

Our people

Annual Workforce Report
2022 to 2023



Hampshire
County Council

“

Serving the people
of Hampshire with
purpose and pride to
improve lives, today
and for tomorrow

”

Introduction

Welcome to Hampshire County Council's Annual Workforce Report for the financial year ending 31 March 2023. In my fourth year at the Council this is now my third Annual Workforce Report and never has the need to understand our workforce and learn from our past experiences to inform our future strategic workforce plans been more important.

I say this for several reasons, including; the global, national and local labour market challenges that are having a tangible impact on our recruitment and retention strategies. In addition, the concerns our workforce are facing in relation to the 'energy crisis' and the rising cost of living; the increased national action from Trade Unions about public sector pay; and our own open acknowledgement about the financial uncertainties that we and many other local authorities are facing.

But I don't write this introduction from a place of pessimism, because as always, our Annual Workforce Report serves to be a wonderful reminder of the commitment demonstrated by our workforce to the residents of Hampshire despite what is happening in the world around them.

As always, this report presents an overall picture of our workforce, with our focus over this reporting period very much on our recruitment and retention to support our critical front-line services. It highlights ongoing work and interventions that we have put in place across three points of the **employee lifecycle** 'Attract,' 'Develop' and 'Retain and exit.'

Likewise, this report continues to call out the diversity of our workforce and evidences where our work to become increasingly inclusive is beginning to result in positive change whilst at the same time reflecting openly where we have seen little or no change.

2023 also brings changes to the Council's organisational model and directorates are starting to embed new ways of working. Being one organisation has always been critical to the effective delivery of our services and now our new structure reinforces this and reflects the ongoing necessity for collaboration across the whole organisation and our wider partners to the effective delivery of our services. As change continues, our shared values and behaviours will continue to be important to 'how it feels' to work at the Council. Our purpose is articulated through our Strategic

Plan, and this links to our values which we will say more about in **'Our purpose, vision and values' section.**

Finally, I would like to take this personal opportunity to thank our staff for their ongoing hard work and dedication to delivering and supporting the critical services we provide.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jac Broughton".

Jac Broughton
FCIPD, Director of
People and Organisation

Context

This Workforce Report for the period April 2022 to March 2023 provides an overview of initiatives and strategies that have been put in place to support our people over the last year.

In addition, the report includes a high-level overview of key workforce data (excluding schools)

and the relevant trends to inform the Council's people strategies and priorities.

As in previous years, the report is split into two parts – **'Our organisation,'** and **'Our people'** and follows an 'employee lifecycle' as reflected below:

In this reporting period, there has been a particular focus on recruitment and retention and work is progressing through a new Strategic Workforce Planning Programme. Reflecting this, the report focuses detail on three key elements of the **employee lifecycle: 'Attract,' 'Develop'** and **'Retain and exit'** where work has progressed to support our recruitment and retention challenges.

The data comparisons used in this report show either trends over the last couple of years or are a specific point of time (i.e. 31 March 2023) and Special Recognition Payment (SRP) data detailed in the **'Reward and recognise'** section, relates to the 2022 calendar year.

1 Employee lifecycle



Contents

Our organisation

- 2** Our progress in 2022 to 2023
- 4** Our purpose, vision and values
- 6** Changes to our operating structure
- 16** Inclusion and wellbeing
- 19** Our extended organisation
- 20** Employee lifecycle
- 22** Attract
- 34** Resource
- 44** Onboard
- 48** Develop
- 66** Recognise and reward
- 72** Progress and perform
- 86** Retain and exit
- 96** Conclusions
- 100** Next steps

Our people

- 104** An overview summary of our workforce data
- 128** Appendices



Our organisation

Our progress in 2022 to 2023

Hampshire County Council is a high performing democratic body that serves the residents and businesses of Hampshire. We are proud of our people and acknowledge that our strong reputation is built on our exceptional staff, managers, and leaders.

The 2022 to 2023 reporting year has marked some significant changes to the Council, with the introduction of a new Corporate Management Team, a new organisational structure and a re-articulation of our vision and values.

We have continued to see an increase in both overall headcount and full-time equivalent figures and have seen a decrease in external turnover as illustrated. It should be noted however, as described in 'Retain and exit,' that this decrease in overall external turnover masks more concerning turnover data in relation to some specific areas of work.

Further insight and detailed figures are reported in **part two** of the report.

A range of actions were evident in last year's report and progress against these is shown in **Appendix one** reflecting not only what has already been achieved but what remains as ongoing programmes of work.

2 An overview of changes to our data for 2022 to 2023

	March 2022	Trend	March 2023
Headcount	12,726	▲	12,989
Full-time equivalent	9,940	▲	10,440
Part-time headcount male	704	▲	709
Part-time headcount female	5,582	▼	5,549
Female headcount	9,719	▲	9,923
Under 25 headcount	466	▼	457
Over 55 headcount	3,602	▲	3,738
Declared ethnicity percentage	95%	▲	97%
Percentage in senior roles (H+) female	57%	=	57%
Percentage in senior roles (H+) ethnic minorities	3.3%	▲	3.61%
Gender pay gap percentage	16%	▼	15.5%
Annual overall external turnover percentage	17%	▼	15%

Our purpose, vision and values

We are proud to share our organisational vision and values which we have recently re-articulated across the organisation.

The vision and values as stated here are the result of multiple engagement activities across our directorates and therefore reflect the lived experiences of our workforce.

Our purpose

Our purpose articulated through our **Strategic Plan**.



Hampshire maintains strong and resilient economic growth and prosperity



People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives



People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment



People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive and resilient communities

Our vision



Serving the people of Hampshire with purpose and pride to improve lives, today and for tomorrow



Our values

Working as one organisation

We collaborate with each other and our partners for the good of our service users, support each other to recover quickly from setbacks and take responsibility in managing our personal and organisational wellbeing. We work together to ensure we are a healthy and resilient organisation.

Integrity and respect

We value and encourage every individual for their unique strengths, and demonstrate our confidence in each other through our language and behaviour. We are fair, honest and reliable in everything we say and do.

Making a difference

Our work puts people at the forefront of what we do and helps communities across the County to thrive. We care.

Professionalism

We work hard to deliver the best services that we can and we hold ourselves accountable for our performance. We have pride in what we deliver and enable.

Continuous improvement

We are ambitious. We challenge ourselves to innovate, be creative and work to create a sustainable, future proof Hampshire.

Changes to our operating structure

This reporting period saw changes to the Council's leadership structure across the organisation – with the aim of ensuring we are aligned in the best way to our strategic

priorities; positioned well to deliver our ambitions for the future; and fit for the considerable financial challenges that lie ahead for local government.

Key changes

- Disbanding of the Culture, Communities and Business Services (CCBS) and Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE) public facing service departments.
- The creation of two new directorates:
 - **Hampshire 2050** – Delivering strategies and policies to support the Authority's priorities to safeguard the future of local services for residents and make Hampshire an even better place to live, play, work, visit and do business.
 - **Universal Services** – Bringing together the delivery and development of Hampshire County Council's services which are accessible to all residents of Hampshire, as well as those which directly support the delivery of these, and our broader public facing services (Adults' Health and Care and Children's Services).
- Re-organising some of our corporate services to operate more efficiently and enable functions that support all directorates to operate centrally and to maximise future opportunities for continuous improvement. **Appendix two** shows the details of how service responsibilities have been redistributed across our new directorates.

Our new Corporate Management Team (CMT) has seven chief officers and is led by the Chief Executive.

The role of CMT is to give direction to the Council as one organisation, determining its strategic objectives and policies.

It is also jointly accountable for the Council's activities to third parties and stakeholders, taking decisions on behalf of the organisation.



Carolyn Williamson,
Chief Executive

The Chief Executive leads Hampshire County Council's staff and the strategic vision set out by the Council's elected Leader, mobilising strategies, plans and policies to ensure it is successful. The Chief Executive holds the responsibility for major organisational decisions, an expenditure budget of £2.3 billion and over 12,500 employees (excluding school staff) who deliver a wide range of services to the community.



Stuart Ashley,
Director of Children's Services

The Director of Children's Services is responsible for the leadership, strategy and effectiveness of Children's Services. They are responsible for securing the provision of services which address the needs of all children and young people, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, their families and carers.



Rob Carr,
Director of Corporate Operations
and Deputy Chief Executive

The Director of Corporate Operations is responsible for the technical and financial infrastructure that supports and protects frontline services and employees across Hampshire County Council. This role is also responsible for the delivery of services under the Shared Service Partnership, where transactional activities such as payroll and finance are provided jointly to a wide group of public service organisations to maximise efficiency for all partners. The services in Corporate Operations play a key role in all of Hampshire County Council's partnerships.



Patrick Blogg,
Director of Universal Services

The Director of Universal Services is responsible for leading the delivery and development of Hampshire County Council's services which are accessible to all residents of Hampshire, as well as those which directly support the delivery of these and our broader public facing services (Adults' Health and Care and Children's Services).



Gary Westbrook,
Director of Hampshire 2050
and Assistant Chief Executive

The Director of Hampshire 2050 and Assistant Chief Executive is responsible for leading the development of Hampshire County Council's strategy in relation to the regeneration and growth of Hampshire, focusing on the ambitions for Hampshire 'as a place.' This includes protecting and growing Hampshire's strong, vibrant, and successful local economy, and ensuring the County remains a place where residents and businesses can flourish now and into the future.



Graham Allen,
Director of Adults' Health and Care
and Deputy Chief Executive

The Director of Adults' Health and Care is responsible for enabling the people of Hampshire to stay well and live independently, providing support to the most vulnerable within our communities.



Jac Broughton,
Director of People and Organisation

The Director of People and Organisation is responsible for supporting frontline services and employees across Hampshire County Council and Shared Service partners. They lead on planning and delivering the people and organisational strategies across the council.

Our Chief Officer Group includes our Chief Executive, Directors and Senior Officers, who provide support to CMT. Our Senior Officers can be found here – **Senior Officers.**

Our Directorates 'at a glance'

Adults' Health and Care (AHC)

Workforce capacity continues to be a challenge in AHC for a variety of reasons including ongoing post-COVID-19 recovery leading to a shortage of workforce supply (both locally and nationally), low levels of unemployment and competition with care and non-care employers e.g. retail, hospitality etc.

A huge amount of work has been undertaken to support recruitment and retention, both internally and externally, including the work undertaken across the Call to Care national recruitment campaign aimed at improving recruitment for all care providers.

The significant effort and resource channelled into the directorate's recruitment and retention strategies is paying dividends, albeit progress has been impacted by the cost-of-living increases. The directorate has responded to some of its pay related challenges through new or increased market supplements, recruitment and retention payments and Refer a Friend schemes, all of which have made the overall remuneration package more attractive. However, challenges remain given the broader public sector landscape, particularly the widespread industrial action and pay increases awarded to other sectors e.g. the NHS.

The directorate will continue to improve the recruitment and onboarding process and work with the Strategic Workforce Board to develop its unique Employee Value Proposition, horizon scan to ensure remuneration and benefits packages remain competitive, and look at specific initiatives to attract a younger workforce.

Children's Services (CSD)

The most significant risk in the Children's Services workforce is still the shortage of Qualified Social Workers which reflects the challenges in supply that exist nationally and particularly in the South-East.

We have recruited more than 90 new social workers during the last year, although increased demand and vacancy levels mean that social worker recruitment remains an ongoing priority. A workforce plan has been agreed and sets the strategy for the recruitment and retention of social workers over the next three years. In addition to existing recruitment methods the directorate has expanded apprenticeship numbers and is undertaking targeted overseas recruitment.

COVID-19 continues to contribute to sickness absence, accounting for 15% of sickness absence within Children's Services in the last 12-months.

The challenging recruitment market is also causing staffing pressures beyond social workers. The recruitment of residential children's home practitioners, passenger assistants, Special Educational Needs caseworkers and educational psychologists are also high priority. This year new market supplements and other payments have been introduced for Children's Home

Practitioners and work is underway to develop arrangements to support recruitment and retention within SEN.

During the last year, the directorate has successfully led the Council's response to the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. This has required the recruitment of additional family support workers which have been successfully resourced in partnership with our employment agency Connect2Hampshire.

In March 2023, the Government published its response to the independent review of children's social care. This has already started to inform the further development of our Children's Services workforce with the introduction of a new role of Family Practitioner that will help to create capacity in our social work teams. Further developments for the future will include development of family help services, tighter regulation of the agency worker market and a new early year's career framework for children's social workers.

Ofsted recently undertook a targeted inspection of Children in Care with very positive outcomes confirming the quality and commitment of Children's Services staff.

Corporate Operations

Within Corporate Operations, there has been and continues to be challenges in the recruitment and retention space for some of the professional roles such as auditors, administrators and specialist IT. The introduction of market supplements has successfully addressed some of these issues, with work to resolve others still ongoing. This is likely to include, for example, increased use of apprenticeships, continued application of market supplements and/or role re-design. In addition, the new operating model within the Audit team has broken down some of the former geographical barriers to aid recruitment. After a period of low staff turnover during the pandemic, turnover, particularly at the lower grades within Finance is returning to normal levels.

The IT service continues to see a challenging external recruitment market, particularly for senior and experienced technical roles. However, this is not felt as acutely given that attrition in IT remains low, although increasing demand for Networking and Cyber Security skills is putting pressure on existing staff. Looking further forward, in the next five to seven years the service anticipates a shift in the skill base of the workforce, as application vendors increasingly move to off-premise and subscription delivery models, and as emerging disruptive technologies such as Artificial Intelligence become mature.

The IBC has continued to experience challenges around recruitment and

retention for entry level transactional roles and continues to review recruitment and the journey of new starters and improve retention levels by delivering on its People Plan. The IBC is committed to providing colleagues with a thriving workplace where they feel supported, included, recognised, and engaged with the services delivered. Employees can access a digital employee hub, where a suite of resources and activities are available across wellbeing, recognition, team huddle meetings, and networking. The largest engagement events are bi-annual People Forums, where the IBC brings everyone together to celebrate, inform and appreciate our people. The IBC promotes qualifications including the Institute of Customer Service (ICS) professional qualifications and apprenticeships, and access to a wide range of learning through the Learning Management System. Recognising and rewarding colleagues is achieved through a range of engaging ways including our recognition app and our Shared Services Awards programme.

The directorate has continued to maximise opportunities for collaboration and wellbeing within teams for example by working together in the office on the same day each week. As referenced in **'Our extended organisation'**, the directorate is working closely with the People and Organisation directorate to plan the strategic changes during 2023 to 2024 with our partners.

People and Organisation

Within People and Organisation, there are some recruitment and retention challenges within roles such as lawyers and market supplements have been considered and introduced as necessary.

As referenced in the **'Changes to our operating structure' section**, during the final quarter of 2022 to 2023, the Council underwent a re-design of its services, the impact on People and Organisation being an increase of the functions that fall within its remit. The services within the directorate are working together to better understand the links and connections between all of the 'enabling functions' to maximise efficiencies and build relationships across the now extended team.

Work continues to better understand what our current and future employees want from their roles to be able to meet these where we are able to e.g. increased opportunities to work flexibly, opportunities for development and undertaking apprenticeships.

Our new directorates

Whilst CCBS and ETE no longer exist in their previous structural form, the services they deliver remain and have been realigned under new directorates. There is now clear separation between the strategic functions which support the ambitions of Hampshire as a place (Hampshire 2050) and the delivery of services that universally are provided to residents (Universal Services). Consequently, and for the purposes of this workforce report, our people priorities are aligned to these new directorates.

Hampshire 2050

In Hampshire 2050, an increased emphasis has been placed on the recruitment and retention of our people as workforce capacity continues to be a challenge for some specialist professions e.g. Planning Officers and Transport Planners. There are many contributing factors including national skills shortages coupled with a very competitive market, which is driving demand and fuelling enhanced remuneration packages and greater flexible working opportunities by the private sector. Strategies aimed at increasing the potential pool of available talent, defining and profiling our employee value proposition, reviewing attraction strategies for hard to fill roles, and maximising career pathways are some of the interventions deployed in support of an optimum workforce that can meet the future needs of the directorate.

Whilst in its infancy, Hampshire 2050 is also seeking to harness insight from our people, share knowledge and collaborate to aid learning across the new directorate. This is to help unite the collective workforce in how the directorate works, from the way our people think strategically and take decisions on behalf of the Council, to the accountability jointly held in delivering services to the people of Hampshire and our partners.

Universal Services

The Universal Services' directorate has continued to be opportunistic in developing creative and agile delivery models. It has taken learning from its previous experiences, making greater use of digital capabilities, and with appropriate strategies applied this which has enabled the directorate to maintain service delivery whilst working differently. This has required significant innovation, resilience, and flexibility from the workforce. Despite the challenges, there has been valuable learning and improvement resulting from alternative ways of working and service innovation.

Furthermore, the directorate's senior leadership team has focussed on maximising staff engagement, helping people to maintain their mental wellbeing and a healthy work life balance to continue to thrive during periods of significant change.

There has been significant investment in our people to continue to build capability and capacity fit for the future, in recognition of recruitment and retention challenges and to support a continuous talent pipeline. Our increased investment in diversifying and expanding our apprenticeship offer and increasing the number of graduate placements in respect of civil engineering during the last year (30 individuals currently participating in an engineering qualification) is directly contributing to growing our own talent base, particularly in professions which

are in high demand and where we continue to experience significant recruitment and retention challenges. We continue to be the only Local Authority in the southeast offering a Civil Engineering Scholarship Scheme including a year in industry placement. Our work in the apprenticeship space extends beyond engineering to include increased apprenticeships and graduate placements for quantity surveyors, generalist graduates and project managers, roles which are core to the directorate and our future workforce supply.

Occupation-specific attraction strategies, defining and profiling our employee value proposition, radical overhaul of recruitment for hard to fill roles, and maximising career pathways are some of the other interventions deployed in support of an optimum workforce that can meet the future needs of the directorate.

Inclusion and wellbeing

Our 'why' in terms of inclusion is rooted in our lived experiences. We want people to feel included, so that we work and live in an environment where innovation, engagement and productivity are maximised, and where diverse views and experiences are combined with an inclusive culture to drive better decision-making, increase agility and strengthen resilience. Put simply, our 'why' is about maximising the positive impact of all our differences to achieve meaningful outcomes for everyone.

We achieve and deliver inclusivity by:

- adhering to the Equality Act;
- subjecting ourselves to good governance and oversight;
- being clear about what we mean and doing what we say we will do.

Results from the 2021 Inclusion and Wellbeing Survey have helped inform our Inclusion, Diversity and Wellbeing Priorities that we reported in last year's report. These have progressed over the last 12-months, as shown in **Appendix one**.

In October 2022, together with the Staff Networks we published our Staff Networks Charter, which shows our joint commitments as an inclusive organisation.

In November 2022, we updated the questions we ask staff to complete in regard to their personal information in relation to disability, religion/belief, ethnicity, and gender identity to ensure these align to civil service standards. In March 2023, we developed this even further by adding new fields relating to carer responsibilities and armed forces status. To give staff time to update their personal information, we will publish this additional detail in next year's report along with our employee data in the **'Our people' section** of this report.

Directorates continue to promote inclusion, diversity and wellbeing and have placed an increased emphasis on this through multiple interventions to raise knowledge, understanding and profiling. This ensures inclusion, diversity and wellbeing forms part of our culture, everyday thinking and activity and supports our people to deliver accessible and inclusive services where staff and customer needs and expectations are met.

Our Wellbeing Programme continues to be significant, developing well and receiving positive feedback from managers and staff across the Council.

There are **three key aims** in the Wellbeing Programme:

- embedding health and wellbeing in the organisation;
- progressing the Wellbeing Session Schedule;
- continuing to provide manager support and toolkits.

Through these aims we have created and delivered a programme of mental, physical, and financial wellbeing sessions for employees. The schedule is mindful of key national campaigns, guided by organisational need and continues to be flexible.

Other aims include helping to create a culture where employees feel confident and comfortable to speak about their wellbeing and know how to seek help, if required. We want to empower colleagues to learn for themselves, explore creating healthy habits and/or share tips and techniques to support wellbeing. We do this through raising and increasing awareness of the resources available and relevant signposting.

In October 2022, we signed up to **The Menopause Workplace Pledge**, we have committed to:

- recognising that the menopause can be an issue in the workplace and women need support;
- talking openly, positively and respectfully about the menopause;
- actively supporting and informing employees affected by the menopause.

Zero tolerance

Treating each other with respect and kindness is a basic expectation at Hampshire County Council, and we all have a responsibility to ensure people are being treated equally around us. This matters for two reasons, firstly because it is simply the right thing to do, we are all human; and secondly because our organisation functions at its best when everyone feels respected. People cannot give their best unless they feel safe and welcome. From our Inclusion Strategy, we know our organisation performs most highly when we value diversity, and actively promote equality.

As an organisation we are committed to being anti-discriminatory, to ensure zero tolerance of harassment, discrimination, bullying and abuse and to respond promptly to any incidents of these.

We published our **Zero Tolerance** Statement in July 2021 and are continuing to communicate this widely across the Council through two workstreams:

- **Awareness** – developing internal and external campaigns raising awareness amongst our staff, customers/service users and providers/partners of our Zero Tolerance Statement and associated policies, reporting mechanisms and expected behaviours.
- **Supporting** – developing and reinforcing existing mechanisms to support our staff, managers and providers/partners/suppliers when dealing with Zero Tolerance incidents.

Our extended organisation

Our extending organisation can be seen in **Appendix three** and we continue to evolve.

It has been nine years since the creation of our public sector Shared Services Partnership, and it has been proven as an efficient and successful model for operating public services, having brought benefits to the communities we serve by making effective use of limited public funds to enable resources to be focused on the delivery of important local services.

Due to the changing national strategic and operational landscape of Police and Fire Services, a decision was taken in January 2023 to return some services to our partners. These changes will be progressed through a programme of work during 2023 to 2024.

Shared transactional services delivered by our Integrated Business Centre (IBC) (**Appendix three**) continue to provide transactional finance, transactional HR and payroll and these are unimpacted by the changes referred to.

Employee lifecycle

Strategic Workforce Planning Programme

The Strategic Workforce Planning Programme was set up in September 2022. The programme is governed by a Corporate Management Team Strategic Workforce Board. The programme is structured around the employee lifecycle and its purpose is to ensure that the Council is appropriately positioned to balance its labour supply in line with service demand/need, to maintain and deliver excellent services. As referenced by all directorates in the 'At a glance' section, recruitment and retention has been and remains a key focus for us as an organisation.

The workstreams identified for this programme align with the full employee lifecycle, recognising that challenges and issues exist within each stage which need to be addressed to ensure that the Council can achieve a competitive edge in the market, and become an employer of choice.

Key actions were identified for the Strategic Workforce Planning Programme, and all are progressing well, these are shown in **Appendix one**.



Attract

Being an inclusive employer of choice

Being an inclusive employer of choice enables us to both attract new employees and to encourage existing employees to seek new challenges within our organisation.

It means being attractive to as diverse a pool of applicants as possible, whose varied backgrounds and experiences are reflective of the people we serve and contribute to the continuing evolution of how we deliver our services and perform as an organisation.

In the context of the recent COVID-19 pandemic and the current cost of living crisis, **'Attract'** has been a particular challenge and therefore a particular focus in this reporting year as we strive to remain an employer of choice within an increasingly competitive recruitment environment.

