

# Human Resources and Organisational Development

## Workforce to Reflect the Community Strategy 2024/26

Date Implemented	May 2023
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Contact for Queries	<a href="mailto:ER.casework@towerhamlets.gov.uk">ER.casework@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a>



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# Workforce to Reflect the Community Strategy 2024/26

## 1. Introduction

Having a council workforce that fully reflects, at all levels, the rich diversity of the population of Tower Hamlets and addresses areas of inequality is a priority for the Council. This is the second iteration of this strategy, first introduced in its current form in May 2023. It aims to build on the successes of the previous strategy, whilst continuing to address areas of underrepresentation and make progress in new areas. It is the primary strategy for workforce Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), supplemented by specific plans where necessary, i.e. Stonewall.

The people we employ to deliver and manage services and devise strategy is of paramount importance. There can be no compromise on the over-riding objective of employing and developing the very best talent that is available.

This should not contradict our aim of having a workforce that reflects the community but rather must contribute to it, as it will mean removing potential barriers faced by prospective and current employees to achieving their fullest potential.

Notwithstanding the strategic objective of having a 'workforce that reflects the community', it is inevitable and desirable that the catchment area from which the organisation can draw on the best talent available will be wider than the borough boundaries. This must be balanced with the need to ensure that the talent available locally is able to be employed and developed within Tower Hamlets Council.

The recent Best Value Inspection report covered diversity and equalities, as well as culture and this strategy and action plan addresses the issues raised. The Casey Report on the Metropolitan Police also highlighted the importance of having a workforce that reflects the community, something that Tower Hamlets Council is committed to.

The Council has made good progress in delivering against the first year of the strategy and action plan. This second version of the strategy is more ambitious and builds on those successes. It is designed to continue to work towards representation but to take us beyond this, to be a leader in the field of EDI and an example of best practice, to achieve equity of outcomes.

There are 9 protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. These are:

- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Religion/Belief
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Gender Reassignment

This strategy covers those protected characteristics that we are able to report on. It also expands to include gender identity and resident status, as well as care experience, which the Council has adopted as an additional protected characteristic.

For the first time, the strategy covers specific work around socio-economic status, neurodiversity, disability, care experience and culture.

## 2. Achievements in 2023/24

Area	Achievements 2023-24
1. Monitoring and Evaluation of Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implemented a monthly dashboard/gap analysis tool</li> <li>Updated borough comparison data to reflect Census 2021 data</li> <li>Created a target setting framework</li> <li>Implemented Directorate Action Plans, including directorate/service targets</li> </ul>
2. Recruitment and Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Piloted anonymised recruitment</li> <li>Updated EDI statement for job adverts</li> <li>Utilised CV only recruitment for specific roles</li> <li>Developed a shortened application form</li> <li>Updated Recruitment and Selection Guidance and training/e-learning</li> <li>Diverse recruitment pools required, including for senior roles</li> <li>Undertook targeted recruitment campaigns, e.g. for Waste and THEOs</li> <li>Held a general careers fairs and targeted events looking at specific professions</li> </ul>
3. Entry Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>121 apprenticeship starts – 37% female, 69% Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic, 12% disabled, 38% aged 16-24</li> <li>12 SEND pre apprenticeship starts</li> <li>9 Care Leaver apprenticeship opportunities created (including 5 in Resources)</li> <li>50 work experience/internship opportunities created</li> </ul>
4. Graduate Careers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Took on 2 National Graduates this year – 14 in total since 2017, of which 8 have been supported into Council roles</li> </ul>
5. Talent Management, Progression and Career Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trained 31 employees on the Aspiring Leaders programme – 61% female, 55% Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic, 6.5% disabled, 23% aged 25-34</li> <li>Appointed 3 employees through the STEPS scheme</li> <li>Provided coaching opportunities</li> <li>Signed up to cross London mentoring platform with 27 Council employees currently signed up as mentors and 57 as mentees</li> <li>Provided secondment, acting up and work shadowing opportunities</li> </ul>
6. Leadership and Management Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Run ELBA programme for general cohort (18 employees) and LGBTQIA+ cohort (7 employees)</li> <li>Delivered 360 degree feedback programme</li> <li>Delivered Managers Fundamentals programme to ? employees</li> <li>EDI objective added to all managers MARs</li> </ul>
7. Pay Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reported hourly rates by ethnicity strand – mean hourly rates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £25.73 for Asian employees</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £22.04 for Bangladeshi employees</li> <li>• £22.53 for Black employees</li> <li>• £22.58 for Mixed employees</li> <li>• £22.71 for Somali employees</li> <li>• £24.53 for White employees</li> </ul> <p>Engaged a Data Analyst for 6 months Reduced the ethnicity pay gap by just under 1% (total reduction since 2018 is just over 8%)</p>
<p>8. Increasing Corporate Representation, Senior Representation and Benchmarking</p>	<p>Implemented Directorate Action Plans, including directorate/service targets Implemented a monthly dashboard/gap analysis tool Benchmarking data used in reports where appropriate Updated borough comparison data to reflect Census 2021 data</p> <p>Representation in the Council workforce as a whole has increased for:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asian, Bangladeshi, Black, Mixed, Somali and Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic employees</li> <li>• Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and LGBT employees</li> <li>• Trans employees</li> <li>• 25-34, 45-54, 65-74 and 75-84 aged employees</li> <li>• Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh employees</li> </ul> <p>Representation in the Council workforce at £60k plus has increased for:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bangladeshi, Mixed, Somali and Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic employees</li> <li>• Disabled employees</li> <li>• Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and LGBT employees</li> <li>• 25-34, 35-44 and 65-74 aged employees</li> <li>• Hindu, Muslim and Sikh employees</li> </ul> <p>Achieved the Strategic Plan KPI for top 5% earners who are Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic – target is 35% and performance for the last 2 quarters was Q1 2024/25 37.41% and Q2 2024/25 37.30%</p> <p>Benchmarking across London (as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024):-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24<sup>th</sup> for female representation in the workforce at 55%</li> <li>• 21<sup>st</sup> for top 5% earners who are female at 48.5%</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> for Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic representation in the workforce at 62%</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> for top 5% earners who are Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic at 41%</li> <li>• 17<sup>th</sup> for disabled representation in the workforce at 7%</li> <li>• 13<sup>th</sup> for top 5% earners who are disabled at 7%</li> <li>• 12<sup>th</sup> highest average workforce age at 47.5 years</li> </ul>
<p>Other Achievements</p>	<p>Rise in Stonewall Top 100 Employers Index and retained Bronze Employer status Finalist in 3 LGC Workforce Awards related to EDI Introduced Young Employees Network (YEN)</p>

