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**To: Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board**

**Date: 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

**Subject: Recruitment and Retention**

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### **1. Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of current employment levels with a focus on diversity, particularly in relation to the three protected characteristic groups that are under-represented, namely minority ethnic, disability and LBGQT. The report details the current workforce analytics in relation to starters and leavers plus apprenticeships. There is further information on the support provided to these groups and wider benefits that available to employees.
- 1.2 This report enables members to have oversight of this area of work and details of the related metrics.

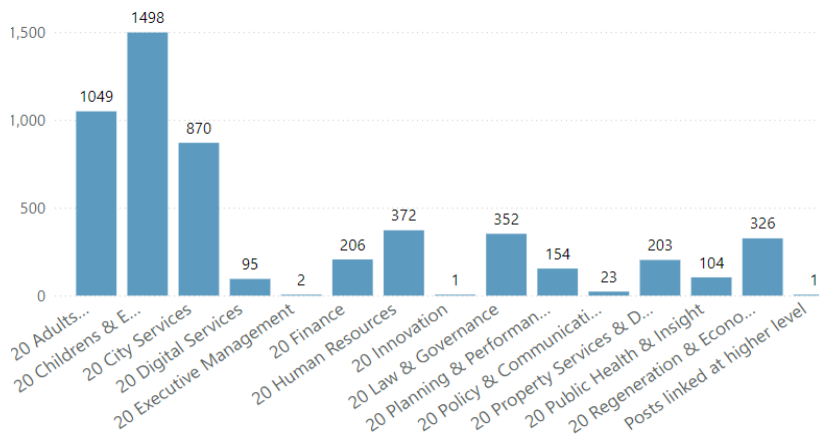
### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) is recommended to:
  1. Note the contents of the report and related analytics.
  2. Acknowledge the work being carried out in these areas and the ongoing organisational aim to have a sustained and growing representative workforce.
  3. Identify any recommendations for the Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources) to implement in the areas the report covers.

### **3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 Current employee numbers are 5210, which equates to 4210fte, with turnover at 14.38%. For comparison in June 2024, turnover was 13.91%, this increase is not unsurprising in the current climate.
- 3.2 This is also demonstrated in the graphs below which show the change in recruitment patterns over the last year, partly due to the introduction of the recruitment panel in September 2023, a number of organisational change programmes and greater consideration being given to filling posts in the light of the financial pressures.
- 3.3 Both graphs were accurate as of the 28<sup>th</sup> of January 2025.

### Employees at Selected Date by Hierarchy



28/01/2025

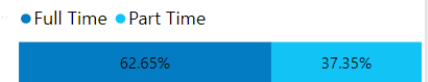
Leavers in 12 Months to Selected Date: 743  
Starters in 12 Months to Selected Date: 845

