

Report Title	Equalities Workforce Report and HR and Organisational Development Strategy 2020-2023		
Committee	Strategy and Resources Committee		
Committee Date	12 October 2020		
Committee Chair: Lead Member:	Councillor Ruth Dombey Councillor Sunita Gordon, Lead Member for Resources		
Report From	Richard Simpson, Strategic Director of Resources		
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Wards Affected	Corporate Business		
Ambitious for Sutton priorities	Smarter ways of working		
Open/Exempt	Open		
Signed		Date	29/09/20

1. Summary

- 1.1. Sutton works towards greater equality in the workforce profile year on year and is committed to developing a workforce profile that broadly reflects the community it serves. This report provides an overview of the workforce which, together with other learnings from staff, provides greater direction on where the council can influence change for the better. This is the most detailed equalities workforce report provided to date and provides data as at 31 March 2020. The information below demonstrates improvements in many areas across the council and reassures that many of the Diversity & Inclusion initiatives put in place are seeing positive results. This report highlights a need for some key focus areas which are already reflected and incorporated in the Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR & OD) strategy (Appendix B).

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1. To note the overview and analysis provided of key HR data workforce and the overall direction of travel.

- 2.2. To agree the Human Resource and Organisational Development Strategy for Sutton Council 2020-23 to support an inclusive and engaged workforce to deliver the Ambitious for Sutton programme.

3. Background

- 3.1. The information in this report is usually combined with the Performance and Finance reports to the Strategy and Resources Committee. The COVID-19 global pandemic has disrupted the usual reporting cycle, and given the fact that the data covers the 2019/20 financial year, and that this information is a key evidence base for the focus of activity for the Human Resources and Organisational Development Strategy, the equalities workforce report has been disaggregated this year and the data is presented separately in this report in Appendix A.
- 3.2. This report highlights key areas which are reflected and incorporated in the Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR & OD) strategy (Appendix B). This strategy has been produced in response to the need to focus the council's approach to supporting its workforce to deliver the Ambitious for Sutton programme at the same time as the workforce emerges from the emergency response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. The strategy will be delivered through a programme of work to support Sutton's staff, while many of them work remotely, understanding the need for them to remain connected to their teams and to Sutton as a borough. This is underpinned by a focus on diversity, inclusion and wellbeing.

4. Sutton's workforce profile

- 4.1. Sutton has 1210 staff who are employed by the council on a permanent or fixed term basis. Of this staffing group, 184 deliver services jointly to Sutton and Kingston (73 in Customer Contact and 111 in Finance). In addition, there are 300 staff who are employed by Kingston in shared services which deliver services for Sutton (70 in Human Resources and Organisational Development; 95 in Digital and IT and 135 in Highways, Transport and Regulatory Services).

Gender Balance

- 4.2. The number of women in the council continues to rise, and was 73.5% as of 31 March 2020, which is a 5% increase from last year, and 22% above the proportion of the women in the borough. This varies across departments, Chief Executive's and People Services employ above council average female staff, while 41% of the EH&R workforce are women. 51% of those earning over £50,000. Although only 26% of the EH&R workforce earning over £50,000 are women, EH&R has seen the largest improvement from last year's figures with an increase of 15% women earning over £50,000.
- 4.3. The council has made positive steps during 2019 to decrease the gender pay gap and as of March 2019, the Council's mean pay gap is 9.3% (in favour of men). The **Gender Pay Gap** has decreased since 31 March 2018, when it was 14.6% and encouragingly the percentage of women in the upper quartile has also increased from 59% in March 2018 to 65% in March 2019. The average UK gender pay gap is 17%.
- 4.4. The Council has put in place a number of policies and actions to address gender equality in the workforce over the last year with the help and engagement of the Women's +allies staff network, to work to ensure there are no barriers to progression. A Carers policy has been developed with the carers staff network and an introduced an intranet page for all relevant links, including premature baby additional leave. In addition the 'Menopause guide' was launched on International Women's Day, and a Reproductive policy which covers all aspects of this broad subject has been developed in order to help support our staff.

Ethnicity

- 4.5. Sutton is employing 4% more staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities (26%) than at the same point last year and the council is now only 1% away from hitting its 27% target to reflect the BAME representation of Sutton's community (which is 27.3%). The number of BAME employees earning over £50,000 has increased by 11% over the last three years, from 3% in 2017 to 14% at 31.3.20. The reporting data currently presents all BAME employees together. In future years, this will be broken down further to understand any variances between each of the groups.
- 4.6. In response to Black Lives Matters, the Leader and Chief Executive held listening webinars with staff and as a result, and the Chief Executive has commissioned the BAME network and senior managers to set up a working group focused over three areas: improving management capacity and confidence in supporting a diverse workforce; reviewing systems and structures for recruiting and supporting colleagues; and listening to and celebrating Sutton's diverse communities. Sutton's new recruitment system will offer improved reporting and anonymous application processes. As part of this, the language used in advertising posts and make-up of interview panels will be reviewed. A new 'Active Bystander' Workshop was piloted for managers and recruiters. The feedback was very positive and this will feature as part of planning for 20/21.

