

Report Title	Equalities Workforce Report 2020/21		
Committee	Strategy and Resources Committee		
Committee Date	5 July 2021		
Committee Chair: Lead Member:	Councillor Ruth Dombey Councillor Sunita Gordon, Lead Member for Resources		
Report From	Richard Simpson, Strategic Director of Resources		
Report Author(s)	Emily Nice, Assistant Director - HR and Organisational Development Neisha Porter, Head of Organisational Development Adele Nutt, Senior Employee Experience Business Partner		
Wards Affected	Corporate Business		
Ambitious for Sutton priorities	Smarter ways of working		
Open/Exempt	Open		
Signed		Date	22 June 2021

1. Summary

- 1.1. Sutton works towards greater workforce equality year on year and is committed to developing a workforce profile that broadly reflects the community it serves, in line with the Ambitious for Sutton Corporate Plan. 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 equalities workforce report provides an update on the workforce as at the end of the last financial year (the previous year's update was presented to this committee in October 2020). Unless otherwise stated, this report provides data as at 31 March 2021. The information below demonstrates improvements in many areas across the council and reassures that many of the Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR & OD) strategy and Diversity & Inclusion initiatives put in place are seeing positive results.

2. Recommendation

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

3. Background

- 3.1. This report sets out an overview of Sutton's workforce as at 31 March 2021, and gives an overview of the activity by the Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR and OD) service to support Sutton's staff and managers throughout the 2020/21 financial year. This work has been shaped 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. HR and OD, which is a shared service, has agreed a programme of work to support both Sutton and Kingston's staff. For Sutton, this work has had a diversity, inclusion and wellbeing focus in order to support staff working remotely, understanding the need for them to remain connected to their teams and to Sutton as a borough.

4. Sutton's workforce profile

- 4.1. At the end of March 2021, Sutton had 1221 staff employed by the council on a permanent or fixed term basis. Of this staffing group, 209 deliver services jointly to Sutton and Kingston (66 in Customer Experience, 30 in Pensions and 113 in Finance). An additional 316 (as at 31.3.21) staff work in teams that provide services to Sutton but are hosted (employed) by Kingston: HR and Organisational development, IT and digital services and Highways, Transport and Regulatory services.
- 4.2. An additional 122 staff work in the South London Legal Partnership (SLLP) providing the in-house legal service to Sutton, Kingston, Merton, Richmond and Wandsworth Councils. The SLLP is hosted by Merton Council and the relevant equalities profile is not included in this report. There are also 39 staff who work in the Shared Audit and Fraud service hosted by Wandsworth and Richmond Councils, whose relevant equality data is not included in this report.
- 4.3. The two tables below set out an overview of the workforce profile for Sutton Council and the shared services who are employed by Kingston.

Table 1: Workforce profile breakdown for Sutton Council by ethnicity, gender, disability and sexuality

Measures	2021 Target (%)	2015 - 16 (%)	2016 - 17 (%)	2017 - 18 (%)	2018 -19 (%)	2019-20 (%)	2020 -21 (%)	Compare d to previous year
Percentage of black and ethnic minority employees within the Council	27	17	20	24	22	26	26	=
Percentage of employees earning over 50K from black and ethnic minority groups	27	6	4	15	14	14	22	↑
Percentage of employees declaring they meet the Equality Act definition of disability	6	7	6	5	5	4	5	↑

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Percentage of employees earning over 50K declaring they meet the Equality Act definition of disability	6	13	7	5	4	1	2	↑
Percentage of employees that are women	62	66	65	72	69	74	74	=
Percentage of employees earning over 50K that are women	62	58	43	49	53	51	58	↑
Percentage of LGBT employees within the Council	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	↑
Percentage of employees earning over 50K that are LGBT	5	8	9	8	7	9	8	↓
Employees 16 to 24	6	5	4	7	7	6	6	=

Table 2: Workforce profile breakdown for Shared Services staff employed by Kingston Council by ethnicity, gender, disability and sexuality

Measures	Human Resources and Organisational Development	Digital and IT	Highways, Transport and Regulatory Services	Overall Kingston employed Shared Services
Staff Headcount	83	98	135	316
Percentage of black and ethnic minority employees	41%	18%	17%	24%
Percentage of black and ethnic minority employees over 50k	45%	6%	9%	18%
Percentage of employees declaring they meet the Equality Act definition of disability	13%	15%	1%	9%
Percentage of employees declaring they meet the Equality Act definition of disability over 50k	9%	0%	10%	5%
Percentage of employees who are women	76%	35%	41%	48%
Percentage of employees that are women earning over £50,000	77%	26%	25%	40%
Percentage of LGBT employees	*	*	*	*
Percentage of LGBT employees over 50k	0%	0%	0%	0%
% employees 16 to 24	8%	3%	3%	4%

Gender Balance

- 4.4. The number of women in the council remains stable at 74% as of 31 March 2021, unchanged from last year, and 23% above the proportion of the women in the borough. 58% of the female workforce earns over £50,000, which is an increase of 7% on last year. The Gender Pay Gap for the 2020/21 year will be reported in the Autumn of 2021.
- 4.5. 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, working to ensure there are no barriers to progression. In addition to the equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives set out at section 5, the HR&OD service worked with the Women's Network to ensure that guidance supported specific family and caring needs during the Covid-19 pandemic (including supporting staff experiencing domestic abuse) and the Council celebrated International Women's Day on 8 March 2021. The 'Menopause guide' and a Reproductive policy which covers all aspects of this broad subject has been developed and promoted in order to help support staff.