	Positive Annual Residents Survey – with 90% of respondents saying that residents get on well with people from different backgrounds (compared to 77% nationally) Impact and Influence Training
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NB percentage figures above have been rounded

The following charts show the percentage increases from May 2023 to October 2024

Council Wide Representation

<b>Equality Strand</b>	<b>Percentage Increase between May 2023 and October 2024</b>	<b>Number of employees in Council with equality strand Oct 2024 (total of 5315 employees)</b>
Asian	0.5%	345
Bangladeshi	1%	1317
Black	1%	970
Mixed	0.5%	162
Somali	0.5%	49
Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic	3%	2911
Bisexual	0.5%	76
Gay	1.5%	74
Lesbian	0.5%	28
LGBT	0.5%	203
Trans	0.5%	2
25-34	0.5%	950
45-54	0.5%	1308
65-74	0.5%	265
75-84	0.5%	15
Hindu	0.5%	69
Muslim	2%	1528
Sikh	0.5%	30

NB percentage figures above have been rounded

£60k plus representation

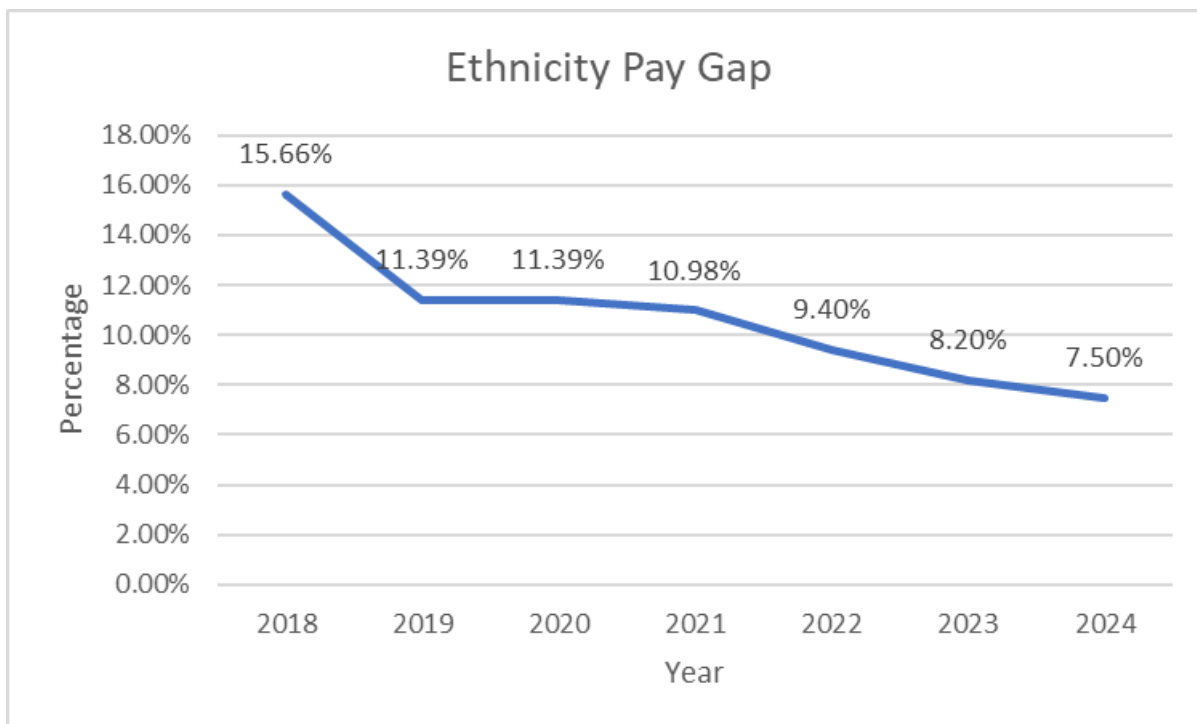
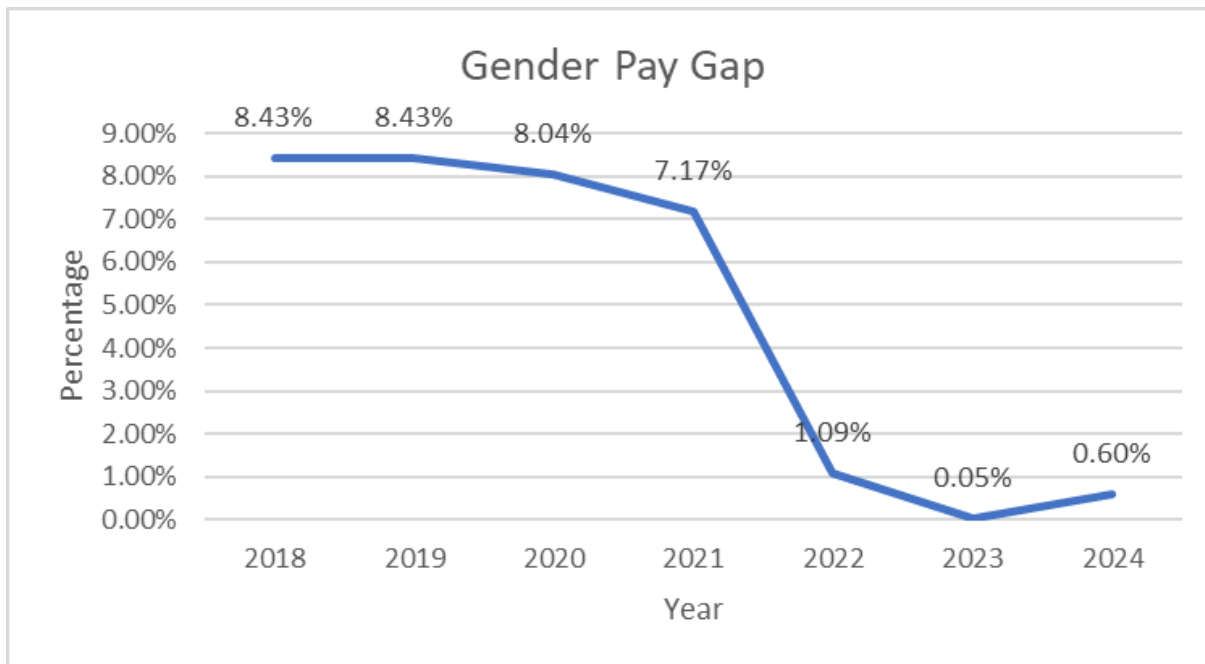
<b>Equality Strand</b>	<b>Percentage Increase between May 2023 and October 2024</b>	<b>Number of employees in Council with equality strand at £60k plus Oct 2024 (total of 317 employees)</b>
Bangladeshi	4.5%	55
Mixed	0.5%	7
Somali	0.5%	2
Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic	3.5%	128
Disabled	2%	30
Bisexual	1.5%	6
Gay	2.5%	8
Lesbian	0.5%	1
LGBT	1%	18
25-34	1.5%	14
35-44	3.5%	87