743 845

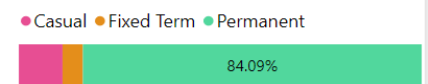
14.38%

Turnover at Selected Date

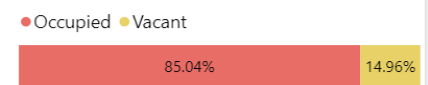
#### Employees by Type



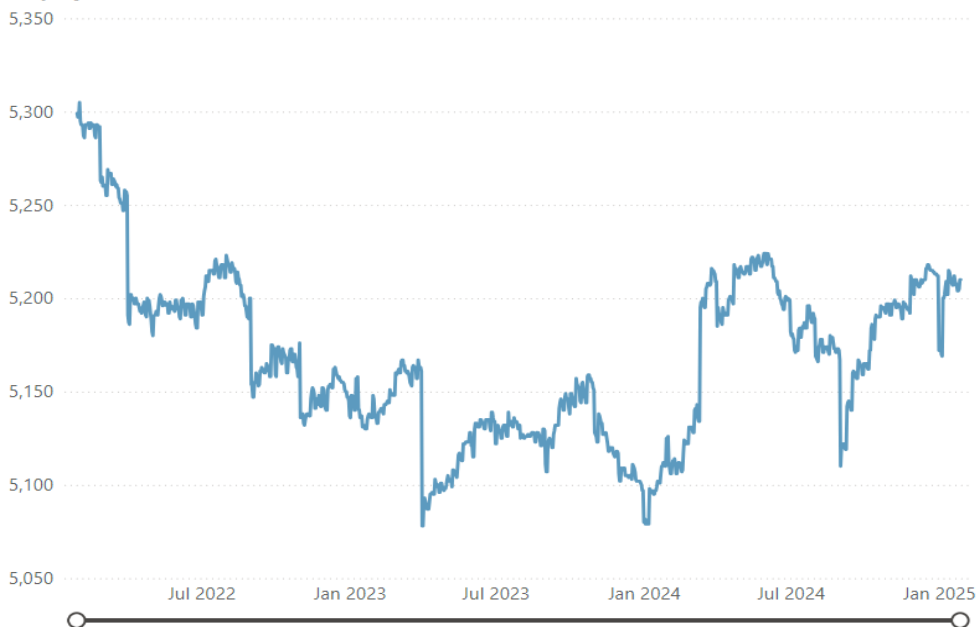
#### Contracts by Type



#### Posts by Status

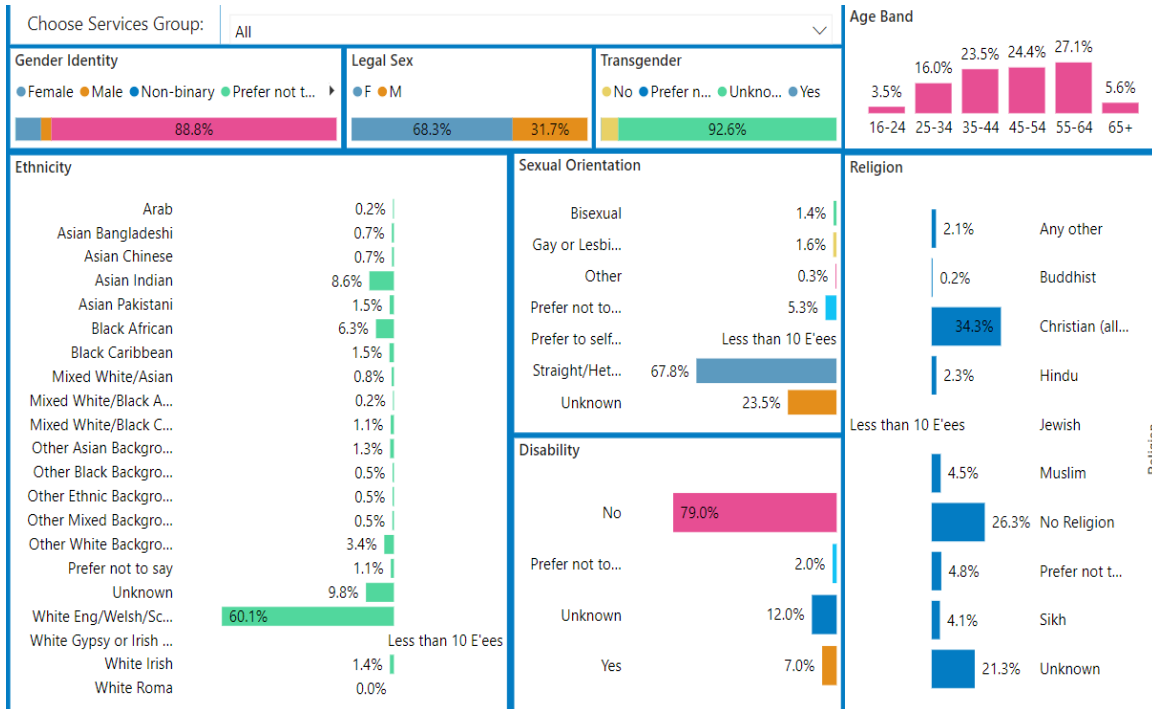


### Employees over Time

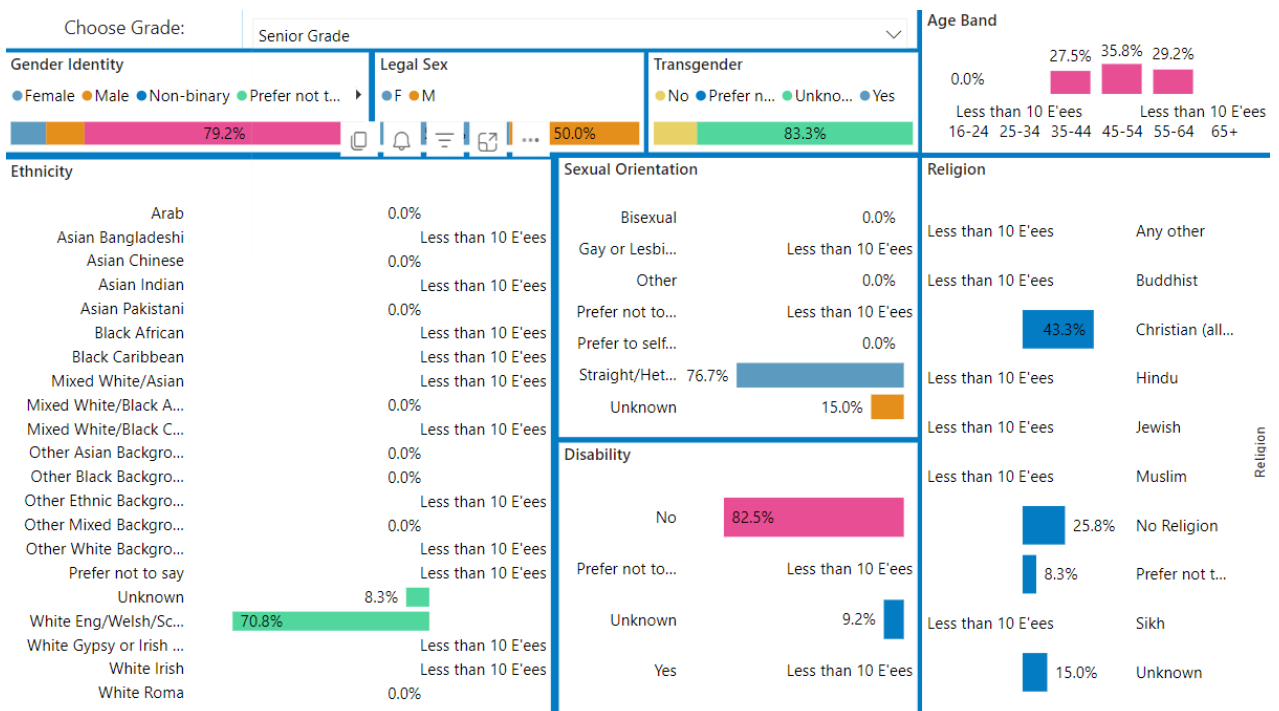


## 4 Inclusion Data

- 4.1 In relation to the protected characteristics of the workforce, the data below provides the overall breakdown within the Council.
- 4.2 This information in 2020 identified that there were 3 groups of employees who were under-represented at leadership level across our workforce; employees with a disability and who are neuro diverse, employees from visible minority ethnic backgrounds and employees who identify as LGBT+.
- 4.3 Overall Workforce by Ethnicity ( the' long' version of employee ethnicity is appendix 1)



## Senior Managers by Ethnicity



4.4 As a result, the inclusion focus has been on three specific areas to increase number employed. Support in the workplace, recruiting and retaining is a priority.

4.5 Also in 2020, anonymised recruitment was introduced with the introduction of the new recruitment system. The system does not provide recruiting managers with any personal details until shortlisting is completed and candidates are selected for interview. This process operates for all appointments including Chief Officer level.

- 4.6 Recruiting for Workforce Diversity Training has also been in place for some time, and this is supported by the Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit, which is available on the intranet.
- 4.7 The recruitment webpages have also been revised and updated, plus a review of advertising took place to ensure they were best placed and value for money. A new job description format is also in the process of being introduced, to remove bias in terms and language to ensure inclusivity. The format is being standardised so they will be consistent in approach and look.
- 4.8 Work has also taken place to ensure better and greater access for candidates with a disability, which enables other methods of application besides completing an application form, such as video.
- 4.9 It should also be noted that there are still a number of employees who have not provided their protected characteristics data. These figures are significant in number in several areas, for example disability declaration has 12% of employees not making a declaration, 9.8% for ethnicity and 23.59% for sexual orientation. A number of campaigns have been undertaken to increase these numbers with some improvement, but it remains an area of concern.
- 4.10 There are further plans in the upcoming Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to improve this, including a % target for headway.