Ethnicity

- 4.6. Sutton is employing the same proportion of staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities (26%) as last year, nearly matching the BAME representation of Sutton's community (which is 27%). Breaking this down by ethnicity group, this is 7% Asian; 15% Black; 3% multiple heritage and 1% other.
- 4.7. The number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees earning over £50,000 has increased by 11% over the last three years, to 14% at 31 March 2020, and has increased a further 8% to 22% at 31 March 2021. Breaking this down by ethnicity, of those earning over £50,000, 8% declare as Asian/Asian British; 11% Black; 2% Multiple Heritage and 1% Other.
- 4.8. Recruitment activity may help explain this increase where nearly 36% of staff who joined the council between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021 were Black Asian and Minority Ethnic, of which 43% earned over £50,000.
- 4.9. The focus of the equality, diversity and inclusion work for the year has been around race equality, as in July 2020, the Chief Executive formed a working group to address the issues following the dreadful murder of George Floyd, the Black Lives matter movement, the spring 2020 Public Health England reports that Covid-19 has a disproportionate impact on BAME communities and having listened to our staff. This working group is made up of representatives from the BAME staff network, Communications, Policy and Partnerships and HR&OD. The Chief Executive also attends each meeting. The working group have designed and implemented an action plan structured around: supporting managers in being confident to have conversations about race, discrimination and inclusion and challenging poor behaviour where they see it; listening to staff and celebrating their culture and history; and reviewing structures and processes for recruiting, inducting, managing and developing staff to eliminate bias.
- 4.10. An Unconscious Bias course which covers the basics, creates awareness, and asks staff to document times where they have seen unconscious bias and the impact it had on them and the organisation now features on the learning programme and is part of the

mandatory induction for all new joiners. Sutton took part in the first Race Equality week in February 2021 with activities such as Insight articles, webinars, and discussions about why race at work matters, including calling out microaggressions. An Allyship guide was produced in partnership with the BAME network and a D&I action card was produced as a reference point for our staff and managers to signpost the diversity and inclusion activities. The staff networks have compiled a calendar of events and dates to celebrate throughout the year and Sutton signed up to the NLA housing, regeneration and planning workforce diversity pledge.

Disability

- 4.11. The workforce figure of 5% of staff having a disability compares to the London Councils average at just under 5%. However, over a third of the workplace have not declared whether they have a disability or not and 14% of the workforce have stated they 'prefer not to say'. The disability figure is therefore only based on those who have declared their status. Work is ongoing in partnership with staff networks to improve monitoring data and encourage staff to complete their sensitive data on iTrent, as well as creating a culture where staff feel safe to declare. The Council has achieved 'Disability Confident Committed' status which helps to recruit, retain and develop disabled colleagues and recognise the value they bring to the council. HR&OD continues to work with the disability network around new systems and processes to make sure that they are accessible and helpful (examples include the new recruitment systems and the WorkWell programme).

LGBT

- 4.12. The latest ONS figures show that 2.2% of the London population declare as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual and Stonewall estimate 1% of UK population identify as Trans (no London Councils information is available regarding sexual orientation). 5% of the Sutton workforce declare themselves as LGBT. Of those earning over £50,000, 8% declare as LGBT therefore there are no obvious barriers to progression (albeit that this is a slight decrease of less than 1% on last year). 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', suggesting staff must continue to be encouraged to update their sensitive information on iTrent. Sutton has an active LGBTQ+ network, which has developed and promoted a series of network member videos as part of LGBTQ+ history month in February. This in turn increased membership of the network.

Age

- 4.13. There has been no change in the past year in relation to the percentage of the workforce aged 16-24 and remains at 6%, (under the borough profile of around 9% but twice that of the London Council's median figure). 31% of staff are aged 25-39. The largest proportion of staff are 50-64 (38%), and with 22% of the workforce being 40-49, 60% of the workforce is over the age of 40. There is a need to bring in a pipeline of younger staff and apprentices as part of workforce planning for the future.