The recruitment landscape

The number of roles we advertised in 2022 to 2023 (2,440) was akin to the previous year (2,453) and continued to reflect the full range of services the Council delivers. Directorate workforce data tells us that the profile of recruitment 'hot spots' (roles which have a lot of vacancies, a high turnover and may be hard to fill) remains the same as in recent years, including, for example, care assistants, nurses, cooks, catering assistants and social

workers. 31% of all roles advertised were in Schools catering and 9% were for administrative roles.

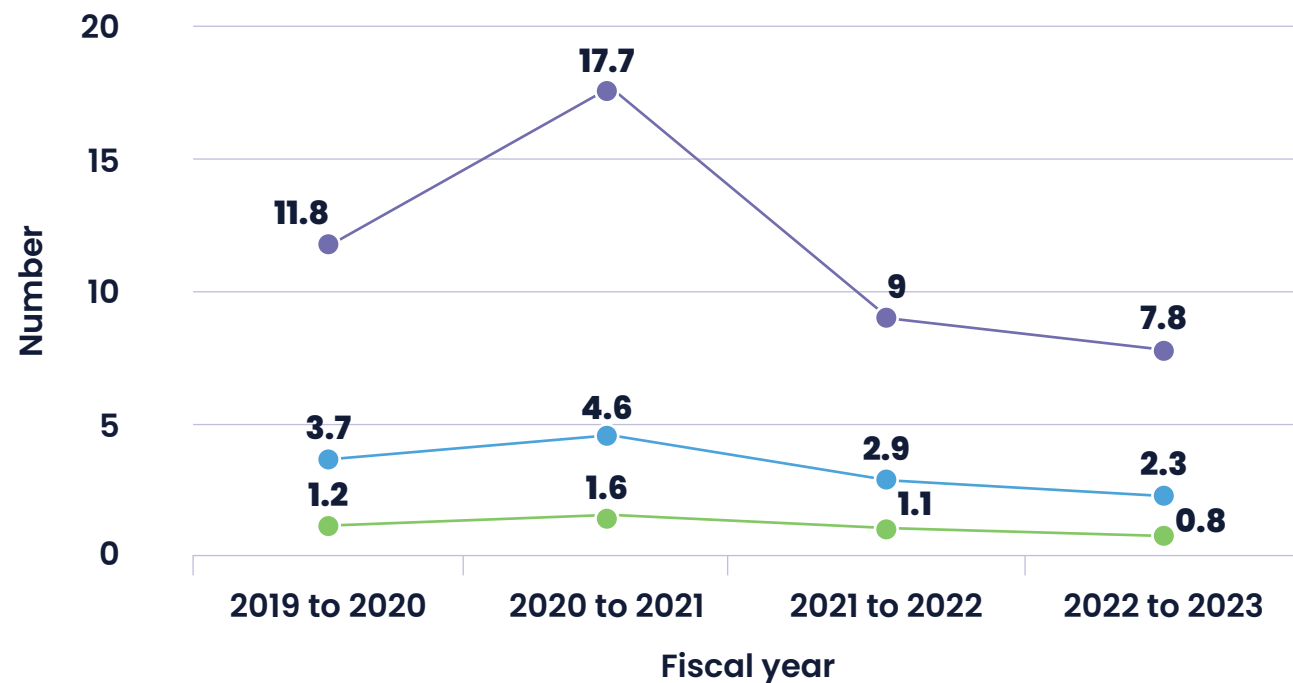
Overall, both the number of applications (19,131) and the average number of applications per role (7.8) decreased across this reporting year. Both continue to remain lower than the number received before the pandemic as shown in the next graph.

The trend described in the previous graph is broadly mirrored in the next graph, showing the UK unemployment rates (Office for National Statistics). Unemployment initially surged following the first lockdown in March 2020 (subsequently stabilised by furlough) and remained elevated but steady going into 2021 (peaking at 5.1% in the 12-months to June 2021), and we also saw a peak in applications over a similar period. As social distancing restrictions were eased the economy rebounded and the unemployment rate began to gradually fall in 2021 to 2022, as did our applications and both trends have normalised over the past 12-months.

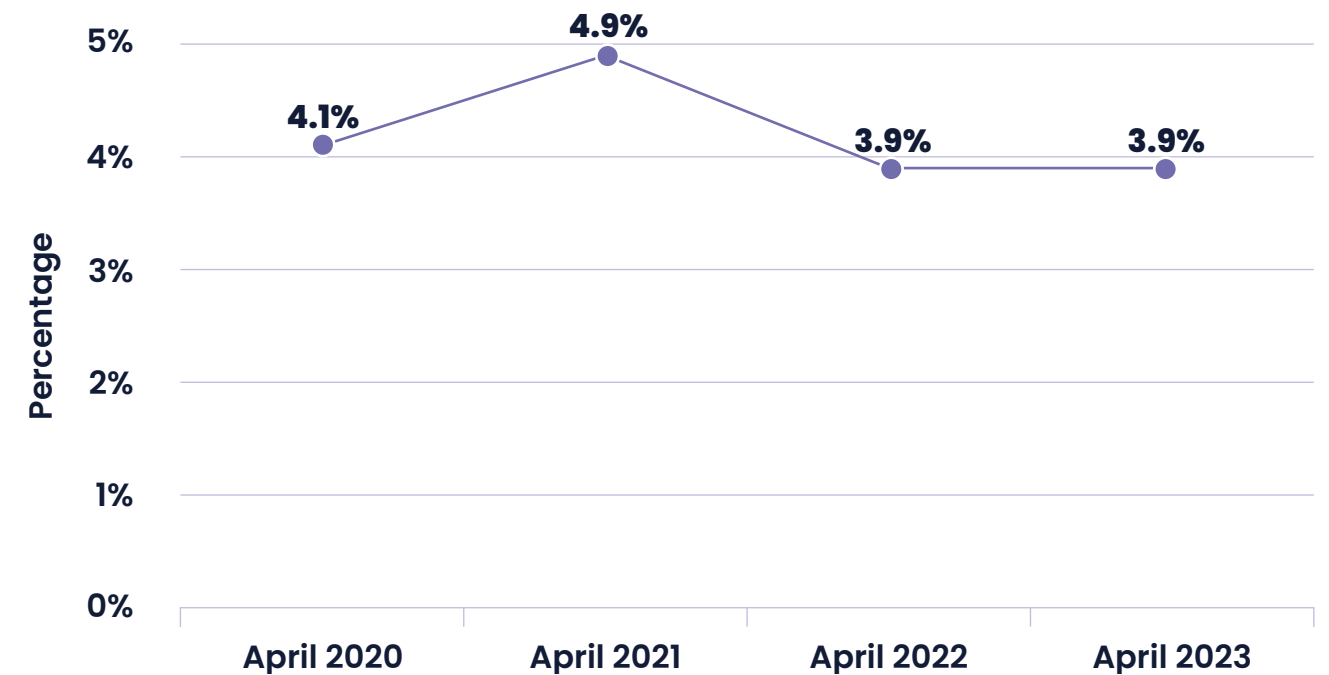
Our application intensity rate has yet to return to pre-pandemic levels, possibly because of a tight labour market and skills gaps as workers left the workforce or moved to other sectors (e.g. care workers incentivised by higher wages in the private sector). However, unemployed claimant counts in 2023 point to rising unemployment as inflationary pressures increasingly impact on businesses, and the private sector may become more cautious about hiring due to economic uncertainty. If unemployment rises as forecast by the Office for Budget Responsibility and the Bank of England, then applications to the County may begin to rise.

3 Number of applications, shortlisted and hires over time

- Applications
- Shortlisted
- Hires



4 National unemployment rates



The proportion of applicants shortlisted for assessment or interview in 2022 to 2023 decreased slightly, to 29%, from 32% in the previous year. This may reflect the quality of external applicants as internal applicant shortlisting remained stable at 16% (versus 15% in 2021 to 2022).

Of the 5,605 applicants shortlisted, 37% (2,049) were hired, versus 39% last year, indicating that generally we remained able to find applicants we felt were suitable, despite the challenging context and the smaller pool of applicants.

However, whilst we have received more applications for some roles, our areas of recruitment difficulty in others (e.g. social work and care assistants) remains consistent.

Diversity of our applicants

Age

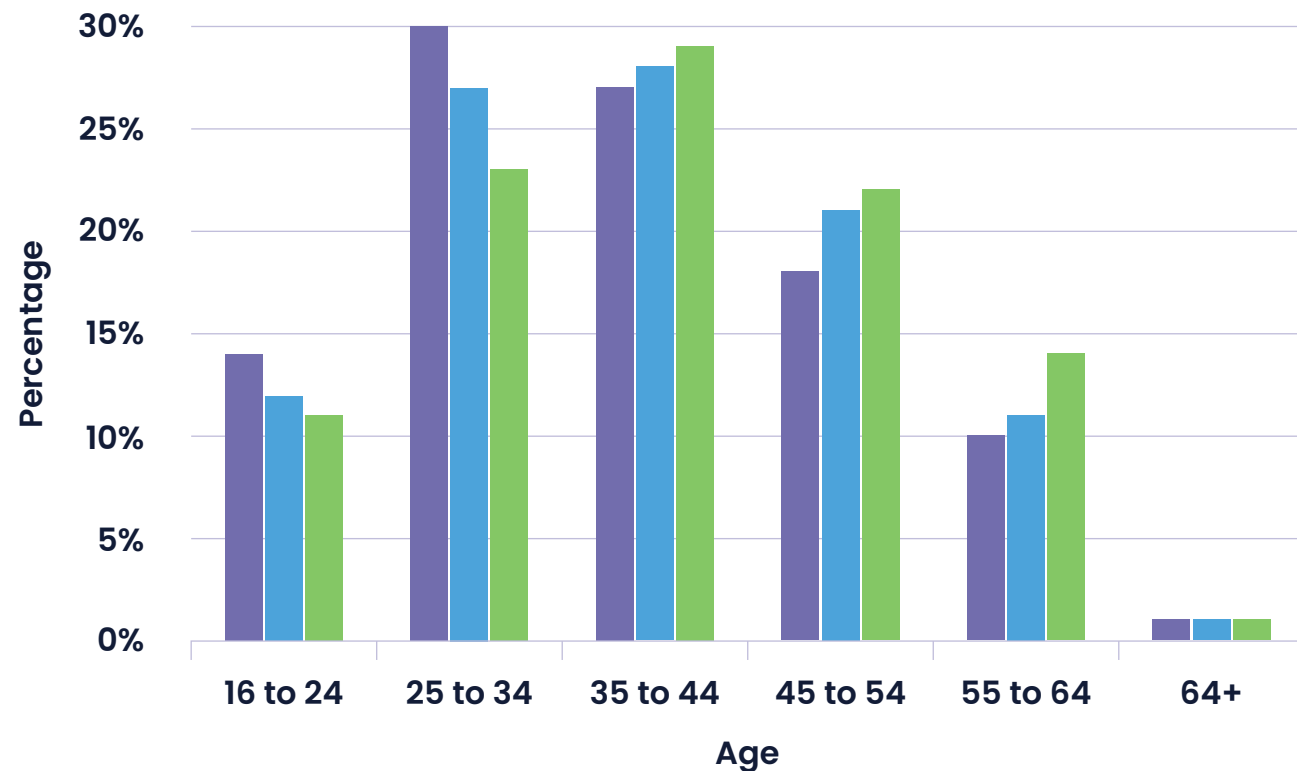
Our applicant profile leans towards the younger end of the market, with 44% of applicants under 35 years of age, compared to 27% aged 35-44 and 29% aged over 45. However, relative to the number of applications, the graph below shows younger applicants have been less likely to be shortlisted and hired. Only 8%

of 16-34 year old applicants were hired, compared to 14% for all other ages.

Within the 55 to 64 age group, 41% of applications and 49% of hires were made to A, B or C grades.

5 Age breakdown by applications, shortlisted and hires

- Applications
- Shortlisted
- Hires



Disability

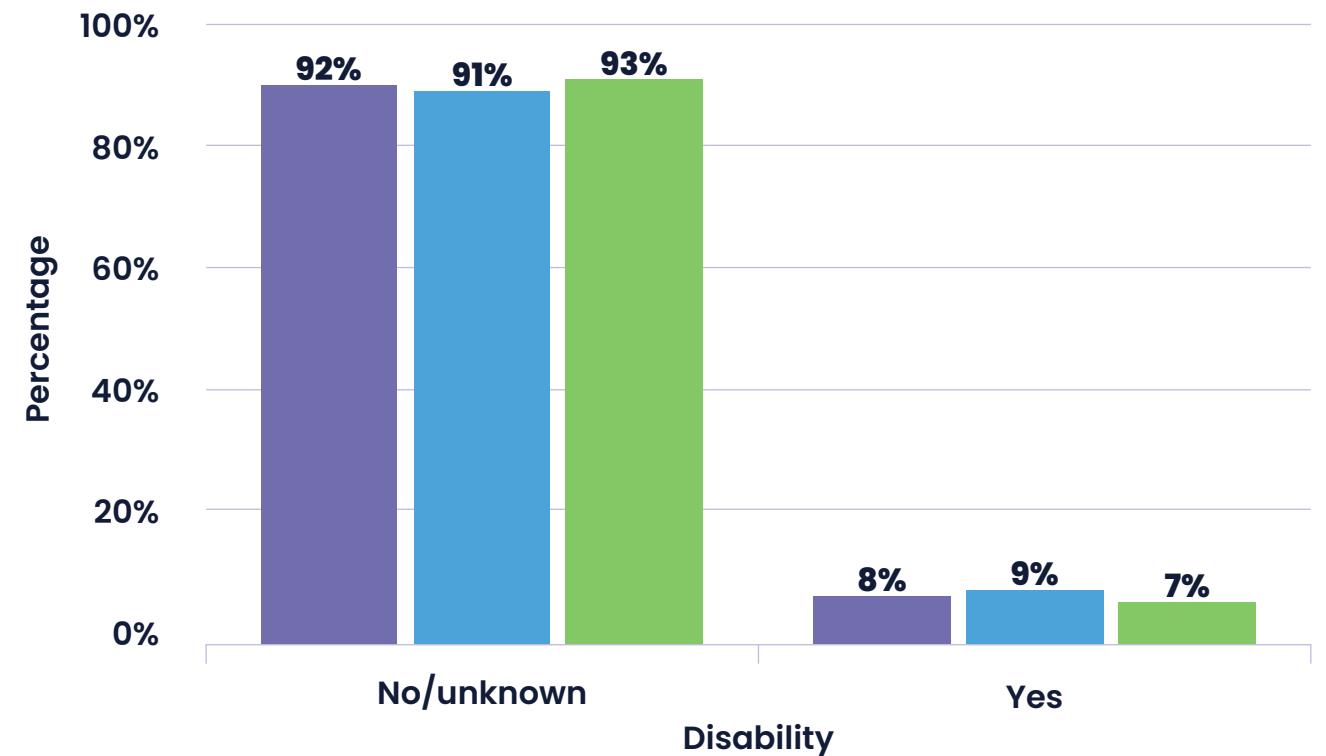
8% of our applicants declared a disability, rising to 9% of shortlisted applicants, but reducing to 7% amongst hired applicants, albeit that this is a slight increase from 6% hired last year.

The proportion of applicants declaring a disability through their

applications is notably higher than the representation of employees declaring a disability at the Council (5.4%), which suggests that Hampshire County Council may be viewed as an inclusive place to work as a **Disability Confident Committed Employer**.

6 Disability breakdown by applications, shortlisted and hires

- Applications
- Shortlisted
- Hires



Ethnicity

The ethnicity breakdown of applicants shows that 85% were white applicants and 15% ethnic minority applicants, a slight fall from 17% in the previous year. The proportion of ethnic minority applicants shortlisted reduced from 12% last year to 9% this year. Hired applicants reduced from 9% to 7%.

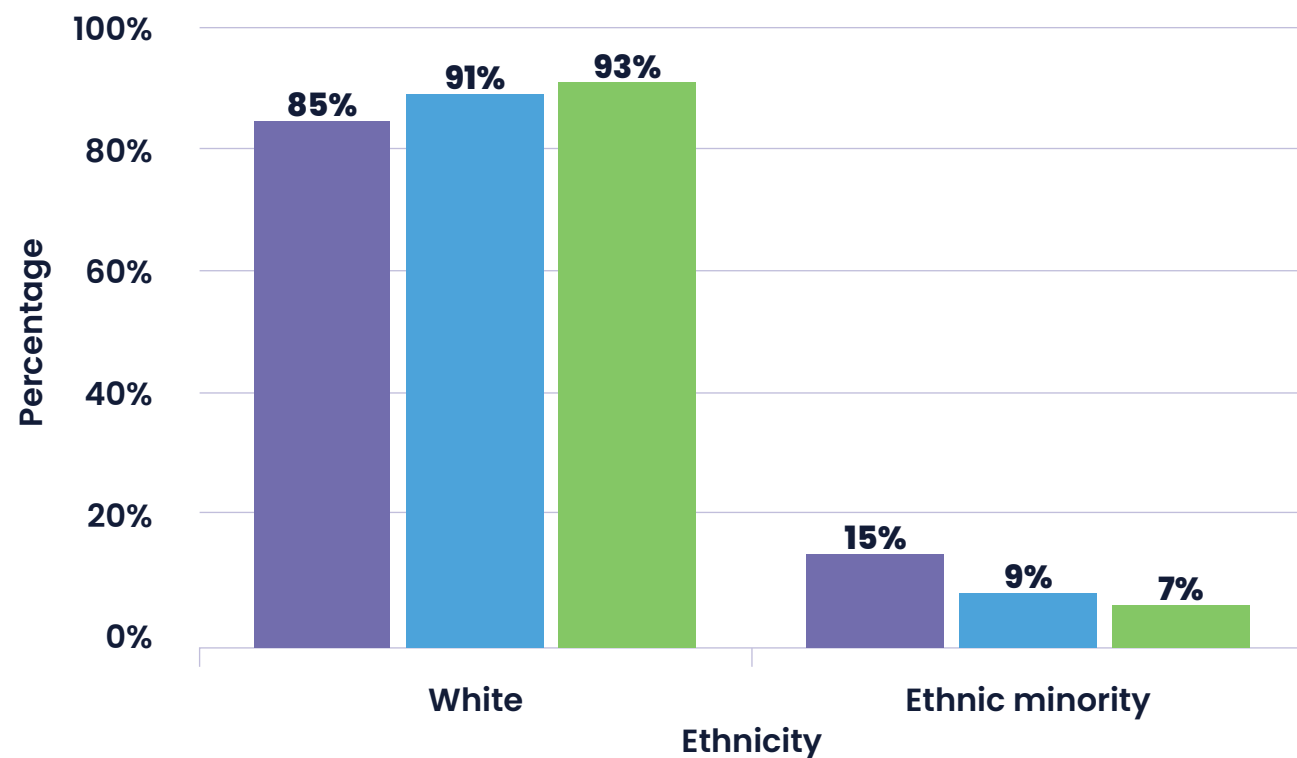
In this reporting year 17% of applications to H+ grade roles were from ethnic minorities, a reduction from 19% last year. Out of these ethnic minority applicants, 33% were female, this has reduced from 45%

last year. We shortlisted 11% of ethnic minority applicants, this is a slight reduction on 12% last year. We hired 16% of ethnic minority applicants an increase from 3% last year. However, it should be noted that this is a small sample and relates to nine hires to H+ grades from ethnic minority applicants, so is prone to highly fluctuate.

As shown in 'An overview of changes 2022 to 2023', our ethnic minority representation in H+ grades has increased from 3.3% to 3.6%.

7 Ethnicity breakdown by applications, shortlisted and hires

- Applications
- Shortlisted
- Hires

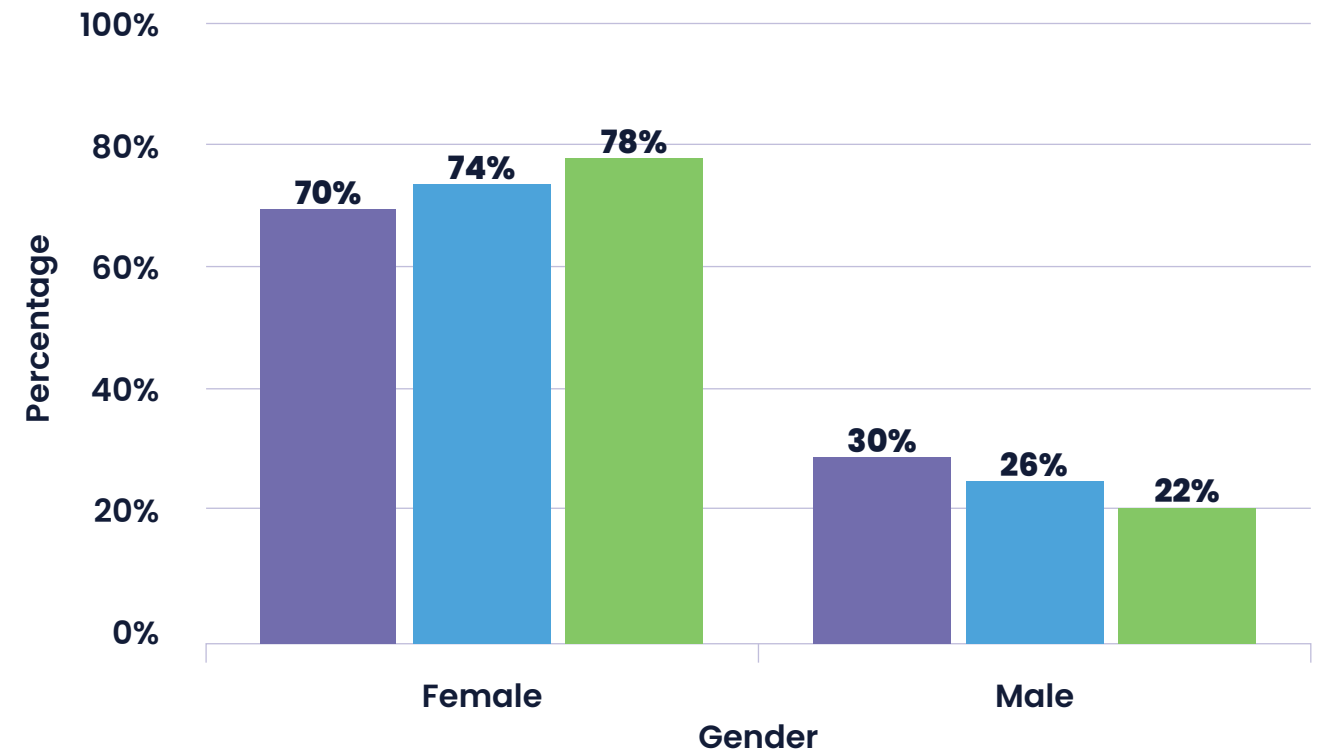


Gender

Applicant gender remains on a par with the previous two years. We continue to attract more female than male applicants and remain more likely to short list and hire females into the Council.

8 Gender breakdown by applications, shortlisted and hires

- Applications
- Shortlisted
- Hires



Sexual orientation

Minority sexual orientations make up 7% of applicants, 7% of those shortlisted, and 5% of hires. In analysing the sexual orientation profile of our new staff, we can see that our profile remains similar to last year. However, there is a reduction at hiring to 5%. The Census 2021 notes 3.3% of all Hampshire residents declare minority sexual orientations. Applicants declaring minority sexual orientations are more likely to be in the younger age categories, and therefore may be less likely to get shortlisted and hired due to their age.

Internal versus external applications

Of the 19,131 applications received in 2022 to 2023, 11% (2,053) were from internal employees, slightly higher than 10% last year.