65-74	3.5%	14
Hindu	0.5%	7
Muslim	4.5%	69
Sikh	0.5%	3

NB percentage figures above have been rounded

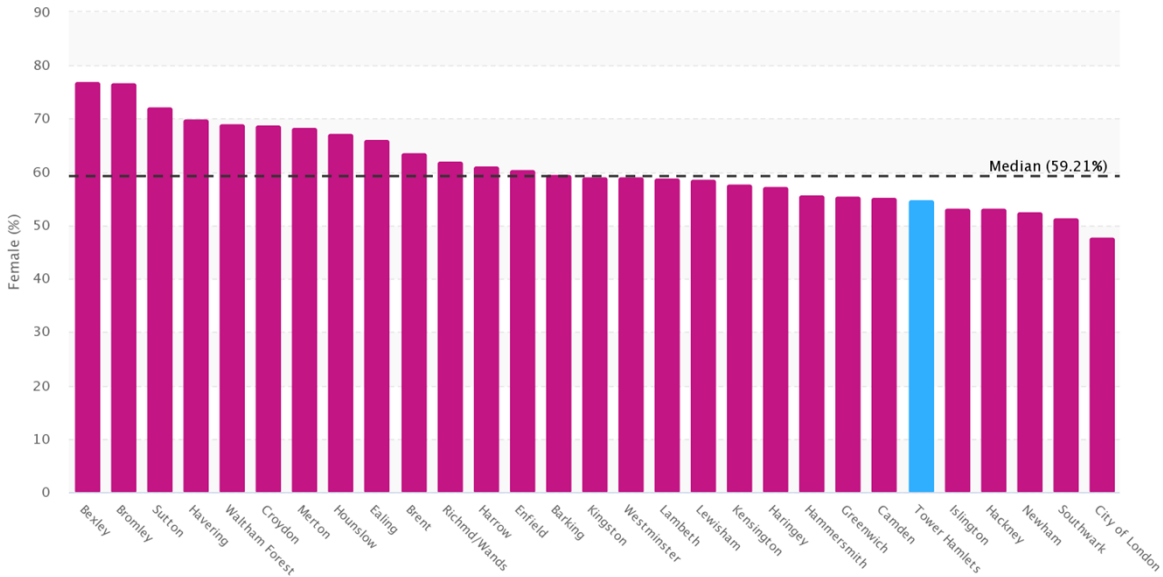
The following charts show the trends for gender and ethnicity pay gaps

Pay Gap Trends

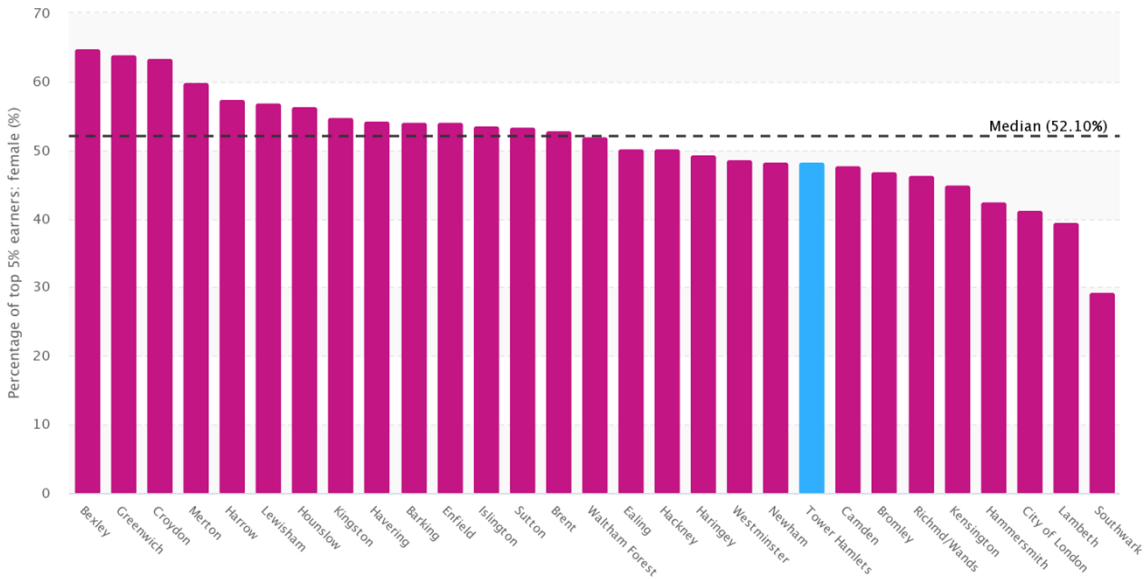


The following charts show benchmarking comparison information from London Councils