## **5 Inclusive Recruitment Panel Initiative**

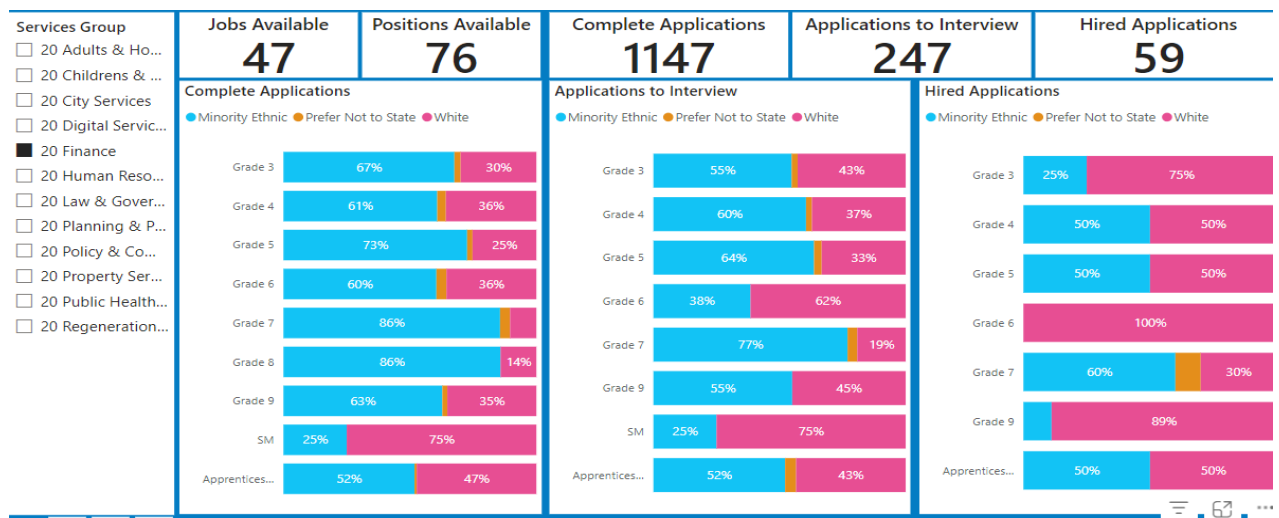
- 5.1 The introduction of anonymised recruitment did result in a significant shift in the number of applications received from each of the under-represented groups of employees, plus the percentage of those candidates shortlisted has increased through the application of our anonymised process.
- 5.2 However, there was a noticeable gap between those shortlisted and those being appointed which could possibly have implications for the way in which the Council delivers its services to our diverse residents.
- 5.3 As a result of our ambitions to be more creative and innovative we took the positive steps of offering a development opportunity to employees from those three under-represented groups, so that they could play an active and important role in changing the representation of our workforce. The inclusive recruitment panel initiative involves employees with the three protected characteristics receiving training so that they are able to support with the writing of interview questions, clear on shortlisting criteria and could play an action role on all interview panels for posts which are Grade 8 and above, which is where under-representation is the most evident. Following the expression of interest being sent out to all staff in March 2024, 61 staff have come forward to be trained resulting in 30 employees sitting in the Council pool.
- 5.4 The Council's appointment data in relation to the three cohorts of employees who are under-represented has fluctuated over the past 9 months, however our recent data for the end of Quarter 2 (July-Sept) shows that the number of new starters from minority ethnic backgrounds has increased from 29.96% to 41.52% at the end of the Quarter 3 (Oct-Dec 2024) which is when the inclusive interview panel initiative has been active.
- 5.5 A survey was recently sent out to those individuals who had applied for a job at the Council and were asked whether they thought the Council's commitment to

becoming a more diverse and inclusive organisation was visible. One respondent said “Yes, there was someone who looked like me on the interview panel.”