Internal applicants make up 16% of those shortlisted (884), a minimal increase on last year (15%). Internal applicants are 2.9 times more likely to be hired than external applicants (up from 2.3 last year).

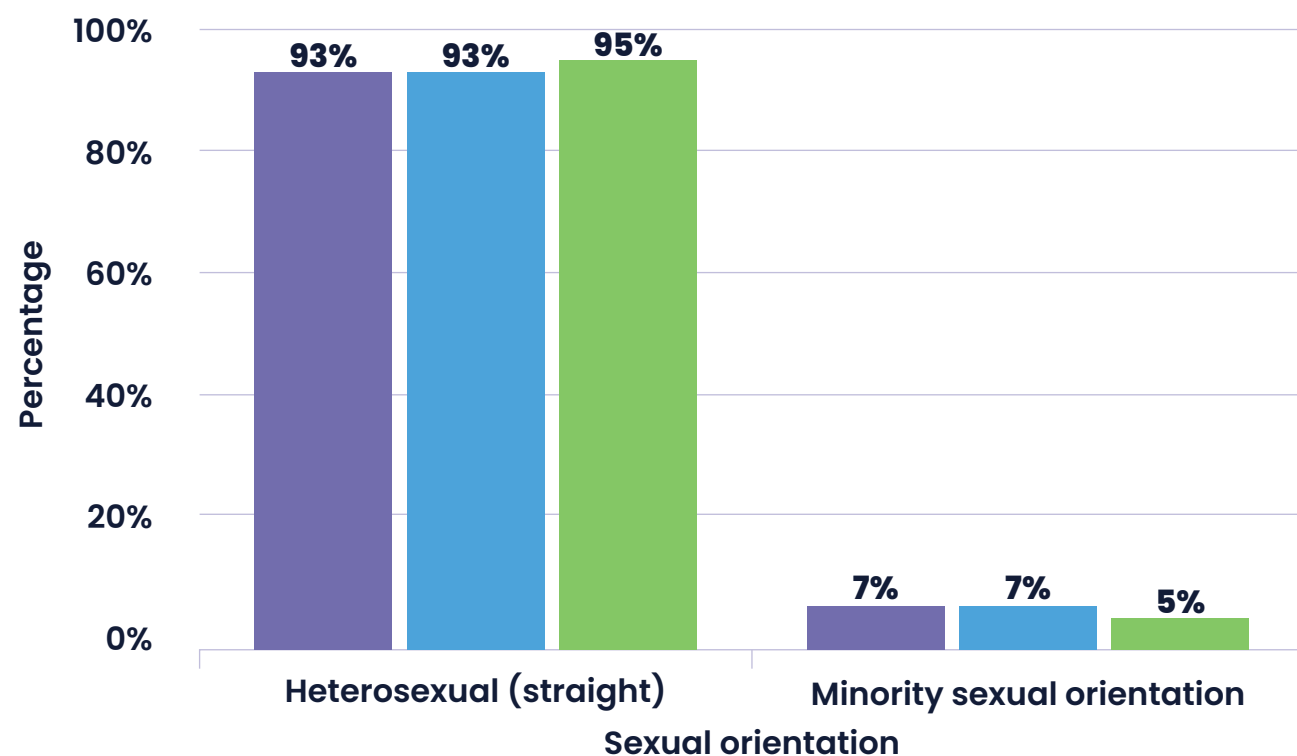
Ensuring we are positioned as an inclusive employer of choice

Our core recruitment portfolio comprises digital campaigns, attendance at face-to-face careers events, delivery of professional development opportunities and hosting of regional events. Given the challenging context, in this reporting year we have been developing different strategies to attract applicants to the Council. Many of these have been informed by insight work to understand the applicant experience, test marketing concepts, approaches and materials and identify target profiles.

has commissioned projects to explore how we engage with colleges, universities and schools to attract young people, and to understand external organisational approaches to recruitment of hard to fill occupations to inform a future recruitment strategy. Furthermore, attendance at careers events and recruitment fairs has expanded to promote roles in engineering, catering and countryside specialisms.

9 Sexual orientation breakdown by applications, shortlisted, hires

- Applications
- Shortlisted
- Hires



- Adults' Health and Care has invested significantly in marketing and branding, with presence at recruitment events and the use of social media. This, coupled with a clear commitment to flexible working, wellbeing, vocational and professional development has helped 'sell' Adults' Health and Care as a great place to work.
- Children's Services has expanded numbers undertaking the social work apprenticeship, and work with the University of Winchester around the accreditation of prior learning, meaning that many apprentices can now complete their social work degree in two (rather than the normal three) years and therefore start practicing sooner.
- Universal Services has extended its social media profile and position making it more competitive in the recruitment market and

- Corporate Operations has also been attending career fairs at universities and recruitment fairs to attract applicants to roles and promote graduate schemes.

In January 2023, we launched our new '**Benefits for joining Hampshire County Council**' website with a clear and consistent message about our existing Employee Value Proposition and organisational narrative to position ourselves as an attractive organisation to potential applicants.

Values Based Recruitment has been adopted across the organisation to attract applicants where roles are considered hard to fill and prioritised action is required. With the introduction of our organisation vision and values, there is an increased focus on using lived experience to recruit people who share the organisation's vision, are aligned to our values and equally support employee retention by making sure we are the right organisation for individuals.

Resource

Facilitate all available talent to apply

As with all large organisations our workforce strategies enable the effective deployment of a range of resourcing options recognising that no one option would work across the breadth of services we deliver.

We offer a range of contracts, opportunities for progression, financial rewards and flexible working options to consider individual and

market circumstances and ensure that all our roles are fully resourced with the best available talent.

Our current workforce

Our workforce comprises permanent and temporary employees, apprentices, agency workers, casual/bank workers, sponsored overseas workers and external contractors or consultants.

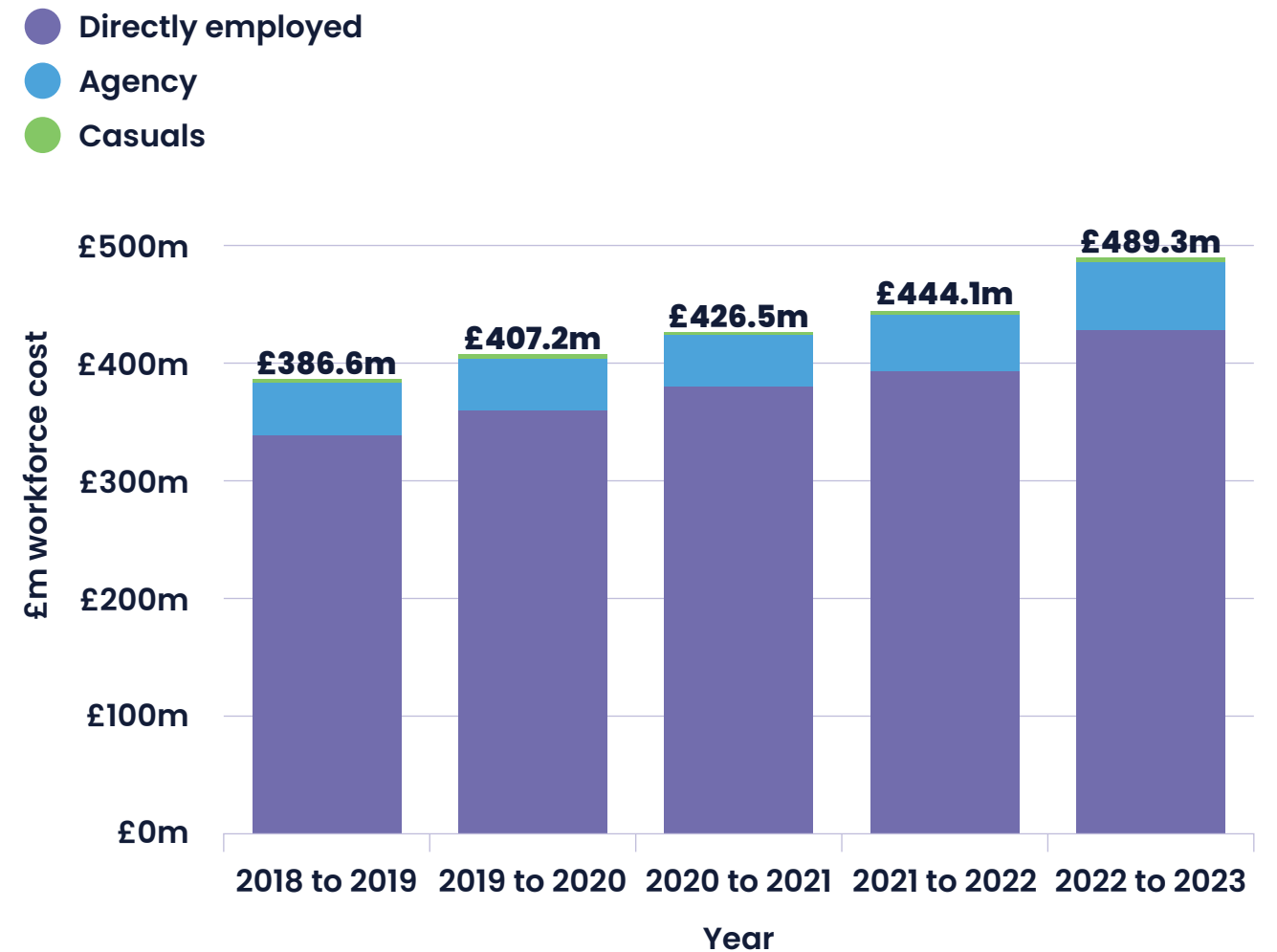
The chart below shows our total workforce costs, split by our workforce 'resource' type:

- directly employed (permanent/temporary);
- agency (Connect2Hampshire/contractors/consultants);
- casual workers.

At the end of March 2023, 86% of our workforce costs were for directly employed staff, 14% were agency workers and casual workers. Using agency and casual workers enables flexible management of resource and costs to meet demand across services and allows us to take advantage of specialist expertise.

It should be noted that our overall directly employed costs have increased compared to the previous year as shown in the graph. Managers have been utilising annualised hours contracts to respond to their resourcing challenges, this has increased our directly employed workforce costs, however, has reduced the requirements to rely on casual workers. Our agency worker costs have also increased, due to a change in how we manage our casual workers. Previously casual workers were recruited and managed directly by the Council, but since July 2022 Connect2Hampshire has managed the recruitment of these workers (now referred to as bank workers), meaning they are now captured as part of our agency workforce costs.

10 Total workforce costs £m



Connect to Hampshire (C2H)

Connect2Hampshire is a joint venture partnership between Hampshire County Council and Commercial Services Kent Ltd (a wholly owned subsidiary of Kent County Council) which performs a fundamental role in sourcing temporary workers to supplement and support the Council's permanent workforce.

The number of applicants applying to work through Connect2Hampshire over the first nine-months of 2022 to 2023 decreased. We have worked collaboratively with Connect2Hampshire to identify alternative ways to promote the agency and to attract new applicants, for example through eye-catching social media campaigns, which have helped fill some harder to recruit agency roles to support Children's Services. Connect2Hampshire has also made strong links with the Job Centres in Hampshire and attended recruitment fairs – both approaches helping to fill school passenger assistant and catering vacancies.

During 2022 to 2023, the number of temporary roles advertised by Connect2Hampshire rose very slightly. This was mainly in relation to administrative and qualified/unqualified care roles, with a reduction in other areas such as

technical IT positions. In the last three-months of the financial year, demand has increased for administrative roles, and Connect2Hampshire has observed an increase in applications received for these opportunities.

Connect2Hampshire also continues to provide a key role in sourcing Qualified Social Worker applicants for the Council, due to the ongoing national workforce challenges and high demand for these skills across the UK. As part of our combined response, Connect2Hampshire also align with the Memorandum of Corporation in place across councils in the South region, which seeks to align the pay of children's Qualified Social Workers and reduce the movement of children's social workers from council to council.

In response to the changing needs of the Council, Connect2Hampshire has recently increased the size, skills and capability of its team, to ensure that they are effectively resourced and able to meet future levels of demand. An example of this is the new requirement for Connect2Hampshire to take on the management of the Council's casual vacancies and to recruit bank workers from July 2022.

Sponsorship of overseas workers

In November 2022, we amended our Recruitment Policy to allow the sponsorship of overseas workers in a greater number of roles. Sponsoring workers gives them the right to work in the UK if they do not have an alternative route to do so.

This change means that managers can now sponsor workers in roles on the wider Skilled Worker List, thereby providing a greater pool from which to recruit. This is particularly useful for Council roles that are either listed as critical or difficult to fill (and therefore likely to be critical roles in future).

We have sponsored circa 0.5% of our workforce, most of which are concentrated in roles related to social work, for example:

- overseas recruitment in the Adults' Health and Care directorate has focused on securing qualified professional staff (Nurses, Occupational Therapists) and more recently Care Assistants – whose salaries are now within the sponsorship threshold;

- the Children's Services directorate has also built upon the existing approach to recruitment of overseas Social Workers by entering into a contract with an employment agency to deliver increased numbers of permanent experienced overseas children's social workers with five out of the initial cohort of 25 having started work.

Market supplements

Where appropriate the Council will consider market supplements to ensure key roles are fully resourced. These are temporary payments that take account of published market pay and turnover data and other evidence supporting the business case.

Regular reviews of market supplements are undertaken by directorates and Corporate Management Team to help identify and address specific pressures in staff recruitment and retention.

Over the last six-months, as part of the Strategic Workforce Planning Programme, a specific review was undertaken by directorates to review the market supplements of critical roles and whether pay impacted recruitment and retention into these. From this review, we know that there are 40 roles where it is particularly difficult to recruit and retain staff, nine of which are newly identified. These roles can attract market supplements where appropriate in recognition of highly sought after or specific skill shortages. Work continues to analyse the impact of the market supplements on recruitment and retention in these roles, and to consider if any further roles could benefit from this approach.

Having reviewed and revised the market supplements that apply to nursing and social work staff in 2021 to 2022, a new market supplement was introduced in September 2022 for Care Assistant staff which has positively impacted recruitment and retention, increasing the substantive care workforce and reducing the reliance on agency workers. A market supplement was also introduced for Occupational Therapists given the significant number of vacancies, circa 50%. Whilst a definitive linkage cannot be asserted, it is notable that shortly after the market supplement was agreed the service was able to appoint several staff to long standing vacancies. It is hoped that as well as improving 'attraction' the market supplement will also assist with the retention of Occupational Therapy staff.

Children's Services are monitoring the impact of new market supplement arrangements introduced for social workers which included allowances differentiated by role and team, introduction of a senior social worker role and a retention payment on completion of the graduate entry training scheme. Over the last year since the introduction of these arrangements social worker turnover has stabilised and has started a slow downward trend.

Also, within Children's Services new market supplements have been introduced for residential children's home staff, occupational therapists and independent reviewing officers. The arrangements for residential children's home practitioners have also included recruitment and retention payments. It is too early to understand the impact of these developments, however, there are some early signs of improvement in our recruitment of children's home practitioners.

There are also continued pressures in recruiting to many professional roles and specialisms such as planning,

engineering, transport professionals, surveyors, architects, countryside rangers, arborists, trading standards officers and vehicle technicians. The market for the recruitment of these professions remains very competitive and has been exacerbated further in the last two years because of national skills shortages, demand outstripping supply and the consequential impact resulting in significantly increased remuneration predominately in the private sector. Recruitment and retention strategies are being applied with a review of market supplements implemented for high-risk roles.

Secondments, acting up arrangements, and promotions

Another way in which we resource our workforce is to provide 'acting up' roles, secondments, and promotions for Council employees. During the last 12-months there have been approximately 1,271 employees securing such roles.

Flexible ways of working

In June 2021, the Council introduced an Open Workplace Policy. This flexible framework set out the key requirements and considerations that enable both managers and staff to work from Council premises, from home, or from other suitable alternative locations (as agreed by managers and the business).

The policy recognised that, although most staff would continue to be required to work from their designated workplace or other Council premises all or part of the time, some roles could, at times, be effectively carried out from home or an alternative location.

A staff survey undertaken in July 2022 provided confirmation that the policy works well, and the Council has begun to see that working more flexibly has potential for great benefits, both to business operations and to the wellbeing of staff. Desk-based staff are balancing office time effectively alongside more home working, managers say their teams are performing well, and most people say they are feeling the benefits of more flexibility, including an improved work/life balance, and reduced time and cost pressures.

Hybrid working is now established and consolidated into business-as-usual operations across directorates. Although services delivered directly to the people of Hampshire continue to be conducted primarily face to face, many office-based staff work flexibly between home and office locations, with careful consideration being given to working from the office 'with a purpose'. For example, teams working in the office on the same days, or for face-to-face development sessions and collaboration events.

The hybrid way of working has seen high performance levels continue and is an asset in our recruitment and retention space.

Onboard

**Making sure people are
welcomed and inducted**

In 2022 to 2023 there were 2,094 external new starters to the Council, compared to 1,956 last year. The workforce profile of new external starters is broadly in line with the organisational profile.

All new permanent and temporary staff who join the Council are 'inducted' into the Council through a formal 'induction process' that is led and facilitated by their new line manager. This remains the case whether the induction is conducted virtually or in person.

The 'Welcome to Hampshire' e-learning module of the corporate induction has now been launched, following input from recent new starters to help inform its content and development. The module reflects the current culture of the organisation and its corporate priorities, helping new staff to understand how their individual contribution will support the work of the Council.

In addition to specific role induction, directorates have also continued to provide information and context in respect of their specific service and directorate.

The Chief Executive continues to meet with new starters to the Council to find out more about their experiences. These meetings are scheduled bi-annually, and feedback indicates that the new starters were positive about their experience of joining the Council. Feedback received provided experiences

about the recruitment processes and confirmed that the new starters had joined friendly, supportive teams where colleagues across the Council were receptive to helping them. The insight gathered from these meetings will continue to develop our approach to recruiting and welcoming new starters, as well as to inform how we may be able to further improve our approach to attracting new talent into the Council.

The insights team has conducted a range of work to inform recruitment and retention initiatives for individual services. This may provide wider learning for the organisation especially as it seeks to recruit and retain staff with common skills, experiences and competing opportunities. Recent projects have informed recruitment and/or retention approaches in:

- early years;
- foster care;
- adults' services care roles;
- children's residential care;
- school transport assistants;
- Public Health nursing.

Leavers in the first three-months

111 employees (6%) left the Council in the first three-months of employment, this is a reduction on last year (136).

We know that 97% of employees leaving in the first three-months did

so for voluntary reasons. However, further insight into these reasons may enable us to retain more employees longer into their employment.

11 Leaver reasons in the first three-months

Leaver reasons	External Leavers in the first three-months of employment
Involuntary	3
Dismiss	2
TUPE Transfer	1
Voluntary	108
Resign	108
Total	111

TUPE – Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)

Only 3% of external leavers who left within three-months of joining completed the leaver questionnaire.

Work continues in directorates to encourage leavers to complete the leaver questionnaire.

Develop

Supporting our people to grow, develop and learn

As noted in previous years, there are links between an organisation's approach to personal development and the positive impact on retention and indeed organisational performance. This is evident in the participant progression data from the Firefly and TLP development programmes shown in the following pages.

Professional development is provided by directorate learning and development teams. However, we also provide cross organisational learning and development

opportunities, the key one being access to the Leadership and Management Development team, who provide a variety of development interventions including learning resources, digital content and development events.

Leadership and Management Development

The Hampshire Leaders Network (HLN)

The Hampshire Leaders Network (HLN) provides H+ grade members with a variety of opportunities to network with peers, engage with other senior leaders, learn from internal and external specialists, share real and relevant learning and connect digitally. HLN activities include small group events such as monthly conversations with our Chief Executive; talks by external and internal specialists; and large group events such as the Chief Executive's Senior Managers' Briefing.

During 2022 to 2023 HLN met virtually and in person, with over 1,330 staff attending HLN events. Online events, which have included regular Teams meetings with our Chief Executive, and the use of Microsoft Teams Live, have enabled senior leaders to attend and engage virtually in senior management briefings. In person events included an HLN 'Speakers' Corner' session sharing internal expertise across the Council in an event led by the HCC Climate Change Strategy team.

There were three Chief Executive's Senior Managers' Briefings during 2022 to 2023. Each one provides senior leaders with the opportunity to hear a strategic update from our Chief Executive, and to be briefed by other CMT members on cross-cutting organisational and/or directorate priorities.

To date HLN has provided the Council with an identifiable group of senior leaders (grade H+) to engage with on key strategic issues, operational priorities and cross-cutting themes to consider as leadership peers and/or to cascade within their wider teams. For HLN members, key benefits include opportunities to connect and learn from other leaders across the Council which helps build resilience and support, leading to greater collaboration and an appreciation of the wider organisation they are a part of.

Transformative Leadership Programme (TLP)

The latest cohort of the Council's ten-month transformative leadership development programme (TLP 2021 to 2022) which enrolled in July 2021, closed in June 2022.

There were 83 participants in total, nominated from the HLN cohort (H-grade and higher) by Directorate Management Teams.

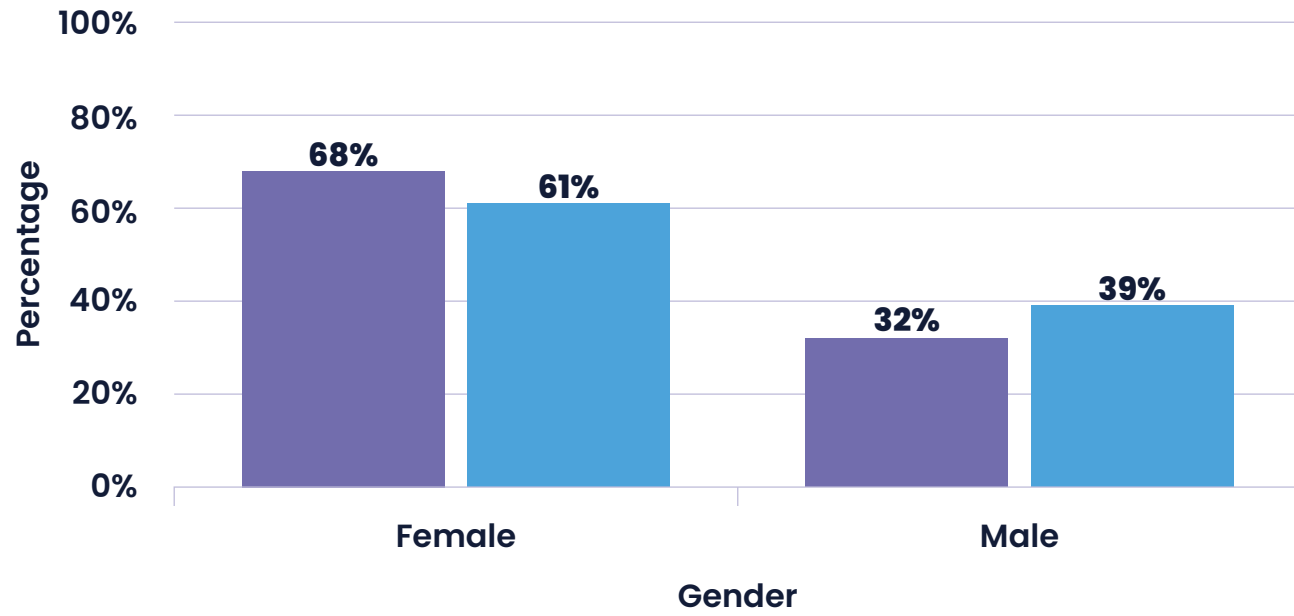
A comparison of TLP 2021 to 2022 participant data relative to the proportion of Hampshire Leaders Network (HLN) participant data reveals that the TLP profile had a higher representation of females, younger managers, managers with a stated disability and a slightly higher representation of ethnic minority groups than the HLN cohort overall.