- 4.14. For 2020/21, the COVID-19 pandemic restricted the Council's ability to provide apprenticeships, and the position was 1.66% with 20 apprentices of whom 4 were new starters. HR&OD will continue its work to promote Sutton as an employer of choice, reinvigorating the apprentice programme. From 1 May 2021, are paying apprentices the London Living Wage of £10.85 or above for all apprenticeships. This brings the council in line with seventeen of the 32 other London boroughs (including Kingston Council) who already pay the London Living Wage and will improve Sutton's ability to attract and retain apprentices. The council has also improved support for apprentices by tailoring the induction and introducing mentoring programmes for them.

Recruitment and turnover

- 4.15. 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 is in proportion to the number of applicants. However, the selection and appointment processes figures suggest Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic applicants, in particular Asian/Asian British candidates are less successful. Of all job applications received, 45% were from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities. This figure is in line with the median percentage of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Community in London Councils, and 1.7 times higher than the percentage of the Black, Asian Minority Ethnic population in the borough. When looking at the distribution of offers made to applicants, 36% were from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities (up 9% from last year). However this still makes White candidates 1.8 times more likely to receive an offer than Black Asian and Minority Ethnic candidates. Analysis shows that Black candidates were nearly twice as likely to receive a job offer than Asian/Asian British candidates. Work to monitor this more closely and to improve outcomes for Black and Asian applicants is detailed in section 5 of this report.
- 4.16. The number of voluntary leavers has decreased overall to 130 in 2020/21 from 170 in 2019/20 and 223 in 2018/19. This may well be because of the pandemic and the UK wide nervousness around the job market and economy.

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. The HR&OD strategy and equalities workforce report was agreed at Strategy and Resources Committee on 12 October 2020 and delivery of the work programme to deliver this is underway and is phased over the life cycle of the strategy.
- 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. HR&OD, Policy and Partnerships and the Staff Networks meet every six weeks with a focus on borough wide and workforce equality and report to the Chief Executive and Strategic Directors (CMT) quarterly to address strategic impact across all directorates.

- 5.3. The recruitment team has reviewed the information on the Sutton website to welcome diverse applicants and encourage applications from under-represented groups. The new recruitment system launched in March 2021 and enables anonymous application forms for recruitment. HR&OD have also reviewed recruitment processes and language used to ensure that they are inclusive and the new system is able to monitor the diversity of recruitment panels.
- 5.4. With our new permanent and agency recruitment system, the Council can monitor application levels/shortlisting and appointment levels of applicants from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority communities and other equalities characteristics. Work will continue to encourage staff to feel comfortable about sharing their equalities information on iTrent and the staff networks and Trade Unions are helping disseminate this to staff.
- 5.5. The reverse mentoring programme launched in January 2021 with 14 Mentees and 14 Mentors signed up (including all of CMT). Reverse mentoring helps senior leaders/managers to gain insight into the experience of our staff from a diversity and inclusion perspective. Whereas traditional mentoring is centered on the development of the mentees, in reverse mentoring both the mentor and mentee are provided with an opportunity to learn from each other. This builds relationships and supports senior leaders/managers to understand the different experiences of others. Mentors are supported through regular networking opportunities. Feedback to date indicates that reverse mentoring is hugely positive and recruitment for cohort two is underway.
- 5.6. The focus for 2021/22 will be reviewing HR policies, implementing a wellbeing plan; continuing to work closely with staff networks and engaging with staff through a pulse survey in June 2021 and a more detailed survey in the Autumn.
- 5.7. Sutton will continue our work around race equality, and acting on the listening events that were held with our female colleagues around safety. Planning for events such as promoting allyship, challenging behaviour not in line with our PRIDE values, improving awareness and safety from domestic abuse, and challenging microaggressions is underway with input across the staff networks.
- 5.8. A two part series entitled 'Uncomfortable Truth' and 'Uncomfortable Conversations' e-learning and accompanying virtual workshop has been reviewed and developed to suit Sutton Managers with input from the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic network.
- 5.9. The council has appointed Abstract, a learning provider, who will run focus groups with staff, which will shape case studies to inform mandatory learning for managers, and a 3 part mandatory learning programme will roll out to managers at grades 9 and above in September.

6. Overall Benefits to Sutton and its Residents

6.1. By creating an open and inclusive workforce at Sutton where staff live out the 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.

7. Implications

7.1. 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.

8. Finance and Legal Commentary

Finance Comment

8.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The initiatives described will be delivered within existing budgets and are planned for in the HR budget. Creating an open and inclusive working environment with a diverse workforce will help the Council to deliver high quality services within available financial resources.

Legal Comment

8.2. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

9. Appendices and Background Documents

9.1. Appendices

Appendix Letter	Appendix Title
A	Workforce Equalities Information (detailed tables)

9.2. Background Documents

Date of Expiry	Background Document
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N/A	N/A
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10. Audit and Consultations Trail

Consultees	Yes/No	Officer	Date of Comments
Finance	Yes	Victoria Goddard Assistant Director for Finance	4/6/21
Legal	Yes	Tracy Swan Head of Law, Property and Commercial	9/6/21
EQIA	No		

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