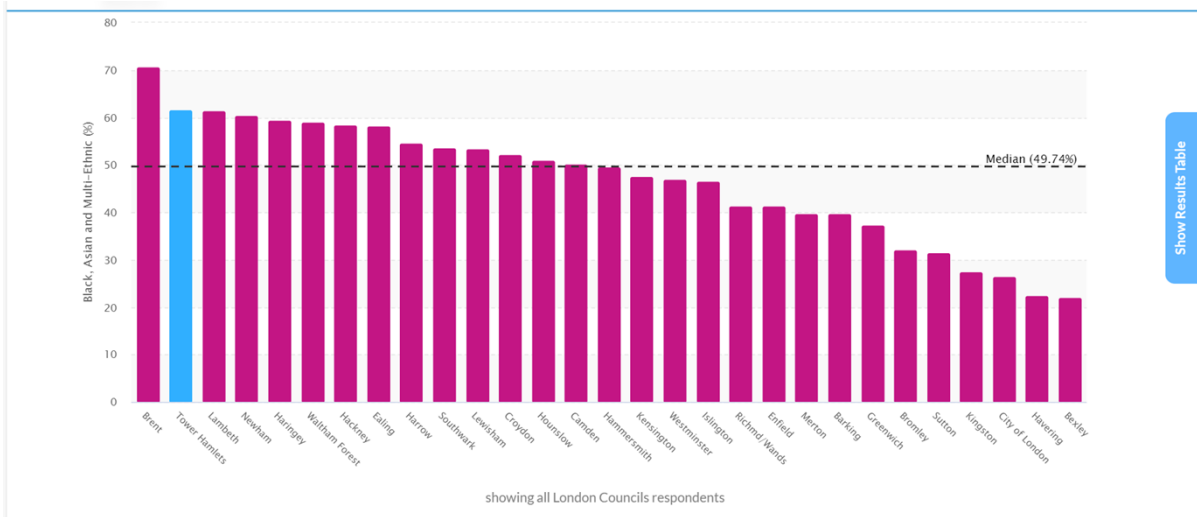
**Female Workforce – 54.85%**



**Top 5% Earners Female – 48.28%**

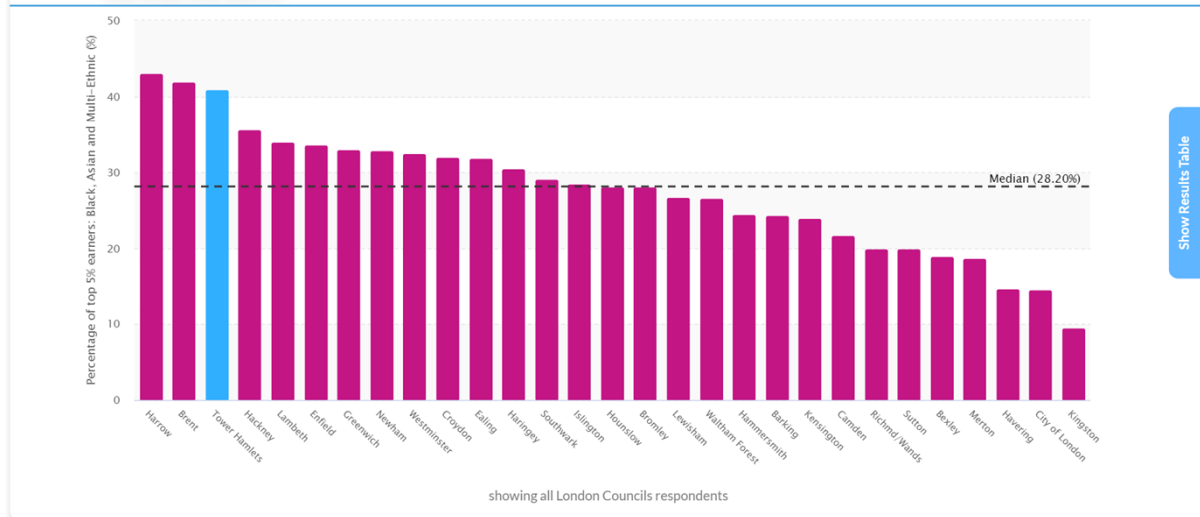


**Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic Workforce – 61.75%**

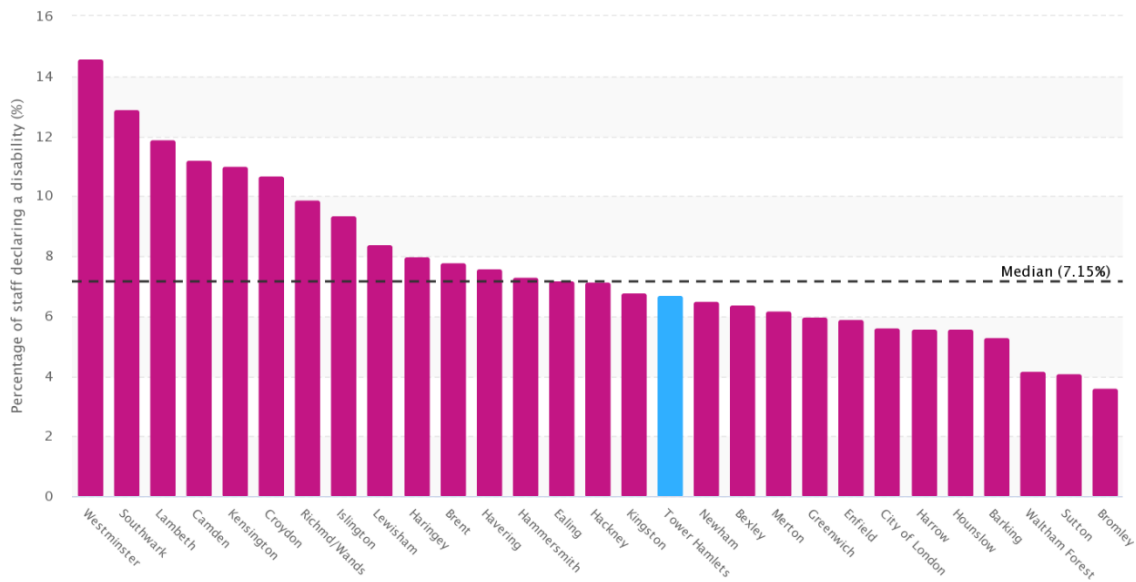




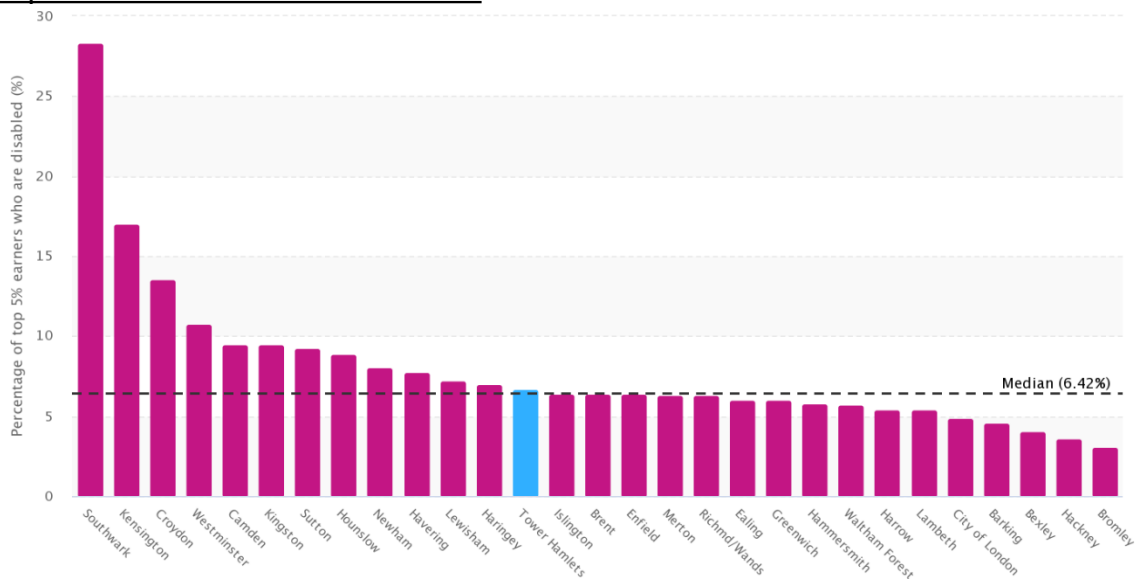
## Top 5% Earners Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic – 41%



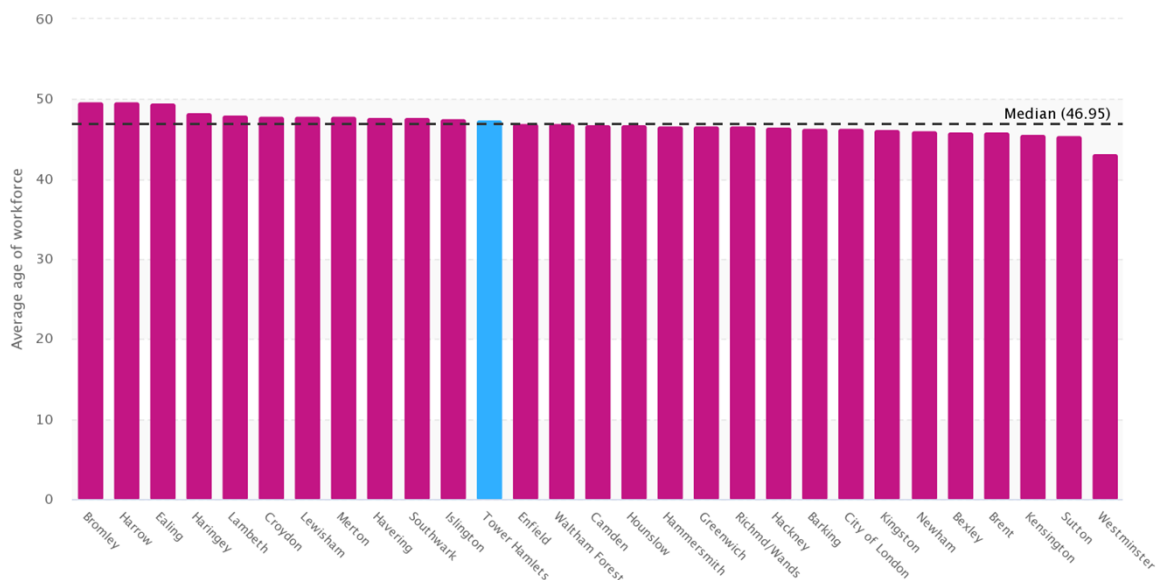
## Disability Workforce – 6.70%



## Top 5% Earners Disabled – 6.70%



## Average Age of Workforce – 47.5 years



### 3. Current Performance

Over the past year, fresh impetus has been given to achieving the aspiration of having a workforce that reflects the community, and good progress has been made, however, there is no room for complacency, and we are committed to ensuring improvements are made and that our aspirations for the workforce continue to be ambitious.