Progression data for the TLP 2021 to 2022 cohort is not available to include in this report, because it is collated 12-months after the programme closes but will be reported in next year's report.

Diversity profiles of TLP 2021 to 2022 participants in comparison with our organisational profile of H+ grades are shown in the following graphs.

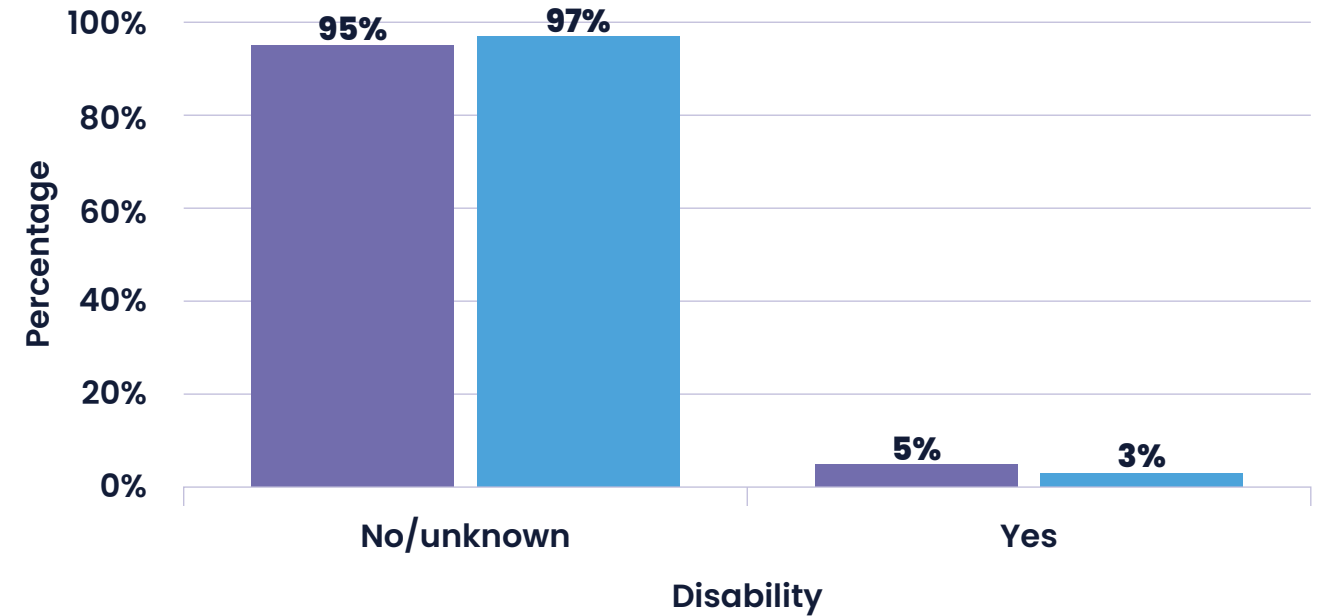
12 Gender breakdown across TLP compared to H+ grades across the organisation

- Transformative Leadership Programme
- H+ grades



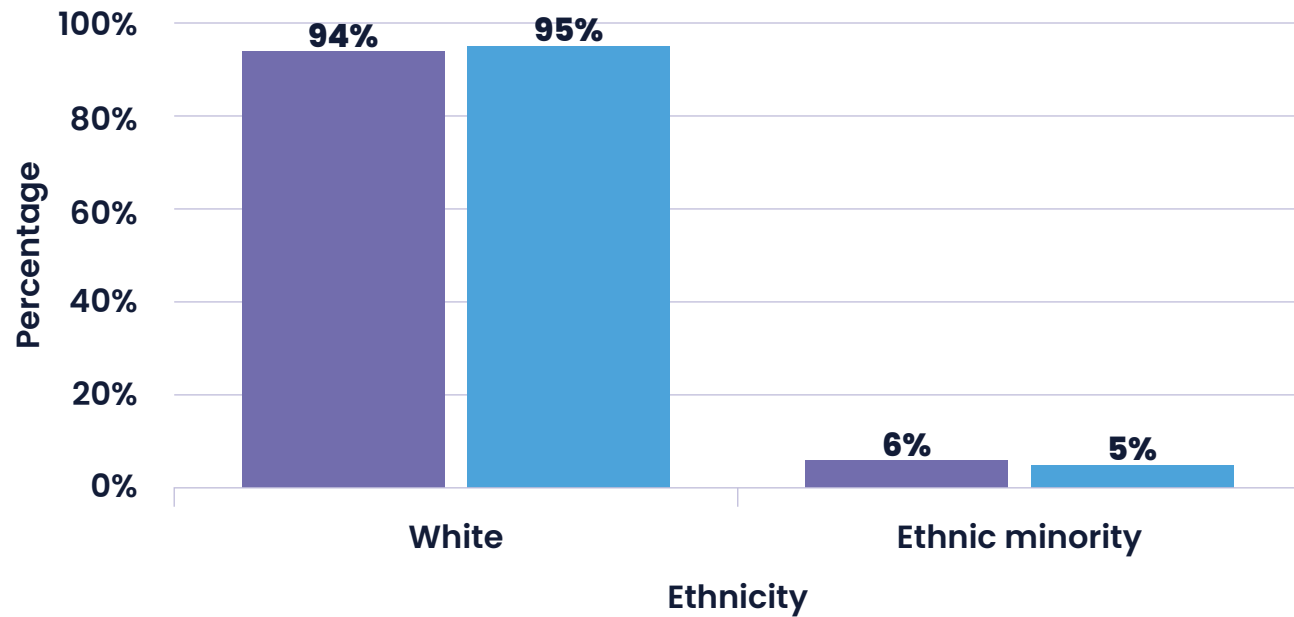
14 Disability breakdown across TLP compared to H+ grades across the organisation

- Transformative Leadership Programme
- H+ grades



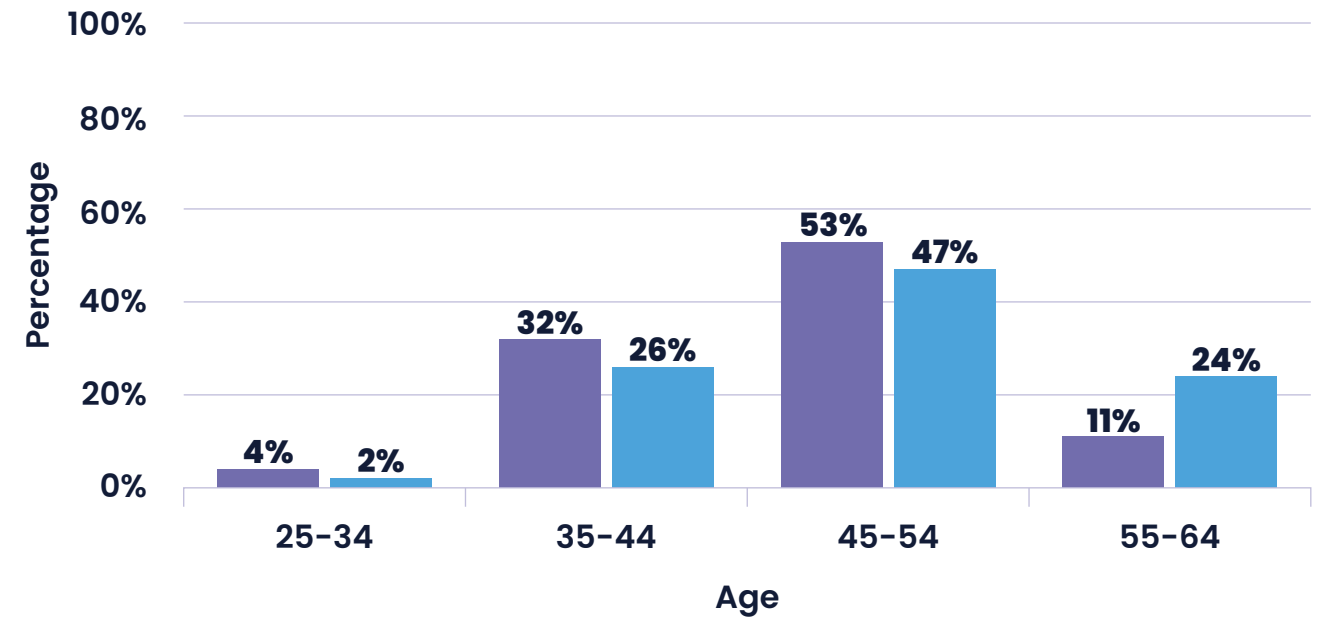
13 Ethnicity breakdown across TLP compared to H+ grades across the organisation

- Transformative Leadership Programme
- H+ grades



15 Age breakdown across TLP compared to H+ grades across the organisation

- Transformative Leadership Programme
- H+ grades



Firefly

The ten-month Firefly high-potential development programme for staff grades E–G, was again oversubscribed in this reporting period. As a result, there were four Firefly cohorts (10, 11, A and B) involving over 120 Council participants. These cohorts started between June and October 2021 and closed in May and July 2022 respectively. As participant progression data is collated 12-months after each programme closes (which will be in May to June 2023), the progression data for these four cohorts will be reported in our 2023 to 2024 report.

Firefly cohorts 12 and 13, involving participants from all the directorates, launched in August 2022 and will close in June 2023. However, due to high demand for places an additional Firefly cohort C was organised which will close in November 2023. As a result, there are over 100 participants engaged on three Firefly development programmes in 2023.

The Firefly 2022 to 2023 cohort data profiles (Figures 29–32) for cohorts 12, 13 and C show Firefly participant data, relative to the percentage of Council employees (grades E–G) from which most Firefly participants are nominated.

Gender

- Female participants represent 68% of all current Firefly participants, compared to 70% for all Council staff (grade E–G).
- There are proportionately more male participants on the programme with 32%, compared to 30% for Council staff (grade E–G).

Age profile

- 67% of Firefly participants are aged 35–54 compared to 66% of all Council staff (grade E–G) aged 35–54.

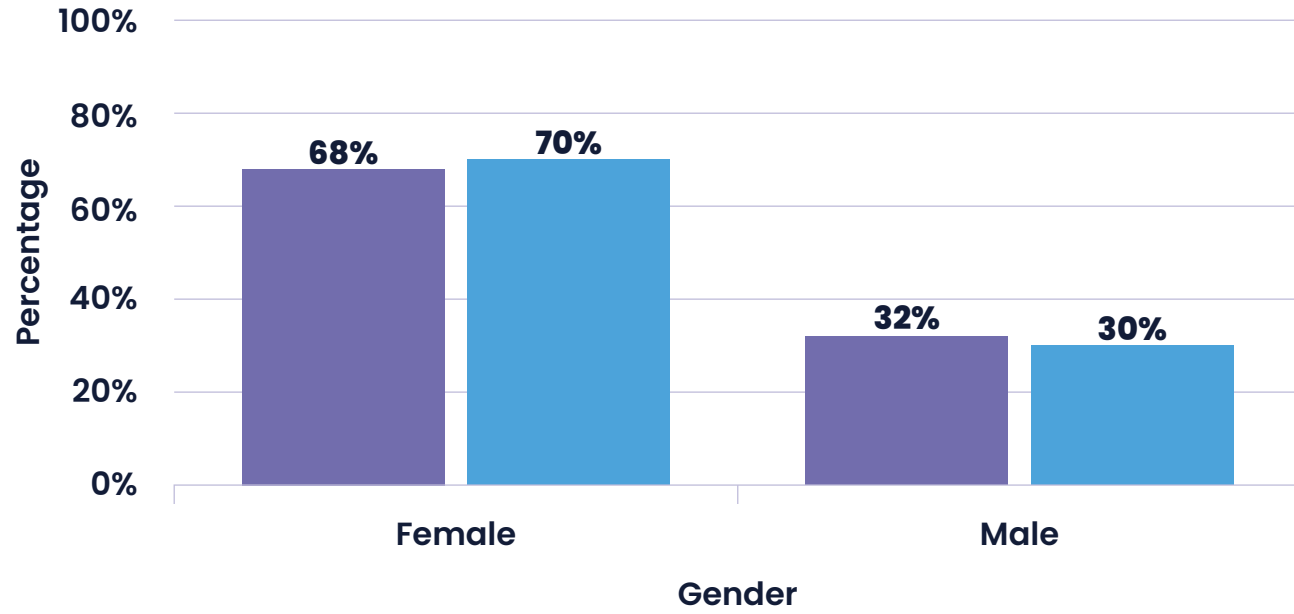
Diversity profiles of 2022 to 2023 Firefly cohorts 12, 13 and C participants in comparison with our organisational profile of E–G grades are shown in the graphs on pages 56 and 57.

An important element of the Firefly development programmes is the opportunity for participants to continuously apply their learning. Since August 2022 this has included the new element of Future Thinking Projects (FTP). These provide participants with an experiential learning experience and developmental stretch which is aligned to the complexity and challenges participants will face as they develop as leaders. The FTP experience involves small groups of Firefly participants from different directorates working together on unfamiliar projects which have been identified by directorates as priority challenges which would benefit from new thinking.

24 FTPs started in 2022 with project briefs covering a wide range of challenges facing the Council, including recruitment, retention, digitalisation and nurturing partnerships. Each brief detailed the project objectives, context and constraints and included an inclusivity focus. The project teams' findings will be presented to FTP sponsors at the end of the Firefly programmes in 2023. We will report on the FTP learning experience and outcomes in the 2023 to 2024 report.

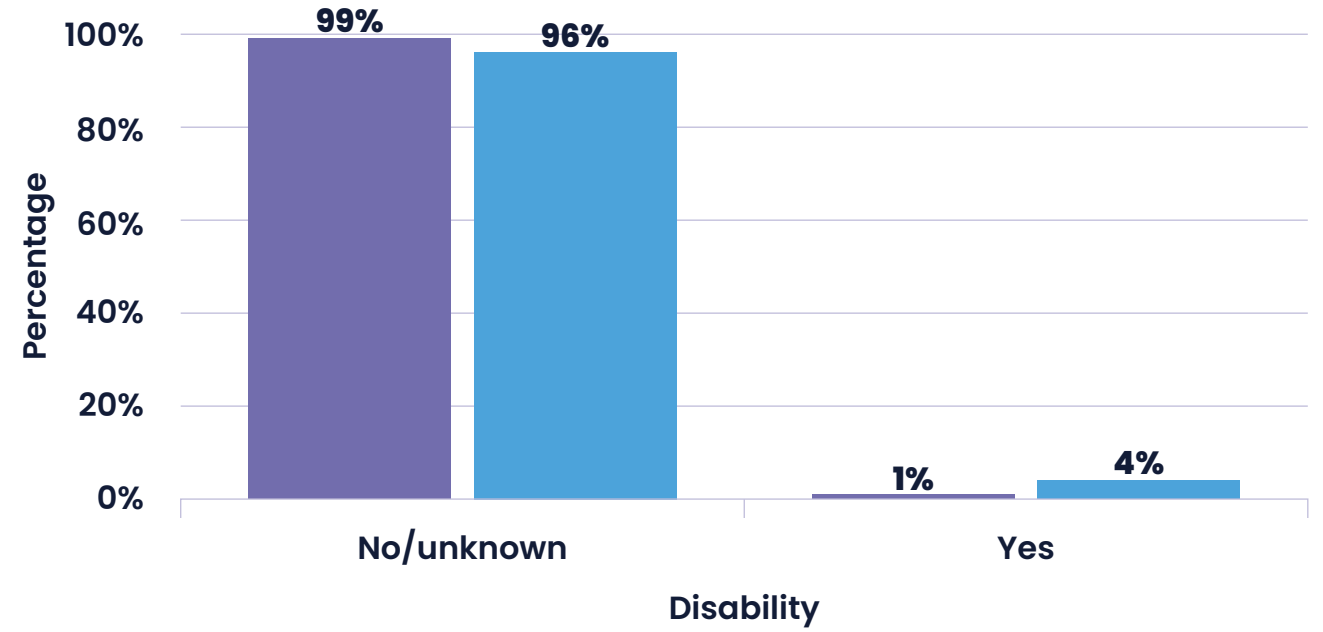
16 Gender breakdown across Firefly compared to E to G grades across the organisation

- Firefly
- E to G grades



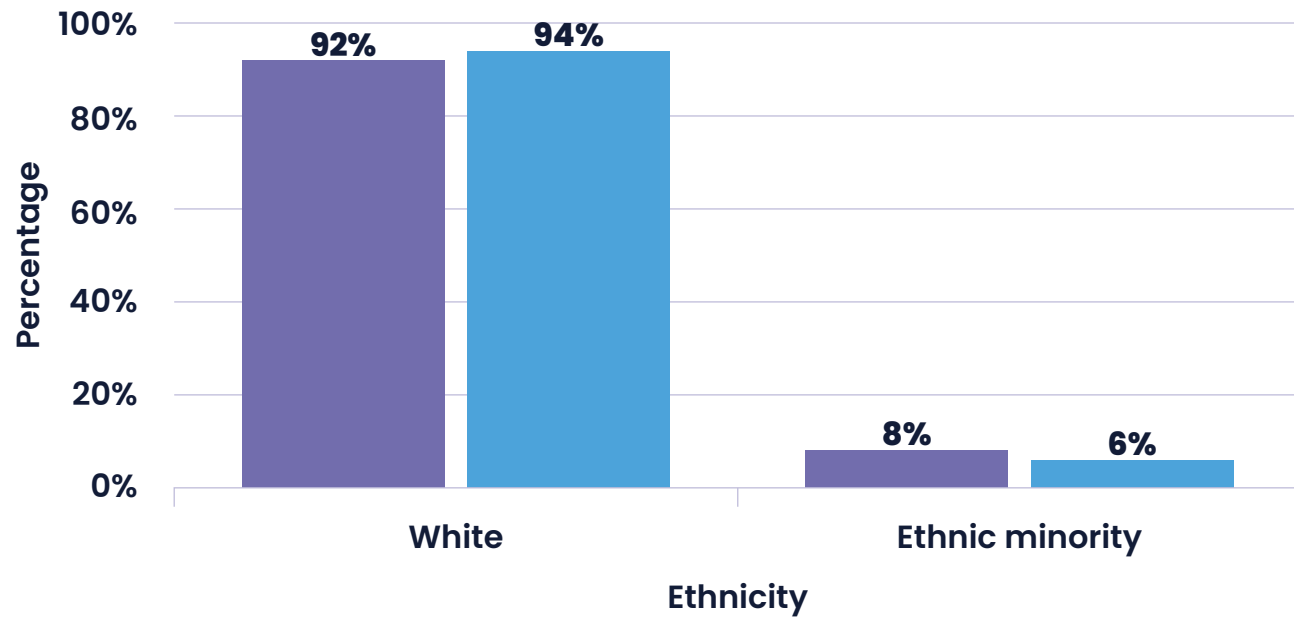
18 Disability breakdown across Firefly compared to E to G grades across the organisation

- Firefly
- E to G grades



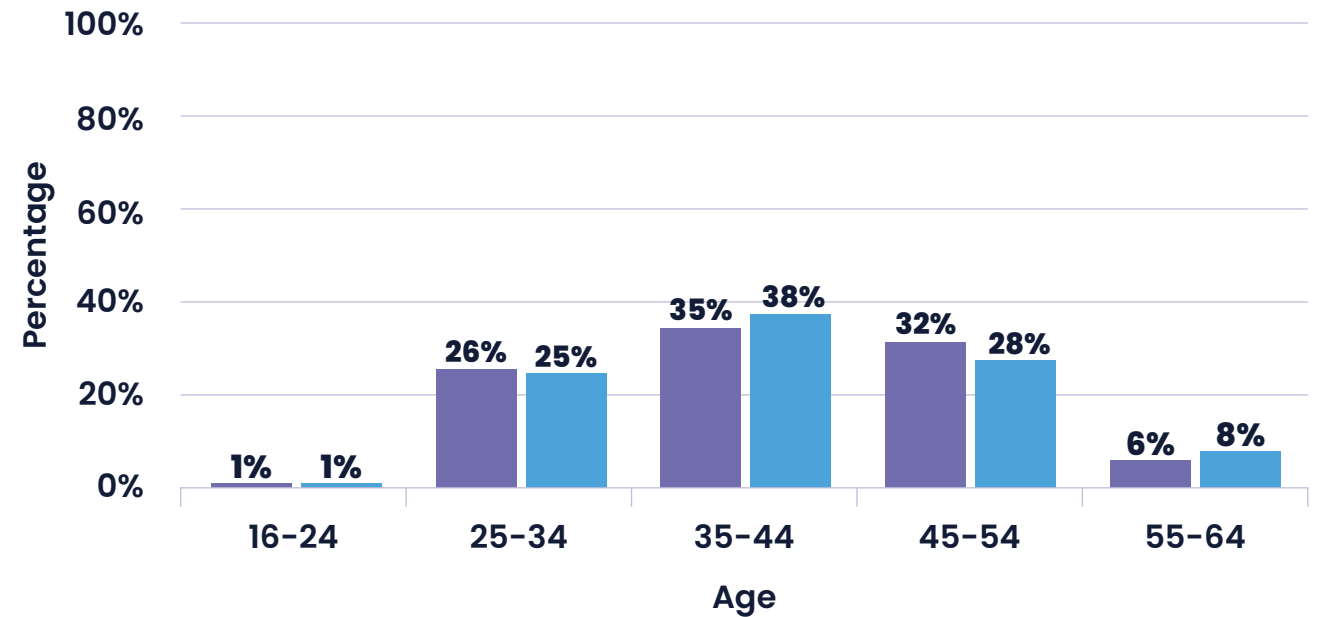
17 Ethnicity breakdown across Firefly compared to E to G grades across the organisation

- Firefly
- E to G grades



19 Age breakdown across Firefly compared to E to G grades across the organisation

- Firefly
- E to G grades



Ongoing Investment in Leadership and Management development

To help ensure our investment in development remains effective, key pieces of work were progressed in 2022 to 2023 as part of the Strategic Workforce Planning Programme workstream ‘Develop people.’

These have included an evaluation of the current senior leadership development programmes TLP and HLN, and recommendations on changes and alternative sustainable options to meet our senior leaders’ development needs and equip them for the next three to five years.

As a result of this review, our Leadership and Management Development framework is being updated in line with emerging needs, and gap analysis is underway in each of the five areas of the Leadership and Management Development framework:

- managing self and others;
- enabling change;
- systems leadership;
- digital optimisation;
- business and commerciality.

Wide-reaching research and thorough evaluation of possible solutions, has led to recommendations relating to the design, development and delivery of resources and interventions which support behavioural change in the following areas:

- how individuals and teams develop new skills and behaviours;
- desired leadership behaviours;
- digital literacy.

We are focused on achieving this through the following interventions:

- Hampshire Learn and Connect – open access learning resources;
- senior leadership development initiatives;
- cross organisational cultural engagement.

The overall future leadership development need in the Council is to ensure our leaders can shape and improve the future organisation in accordance with our strategic objectives and intent.

Hampshire Learn and Connect has already started to design, develop and implement a suite of learning solutions aligned to the five areas of the updated Leadership and Management Framework, to provide operational managers with the skills detailed in the leadership behavioural framework. This work will continue during 2022 to 2023 and replaces what was formerly known as ‘open offer’ learning.