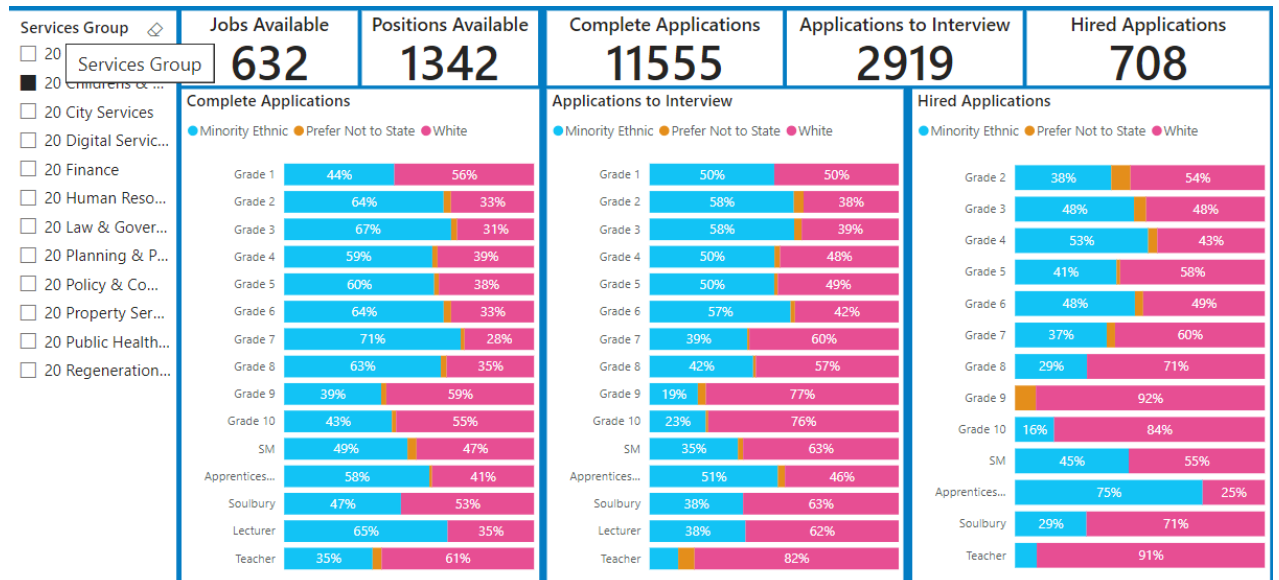
5.6 It is planned to extend the scheme further. There are also plans to work in partnership with the job shop in some focussed areas to encourage applicants from these areas to apply for roles with the Council.

5.7 The People analytics continues to develop and improve with recruitment data now being available relating to the three focussed protected characteristics.

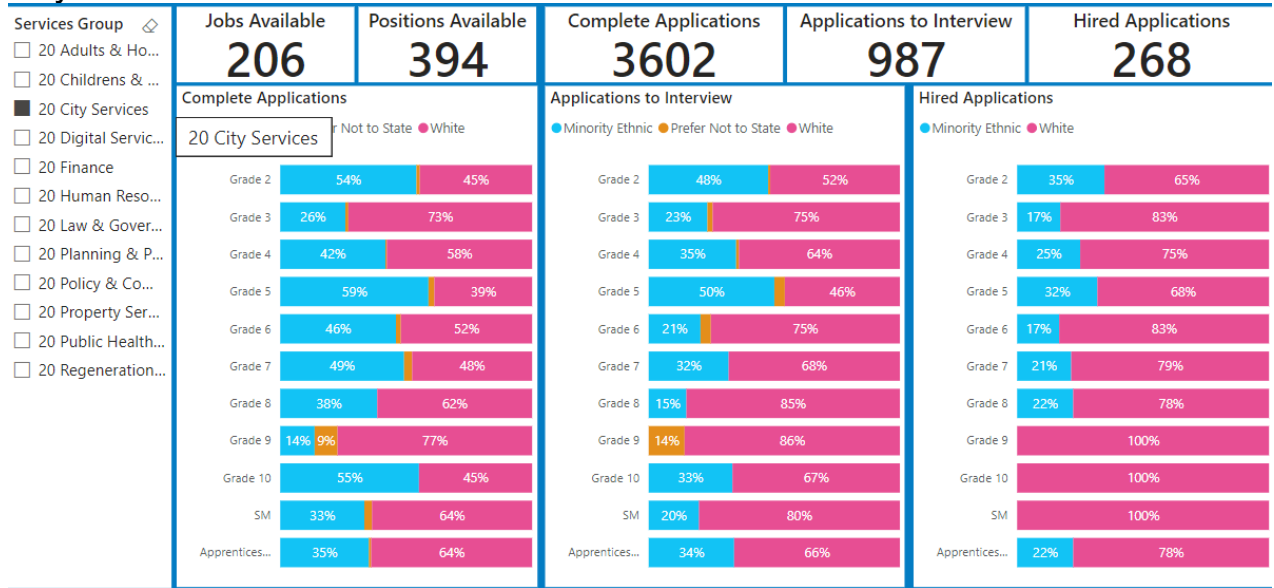
The example below is data for the recruitment undertaken in Finance by numbers of jobs, applicants, shortlisting and interview by ethnicity.



