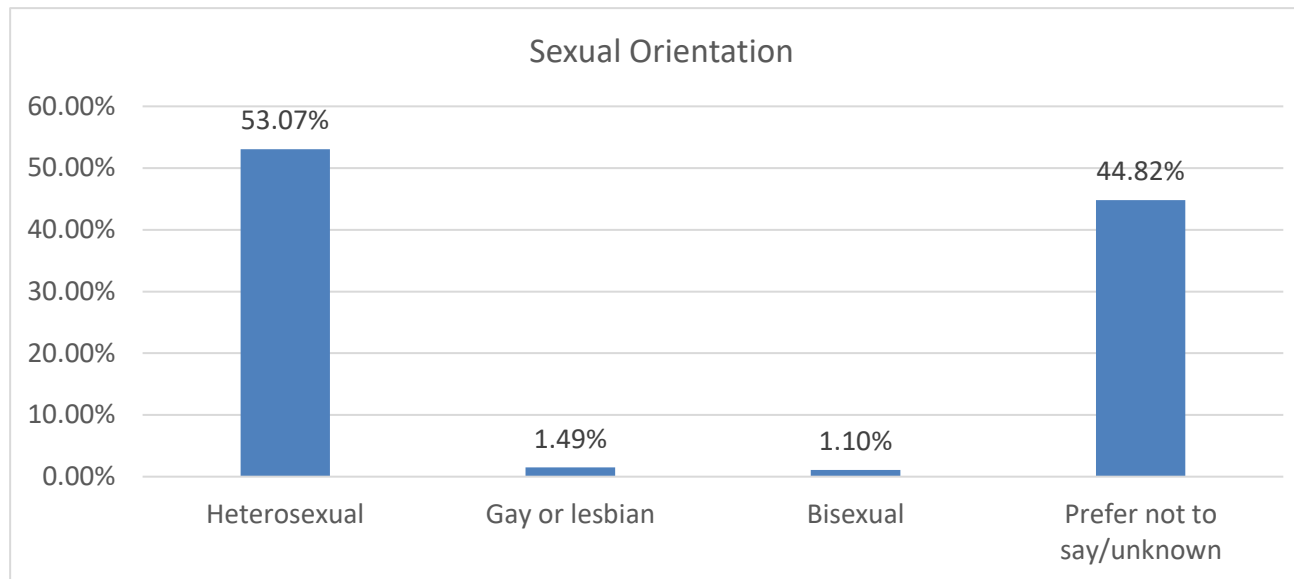
## Religion

<b>Christian</b>	25.15%
<b>Buddhist</b>	0.19%
<b>Muslim</b>	0.19%
<b>Hindu</b>	0.15%
<b>Other religion</b>	1.21%
<b>no religion</b>	28.91%
<b>unknown/prefer not to say</b>	44.20%



### Sexual Orientation

<b>Heterosexual</b>	53.07%
<b>Gay or lesbian</b>	1.49%
<b>Bisexual</b>	1.10%
<b>Prefer not to say/unknown</b>	44.82%



**Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups and what have they told you?** If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?

A formal 45-day collective consultation period on redundancies and as required under the Trade Union & Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (s188) is planned as part of the VR Programme. This includes consultation with staff and Trade Union representatives. Any impacts on protected characteristics will be considered as part of the consultation along with mitigations.

### Analysis of impact on protected groups

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. Consider how this policy/service will achieve these aims. In the table below, using the evidence outlined above and your own understanding, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Based on this information, make an assessment of the likely outcome, before you have implemented any mitigation.

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
<b>Age</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some colleagues who are younger may be less likely to volunteer for redundancy.</li> <li>Older employees are likely to be eligible for a higher redundancy payment due to length of service and salary and will therefore cost more to release.</li> <li>Any employee who is a member of the LGPS and is made redundant over the age of 55 is entitled to immediate access to their pension for which there is a cost to the employer. These costs can be significant. There could be a perception that younger employees are at greater risk of redundancy to avoid these costs.</li> </ul>	☒	☐	☐
<b>Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some employees with disabilities may be reluctant to apply for VR due to increased anxiety about seeking work elsewhere.</li> <li>If there is a lack of clear process and timeline neurodivergent employees may find it challenging to engage with &amp; understand. A lack of clarity or non-adherence to timescales is likely to increase anxiety levels in this group of employees.</li> <li>Employees with long-term health conditions/disabilities may view VR as an opportunity if considering their future.</li> </ul>	☒	☐	☐

<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees who are transitioning may prioritise working for a known supportive employer and therefore feel that VR is not an option for them.</li> </ul>	☒	☐	☐
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marriage and civil partnership has been fully considered and no impact identified.</li> </ul>	☐	☒	☐
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colleagues on maternity leave or long-term pregnancy-related absence may not receive timely communications and information to allow them to apply and/or have the full amount of time to consider their options.</li> </ul>	☒	☐	☐
<b>Race and ethnicity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some colleagues may not have English as a first language and therefore not understand or be able to access the VR scheme.</li> </ul>	☒	☐	☐
<b>Religion or belief</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the window to submit expressions of interest/applications for VR includes a significant period of religious observance groups that observe this period may be at a disadvantage as will have less time to consider their options.</li> </ul>	☒	☐	☐
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Term-time only roles are more often held by women. If the window to submit expressions of interest/applications for VR includes school holidays, these employees may be at a disadvantage as will have less time to consider their options.</li> </ul>	☒	☐	☐
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The protected characteristic of sexual orientation has been considered and no specific impact identified.</li> </ul>	☐	☒	☐



<b>Armed Forces (including serving personnel, families and veterans)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We recognise we have staff who are reservists and who may be or currently are called up for duty. These staff are less/unlikely to be able to access the VR process in a timely manner.</li> </ul>	□	⊗	□
<b>Other, e.g. carers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some employees who are in low-income households may see VR as more attractive.</li> </ul>	□	⊗	□

**Negative outcomes action plan**

Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

<b>Action taken/to be taken</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>How will it be monitored?</b>	<b>Action complete</b>
Ensure clear and timely communications of any VR process to all staff who are not currently in the workplace. This should include those on maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave, long-term sickness, reservist duties and compassionate leave.	9th Feb '24	Lauren Fellingham /Sarah Welland	Weekly meetings	□
Promote existing Financial Wellbeing support to help ensure employees make informed decisions.	9th Feb '24	Sari Brice/Sarah Welland	Weekly meetings	□
Give consideration to the timing of any programme launch and ensure window of	9th Feb '24	Design Authority	Weekly meetings	□

opportunity enables all employees to apply if they wish.				
Ensure employees who do not have English as a first language both, understand and are able to access support to apply.	9th Feb '24	Sari Brice/Sarah Welland	Weekly meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
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	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>

**If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.**

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<b>Completed by:</b>	<b>Sari Brice/Michelle Anderson</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>28/01/24</b>
<b>Signed off by:</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
<b>Equality Lead sign off name:</b>	<b>Michelle Anderson</b>
<b>Equality Lead sign off date:</b>	<b>29/01/24</b>

<b>To be reviewed by:</b> (officer name)	
<b>Next Review date:</b>	<b>28/03/2024</b>