Learning and development across directorates

Wider staff development across directorates is accomplished through a blended approach of on and off the job learning activities, including apprenticeships and professional qualifications.

- **Adults' Health and Care** has expanded its apprenticeship programme, either increasing the volume of apprenticeships (Social Work), introducing new schemes (Nursing) or utilising the existing programme to support a broad skill base including Occupational Therapy, Catering and Senior Management qualifications.
- The nurse conversion programme has made a significant impact on the number of qualified nursing staff employed in HCC Care. Since 2018 the service has supported a total of 21 nurses successfully through the programme, 19 of whom remain working for HCC Care. Currently, 13 staff are being supported through the programme and the expectation is that this coupled with recruitment (local and overseas) will result in a full nursing establishment.
- Additionally, Adults' Health and Care has captured interesting career pathways 'stories' to shine a spotlight on how staff in the directorate have progressed in their careers whilst working for the

directorate/Council, and thereby encourage others to reach their own potential.

- Within **Children's Services** the Graduate Entry Training Scheme (GETS) for newly qualified social workers was enhanced with a refreshed offer of continuing support in the second post qualifying year which focusses on more bespoke ongoing learning and development as well as a structured career framework post GETS. Development plans are firmly embedded and updated once the programme finishes to be carried forward around their next career goals.
- The first cohort of the apprentice social workers graduated and started on the GETS programme. This was followed by the expansion of the social work apprenticeship programme with 30 apprentices starting in the 2022 to 2023 academic year.
- As the lead regional partner for Step Up to Social Work, Children's Services delivered the most recent cohort in partnership with the University of Winchester.
- Children's Services has continued delivery of the Social Care Managers Programme. A collaboration between Children's Services Learning and

Development and Leadership and Management Development and a bespoke intervention. It draws on elements of the corporate offer, combined with specific sessions designed for Children's Services and engagement with Senior Managers, and is aimed at Assistant Team Managers and new Team Managers with less than 12-months management experience.

- Over 1,000 staff were trained at schools and Early Years settings in Hampshire on one of Children's Services' safeguarding training programmes during 2022, with an average of over 85% of attendees agreeing that the knowledge gained in the training would support them in their role.
- Both **Universal Services** and **Hampshire 2050** directorates have placed increased focus on growing their own staff by continuing to engage graduates across multiple disciplines, increasing the breadth of apprenticeships on offer and deploying an increased number of professional opportunities to existing staff to invest in their development and build capacity and capability aligned to future workforce needs.
- The Civil Engineering Scholarship Programme with the University

of Portsmouth aims to offer graduates long term employment after graduation. Four new students were selected in 2022 and there are currently seven on the programme. Since the programme launched in 2015, 19 students have participated on the programme, of which four students (22%) have taken up permanent roles in the directorate following their graduation between 2019 to 2022.

- The Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) accredited training scheme provides a structured means for staff to attain the abilities and experience they need to reach the standards required for professional membership of the Institution at a range of levels (Technician, Incorporated Engineer and Chartered Engineer). Qualified staff from across the directorate provide the day-to-day guidance and mentoring for (currently) four graduate trainees and nine trainees in permanent posts, as well as supporting all staff on Civil Engineering apprenticeships.
- New funding was provided for four staff to undertake professional courses where no relevant apprenticeship was available.

Apprenticeships

We greatly value the role of Apprenticeships in supporting employee and strategic workforce learning and development. We are committed to maximising the availability of the Apprenticeship Levy to meet identified skills needs, raise aspirations of new and existing staff, and so further professionalise the Council to provide the highest quality of service to our residents.

In 2021 to 2022 Hampshire achieved the highest number of Apprenticeship starts of any local authority in England. This commitment to Apprenticeships has continued into the 2022 to 2023 financial year with the Council enrolling a comparable number of apprentices.

There were 272 new Apprenticeship starts in the 2022 to 2023 financial year, the highest annual enrolment since the start of the Levy in 2017. Demand for Apprenticeships has continued to grow with directorate's accessing over 50 different Apprenticeship pathways in the last year such as solicitors, project managers, HR support, finance, engineering, regulatory compliance, leadership and management, information governance, chefs, business administration, adult care, occupational therapy, and many more.

Inclusive of all the new Apprenticeship starts, there are now 570 apprentices currently on

programme, developing new skills across 70 different occupational pathways.

150 apprentices successfully completed their programmes in 2022 to 2023, which has provided the Council with a wide range of new knowledge and skills in every directorate and at every level of the Council. Significantly, the first 15 Social Worker apprentices successfully graduated in the autumn and will now begin their assessed year in employment as newly qualified Social Workers.

In the last financial year, we have begun to systematically evaluate the Council's Apprenticeship programme by asking apprentices and their managers to complete an end of programme evaluation. To date, 129 apprentices and 91 managers have responded.

A full review of the evaluation data will take place this summer. However, early indications are that staff feel their apprenticeships have been valuable in supporting them to develop relevant new skills, be more productive in the workplace and achieve their career goals. Furthermore, 44% of those who completed the evaluation had been promoted during the apprenticeship programme.

Inclusion

Inclusion at the Council has been enhanced through multiple interventions (some of which are outlined below) and the active support and input of our staff networks. Emphasis has been placed on staff engagement to better understand our people's views on a broad range of topics such as inclusion, diversity, wellbeing, ways of working and staff's lived experience. This insight has proved invaluable and enabled co-creation of interventions, guidance and support for managers and staff.

Following on from 'Let's Talk Race' which was launched in 2020 and 'Let's Talk Being Disabled' sessions in 2021 we delivered 'Let's Talk about LGBT+' and 'Let's Talk about Gender' during 2022. 'Let's Talk about Religion, Faith and Belief' will be launched in the summer of 2023. These programmes:

- increase awareness of the challenges people face and how allies can help;
- inspire and provoke thought amongst colleagues and enable continued conversations about these topics;
- increase colleagues' confidence to raise, discuss and where necessary 'manage' issues;

- support cultural change and our position as an inclusive employer;
- enable colleagues to be their authentic selves in work;
- support colleagues to overcome uncertainty of terminology;
- encourage colleagues to update their personal data relating to diversity.

Each year, we continue to promote inclusion and diversity through a range of events during National Inclusion Week. The theme in 2022 was '**Time to Act the Power of Now,**' which provided an opportunity for colleagues to develop and increase their understanding of allyship. In a series of wide-ranging activities staff learnt tips on how to be an even better ally and provide appropriate support to people, with differing characteristics. The week saw a year-on-year increase in the number of colleagues engaging with the event. Over 500 colleagues attended scheduled events and many sessions were oversubscribed.

Wellbeing

Over 49 wellbeing sessions have been delivered in this reporting period, with over 4,000 employees in attendance. A variety of topics have been delivered around building healthy habits via a weekly mindset programme launched in this reporting year. Sessions include movement and exercise, menopause, mental health, managing stress and anxiety, financial wellbeing, nutrition and exploring grief and loss.

We continue to embed health and wellbeing into the Council and are supporting managers in this area. Over 40 managers in this reporting period, have attended the 'Supportive Conversations' training. Sessions were kept purposely small (up to 15 managers per session) to provide the space for a trusted and open conversation and these have continued to work well. Manager feedback has been positive and further topics and sessions are being planned to support managers in the wellbeing space, as well as the development of resources and materials to aid conversations, for example Wellness Action Plans.

As part of the Health and Wellbeing programme, Solent Mind delivered a session to introduce Wellness Action Plans- a tool to support

conversations around wellbeing at work. Staff had a chance to discuss and explore Wellness Action Plans and look at other ways to improve their wellbeing in the workplace.

Messages promoting flexible working, work/life balance and the importance of staff wellbeing are regularly promoted through a variety of channels, and support for staff trauma within Adults Health and Care continues to be available via specially trained staff deployed across the directorate.

Recognise and reward

Ensuring the efforts of our people are recognised

We continue to reward and recognise our people in many and varied ways, both formally and informally. We are unashamedly repetitive in voicing our pride in our workforce for the loyalty they demonstrate and the contributions they make to the people of Hampshire.

In addition to our salary and expense arrangements, as part of our Employee Value Proposition the Council has a Valuing Performance framework in place that enables managers to measure performance and subsequently reward and recognise staff where exceptional performance is evident.

The performance of staff across the Council continues to be high, with over 99% of staff achieving successful

and exceptional performance again this reporting year.

Reward for exceptional performance is typically through a Special Recognition Payment (SRP). For the period January to December 2022, 11% of staff received SRPs for exceptional performance, this is a decrease from 17% last year, which may have been higher due to rewarding staff through the pandemic.

The below table shows that SRPs are distributed across grades.

Detailed data on SRPs awarded throughout 2022 enables us to summarise as follows:

- **grade:** The percentage of staff receiving an SRP continues to be highest in H+ grades. Marginally more A-D grades have received an SRPs than in 2021;
- **male/female:** SRP reward is comparable regardless of gender;
- **ethnicity:** A higher proportion of those identifying within the ethnic minority groups (17%) were awarded an SRP than those in the group identifying as White (10%);
- **disability:** There is little difference in the proportion of SRPs being awarded to those who are recorded as having a disability and those without or not recording a disability;
- **age profile:** The distribution of SRPs is evenly split across the age profiles;
- **full-time/part-time profile:** Overall a higher number of staff working full-time (14%) received an SRP compared to part-time staff (8%).

20 Total SRPs in year and end of year for 2022 across grade

Grades	Headcount	Total SRPs (in-year and end of year)	
		People getting SRP	Percentage
A – D	7,008	698	10%
E – G	5,014	611	12%
H +	828	116	14%
Total	12,850	1,425	11%

SPRs – Special Recognition Payment

Long service awards

Every year Hampshire County Council marks the long service given by those employees who achieve 25 and 40 years’ service. From 2022, the Council also recognised those who have achieved 50 years’ service.

Between April 2021 and March 2022, 69 staff achieved 25 years’ service and 11 staff achieved 40 years’ service. 2022 to 2023 achievements will be shown in next year’s report.

Gender Pay Gap

The Gender Pay Gap report published in March 2023 shows an overall gender pay gap of 15.5% in favour of men. This is a slight decrease from 16.0% reported for 2020 to 2021.

This gap is not because of paying men more than women for the same or equivalent work. Our job evaluation scheme provides an objective and gender-neutral framework to evaluate the jobs that are carried out within the Council.

Instead, the gender pay gap exists because of the workforce profile—the roles which men and women undertake within the Council, and the salaries that these roles attract, for example:

- in terms of salary, although there are more women than men in the top 5% of earners overall, most of the workforce is also female, with this being most pronounced at the lower grades;

- the Council continues to deliver services that other equivalent organisations have either outsourced or no longer provide e.g. catering in schools. These services usually have a higher concentration of employees on lower grades. If these services were excluded from the data, the Council would have a gender pay gap of 10%.

Within our **Gender Pay Gap Report for 2021 to 2022** we have reported how we continue to work to reduce our gender pay gap.

21 Gender pay gap overview

Pay	Percentage
Mean gender pay gap in hourly pay (men currently earn more)	15.5%
Median gender pay gap in hourly pay (men currently earn more)	16.5%
Bonus	Percentage
Mean bonus gender pay gap (men currently earn more)	6.7%
Median bonus gender pay gap	0%
Proportion of males receiving a bonus payment	18%
Proportion of females receiving a bonus payment	16.2%

Highest earner figures

In this reporting year, figures continue to show that most of our highest earners (top 5%) are white, with ethnic minority representation in this group at 2%, which is below the organisational profile and that of the Census 2021 figures for Hampshire which are both 9%.

Our data also tells us that, of our top 5% of earners, those with disabilities represent 4%, which is close to the representation of employees with disabilities (5%) at the County Council.

As referenced in 'Develop,' we continue a programme of work to educate and create awareness of our differences, to promote inclusion at the Council.

Progress and perform

Regular conversations about performance

As referenced in **Reward and recognise**, the Valuing Performance framework supports our people (managers and staff) in having meaningful conversations about performance.

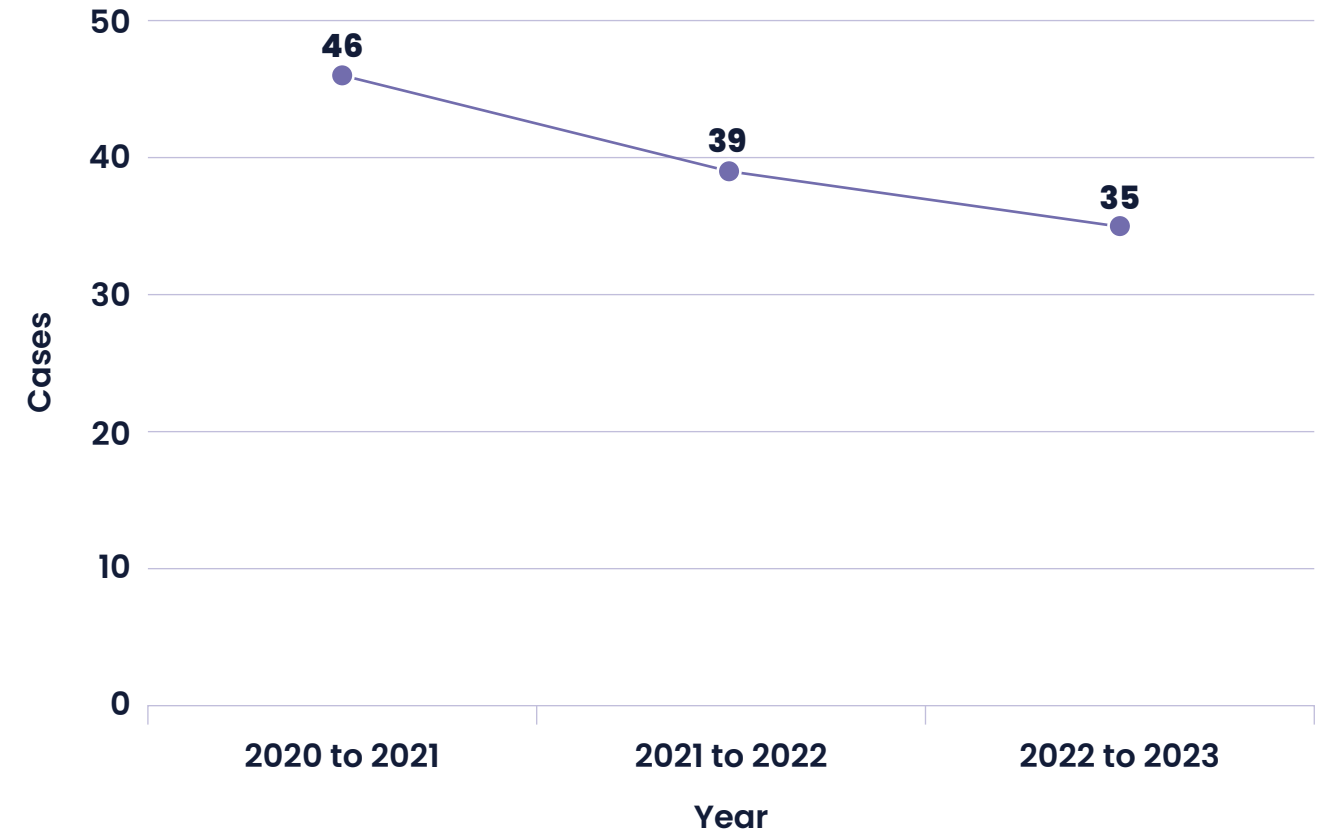
In a high performing organisation such as ours we would not expect to see high numbers of formal performance management cases and our policies support the informal resolution of issues, including performance, where it is possible to do so.

Where there are instances of underperformance, we deal with this through management measures, which include support and development. However, incremental progression can also be withheld where appropriate.

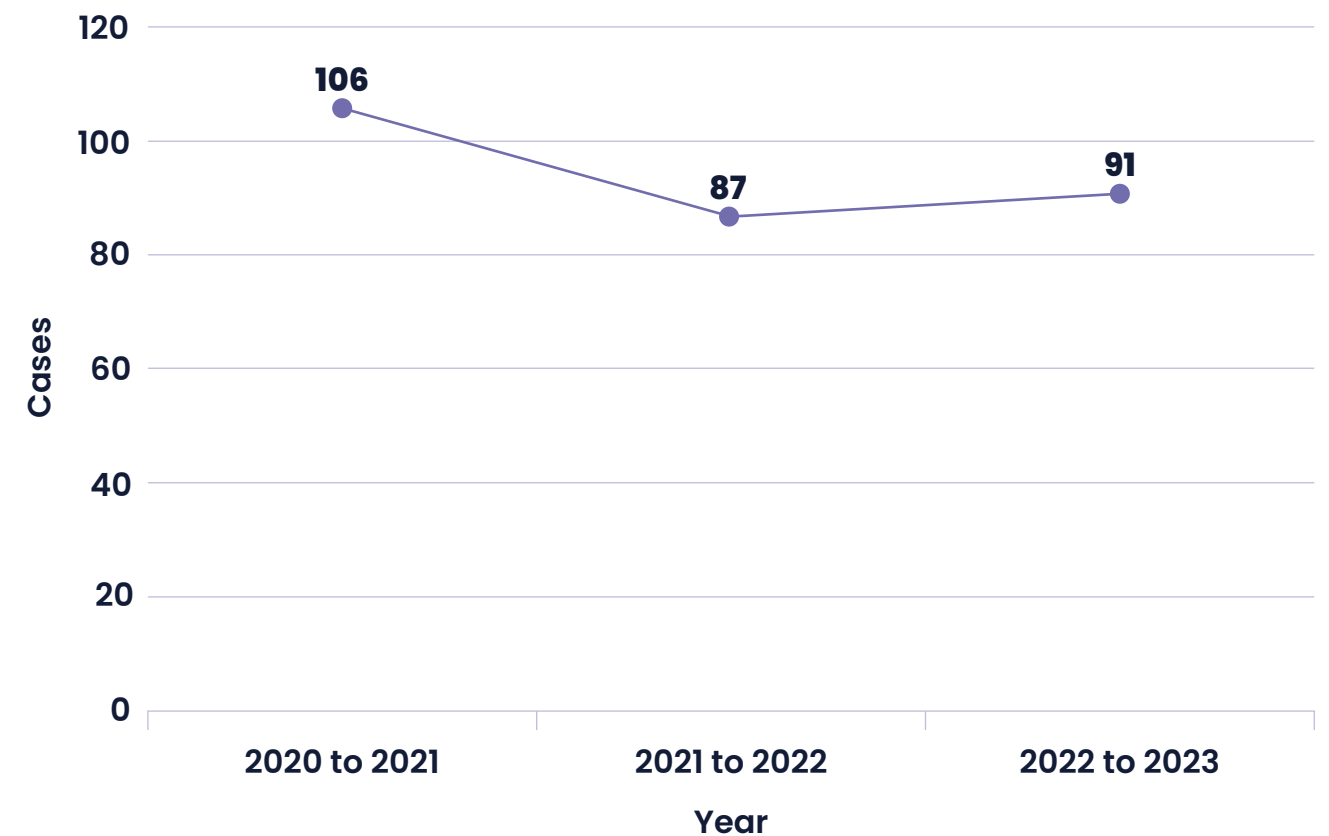
Managers tackle poor performance and misconduct issues in accordance with the Council's misconduct or performance policies. During the period 2022 to 2023, there were 35 new performance cases (0.27% of the total workforce) and 91 new misconduct cases (0.70% of the workforce) across all directorates.

Looking across the last three years there has been an overall decrease in both new performance and misconduct cases. Performance cases decreased from 46 in 2020 to 2021 to 35 in 2022 to 2023 and misconduct cases from 106 in 2020 to 2021 to 91 in 2022 to 2023.

22 Managing performance cases



23 Managing misconduct cases



Performance

Of the 34 performance cases resolved in 2022 to 2023, 53% were resolved through informal action.

24 Resolution categories of managing performance cases 2022 to 2023

Resolution category	Number of cases	Percentage
Dismissal	3	9%
Formal warning	5	15%
Informal advice	18	53%
No further action	3	9%
Resignation	4	12%
Mutual/settlement agreement	1	3%
Total	34	100%

In April 2022, 15 members of staff who were not at the top of their pay grade had their incremental salary progression withheld whilst their performance was managed. The same number (although different individuals) had their salary progression withheld in April 2021.

Whilst the Council seeks to support an employee to improve their performance, it recognises that in some situations this may not be the employee's desire. The Council's Managing Performance Policy allows for a contract of employment to be ended by mutual agreement between the employee and Hampshire County Council. This is most likely to be reached where an employee is unlikely to achieve the

required standards for their role, or unlikely to achieve the required standard in a reasonable time frame and the employee does not wish to participate in a formal process. In 2022 to 2023 five employees left by way of a mutual/settlement agreement or resignation mid-way during the performance review process.

There were three dismissals due to performance during 2022 to 2023, consistent with numbers in the previous year.

Misconduct

Of the 91 new misconduct cases in 2022 to 2023, the largest proportion were due to 'failing to follow instruction, policy, procedure or

a professional code of conduct' (37%) and 'behavioural reasons' (36%). The following table shows the reasons for the misconduct cases.

25 Categories of managing misconduct cases 2022 to 2023

Reason category	Cases	Percentage
Behavioural	33	36%
Breach of data protection	4	4%
Criminal allegation	2	2%
Emotional abuse	1	1%
Failure to follow instruction, policy, procedure or professional code	34	37%
Financial abuse	2	2%
Inappropriate boundaries/relationship	1	1%
Inappropriate contact/use of force	9	10%
IT misuse	1	1%
Neglect	1	1%
Risk by association	1	1%
Risk to children/adult	2	2%
Total	91	100%

Of the 91 cases, 69 were resolved in 2022 to 2023, the table below shows the outcomes, with 38% of cases resulting in informal action.

26 Resolution categories of managing misconduct cases 2022 to 2023

Resolution category	Number of cases	Percentage
Dismissal	10	14%
Formal warning	8	12%
Informal advice	26	38%
No further action	14	20%
Resignation	7	10%
Upheld	2	3%
Other	2	3%
Total	69	100%

Attendance management

In respect of tackling absence and attendance issues, managers work in accordance with the Council’s attendance management policies.

Over the last three years we have seen a reduction in the number of attendance cases, from 163 in 2020 to 2021 and 146 in 2021 to 2022, to 110 in 2022 to 2023.