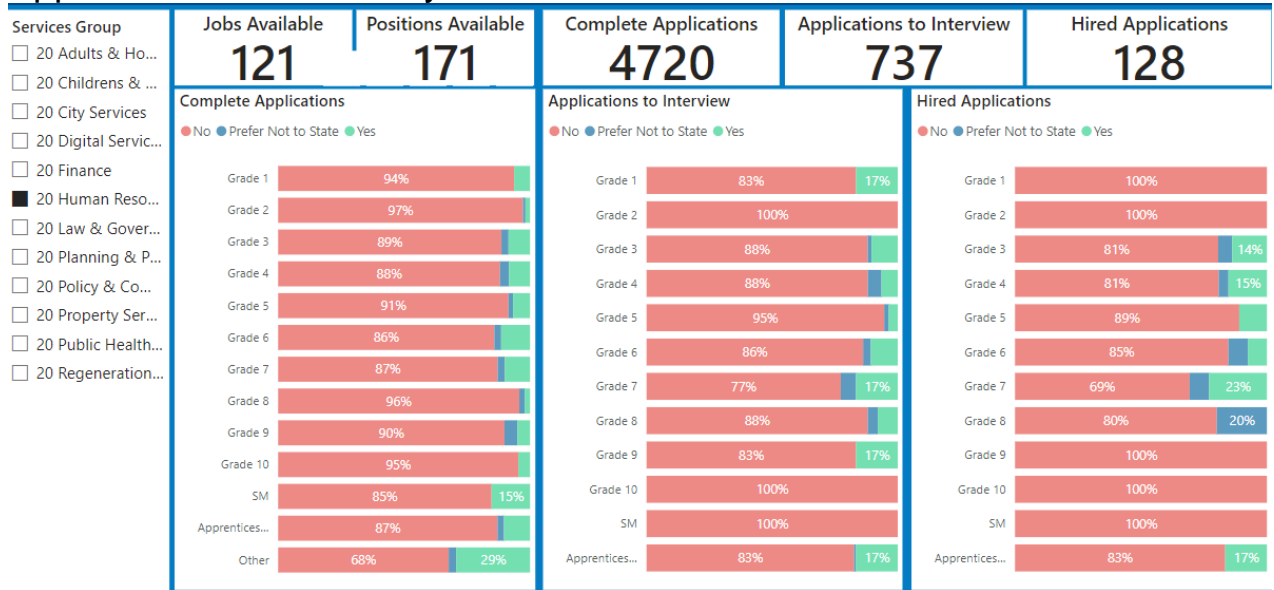
## Childrens Services



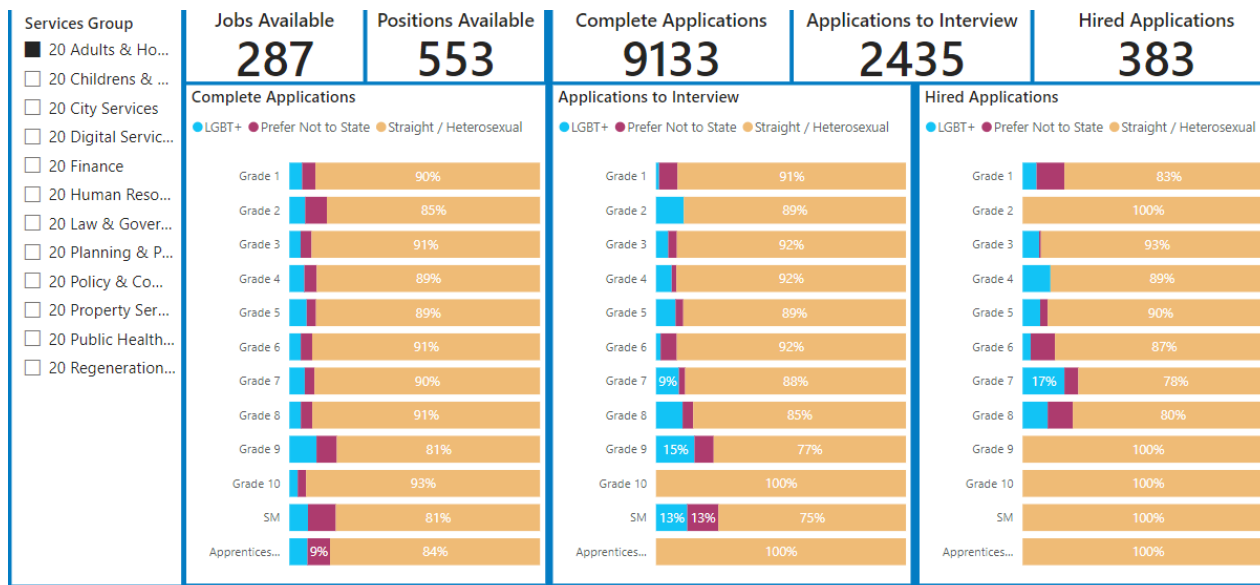
## City Services



## Applicants with a disability for HR/Custom Services roles



## Applicants LBGQT+ Law and Governance



This data means better and greater transparency and enables services to really review and consider what actions they can take to improve outcomes.

### 6 Disability Support

- 6.1 Following the completion of the Calibre positive action program, for employees with a disability, the Council commissioned “Making Lemonade” to deliver Disability Inclusion training. Research consistently shows the two priorities for disabled people and people with long-term health conditions in the workplace are getting the adjustments they need and having a disability confident line manager.
- 6.2 As part of our responsibilities as a Disability Confident Leader organisation, we want Council managers to feel confident to have effective and appropriate conversations about disability and reasonable adjustments. This encourages employees to feel included, respected, and comfortable being themselves at work, which enables them to meet their full potential.
- 6.3 Prior to attending training, delegates receive an information pack that summarises why disability inclusion is important and includes video guides on reasonable adjustments and managing the Council’s Personal Adjustment Passport and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan. To date, 169 colleagues have attended the training, equivalent to 19.5% of Council managers. Training will continue to be offered throughout 2025 with seventy-five places available between February and April 2025.
- 6.4 The Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing team offer additional support via an online seminar on reasonable adjustments. A recording is available on the intranet and two more webinars are planned for 2025. They also offer neurodiversity training for managers. The course provides an overview of neurodiversity, its impact on individuals and workplaces and how to implement reasonable adjustments that enhance inclusivity and performance.

