WILTSHIRE COUNCIL   **AGENDA ITEM NO.**

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE
7th March 2024

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Inclusion and Diversity Workforce Monitoring Report

Purpose of Report

1. To present the updated annual inclusion and diversity employment monitoring report. The council is required to produce this information annually as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Background

2. In March 2023 Wiltshire Council published its inclusion and diversity employment monitoring report for the year 2021/2022 on the Wiltshire Council website.

3. The council is required to publish the updated inclusion and diversity employment monitoring report for 2022/2023 by 31st March 2024. The headcount figures in this report have been based on workforce data as of 1st October 2023 or, where monitoring information is reviewed over a year, the reference period used is 12 months up to 1st October 2023 (for recruitment, leavers etc). There is no set reference date for the collection of workforce data as there is for the gender pay gap.

4. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) undertook a new national census in 2021 and workforce data on this report has been compared against the census data for Wiltshire which was available at the time when this report was produced. The ONS data summaries that have been used for comparison in the report - except for gender identity, marital status, and sexual orientation - include the whole of the Wiltshire population, and not just the working age population. Further analysis will be undertaken in the future once age-specific datasets are released by the ONS.

5. The report contains non-school council workforce data, and then a breakdown of this information by each of the protected characteristics where information is available.

6. The headcount figures in this report are collected from the equality monitoring exercises which have been carried out annually over the last few years (detailed below in para. 12). Where figures are low for groups, the data has not been included where this might lead to individual staff being able to be identified and where possible, has been aggregated to protect individual confidentiality.

7. Information on gender pay gap in line with the requirements of the PSED is contained in a separate gender pay gap report which is also being presented to this committee.

8. Following on from last year's report, the council has produced figures for the ethnicity and disability pay gap and these are included in this report.

9. As part of our PSED, the council is required to publish equality objectives. The current Equality Objectives 2023-2026 are:
    - Deliver on the vision of the Inclusive Workforce Strategy

- Achieve an excellent standard of understanding and working with our communities, measured against the Equality Framework for local government.

Full details of the council's equality objectives and how these link to the Wiltshire Council business plan are set out on the Wiltshire Council website.

10. As part of our PSED the council is required to publish data on service users. This information will continue to be collected and published by the executive office support team. These are available on the Wiltshire Council website.

Data Monitoring

11. The council collects equalities monitoring and reports on all the protected characteristics in addition to caring responsibilities.

12. The monitoring information set out in this report has been collected from the council's management information system (SAP), our recruitment system (Talentlink), and the completion of an equality monitoring questionnaire which is sent out to staff annually. The council also collects additional information through the employee experience survey.

13. The equalities monitoring questionnaire was supported with clear information about why we were collecting the information and how it would be used. Staff are encouraged to complete as much of the questionnaire as possible but could opt to state 'prefer not to say' if they did not feel comfortable sharing their information.

14. We will continue to undertake equalities monitoring exercises periodically, and our work on building an inclusive culture where staff and applicants feel confident to share their equalities data, thereby improving our data and insight in these areas.

15. The report shows a slight decrease in the number of under 25s working for the council, who make up 7.0% of the workforce compared to 7.2% in 2022. The percentage of under 25s appointed has decreased compared to last year from 18.4% to 6.5% this year. We will continue to look at improving this representation through targeted social media campaigns, careers fairs, and increased level of apprenticeship provision and work experience of under 25s.

16. We are a Cornerstone employer, enabling us to work with schools and colleges to improve careers education, making sure key skills for working with us are understood by teachers and education leaders, inspiring students, and giving us a direct route to employ young people living locally. We will support services where representation of young people, ethnic minorities and females is low to engage with schools and deliver talks and assemblies on their careers.

17. Overall, the council's staff turnover has decreased this year from 15.1% to 12.2% and this is reflective of the stabilisation of the job market compared to recent years increasing demand for talent. The highest turnover rate of 22.0% is in the over 65 age group with the majority leaving for retirement followed by the under 25 age group with a turnover rate of 21.4%. The under 25 turnover percentage is significantly higher than the council average turnover and has remained high in the last few years (24.75% in 2021, 24.6% in 2022, 25.5% in 2023 and 21.4% this year). Work is underway to see how this can be reduced.

18. The percentage of males working part-time has increased with 28.7% of men now working part time, compared with 25.2% previously.

19. The percentage of females in the top salary band (N/O/Hay) has very slightly decreased compared to last year (from 6.4% in 2022 to 6.3% in 2023). Further information about remuneration for females in the top salary band is set out in the gender pay gap report which is presented as a separate report for this committee.

20. We continue with the successful reverse mentoring programme which includes pairing senior male leaders with more junior female staff to support our male leaders to understand the experiences and challenges of female staff. The programme has been extended to include middle managers, heads of service and staff in key influential positions such as HR Business Partners.

21. Overall, 95.8% of staff have disclosed their ethnicity which is a very slight improvement on the figures from last year where 95.7% of staff disclosed their ethnicity. The percentage of staff with a BME background has increased from 3.7% in 2022 to 4.5% in 2023, with the proportion of people appointed from a BME background increasing to 19.5% compared to 13.3% last year. The significant increase in applicants from a BME background is partly a result of recruitment campaigns which included overseas applicants, however any further action required will be considered in more detail.

22. Inclusion is at the heart of our vision 'to build stronger communities' and is one of the elements of 'Our Identity'. The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) steering group is made up of an EDI representative from each directorate at Head of Service level and provides strategic oversight for programmes of work relating to EDI.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

23. None.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

24. As set out in the report.

Risk Assessment

25. This is a statutory requirement to comply with the PSED.

Options Considered

26. None.

Recommendation

27. That Staffing Policy Committee note the contents of this report and that this information will be fed into the action plan linked to the new Inclusion strategy

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Appendix 1 Inclusion and diversity workforce monitoring report