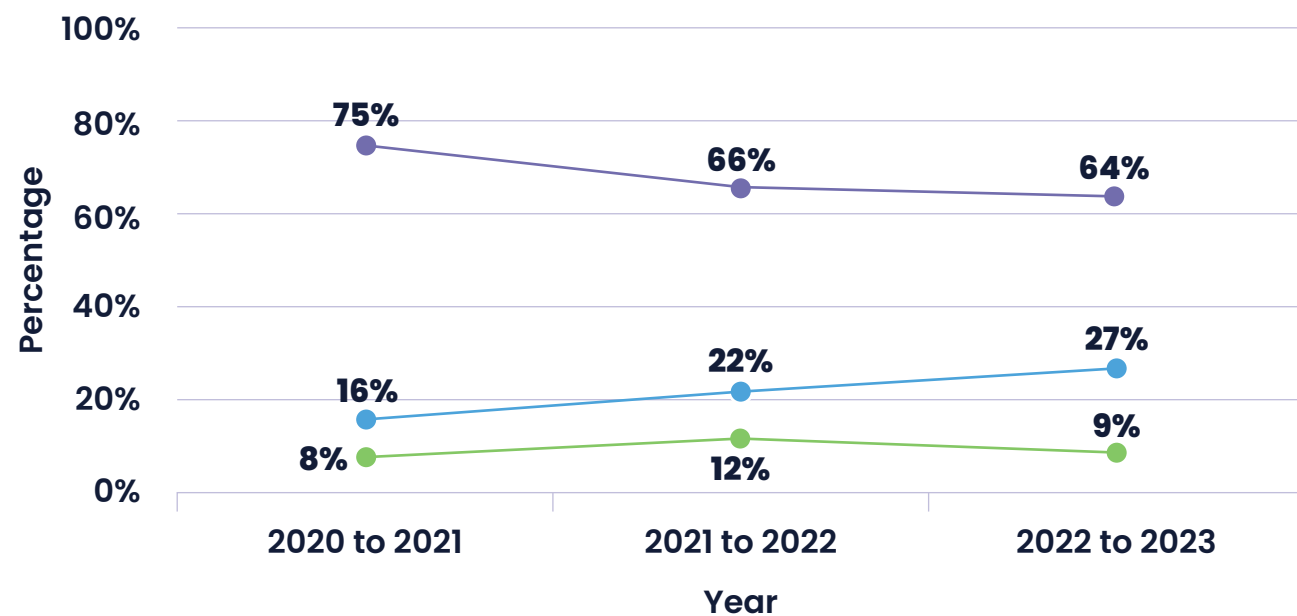
Absence and attendance cases in this reporting year have been a mix of long term (64%), short term (27%) and health cases where the

employee is not absent from work but where action and/or adjustments are required to sustain their attendance (9%).

Over time, the percentage of long-term absence cases has decreased while the percentage of short-term cases has increased. Health cases where action and/or adjustments are required to sustain attendance have remained relatively consistent.

27 Managing sickness absence cases

- Absence – Long-term
- Absence – Short-term
- Health matter – Not absent



Of the absence cases concluded in 2022 to 2023 (108), 46 cases (42%) resulted in the employee’s employment with the Council ending. This includes ten employees who left by way of a mutual/settlement agreement, 17 resignations as employees made the decision to leave the Council rather than undergo the full formal attendance

management process, and seven retirements. The percentage of cases where staff left the Council by way of a resolution was consistent across both 2022 to 2023 and 2021 to 2023, both being 42% of the overall case resolutions. The following table provides detail of the resolution categories for all attendance cases in 2022 to 2023.

28 Resolution categories of managing sickness absence

Resolution category	Number of cases	Percentage
Dismissal – with notice	12	11%
Formal warning	4	4%
Informal advice given	39	36%
Mutual/settlement agreement	10	9%
No further action	1	1%
Redeployed	1	1%
Resignation	17	16%
Retirement	7	6%
Return to work	17	16%
Total	108	100%

The Council's average absence rate for 2022 to 2023 increased from last year from 4% to 5.4%. The total estimated productivity cost of sickness absence has increased from last year from circa £10m to circa £11.6m.

COVID-19 is still the top reason for absence in this reporting year. A significant proportion of absence

still relates to mental health, however, it is positive that this has decreased slightly to 17% from 20% last year, as we have an extensive programme of work on the wellbeing agenda to support employees.

The other most common reasons for absence remain consistent with previous years, as follows:

29 Top sickness reasons

Sickness reason	Percentage split of the top reasons for sickness
COVID-19	26%
E,N,T – including cold and flu, virus	19%
Anxiety/stress	17%
Operation/post op	10%
Muscular/skeletal	9%
Stomach or bowel	8%
Cancer	6%
Diarrhoea and sickness	6%
Total	100%

E, N, T – Ear, nose, and throat

Resolving workplace issues

No matter how successful the organisation is there are issues that prompt an employee to submit a 'grievance' through the Council's Resolving Workplace Issues policy.

During 2022 to 2023 there were 43 new 'resolving workplace issue' cases across Council directorates, akin to the number of cases (46) in the previous year. Not all 'resolving workplace issue' cases that are raised proceed to formal resolution. Some are dealt with informally. Of these:

- the majority (19) related to working relationship issues with colleagues and management. This is in line

with the previous year when there were 17 cases of this nature;

- ten cases were categorised as related to bullying or harassment;
- only two were because of issues with the working environment compared to seven cases in 2020 to 2021.

There were 44 resolving workplace issues cases that were resolved within 2022 to 2023. The following table provides detail of the resolution categories for all workplace issues cases.

30 Resolution categories of resolving workplace issues 2022 to 2023

Resolution category	Number of cases	Percentage
Informal advice given	11	25%
Mutual/settlement agreement	3	7%
Not upheld	20	45%
Other	1	2%
Partially upheld	3	7%
Rejected	2	5%
Upheld	1	2%
Withdrawn	3	7%
Total	44	100%

As one of our actions from last year's report, there is a project team in place to take forward recommendations to use our corporate and directorate communication channels to promote 'good communication' around resolving workplace issues. This includes using the best channels to

prevent and de-escalate workplace issues, encouraging timeliness of engagement between parties and providing emotional and mental wellbeing support to involved parties as appropriate. There will be awareness raising of the Resolving Workplace Issues policy.

Retain and exit

Encourage our people to stay, and learn from those who leave

We recognise that there needs to be a balance between retaining staff and staff leaving. Having new staff allows us to develop and grow. However, there are direct and indirect costs associated with external turnover. Direct costs include recruitment and whilst we welcome new staff and see the benefits of new insight and ideas, recruitment can be a time consuming and costly activity, along with the costs of training new staff. Indirect costs include

losing knowledge, skills, experience, and staff morale. All of these can have a significant impact on the performance of the organisation. Therefore, it is important that we focus on why staff are choosing to leave the Council so that we can consider strategies to retain them.

Retain

As with all organisations we know there are several factors that impact on staff retention, including:

- employee engagement – ensuring that our people are engaged and listened to on the full range of organisational issues;
- health and wellbeing – ensuring that our people’s health, safety and wellbeing are taken seriously, and that support is available for staff across the wide range of needs in this space;
- reward, benefits and development opportunities – both referenced in previous sections.

Equally of course it is important that the Council has appropriate mechanisms in place to support our people to move on when performance does not meet organisational expectations.

According to the CIPD’s Resourcing and Talent Planning Report (September 2022, page one)



Talent is becoming harder to retain, but organisations are taking steps to improve the situation. 60% report that talent is more difficult to retain compared with a year ago.

Given the challenging context, another particular focus in this

reporting year has been developing different retention strategies. Through the Strategic Workforce Planning Programme, several strategies have been implemented to support the retention of staff. These include:

- a recruitment and retention payment scheme to aid the effective resourcing of directorates where there are specific roles which have been difficult to recruit to and/or retain staff in post;
- a review of roles to determine which require market supplements;
- research and business case development to increase the chances of recruiting and retaining staff in business-critical job families, previously referenced in ‘**Resource**’.

In addition, directorates are also focusing on different strategies. For example, Children’s Services continues to seek ways to support the retention of social workers. In the last year, the directorate has held its first Social Work Awards event which showcased and celebrated excellent practice.

Furthermore, feedback from our people strongly evidences that the flexibility hybrid working affords is highly valued where it can be accommodated by services. We know enabling the right sort of flexibility is a major factor in successful recruitment and retention.

What is our data telling us?

In this reporting year, and for the first time in this report, we have analysed length of service across pay scales to gain insight into retention at the Council.

There are 11 grades (A to K) in the pay framework. Each employee will be on one of the 11 grades based on the job evaluation of their role using the Hay methodology. All employees can progress to the salary range maximum subject to assessment of their performance. Chief Officers are paid on ‘spot salaries’ which have regard to the relative size and challenge of the role compared to other Chief Officer roles within the Council and other relevant information available, including the salaries of Chief Officers in other similar sized organisations.

Our data shows current employees have been with the Council for an average of nine years (with 38% of our headcount being employed at the Council for longer than this). Employees on higher grades and steps have been working at the Council for the longest, suggesting strong internal progression opportunities.

Exit

A total of 1,906 employees left the Council in 2022 to 2023, a reduction of 235 leavers from last year. This means that external turnover for the last 12-months has averaged 15% which is a decrease from 17% reported last year, and slightly lower than 16% reported in 2019 to 2020 pre pandemic.

Although organisationally we may be seeing a slight reduction in employees leaving, attributable perhaps to the current financial climate, we are aware that certain critical roles continue to have recruitment and retention challenges. An example is external turnover for children’s social workers which remains high at 20%, albeit this represents a reduction from 24% this time last year.

Overall, the profile of leavers is broadly comparable to our workforce data profile, with the exception that they are more likely to be in the 55+ age category, with retirement being an additional factor for this group.

The reasons for leaving are shown in the table.

31 External leaver reasons

External leaver reasons	External leavers
Involuntary	149
Death in Service	11
Dismiss	104
TUPE Transfer	37
Voluntary	1,742
Resign	1,559
Retirement	183
Voluntary/involuntary	15
Mutual/compromise agreements	15
Total	1,906

Retain and exit

Resignation has remained the main reason for leaving the Council. Year on year there has been a reduction in involuntary turnover, driven by a reduction in dismissals and compromise agreements.

As shown in the table, 22% (453) of leavers left within 12-months of joining, with 419 (92%) of these resigning and 6% (25) being

dismissed. The percentage of these leavers is slightly lower than last year (24%). This means we have retained 62 more employees past their first year of service, thus reducing our recruitment spend.

32 External leaver reasons for people leaving in their first 12-months of their employment

External leaver reasons	External leavers in their first 12-months of employment
Involuntary	30
Dismiss	25
TUPE Transfer	5
Voluntary	422
Resign	419
Retirement	3
Voluntary/involuntary	1
Mutual/compromise agreements	1
Total	453

All resigning employees are encouraged to complete a leaver questionnaire and to have a leaver interview before they depart. This helps us to gather additional insight into experiences of working at the Council and the reasons staff are leaving, so we can respond to any concerning trends.

We are continuing work to encourage more leavers to engage with these processes before they depart. Of the 1,906 external leavers, 18% (370) completed the leaver questionnaire, this is an increase from 16% last year.

A year-on-year comparison of the leaver questionnaire data (**table 33**) suggests that more staff are having regular, meaningful conversations with managers, and Valuing Performance reviews. Despite this, the number of leavers that felt that they were a valued employee of the Council reduced, and it is important that we seek to understand why this might be the case. There was also a decrease in the proportion of leavers who would consider working for the Council in future, which is cause for concern.

Leavers reported an increased ability to take annual leave, which possibly reflects a post-pandemic re-set and increased corporate messaging around using up accrued leave.

The most common reason for leaving was 'My new role is a promotion, or an opportunity to progress my career' (30%). We continue to explore ways to provide opportunities to develop our staff as referenced in 'Develop.' The next most common leaver reason was 'I am leaving for personal reasons (e.g. move away from area)' (15%).

33 A comparison of our leaver questionnaire data with last year

Question
I feel a valued employee of the County Council
I would consider working for the County Council in the future
I would recommend the County Council as an employer to family/friends
I felt career progression was fairly managed within the organisation
There have been opportunities for me to develop
Ability to take annual leave
Amount of annual leave
Expenses e.g. mileage/sight test
Working flexibly
I felt able to raise issues and problems openly
I felt supported by my line manager
I found meetings with my manager useful and meaningful
I had Valuing Performance conversations with my manager throughout the year
I had clear goals and objectives
I had regular 1-2-1 conversations with my manager
My goals and objectives were achievable
My workload has been manageable

- County Council
- Employee benefits
- Valuing performance
- Development
- Line management
- Workload

% agree 2021 to 2022	% agree 2022 to 2023	Variance
65%	60%	-5%
70%	64%	-6%
66%	66%	0%
41%	40%	-1%
55%	56%	0%
83%	90%	6%
89%	92%	3%
60%	58%	-3%
81%	82%	1%
74%	76%	2%
76%	78%	2%
64%	74%	9%
55%	67%	12%
61%	66%	5%
68%	78%	9%
55%	60%	5%
61%	62%	1%

Conclusions

General

We have seen a lot of change over the last 12-months linked to financial pressures that we know all Councils are experiencing.

Our new operating structure is in place, and we have strong, efficient and highly skilled teams, ready to rise to the challenges ahead.

We are continuing to embed our working as 'one organisation' and this gives us a shared understanding of what we are trying to achieve, and the principles by which we will work.

The Strategic Workforce Planning Programme is now in place with the aim to ensure that the Council is appropriately positioned to balance its labour supply in line with service demand/need, in order to maintain and deliver excellent services.

As we reported last year, much of our organisational data continues to have reverted to being

comparable to the years prior to the pandemic. We have also noticed the following changes to highlight:

- headcount and FTE have both increased from last year and we can see our workforce costs have increased;
- the number of people reporting to be disabled has increased from last year, along with those reporting their ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation. This helps the Council to monitor diversity, and also helps inform policies and practice across the organisation, making a fairer, more supportive working environment for all.

Throughout this report we have highlighted the challenging recruitment and retention environments that we are working in and the work that we are doing to limit the impact of these.

Attract

Our recruitment adverts have generated less applications to our vacancies in this reporting year, likely linked to the low levels of unemployment in Hampshire and nationally.

We continue to be more attractive to the female labour market.

In this reporting year, for H+ grades we shortlisted 11% of ethnic minority applicants, and we hired 16%, an increase from last year's 3%. As shown **on page three** our ethnic minority representation in H+ grades has increased from 3.3% to 3.6%.

Resource

We continue to fill our roles through a multitude of means such as directly employed staff, agency workers and contractors.

We continue to work closely with Connect2Hampshire to further develop our combined approach and to improve applicant attraction, recruitment, and retention in light of the current market challenges.

As in previous years, internal applicants are more likely to be hired than external applicants.

Onboard

Over 2,094 external new starters have been onboarded into the Council, an increase from last year's 1,956, with induction remaining critical to the way we welcome and familiarise them with the business.

111 employees left during their first three-months of employment; we will look to explore the reasons for this.

Develop

The Firefly high-potential development programme for staff grades E-G, was again oversubscribed during 2022 to 2023.

As a result of a review, our Leadership and Management Development framework is being updated in line with emerging needs.

Our commitment to apprenticeships has continued into 2022 to 2023 with the Council enrolling a comparable number of apprentices to last year.

Inclusion and wellbeing continue to be important themes for the development of our people.

Reward and recognise

The performance of staff across the Council continues to be high, with 99.9% of staff achieving successful and exceptional performance again in this reporting year.

Our Gender Pay Gap has reduced to 15.5%.

Progress and perform

Another sign of the high-performing nature of our workforce is reflected in the fact there were only 35 new performance review cases (0.27% of the total workforce) and 91 new misconduct cases (0.70% of the workforce) across all directorates.

Looking across the last three years there has been an overall decrease in both new performance review and misconduct cases.

We have seen an increase in sickness absence and our top absence reason is COVID-19.

Retain and exit

We know current employees have been with the Council for an average of nine years and we have a number of retention strategies in place.

Organisationally, turnover has reduced from 17% to 15%. However, we know that in directorates retention challenges are still being faced in specific roles e.g. social workers where it is at 20%.

A total of 1,906 employees left the Council, a reduction of 235 leavers from last year. 18% of leavers completed the leaver questionnaire.

Leavers in their first 12-months of employment with us reduced by 62, meaning we have retained 62 more 'new' employees than last year.

Next steps

In the next 12-months we will:

General

1. Continue to build on progress towards actions arising from the 2021 to 2022 Annual Workforce Report (**Appendix one**).
2. Explore how we can make better use of our data through data cleansing to improve the accuracy of our insight.
3. Further embed our vision and values into our Valuing Performance processes and across the **employee lifecycle**.
4. Continue to encourage colleagues to provide us with their personal information or update to say 'prefer not to say.'
5. Continue to explore, identify, and provide relevant wellbeing resources to support a reduction in sickness absence and a general maintenance of employee wellbeing levels.

Attract

1. Explore 'new/early career' interventions to improve our attraction rates amongst those aged under 25, such as:
 - T-levels;
 - apprenticeships;
 - graduate schemes;
 - career pathways;
 - work experience;
 - graduate placements.
2. Continue to develop our employee value proposition and progress work to ensure that we are sharing and marketing the opportunities across our organisation.
3. Undertake analysis of our critical roles to identify which are attracting less applicants. This insight will be provided to directorates to tailor specific attraction interventions.

Resource

1. Following a strategic review of our recruitment processes, aim to enhance usability for applicants and recruiting managers.
2. Continue to work closely with Connect2Hampshire to further develop our combined approach and to improve applicant attraction, recruitment, and retention in light of the current market challenges.

Onboard

1. Consider the value of introducing a questionnaire for a sample of employees to complete after circa six weeks of employment to understand their onboarding experience and their drivers to stay at the Council.

Develop

1. Enable and drive the development of leaders that can shape and improve the future organisation.
2. Encourage a culture of continuous digital learning to ensure digital literacy and support the realisation of our digital strategy.

Retain and exit

1. Continue to look at ways to retain our people to fill our roles and use our people data to drive evidence-based decisions.
2. Continue to encourage our leavers to complete the leaver questionnaire and review different ways to capture more information from our leavers.



Our people

An overview summary of our workforce data

We continue to explore different ways to analyse our workforce data to understand more about our people. In this reporting year, we have analysed our people data across grades to show how our diversity is distributed across the Council's pay structure.

The following table shows how our people are represented across grades and how this has changed from the last reporting year.

The reduction of staff on grade B can be contributed to organisational change programmes regrading roles and changes to our operating model e.g. catering. In addition, the way we manage casual workers has changed and this is reflected in the figures where staff have moved on to directly employed contracts.

There has been an increase of H+ grades.

With the recruitment challenges referenced within the report, there has been a drive to fill our business-critical roles, which is reflected in our increased headcount and full-time equivalent figures. However, it should be noted that in some service areas as referenced through the report, recruitment and retention challenges remain.

34 Workforce headcount and full-time equivalent

Grade	Headcount			Full-time equivalent		
	2021/22	2022/23	Change	2021/22	2022/23	Change
H+	857	884	3%	819	846	3%
G	1,028	1,054	3%	944	973	3%
F	1,755	1,774	1%	1,591	1,613	1%
E	2,136	2,284	7%	1,923	2,066	7%
D	1,907	2,122	11%	1,533	1,713	12%
C	2,422	2,539	5%	1,912	1,989	4%
B	1,334	1,183	-11%	735	719	-2%
A-	1,176	1,149	-2%	481	522	9%
Total	12,726	12,989	2%	9,938	10,440	5%

Diversity

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific duties) Regulations 2011 requires listed public authorities to publish equality information on an annual basis, the diversity information contained within this report complies with those regulations and goes beyond those legal requirements to support the building of valuable insight that will support us to become even more inclusive.

We continue to encourage employees to declare their personal diversity information, however, it remains discretionary. We know one of the barriers to reporting data is the language used to describe personal characteristics and as such a project has been completed to update the language we use, and we have added additional questions relating to armed forces and caring responsibilities.

For those not wishing to disclose their data there is an option of 'prefer not to say' which we encourage people to use to support further confidence in our data. We know from the responses to our Inclusion and Wellbeing survey (May 2021) that the main reason why people chose not to provide their personal data is 'my personal information should not be relevant in the workplace,' followed by 'I am not comfortable sharing my personal information.' We continue to provide communication that helps to explain the relevance of the data and the security measures in place regarding its use and handling.

Intersectionality

We remain conscious that whilst we report about our people in specific communities for example our 'ethnic minority community' or our 'female community,' we are in fact all unique, and many of us will associate with more than one of these communities at any given time. 'Intersectionality' refers to the fact we all have multiple identities which shape our life experiences and as an organisation we are therefore seeking not only to understand the different staff communities that exist, but also how these overlap for individuals, to shape each separate employee's experience within the Council.

Age

Overall, the average age of our people is 46, and the median age is 47.

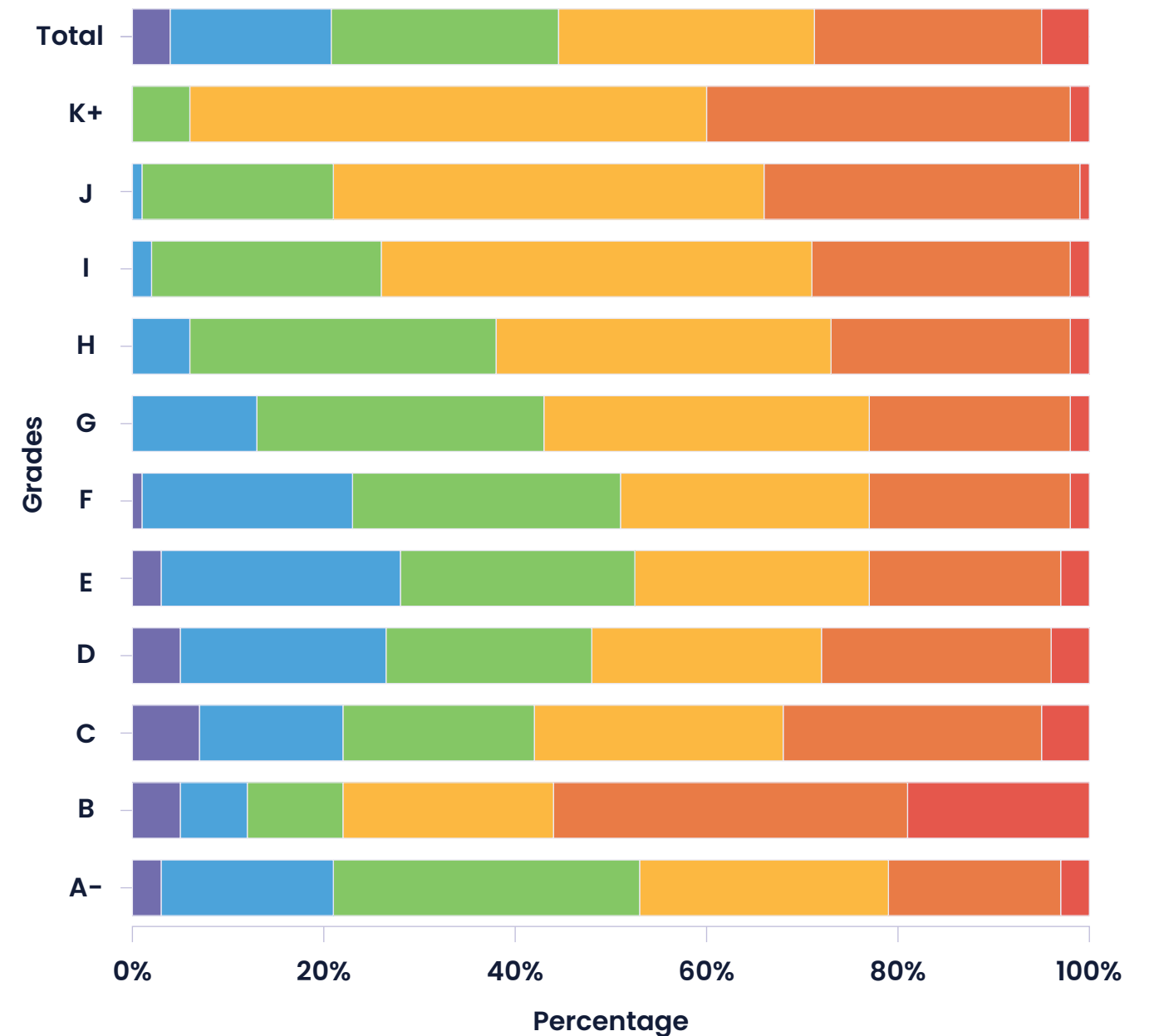
We continue to be underrepresented amongst employees under the age of 25, with the headcount further reducing from 466 last year to 457. Work continues to explore this data, detailed in our actions in **Appendix one.**

Typically, our data suggests that younger people are generally more represented in D to F grades, whilst those in the older age categories may take up a higher proportion of senior roles (H+) and B and C grades. Older age groups are also under-represented in A grade roles, which are almost exclusively

Schools Catering Assistants. School Catering Assistants may appeal more to younger age groups, which may be due to the working hours of the roles. Older age categories are concentrated in higher graded roles which require more experience, but also the lower grades which offer flexible working arrangements, often popular as semi-retirement roles.