6.5 An aim within the new Workforce D&I Strategy for 2025-2028 is to centralise the reasonable adjustments budget and monitor the number and type of adjustments in place. This will streamline the process for employees trying to obtain adjustments but will also help make the most of Council resources and identify opportunities for cost saves.

## **7 Young People**

7.1 The Apprenticeship and Early Careers Team actively seeks to engage with a variety of under-represented groups to promote social mobility and increase the diversity of our apprentices.

## **8 School engagement and work experience**

8.1 The team prioritises engagement with schools that have the highest percentage of students on free school meals. This metric highlights the schools with the most disadvantaged students and those with additional barriers.

8.2 This engagement takes the form of:

### **A) School Insight Days**

A group of 15 students attend a day at the Council, learning about what we do as an employer and provider of services. The students hear talks from Senior Leaders, go on a tour of Council offices, undertake a variety of employability activities, and talk with our current apprentices about their careers. These sessions have been very successful, gaining excellent feedback from the students and teachers and have now started to result in applications for apprenticeships from those that attended in recent years and have finished school.

### **B) Work experience**

Three placements have been allocated to each of the top five schools on the free school meals list, to take place in June and July. Placements are taking place across all service groups within the Council to provide a breadth of opportunities. These schools have been asked to put forward students that may not have otherwise secured a work experience placement.

### **C) Careers fairs and school assemblies**

The team attends a variety of careers fairs and school assemblies to talk to students about Council apprenticeships, always taking a current apprentice with them to talk directly about their experience.