The tables below set out how performance has changed from May 2023 to the current position in October 2024 and also highlights the peak that was achieved during that period, both for representation across the whole workforce and at £60k plus.

Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council	October 2024 Council	Peak
<b>Sex</b>				
Female	50.05%	57.67%	53.90%	58.01%
Male	49.95%	42.33%	46.10%	46.31%

Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council £60k+	October 2024 Council £60k+	Peak
<b>Sex</b>				
Female	50.05%	47.79%	43.85%	47.79%
Male	49.95%	52.21%	56.15%	56.15%

Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council	October 2024 Council	Peak
<b>Race Band</b>				
Asian	10.83%	6.07%	6.49%	6.49%
Bangladeshi	29.36%	24.05%	24.78%	24.90%
Black	6.95%	17.96%	18.25%	18.79%
Declined to state	0.00%	5.96%	7.60%	7.78%
Missing	0.00%	2.36%	1.60%	2.36%
Mixed	4.12%	3.01%	3.05%	3.15%
Other	3.99%	1.34%	1.28%	1.34%
Somali	1.10%	0.84%	0.92%	0.92%
White	44.75%	38.41%	36.03%	38.41%
Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic	56.35%	51.93%	54.77%	54.77%

Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council £60k+	October 2024 Council £60k+	Peak
<b>Race Band</b>				
Asian	10.83%	10.04%	8.20%	10.40%
Bangladeshi	29.36%	12.85%	17.35%	17.70%
Black	6.95%	10.84%	10.73%	10.85%
Declined to state	0.00%	6.02%	4.73%	6.45%
Missing	0.00%	1.61%	0.63%	1.61%
Mixed	4.12%	2.00%	2.21%	3.08%
Other	3.99%	0.80%	1.26%	1.26%
Somali	1.10%	0.40%	0.63%	0.63%
White	44.75%	55.42%	54.26%	55.43%
Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic	56.35%	36.93%	40.38%	40.49%

Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council	October 2024 Council	Peak
<b>Disability</b>				
Declined to State	0.00%	11.22%	8.81%	11.24%
Missing	0.00%	3.51%	18.49%	18.49%
No	85.00%	77.88%	64.89%	77.88%
Unaware	0.00%	1.56%	2.48%	2.57%
Yes	15.00%	5.83%	5.32%	6.01%

Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council £60k+	October 2024 Council £60k+	Peak
<b>Disability</b>				
Declined to State	0.00%	8.43%	6.94%	8.43%
Missing	0.00%	2.81%	12.62%	12.73%
No	85.00%	79.12%	68.14%	79.12%
Unaware	0.00%	2.01%	2.84%	3.11%
Yes	15.00%	7.63%	9.46%	9.54%

Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council	October 2024 Council	Peak
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>				
Bisexual	2.50%	1.23%	1.43%	1.43%
Decline to State	9.80%	16.83%	14.15%	16.83%
Gay	0.00%	0.00%	1.39%	1.74%
Gay or Lesbian	4.00%	2.57%	0.21%	2.57%
Heterosexual	83.10%	73.40%	76.59%	76.59%
Lesbian	0.00%	0.00%	0.53%	0.67%
Missing	0.00%	5.78%	5.44%	5.86%
Prefer to self-describe	0.70%	0.17%	0.26%	0.27%

LGBT	7.20%	3.80%	3.82%	4.06%
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Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council £60k+	October 2024 Council £60k+	Peak
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>				
Bisexual	2.50%	0.40%	1.89%	2.15%
Decline to State	9.80%	11.65%	10.41%	11.89%
Gay	0.00%	0.00%	2.52%	3.23%
Gay or Lesbian	4.00%	4.41%	0.95%	1.19%
Heterosexual	83.10%	78.31%	79.50%	79.50%
Lesbian	0.00%	0.00%	0.32%	0.40%
Missing	0.00%	5.22%	4.42%	5.23%
Prefer to self-describe	0.70%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
LGBT	7.20%	4.81%	5.68%	5.68%

Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council	October 2024 Council	Peak
<b>Transgender</b>				
Missing	8.30%	95.58%	96.29%	96.31%
NO	90.70%	4.25%	3.54%	4.25%
PNTA	0.00%	0.15%	0.13%	0.15%
YES	1.00%	0.02%	0.04%	0.04%

Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council £60k+	October 2024 Council £60k+	Peak
<b>Transgender</b>				
Missing	8.30%	93.17%	93.38%	94.15%
NO	90.70%	6.43%	6.31%	11.05%
PNTA	0.00%	0.40%	0.32%	0.63%
YES	1.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council	October 2024 Council	Peak
<b>Age Band</b>				
16 - 24	19.66%	2.99%	2.95%	2.99%
25 - 34	33.25%	17.35%	17.87%	17.87%
35 - 44	20.46%	26.30%	25.98%	26.30%
45 - 54	12.28%	24.24%	24.61%	24.79%
55 - 64	7.53%	24.31%	23.25%	24.63%
65 - 74	4.05%	4.55%	4.99%	5.04%
75 - 84	1.96%	0.13%	0.28%	0.29%
85+	0.81%	0.13%	0.06%	0.13%

Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council £60k+	October 2024 Council £60k+	Peak
<b>Age Band</b>				
16 - 24	19.66%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
25 - 34	33.25%	3.21%	4.42%	4.91%
35 - 44	20.46%	24.10%	27.44%	27.44%
45 - 54	12.28%	37.75%	37.22%	40.40%
55 - 64	7.53%	33.73%	26.50%	33.73%
65 - 74	4.05%	1.20%	4.42%	4.62%
75 - 84	1.96%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
85+	0.81%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council	October 2024 Council	Peak
<b>Religion/Belief</b>				
Buddhist	1.11%	0.54%	0.55%	0.55%
Christian	24.02%	30.20%	29.75%	30.39%
Decline to State	9.80%	13.32%	11.78%	13.48%
Hindu	2.20%	1.10%	1.30%	1.30%
Jewish	0.49%	0.63%	0.64%	0.67%
Missing	0.00%	5.63%	5.36%	5.63%
Muslim	33.89%	27.01%	28.75%	28.82%
No religion	30.20%	17.92%	17.89%	17.92%
Other	3.99%	3.10%	3.42%	3.54%
Sikh	0.33%	0.54%	0.56%	0.59%

Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council £60k+	October 2024 Council £60k+	Peak
<b>Religion/Belief</b>				
Buddhist	1.11%	0.80%	0.63%	0.80%
Christian	24.02%	30.52%	31.86%	31.86%
Decline to State	9.80%	14.06%	11.67%	14.06%
Hindu	2.20%	2.01%	2.21%	2.78%
Jewish	0.49%	1.20%	0.63%	1.24%
Missing	0.00%	4.42%	4.73%	5.54%
Muslim	33.89%	17.27%	21.77%	22.26%
No religion	30.20%	26.10%	22.40%	28.63%
Other	3.99%	2.81%	3.15%	3.15%
Sikh	0.33%	0.80%	0.95%	1.24%



Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council	October 2024 Council	Peak
<b>Resident</b>				
N	0.00%	N/A	68.41%	68.87%
Y	100.00%	N/A	31.59%	32.21%

Protected Characteristic	Borough	May 2023 Council £60k+	October 2024 Council £60k+	Peak
<b>Resident</b>				
N	0.00%	N/A	88.33%	89.20%
Y	100.00%	N/A	11.67%	12.00%

The above data shows that with regards to the workforce as a whole, Asian, Bangladeshi, Mixed, White, Other, Somali, disabled and LGBTQIA+ employees are underrepresented, as are people in the lower and higher age bands and those whose religion is Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, No Religion and Other.

Female representation remains above representation in the borough population but has reduced and is therefore an area for action

In terms of senior roles, females, Asian, Bangladeshi, Black, Mixed, Other and Somali, disabled and LGBTQIA+ employees are underrepresented, as are the majority of age bands (with the exception of 35-44, 45-54 and 55-64) and employees with no religion, Buddhist, and Muslim employees.

## 4. Context

It is worth noting that the Council now has in place a new, permanent and diverse senior leadership team. There are still various transformation programme taking place across the Council that could impact on delivery of this strategy, e.g. the transformation of the recruitment team and process needs to take place before the required changes in terms of improving inclusive recruitment can take place.

It is also worth noting that between 2023 and now, there have been a number of insourcing programmes for different services, including Housing and Leisure. The Council workforce has grown from 4616 in May 2023 to 5315 in October 2024. The significant insourcing programmes can mean a detrimental impact in the short term to the equalities data, as employees may be transferring from organisations that are not as diverse as the Council and/or do not have good reporting levels of equalities data.

The Council has, since 2024 has an ER/VR programme that in general has seen employees from the higher age bands leaving, though the number of employees who left under the scheme in 2024 amounted to around 1% of the workforce.

## 5. Strategy Summary

This strategy document and the accompanying action plan have been produced in order to accelerate the pace and scale of achievement of our aim to have a workforce that reflects our community and addresses inequality. The work will be done in conjunction with relevant stakeholders, e.g. staff networks and trade unions, wherever appropriate.

It builds on our previous work but extends and refocuses some key activities, based on the learning and more detailed analysis that has taken place over the past year. It also aims to move beyond representation to equity of outcomes.

The action plan has been strengthened and expanded. In particular this strategy highlights:

- Activities to address the continued need to focus on improving the representation of groups underrepresented within the workforce at all levels
- A continued link to directorate action plans and targets
- Continued improvements to the schemes for graduates, focusing on career development and progression into professional careers
- Growing new apprenticeship schemes, with targeted schemes for people with disabilities and care leavers
- An expansion of the STEPS scheme to support talent and encourage progression
- Improved recruitment and selection processes

This strategy sets out the current position and further actions, which are captured in the accompanying Action Plan.

The main sections the strategy and action plan focus on are:

- 1. Monitoring and evaluation of programme
- 2. Recruitment and selection
- 3. Entry level
- 4. Graduate careers
- 5. Talent management, progression and career development
- 6. Leadership and management development
- 7. Pay gaps
- 8. Increasing corporate representation, senior representation and benchmarking
- 9. Culture – NEW
- 10. Socio-economic – NEW
- 11. Neurodiversity – NEW
- 12. Disability – NEW
- 13. Care experience – NEW

## 6. Monitoring and evaluation of programme (section 1 in the action plan)

The objective of actions under this part of the strategy and corresponding action plan is to keep improving data quality, monitoring and reporting.

By keeping improving the quality of data, understanding workforce changes and improving the information presented regularly to directorates, this will ensure better workforce planning is possible. It will also allow the understanding of trends and the ability to put in place targeted interventions.