Our data suggests staff in the older age categories represent about a third of our workforce and are more likely to work part-time than those in the younger age categories. Likewise lower grades attract more part-time workers. Amongst the lowest grades (A to C), circa 80% of our staff work part-time.

35 Age across grades



Armed Forces

Our commitment to the county's Armed Forces community is ongoing and continues to be reflected in our Gold Award status in the MOD's Employer Recognition Scheme.

The Council employs ex-service personnel and reservists from the Royal Navy, the Army and Royal Air Force, with reservists entitled to two weeks additional paid leave for training and other duties.

As part of our responsibilities under the Armed Forces Covenant, we recognise that attracting more armed forces veterans to apply for our roles has the potential for:

- bringing varied skills, knowledge, and experience;
- adding to the different lived experiences, and perspectives in the Council;
- increasing the skills available in languages, handling hazardous substances, HGV driving, engineering, first aid and catering to name a few;
- supporting our Inclusion and Diversity strategy more generally.

We are keen to attract Armed Forces applicants to our roles as the skills they bring are transferable and many of these skills are required in the roles in our recruitment 'hot spots.'

We have had 1.4% (264) of applicants who are Armed Forces veterans apply for our vacancies. An equal proportion of veterans applying for our vacancies are shortlisted and then hired for roles.

As mentioned in **page 16**, in March 2023, we asked staff to provide us with information relating to whether they are an Armed Forces veteran/reservist or cadet leader. We will report on this data in the 2023 to 2024 Annual Workforce Report.

Carers, pregnancy and maternity

Carers

Carers are often not visible in the workforce, so may get missed by employers. In March 2023, we asked staff to let us know about their caring responsibilities (**page 16**). Inclusion of this field within personnel records

will help us to understand how many colleagues there are who have caring responsibilities alongside their job. We will report on this data in the 2023 to 2024 Annual Workforce Report.

Pregnancy and maternity

The below table shows the number of staff who started, or were on maternity leave, from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. It also shows us the number of employees (headcount) who have taken shared parental leave, adoption leave and paternity leave.

Less maternity leave was taken in comparison to the last reporting period as well as a reduction in the number of KIT days and number of employees taking paternity leave.

36 Types of leave

Types of leave	Headcount/days
Maternity leave	358
Paternity leave	60
Shared Parental leave	9
Adoption leave	4
Keep in touch days	355

Disability

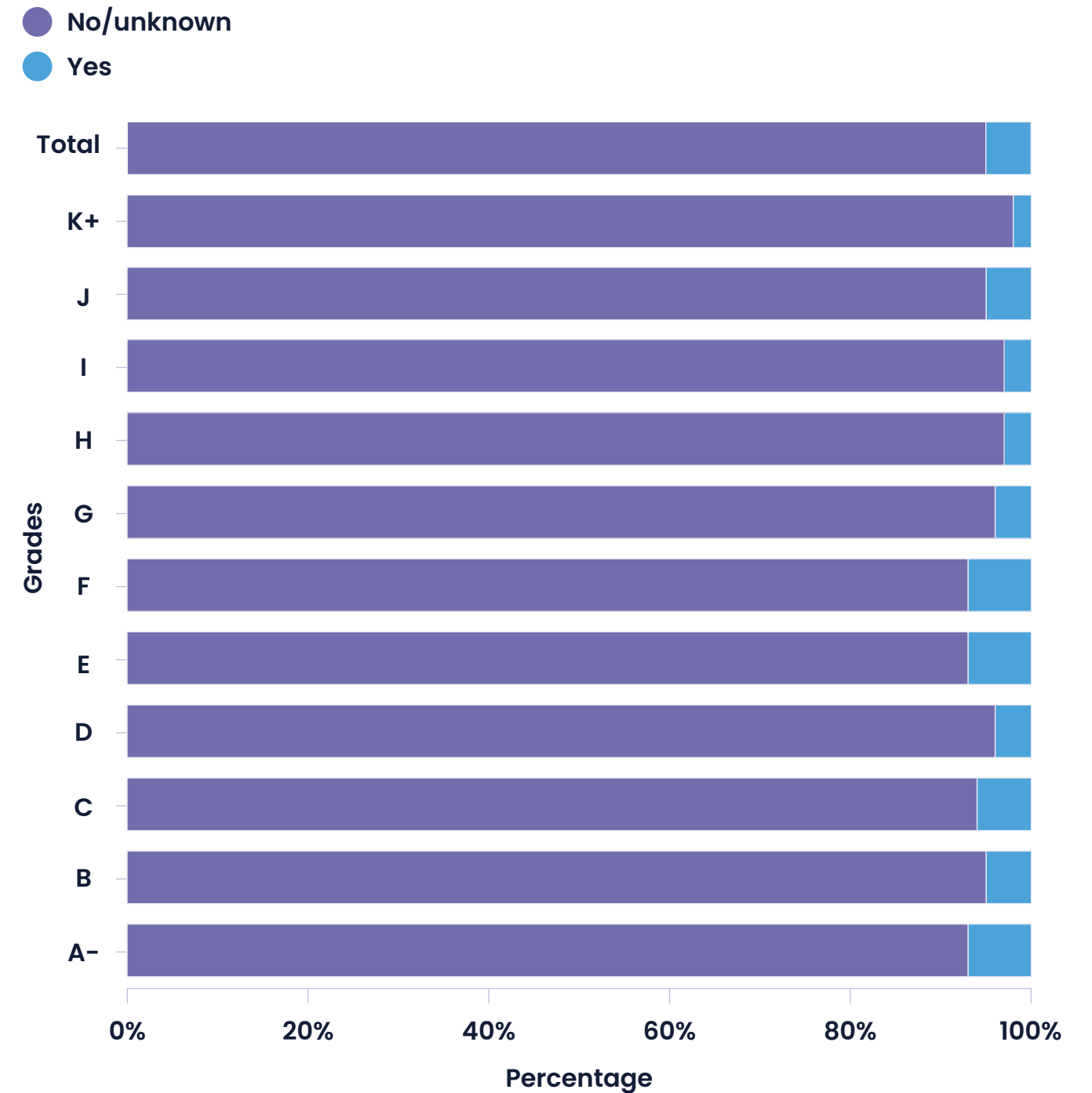
Any physical or mental health conditions, or illness lasting or expected to last, for 12-months or more

In November 2022, we updated the question to staff which asked if they had a disability, to ask if they had a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last for 12-months or more. Responses have increased over time, with 5.4% (704) of employees now having recorded themselves as having a physical or mental health conditions or illness lasting or expected to last for 12-months or more. The increase may be linked to organisation wide communications and the work that the Disability Network has undertaken to encourage staff to record this information under the updated question.

The graph following shows the distribution of staff responses across grades. This shows higher levels of disability at lower grades, and a reduction in disabilities as the grades increase. This is heavily influenced by the higher prevalence of disabilities in younger employees, who are more concentrated in lower grades.

Of the workforce, 5.2% (514) of females and 6.2% (190) of males have recorded a disability and our data shows that those declaring a disability are more likely to be in the younger age groups. This data compares to 7.9% of the population of Hampshire Residents (including Southampton and Portsmouth) aged 20 to 64 have a disability, broken down to 6.9% male and 9.0% female (Census 2021).

37 Disability across grades



Ethnicity

Reflected in the next graph and table we can see that 91% of our staff classify themselves as white and 9.4% classify themselves as from an ethnic minority. This is a marginal increase in staff from an ethnic minority from 8.8% last year and coincidentally is the same figure of 9.4% as the Hampshire population which are from ethnic minority backgrounds (Census 2021).

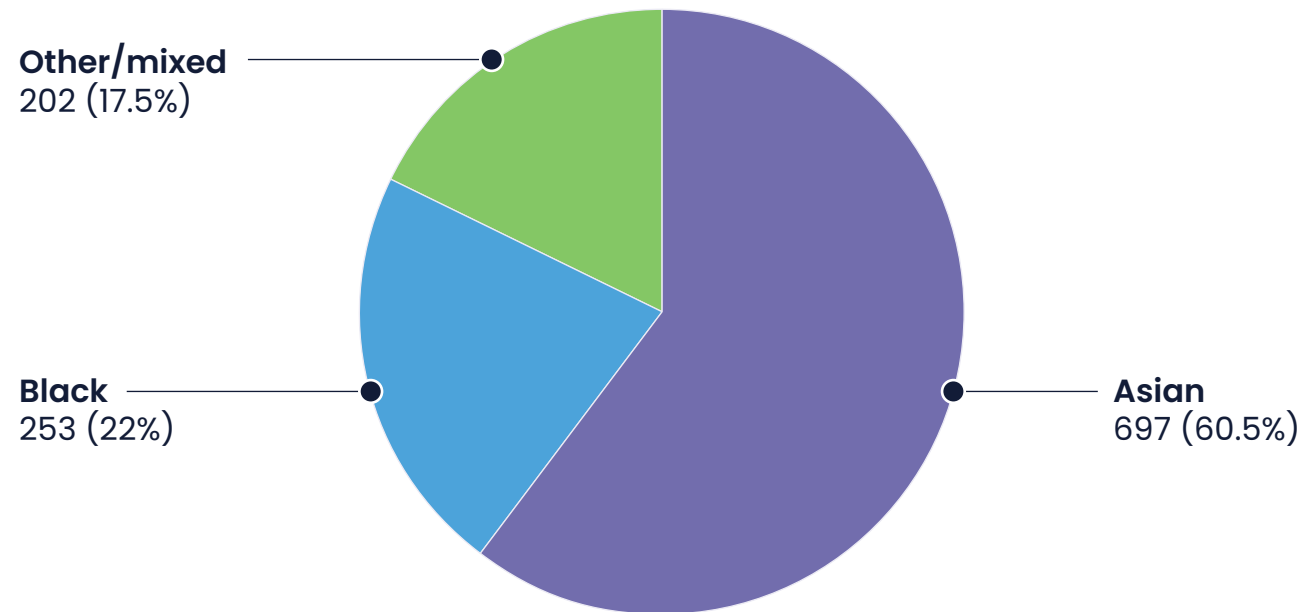
It is positive to see a slight increase in the ethnicity data that staff have shared with us, figures have remained at 95% since 2020 and in 2023 they have increased to 97%.

Throughout the year, the BME Staff Network has encouraged staff to provide us with their information supported by organisational wide communications.

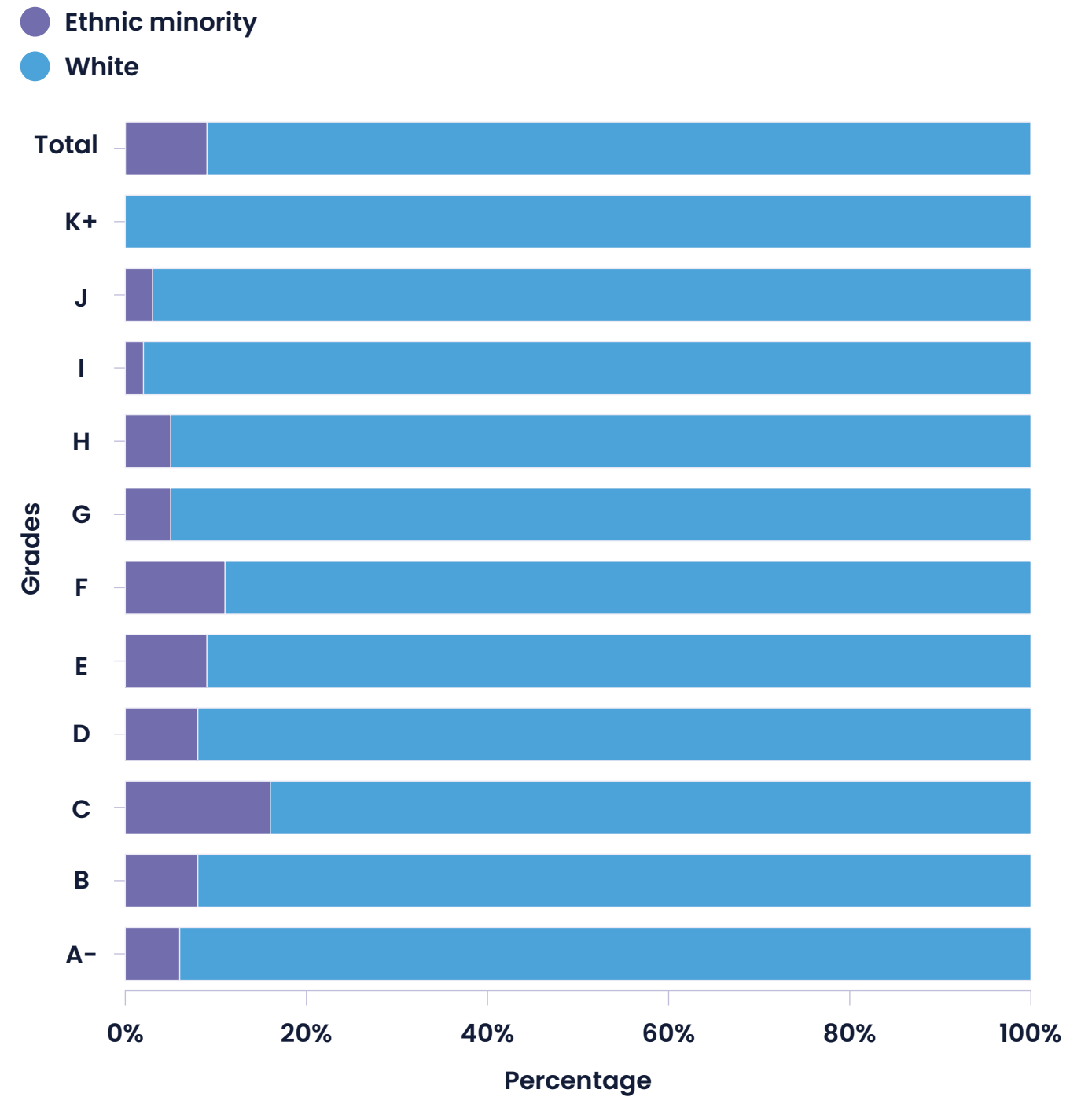
The following table reflects how ethnicity is broken down across grades. Ethnic minority staff are concentrated predominantly in grades C and F and less concentrated in grades A and grades above G.

The 9.4% of ethnic minority staff can be further broken down as follows:

38 Ethnic minority representation



39 Ethnicity across grades



There is a higher representation of males amongst ethnic minority staff (29%) when compared with the workforce as a whole (24%).

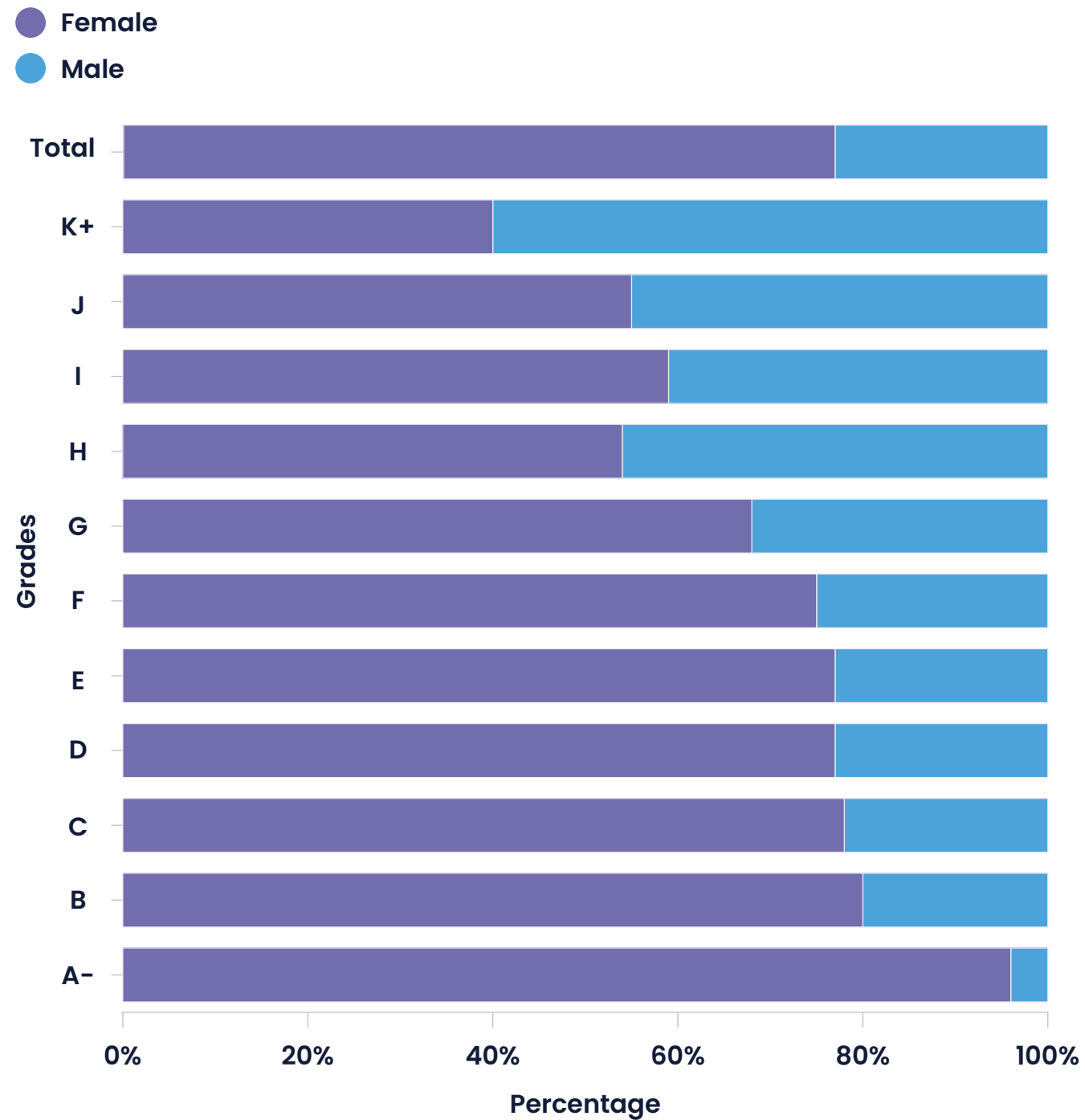
Gender

The graph below reflects our headcount by gender and full/part-time working profile as of 31 March 2023. As previously reported our

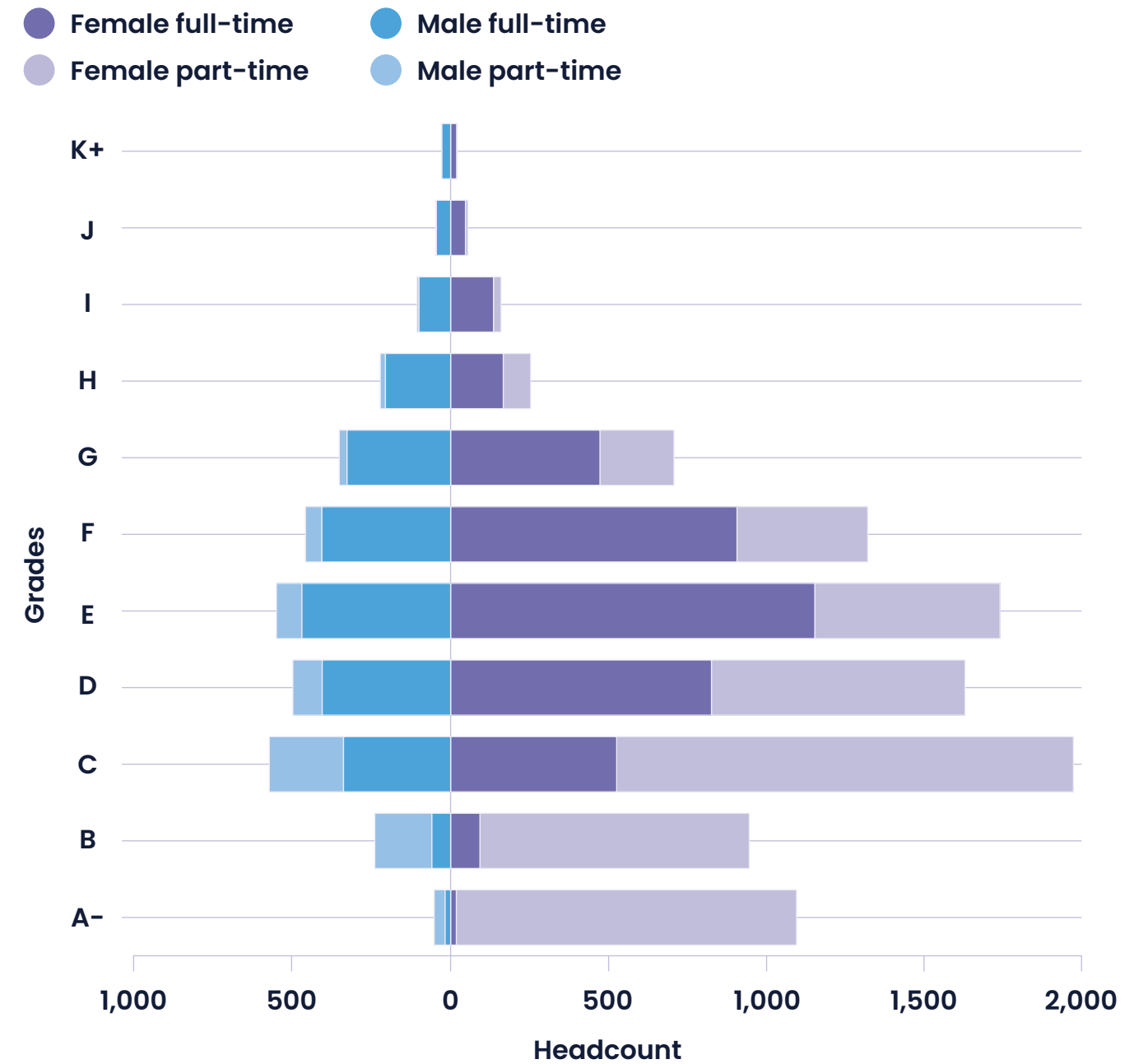
workforce remains predominantly female with a significant proportion of that workforce also being part-time.

This data also shows that half of our workforce works part-time in the next graph and table.

