



## Harborough District Council Workforce Comparison Report 2021

### Results of Employee Questionnaire

Every year we ask our staff to complete a voluntary Equality Monitoring Questionnaire. This, along with age related information held centrally, helps us to assess how representative our workforce is in comparison to the community we serve. We publish this data annually on our website to help demonstrate compliance with our Public Sector Equality Duty. In 2020, due to the exceptional circumstances of the pandemic, we had to do things slightly differently. We decided to amalgamate our equality monitoring survey with a survey aimed at helping us to understand the specific needs of our workforce with regards to communication and the opportunities and challenges increased home working has brought. A total of 140 Harborough District Council employees voluntarily completed the 2020 questionnaire, which represents almost 65% of our workforce. This is a lower response rate than we have achieved in previous years which, whilst disappointing, is understandable with the current climate. We are grateful to those employees who were able to complete the survey, the results of which will be helping to inform our equality actions moving forward.

**Age** - In 2011, 9% of the Harborough District 18-74 year old population were aged between 18 and 24 (approximately a third of these, 3%, were in full time education). Our human resources systems show that 6% of our employees are aged under 24. In the 25-44 age group, our employee figure of 40% is higher than the District population figure of 34%. This is replicated in the 45-59 age group with 45% of employees compared to 32% of the local population. There has been a slight increase in our employees aged 60 or over, with 10% of employees within this age grouping. The District population in 2011 was 24%, however, population figures obviously include those of pension age, who have already retired, so cannot be directly compared.

**Ethnic group** - Of those who declared their ethnic group 97% of our employees said that they are white, compared to the District population in 2011 of 95%. 2011 Census figures showed 5% of Harborough District residents described themselves as Asian, Black, Mixed or Other ethnic group which is higher than the 3% of Harborough District Council respondents who described themselves as belonging to one of these ethnic groups. This is a decrease in last year's figure of 6.6%.

**Gender** – Results from our questionnaire indicate that 72% of our staff are female and 27% male, compared to 49.6% and 50.4% of the Harborough District population (Census 2011 statistics). The workforce figure is comparable to other Local Authorities and public sector organisations and is similar to last year. This disparity may be due to the number of part time positions at the council. Office of National Statistics UK Labour Force data for October to December 2018 show that nationally 41% of women in employment worked part time compared to 13% of men. Our human resources department monitor all vacancies and team reviews to ensure that opportunities for full time and part time positions are allocated appropriately and this policy will continue.

**Gender Reassignment** – 96% of respondents to this year’s employee questionnaire indicated that their gender is the same as that assigned at birth. A number of staff chose not to answer this question. There are no accurate population figures, but a GIRES (Gender Identity Research and Education Society) report in 2011 suggests that 1% of the population experience some degree of gender variance and that about 0.20% may undergo transition.

**Health problem or disability** - Of employees who volunteered this information, 14% stated that they have a health problem or disability which limits their day-to-day activities and has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months, compared to 20% of the local population in the 2011 Census. However, the local population figures include those who are economically inactive due to their disability and therefore would not form part of the labour market.

**Religion or Belief** – 2011 Census figures show that 66% of the District population are Christian, in this year’s questionnaire 48% of employees declared this as their religion. 45% of our employees stated that they have no religion, which is much higher than the 2011 Census population figure of 25%. The workforce percentage for other religions (which includes Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and ‘other’ added together) was 7% which is over twice as high as the district population figure of 3% in 2011.

**Sexual orientation** - In this year’s survey, 87% of respondents described themselves as heterosexual/straight, 5% as lesbian, gay, bisexual or ‘other’ and 8% did not wish to declare their sexual orientation. Modest government estimates suggest that at least 6% of the population are lesbian, gay or bisexual.

#### **Recruitment Equality Statistics 2019/20**

During the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, 232 people applied for jobs with Harborough District Council. Of these, 74 people were shortlisted and 24 offered posts. From information completed at the time of recruitment:

**Gender** – 79% of new starters were female and 21% male. 100% stated that the gender they identify with is the same as that assigned at birth.

**Age** – No new starters were aged 18-24years, 8% were aged 25-29years, 58% aged 30-44years, 29% aged 45-59years, and 4% were aged 60 or over.

**Ethnic origin** – 92% of new starters were White, 8% Asian, Black, Mixed or Other ethnic group.

**Disability** – 79% of new starters declared that they did not have a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months and 4% said that they did. 17% did not wish to declare.

**Religion or Belief** – 42% of new starters were Christian, 8% were Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh or ‘other’, 42% had no religion and 8% did not declare.

**Sexual Orientation** – 96% of new starters declared that they were heterosexual/straight and 4% Lesbian, Gay or Bi-sexual.

#### **Outcome of actions from Workforce Comparison 2019**

**Objective 1.** Undertake further analysis in relation to gender balance of employees

**Measure of success:** Differential between the number of female and male employees is reduced

**Outcome: Not Achieved.** Despite the work which has been completed with regards to vacancies, the figure for male employees this year is 3% lower than last year

**Objective 2.** Continue to monitor quarterly equality recruitment data

**Measure of success:** Characteristics of new employees appointed by the council are representative of the characteristics of applicants who apply

**Outcome: Achieved.**

### Conclusions

Despite the work being undertaken throughout the Council it appears, from this year's results, that we remain under representative of the District with regards to male employees. There has also been a reduction in employees from ethnic groups other than white and in staff who declared that their day-to-day activities are limited because of a health problem or disability. We would like to understand if this noticeable reduction is linked to our lower response rate this year or because of other more concerning factors. Encouragingly, data from recruitment equality monitoring is showing that people who were appointed to posts within the Council over the last year were again representative of the population. Analysis of our next employee survey will be very important. It will help to inform us if the 2020 response was an anomaly, due perhaps to circumstances around the pandemic, or an indication that we are not where we want to be with regards to inclusion within our workforce. Whilst we prepare for the next survey, we will continue to work on staff engagement with the aim of ensuring that everyone feels valued and that their working environment is a safe and inclusive space for them.

### Recommendations for further actions from Workforce Comparison Report 2021

**Objective 1:** Further analysis of the employee survey to be completed and cross referenced with data from leaver surveys

**Led by:** R Jenner, Human Resources Manager

**By when:** December 2021

**Measure of success:** Feedback from leavers surveys

**Support required:** Assistance from equality and diversity officer and service managers to encourage staff to complete leaver's surveys and to identify any potential concerns

**Objective 2:** Continue to monitor quarterly equality recruitment data

**Led by:** J Clarke, Equality and Diversity Officer

**By when:** December 2021

**Measure of success:** Characteristics of new employees appointed by the council are representative of the characteristics of applicants who apply

**Support required:** Assistance from the human resources team to provide data and service managers to identify potential issues

These further actions will form part of our Equality Plan 2021/24 and will be led by our Equality and Diversity Officer and our Human Resources Department. Progress will be monitored on a yearly basis and published as part of subsequent years' workforce comparison reports.

Report Author: Julie Clarke, Equality and Diversity Officer, Harborough District Council  
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