### **D) Targeted advertising**

A pilot is shortly being launched to advertise two Paralegal Apprenticeships in Legal Services. These roles are only being advertised to Coventry Schools for those students finishing their A-Levels this year (Applicants require A-Levels to undertake this apprenticeship). The direct advertising to school leavers is a positive action step to increase the number of young people at the Council. In addition to this, to further target young people from under-represented groups, colleagues in the Apprenticeship Team and Legal Services will be holding talks and information sessions at the top five schools for



free school meals to provide additional details and to encourage applications from those who may not have considered such an opportunity before.

### E) Care Leavers

The team works closely with Through Care to identify Care Leavers that may be interested in Council Apprenticeships and to provide them with support in applying for and securing roles. Additional support and guidance are provided throughout their apprenticeship to enable them to complete and move into a positive destination afterwards.

### F) General support

All shortlisted applicants for apprenticeships are invited to attend a 'pre-interview' session prior to the final interview with the recruiting manager. At this session, the team give applicants an overview of what to expect from the final interview, as well as advice and guidance on how to prepare. This stage was created in recognition that not all applicants receive the required support from parents/carers prior to an interview and this may put them at a disadvantage.

### G) Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs)




The Apprenticeship Team is working with colleagues in Adult Education to support the launch of a new 'Pathways 2 Apprenticeships' programme. This programme is for NEETs aged 19-29 and is designed to provide the required skills and experience for those who are not quite apprenticeship ready at the moment. Apprenticeship vacancies have been identified for suitable participants on the programme to move into upon successful completion.

### H) General engagement

The team has built an extensive list of partners including charities, youth groups, community groups, and those in the third sector supporting young people with employability, that it shares vacancies to ensure a broad range of awareness of Council apprenticeships.

## 9 Benefits

9.1 The current benefits employees are able to access besides the pension scheme, 28 days annual leave and flexible working are listed below.

 My cash	 My discounts	 My way
<a href="#">Competitive salary</a> <a href="#">Pay progression through multiple increments</a> <a href="#">Additional role-related allowances</a> <a href="#">Salary match opportunity</a> <a href="#">Employee Welfare Support Loan</a>	<a href="#">Lifestyle savings</a> <a href="#">Our local discounts</a> <a href="#">Company discounts</a>	<a href="#">Cycle to work</a> <a href="#">Bike shop</a> <a href="#">Car scheme</a> <a href="#">Workplace parking scheme</a> <a href="#">Business car park passes</a> <a href="#">Travelcards</a> <a href="#">Payroll Giving Scheme</a> <a href="#">Home and Electronics Scheme</a>

 <p><b>My time</b></p> <p><a href="#">Generous annual leave allowance (starting at 28 days plus Bank Holidays)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Annual leave purchase scheme</a></p> <p><a href="#">Flexible working arrangements supporting work-life balance</a></p> <p><a href="#">Parental leave</a></p>	 <p><b>My voice</b></p> <p><a href="#">Employee Networks - Embrace, Pride, Disabled, Young, Women</a></p> <p><a href="#">Recognised Trade Unions and active membership</a></p>	 <p><b>My health and wellbeing</b></p> <p><a href="#">Award-winning occupational health team</a></p> <p><a href="#">Counselling service</a></p> <p><a href="#">Employee Assistance Programme</a></p> <p><a href="#">Advantage Voluntary Health Plan</a></p>
 <p><b>My awards</b></p> <p><a href="#">Employee recognition</a></p>	 <p><b>My opportunities</b></p> <p><a href="#">Corporate Learning and Development offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">Improve your maths</a></p>	 <p><b>My savings</b></p> <p><a href="#">Generous local government pension scheme</a></p> <p><a href="#">Clockwise Credit Union</a></p> <p><a href="#">Salary Finance</a></p> <p><a href="#">My Money Matters</a></p>

9.2 The benefits are subject to regular review, and financial well-being is an area we have increased over the last year. We have introduced a Welfare Loan Scheme, AVC's via salary sacrifice are also new and we are currently running a reduced travel card offer in conjunction with WMCA.

9.3 We promote the schemes as often as possible either through the intranet, People Hour or Employee Information Cascade. In April we are promoting the schemes at a weeklong event.

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## Appendix 1

### Ethnicity Long Description