40 Gender across grades



41 Gender representation across grades, full-time and part-time roles



42 Gender representation across grades, full-time and part-time roles

Grade	Female			Male		
	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT	Total
K+	40%	4%	44%	56%	0%	56%
J	47%	8%	55%	44%	1%	45%
I	52%	9%	61%	37%	2%	39%
H	35%	18%	54%	43%	3%	46%
G	45%	22%	67%	30%	2%	33%
F	51%	23%	75%	22%	3%	25%
E	51%	26%	76%	20%	3%	24%
D	39%	38%	77%	19%	4%	23%
C	21%	57%	78%	13%	9%	22%
B	8%	72%	80%	5%	15%	20%
A-	2%	94%	96%	1%	3%	4%
Total	34%	43%	76%	18%	5%	24%

Gender identity

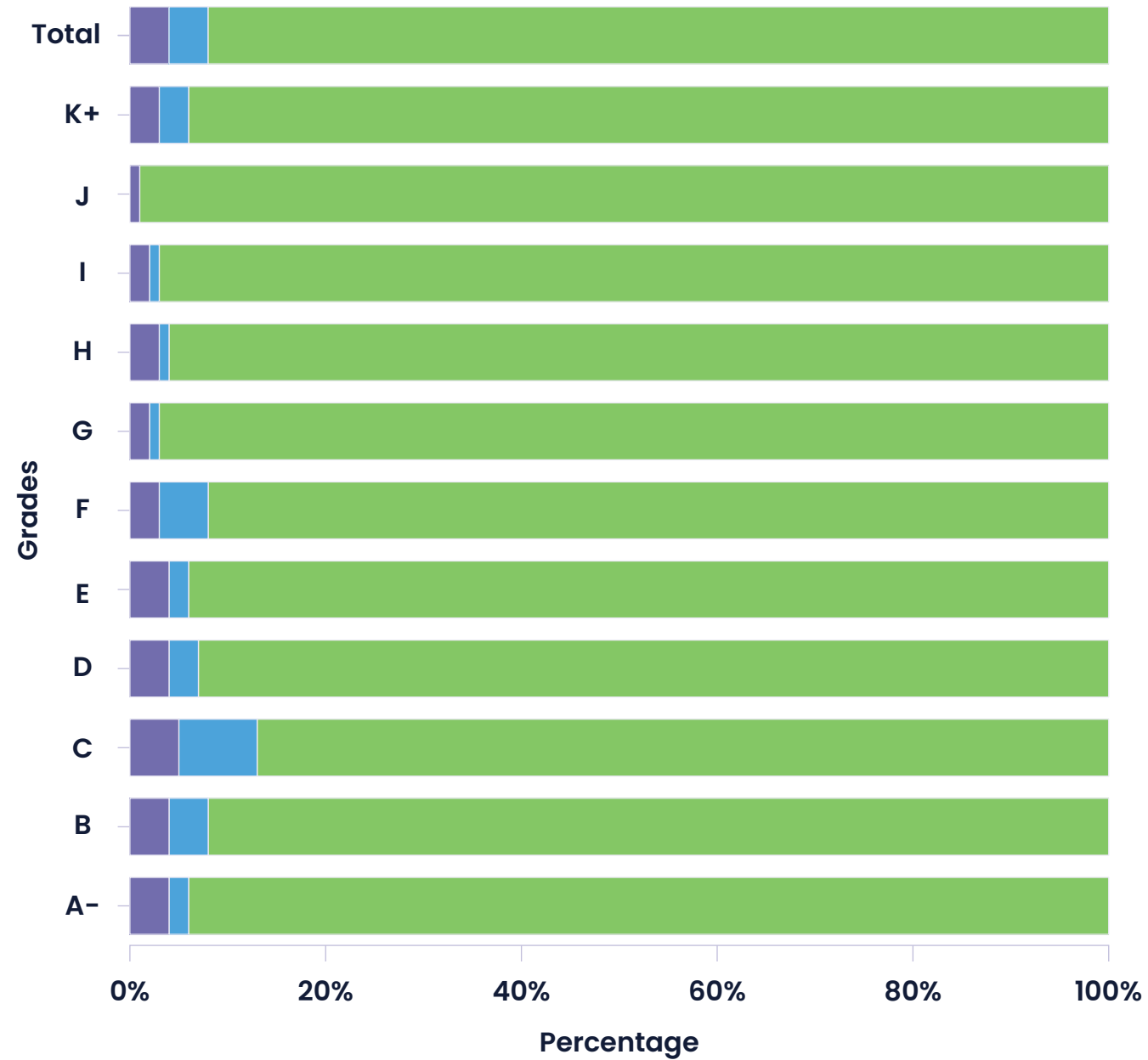
In addition to gender, an employee can choose to record their gender identity. This is ‘a person’s innate sense of their own gender which may or may not correspond to the sex they were assigned at birth’ (Inclusive Employers). As mentioned on **page 16**, in November 2022, we updated our question to employees asking them whether the gender they identify with is the same as their sex registered at birth. Due to this change in question to employees mid-way through the reporting year we will look at reporting this data in the 2023 to 2024 Annual workforce Report.

Nationality

The nationality profile of the Council is presented below; however, we have a 18% gap in this data. We have not seen a significant change in these figures following the EU exit.

43 Nationality by grade

- EU national
- Non UK or EU national
- UK national



Religion and belief

It is important for us to understand and be sensitive to the religious beliefs of our workforce to help promote an inclusive working environment. We encourage staff to share information with colleagues around religious festivals and celebrations that they are involved in, to help educate and inform others. We want staff to feel confident and safe to share their faith at work and note that Inclusive Employers state, 'employees who connect with the deeper purpose of their work through their beliefs are thought to be more resilient, responsive and passionate about their work.'

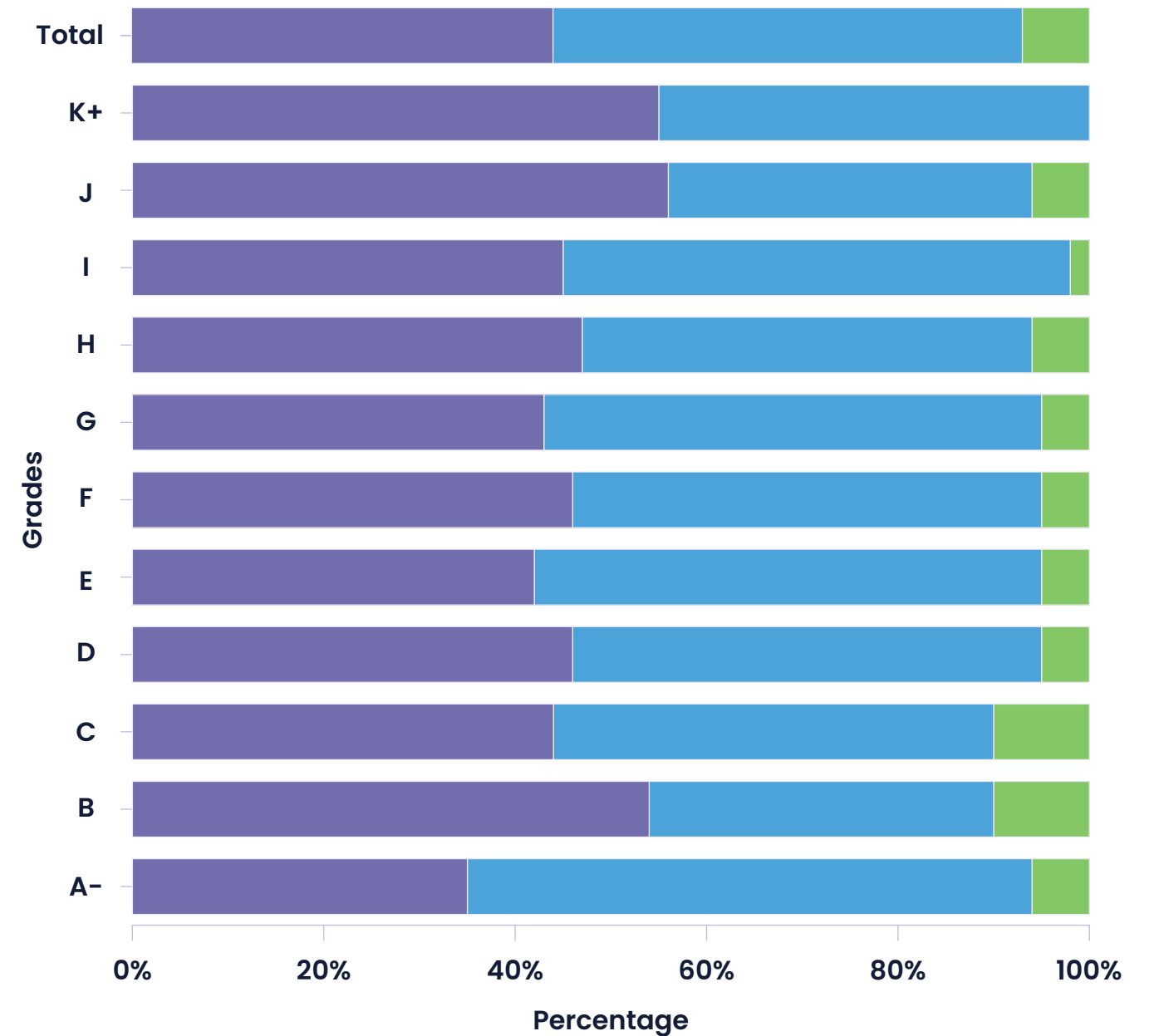
We have seen an increase in the number of employees who have provided us with this information, with 62% of employees declaring their religion or belief. As the quality of our

data improves in relation to religion and belief, in this report we are able to provide comparison to regional and national data.

In this report we can compare our representation against the Census 2021 figures. The figures show 46% of Hampshire residents are Christian and 43% have no religion or belief (Census 2021) reflecting the highest percentages of our employees.

44 Religion and belief by grade

- Christian
- No religion or belief
- Other



Sexual orientation

Since reporting our employees' sexual orientation data for the first-time last year, 56% of employees have now provided their information. It is important to acknowledge the trust that has been placed in the organisation by those staff who have chosen to do so. Whilst we can provide a high-level organisational report on this data, it is NOT information that can be accessed by individual line managers to protect anonymity. The purpose of reflecting it here is to help us inform our strategies and target initiatives to improve the workplace for LGBT+ employees in making the Council an even more inclusive place to work.

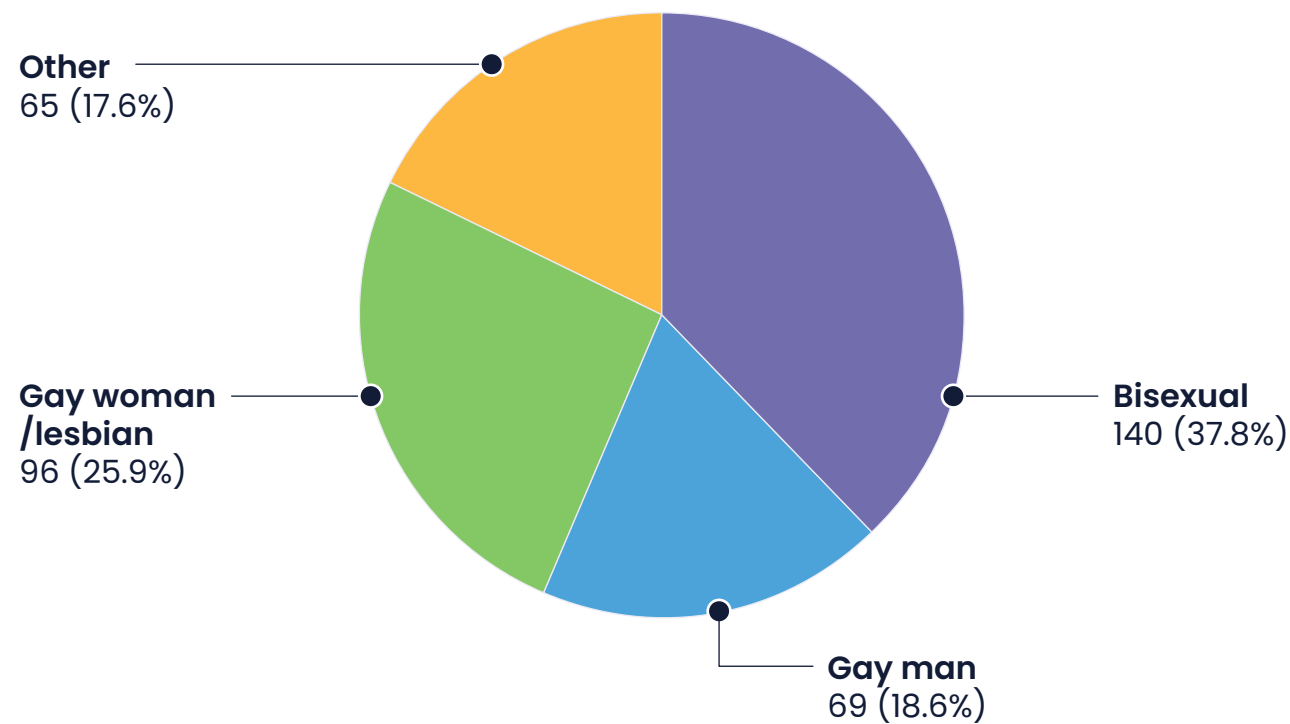
The Census 2021 comparison data shows that 97% of Hampshire 16+ age groups identify as straight or heterosexual and 3.3% identify otherwise (this data excludes residents who did not answer this question). This compares to 5.4% of employees declaring a minority sexual orientation at the Council.

It is positive to see a reduction in our data gaps for staff declaring their sexual orientation, 56% of staff have now provided this information. The minority sexual orientation profile is shown below.

The next graph shows our sexual orientation representation across grades, minority sexual orientations are shown more in lower grades, and this is largely due to the greater

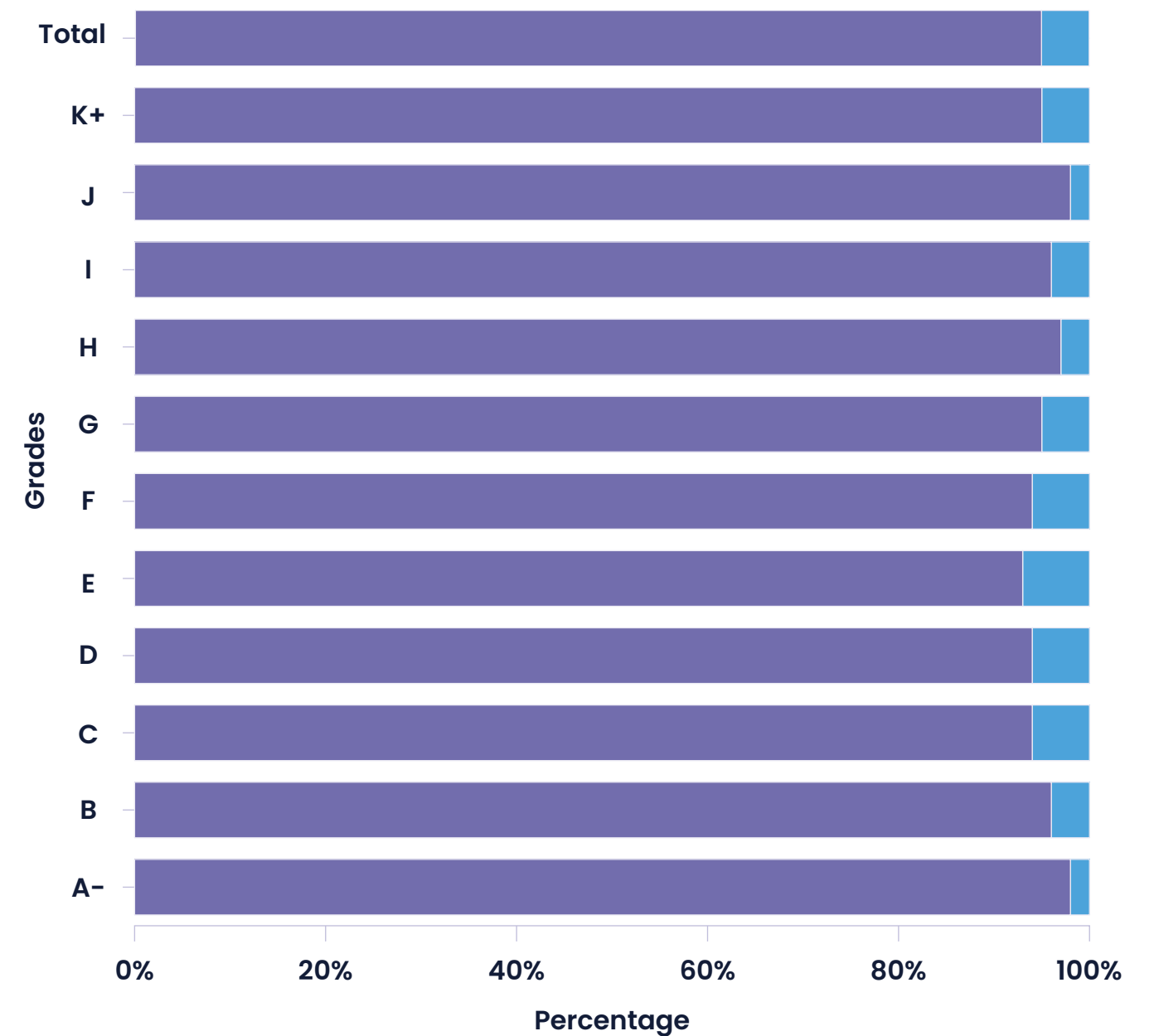
representation of younger workers in these grades, whom have a higher likelihood of identifying with a minority sexual orientation.

45 Minority sexual orientation representation



46 Sexual orientation across grades

- Heterosexual (straight)
- Minority sexual orientation



Staff Networks and Trade Unions

Staff Networks remain a critical part of our organisation. In October 2022, the Staff Network Charter was launched as referenced in **page 16**. The Charter sets out commitments between the Council and the Staff Networks, recognising the positive role that staff networks play, the organisation's commitment to supporting their work, and the way the networks support staff.

Since the last reporting period, it is positive to see that network membership across all staff networks has increased.

Our staff networks are:

- **Black and Minority Ethnic Network (BME)** – 107 members (+4)
- **Carers and Working Parents Network** – 337 members (+94)
- **Disability Network** – 340 members (+210)
- **LGBT+ Network** – 97 members (+32)

In addition to the Staff Networks the Council has several smaller groups that also support employees in relation to a wide range of issues and characteristics such:

- Auto-immune support group
- Better Balance Network
- CCBS's Women's Forum
- Women in IT
- Neurodiverse Staff Group

With the changes to directorates on 1 January 2023, the support for women across the Council is being reviewed by the three informal groups.

Trade Unions continue to play their part within the Council, working closely with managers in the shared best interest of our service users and the staff who provide those services.

Our Unions and professional bodies:

- Association of Educational Psychologists
- GMB
- Hampshire Teachers' Liaison Panel
- Prospect
- Royal College of Nursing
- UNISON
- Unite

Appendices

Appendix one

Progress against our previous actions

One

Explore different ways to analyse our workforce data to understand more about our people.

Status – Closed and incorporated into the Strategic Workforce Planning Programme. We are continuously developing our analytic capabilities and exploring new ways in which to increase meaningful insights that can be drawn from our data, such as understanding internal turnover (trends in job movements), leavers survey insights, salary benchmarking, absence trends, and shortlisting/hire probabilities amongst different demographics.

Two

Continue initiatives to increase the numbers and profiles of people from protected characteristics groups in senior roles (H+).

Status – Closed, this work continues and has been incorporated into the work being undertaken by the Strategic Workforce Planning Programme and Leadership, Management and Development. We continue to analyse our data, explore where best to advertise our roles and promote our Diversity role models. We continue to develop our staff through our core leadership programmes such as Firefly which has a diverse profile of participants. Our courses are designed to be inclusive and accessible to develop our future leaders. We continue to advance how we deliver our inclusion and diversity training content through different resources, and we continue to explore alternative ways to embed inclusion into the organisation.

Three

Continue to look at ways to make flexible working more accessible.

Status – Closed. We have updated our Flexible Working Policy and guidance and directorates are looking at flexible working as a recruitment strategy. We await the forthcoming changes to legislation which central Government has advised will make flexible working the default, with employees being able to request flexible working from day one of their employment.

Four

Raise awareness and sharing information about the diversity and cultures of colleagues and their lived experiences.

Status – Closed and embedded into business as usual processes. Let's talk Gender and LGBT+ took place over the last six-months, positive feedback was received on these new initiatives. Let's talk about religion, faith and belief sessions will commence shortly to continue to provide opportunities for all staff to engage with specialist speakers and colleagues who share their lived experiences of different protected characteristic groups. The sessions encourage open conversations to build awareness and understanding and to drive continuous improvement. We continue to raise awareness of events and celebration days across the year. As in previous years we celebrated International Women's Day with an opportunity to hear some of the Council's inspiring colleagues talking about their experiences.

Five

Better enable colleagues to report feelings of bullying, harassment, and discrimination in the workplace.

Status – Closed and embedded into business as usual processes. We are reviewing our Dignity at Work Policy and guidance to look at how best employees can report these types of incidents, with an additional route scheduled for introduction in 2023. Visual and recorded materials are being developed to promote our approach to addressing bullying harassment and discrimination, and to encourage and support colleagues to report incidences from other colleagues, service users or the public. We will continue to measure reported incidences through the Inclusion and Diversity Survey, next scheduled for 2024. A further update on this work is found under **'Progress and Perform.'**

Six

Explore the value of a 'conflict resolution' approach, modelled on a restorative justice and alternative dispute resolution process.

Status – Closed and embedded into business as usual processes. Research has been conducted into the nature, volume and types of issues raised We are reviewing our Resolving Workplace Issues policy to ensure there is strong focus on early resolution, with appropriate resources for managers to support them in these conversations. A further update on this work is found under **'Progress and perform.'**

Seven

Continue to embed health and wellbeing in the organisation and supporting managers in this area.

Status – Closed and embedded into business as usual processes. We continue to support managers in this area with a full programme of work underway and consistently receive positive feedback from staff and managers. This work is further referenced in **'Develop.'**

Eight

Review and update Directorate and Corporate People Strategies.

Status – Closed. With the changes to our leadership structure referred to in the **'Changes to our operating structure' section**, directorates are reviewing and updating their people strategies and plans. Organisationally we now have a Corporate Management Team Strategic Workforce Board to oversee a broader programme of work and make relevant decisions in regard to strategic workforce planning.

We have made progress against the set of actions through the Strategic Workforce Planning Programme as follows:

One

Action – Improve our attraction rates for those under the age of 25 through the development of appropriate interventions aimed at the early career labour market.

Status – Open. The programme is currently completing a piece of analysis on our current position of the ‘early/new career’ opportunities, such as:

- T-levels;
- apprenticeships;
- graduate schemes;
- career pathways;
- work experience;
- graduate placements.

The critical role analysis will then be overlaid to help identify any gaps and to develop further opportunities to attract those under the age of 25 into critical roles across the Council. This analysis will help to refine our aims and objectives for this work.

Two

Action – Develop our attraction strategy and Employee Value Proposition with a view to gaining a competitive edge in the labour market.

Status – Open. The Communications and Engagement team and HR reviewed our existing description of our employee value proposition, and an updated employee benefits webpage has been published. Work will continue to promote the Council as an employer of choice.

Three

Action – Better understanding our turnover data, particularly any patterns of external and/or internal turnover.

Status – Open. Work is underway and some of our progress is shown within the additional data we have analysed in this report under ‘**Retain and exit.**’

Four

Action – Review and update our Leadership and Management Development framework in light of emerging needs and detailed gap analysis.

Status – Closed. The ‘**Develop**’ section provides further information on the work underway for this action. This action has now been incorporated into business-as-usual processes as we are continually assessing and reviewing the work we do.

Five

Action – Further developing our insight about the future skills and workforce needs of our organisation.

Status – Closed. Work is underway for this action, with a focus on digital literacy, encouraging a culture of continuous digital learning. The ‘**Develop**’ section provides further information about this work.