Disability

- 4.7. The workforce figure of 4.5% of our staff having a disability has remained unchanged from last year. However, over a third of the workplace have not declared whether they have a disability or not. 16% have stated they 'prefer not to say' therefore this figure is only based on those we know. Work must be done again to improve monitoring data and encourage staff to complete their sensitive data on iTrent. The Council has achieved 'Disability Confident Committed' status which helps us recruit, retain and develop disabled colleagues and recognise the value they bring to the council.

LGBT

- 4.8. Whilst 7-10% of the UK describe themselves as LGBT, only 4% of the workforce declares themselves as such. Of those earning over £50,000, 8% are LGBT therefore no obvious barriers to progression. Sexual orientation declaration rates are low but it should be noted that the majority of staff who have not declared their sexual orientation have not made any declaration rather than stating they 'prefer not to say'.

Age

- 4.9. 6.28% of the workforce is aged 16-24, under the borough profile of 10%. In recent years there has been a year on year increase in the number of **apprenticeship** starts for the Council and for the first time the Council was able to meet and exceed the 2.3% public sector target for 2019/20, recording 2.81% in terms of progress with apprenticeship starts as a percentage of the overall workforce. The Council remains committed to apprenticeship opportunities, although it should be noted that is unlikely to achieve the public sector target in 2020/21 due to significant reductions in recruitment due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The largest proportion of staff are 45-54 (29.17%), and with 21.65% of the workforce being 55-64, half of the workforce is aged 45-64. The Carer's and Menopause Policies have been created in collaboration with staff networks.

Recruitment and turnover

- 4.10. When reviewing the selection and appointment rates for protected characteristics using the four-fifths rule, the selection and appointment of disabled candidates, women, and LGBT colleagues appears fair and equitable. However, the selection and appointment processes figures suggest there may be an adverse impact on BAME applicants. Of all job applications received, 44% were from BAME Communities. This figure is in line with the percentage of the BAME Community in London, and 1.6 times higher than the percentage of the BAME population in Sutton. When looking at the distribution of offers made to these applicants, only 27% were from BAME Communities. This made them 1.9 times less likely to receive an offer than white candidates. Analysis shows that Asian candidates were less likely to receive a job offer than Black candidates, although the numbers are small so these figures are not statistically robust. In future years, this analysis will be broken down by ethnicity in a way that provides a more detailed understanding.

- 4.11. The number of voluntary leavers has decreased overall to 170 in 2019/20 from 223 in 2018/19. The overall staff headcount has increased by around 100 when compared to the 31 March 2019 figure. This increase is mainly due to NHS staff being transferred into the council in April 2019.

5. Overview of Sutton's equality initiatives

- 5.1. The Council is working hard to ensure equality across the council but there is always more that can be done as an organisation and as individuals. The Council will focus its efforts, to continue to attract, retain and develop a diverse workforce. The PRIDE Values are embedded in organisational development and performance management arrangements, including the "D" for diversity.
- 5.2. The Council has six equality staff network groups across the council, each with a senior manager sponsor, who are helping build awareness of the needs of all, ensuring fair and respectful treatment. These include BAME+Allies, LGBTQ+Allies, Youth Group+Allies, Women's+Allies, Family & Carers+Allies, Disability+Allies who all meet regularly. The Equalities Champion Group is chaired by the Chief Executive and attended by Equalities Champions from across the Council and Staff Network leads who meet quarterly to address strategic impact across all directorates.
- 5.3. The Council will focus specifically on our recruitment processes including an anonymous shortlisting process and will be spending time developing our managers around diversity and inclusion with a mandatory learning programme. The Corporate Leadership Network will promote inclusive discussions and embed a genuinely open and diverse workplace. The Council is delivering an action plan as agreed with the BAME staff network to address the experiences and challenges faced. The council will continue to embed diversity and inclusion, working collaboratively with staff to make changes which are of real benefit.
- 5.4. Work will continue to engage and involve staff networks in HR&OD projects and raise awareness and understanding of the impact of intersectionalities across all equalities characteristics. The apprentice programme and coaching, mentoring and reverse mentoring programmes will be further developed.
- 5.5. The Council will continue to listen to our staff and act on what they say, through regular surveys. The action plan which was developed as part of signing the 'Time to change' pledge will be implemented, including raising awareness of mental health first aiders. The Council will work to achieve level 2 of the 'Disability Confident Employer' accreditation. Work will continue with staff networks and colleagues across the council to improve our declaration rates for all sensitive data held for staff to provide the most accurate data available to make the right and informed decisions.

6. Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR&OD) Strategy

- 6.1. The purpose of this HR&OD Strategy is to bring together all of staffing related activities to provide visibility, but also to ensure that they are aligned, co-ordinated and focused on delivering the priorities of the council and our PRIDE values, alongside our commitment to our colleagues.
- 6.2. Clear messages from colleagues and leaders through surveys, conversations, staff networks and Trade Unions have established the focus for this strategy. These are grouped under six themes, with deliverables and performance measures underpinning them.
- 6.3. The Council will build on its 'one council' culture, with clear expectations and understanding of behaviours and what the expectation is from those who work for Sutton Council. This will be underpinned by confident people management, delivering great services, working collaboratively and making decisions informed by good workforce information and data. Managers and leaders will celebrate successes and thank each other for collective efforts.
- 6.4. The Council will create a safe environment for staff to share their disability and sexuality status to improve understanding of the workforce. All colleagues need to feel that their development needs are taken into account, that they have opportunities to progress and services understand the specialisms which are hard to recruit and have plans in place to resource their teams, growing their own where this is possible.
- 6.5. A quarter of colleagues are not looking forward to coming back to the workplace, and they will not need to in the way that they did pre-COVID-19. A key learning is that colleagues are all able to work effectively from a number of locations, whether in council offices, homes or other settings. This learning from COVID-19 will be taken on board, ensuring that colleagues remain connected to their teams and the borough. Maintaining a healthy work-life balance and feeling psychologically healthy / mentally well will be key to this. Sutton is committed to this, having signed the Time to Change pledge on Mental Health Day, 10 October 2019.
- 6.6. Sutton Council needs structured and focused initiatives which are aligned to clear outcomes. This strategy is grouped under six strategic themes, which will deliver these priorities.
 1. **A culture that promotes PRIDE in Sutton:** while we take pride in the service area in which we work, we never lose sight of the fact that collectively we make up Sutton Council and the way that we behave will reflect the council's values.
 2. **New ways of working:** we will provide the skills, tools and workplace to maximise activity based working and review our systems and processes to make sure that they are as efficient as possible.
 3. **Strategic resourcing and workforce planning:** we will work to attract the widest talent pool, and design our structures in a way that supports career progression. We will promote apprenticeships and opportunities for Sutton's young people to start their careers with us.

4. **Diversity and inclusion:** we will be respectful of each other and challenge poor behaviour. We will listen to our colleagues and encourage everyone to bring their whole self to work. We will test ourselves to be sure that we are not creating barriers to equalities in the way that we structure our policies and approaches.
 5. **A learning organisation:** We will all be supported to take responsibility for our own learning, understanding that learning can be 'on the job', through networks, coaching or mentoring or through more traditional workshop/e-learning. We will apply our learning in our role and share it with our colleagues.
 6. **People management:** We will be compassionate and consistent to make sure that staff know what to expect from managers. We will manage by outcomes, and have courageous conversations to deliver the best for our residents.
- 6.7. Following agreement of this strategy, a three year programme of work will be established, phased with clear measures of success and key performance indicators so that progress can be monitored. This will be developed with the full engagement of staff networks and unions and will be reported annually as part of the equalities workforce report cycle.
- 6.8. The strategy which is being presented for agreement will be summarised and presented in a way which is visually appealing and accessible for our staff.

7. Overall Benefits to Sutton and its Residents

- 7.1. By creating an open and inclusive workforce at Sutton where staff live out our PRIDE values in their daily work and seek to understand and value the importance of the different perspectives that all staff bring to work, the Council can ensure that it provides a fully inclusive service to its residents.

8. Implications

- 8.1. By noting this report, the Strategy and Resources Committee continues to maintain oversight of the workforce profile and focus the work to support Sutton's workforce, ensuring that the council reflects the community that it serves and provides assurance that it is meeting its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The Committee also agrees the strategy and resultant programme of work to support Sutton's workforce to enable them to provide high quality services to the community and delivery of the Ambitious for Sutton programme.

9. Finance and Legal Commentary

Finance Comment

- 9.1. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Comment

- 9.2. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

10. Appendices and Background Documents

10.1. Appendices

Appendix Letter	Appendix Title
A	Workforce Equalities Information (detailed tables)
B	Human Resources and Organisational Development Strategy

10.2. Background Documents

Date of Expiry	Background Document
N/A	N/A

11. Audit and Consultations Trail

Consultees	Yes/No	Officer	Date of Comments
Finance	Yes	Victoria Goddard Assistant Director for Finance	16/09/2020
Legal	Yes	Tracy Swan Head of Law, Property and Commercial	16/09/2020
Others	Yes	Simon Breeze Policy and Projects Manager (Partnerships)	07/09/2020
EQIA	No		
Version			Date
Final			29/09/2020