Actions related to this section of the strategy focus on:

- Incorporate agency/interim workforce data into the dashboard/gap analysis tool
- Incorporate recruitment data into the dashboard/gap analysis tool e.g. recruitment data
- Enable intersectional approach to data
- Consider additional data collection and reporting for care experience, socio-economic factors and neurodiversity
- Reduce amount of missing and not declared equality data
- Ensure equality monitoring is as inclusive as possible i.e. in terms of gender expression and identity, pronouns, disability and neurodiversity
- Revisit and update directorate action plans and targets
- Each directorate to have a Directorate Equality Group to oversee their plan and targets
- Updates on performance against WFTRTC to be taken to CEB, Equalities Working Group, Directorate Working Groups as well as CMT, MAB, HR Committee/ONS

## **7. Recruitment and selection (section 2 in the action plan)**

The objective of actions under this part of the strategy and corresponding action plan is to establish greater awareness of career opportunities, improve inclusive recruitment practices and increase applications from Tower Hamlets residents and increase recruitment of under-represented groups.

The work will help the Council target a greater number of recruitment activities towards our local community and will raise the awareness of career opportunities within the Council. Attracting local talent into employment with the council will improve the representation of local people within the workforce and recruiting in more diverse media and targeting recruitment campaigns to under-represented groups will help ensure we have a workforce that reflects the community.

Actions related to this section of the strategy focus on:

- Implement recruitment transformation programme
- Implement anonymised recruitment
- Develop an Inclusive Recruitment Guide
- Diverse recruitment panels – audited
- Refresh Refer a Friend Scheme
- Consider other ways of recruiting, e.g. contextualised recruitment or more inclusive methods
- Introduce guidance on use of Genuine Occupational Requirements and use of positive action in recruitment
- Profile employees (including staff networks) for role modelling/advocacy to use in recruitment campaigns

## **8. Entry level (section 3 in the action plan)**

The objective of actions under this part of the strategy and corresponding action plan is more opportunities for apprenticeships and other entry level opportunities, open to the local community with a particular focus on young people leaving Tower Hamlets schools and colleges.

The work will help the Council increase the number of apprenticeships and the number of places available, targeted at local young people and expanding the types of apprenticeships on offer.

Actions related to this section of the strategy focus on:

- Apprenticeships
- SEND pre apprenticeships
- Care Leavers apprenticeship
- Work experience / internships
- T-Levels
- Mayors Apprenticeship Programme
- Defined career pathways for entry level programmes

## **9. Graduate careers (section 4 in the action plan)**

The objective of actions under this part of the strategy and corresponding action plan is to establish a clear programme of graduate-level careers with defined career paths, identified support and education requirements that are open to local and national graduates.

The work will help the Council attract and develop both national and local talented graduates into the council workforce, supporting the aims of developing a workforce that reflects the community and ensuring an intake of employees with the potential for development and progression in to senior management roles. To ensure the best return on the investment in local graduates from previous years, we will provide career support and development guidance for previous graduates to ensure they continue to develop and progress within the organisation and we retain the best employees from the schemes.

Actions related to this section of the strategy focus on:

- National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP)
- Local Graduate Scheme

## **10. Talent management, progression and career development (section 5 in the action plan)**

The objective of actions under this part of the strategy and corresponding action plan is to establish clear opportunities to gain experience and support in developing under-represented groups within the organisation and provide visible senior leadership and support.

The work will help the Council establish and monitor opportunities for identifying and supporting talent from local recruitment (graduates, entry-level) and under-represented groups to provide additional career support and opportunities for progression.

Actions related to this section of the strategy focus on:

- Workforce planning, succession planning and talent management
- Mentoring – including reverse /reciprocal mentoring
- Consider replicating Social Work Academy
- Consider a public v private exchange programme
- Expand the STEPS scheme to lower graded posts
- Expand coaching opportunities
- Continue to provide secondment, acting up and work shadowing opportunities

## 11. Leadership and management development (section 6 in the action plan)

The objective of actions under this part of the strategy and corresponding action plan is to provide supported places on the council's management development programmes and opportunities for experience at management levels leading to greater representation at management and senior levels.

The work will help the Council increase representation in senior roles of under represented groups and develop our pipeline of future leaders .

Actions related to this section of the strategy focus on:

- ELBA Leaders in Partnership
- Inclusive Managers Toolkit
- London wide leadership programme(s)
- Continue to run Managers Fundamentals programme
- Grow and refine the Managers Induction Programme
- Provide managers with specific EDI e-learning programme
- Explore Instep Women In Leadership Apprenticeships

## 12. Pay gaps (section 7 in the action plan)

The objective of actions under this part of the strategy and corresponding action plan is to close the Council's pay gaps in relation to gender, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation.

The work will help the Council close the pay gaps, which is key in addressing the inequality that under-represented groups within the workforce face.

Actions related to this section of the strategy focus on:

- Model targeted actions
- Deliver targeted actions
- Engage stakeholders – Trade Unions and employees networks
- Consider reporting class pay gap

The current pay gaps are:

- Gender Pay Gap is 0.60% - it was 0.05% in 2023
- Ethnicity Pay Gap is 7.50% - it was 8.20% in 2023
- Disability Pay Gap is -3.03% - it was -1.40% in 2023
- Sexual Orientation Pay Gap is -5.41% - it was -9.55% in 2023

In addition to the ethnicity pay gap, as part of the work to use and show disaggregated data, the pay gap report includes average hourly rates of pay by ethnicity, which are as follows: -

- £25.73 for Asian employees
- £22.04 for Bangladeshi employees
- £22.53 for Black employees
- £22.58 for Mixed employees
- £22.71 for Somali employees

- £24.53 for White employees

### **13. Increasing corporate representation, senior representation and benchmarking (section 8 in the action plan)**

The objective of actions under this part of the strategy and corresponding action plan is to identify areas of under-representation in terms of protected characteristics, at all levels of the organisation and at directorate and divisional level, as well as Council wide. Benchmarking across London boroughs to determine performance.

The work will help the Council achieve a workforce that reflects the community, by focusing on each protected characteristic having appropriate representation in the workforce at all levels.

Actions related to this section of the strategy focus on:

- Revisit and update directorate action plans and targets
- Enable intersectional approach to data

Benchmarking currently takes place with other London Councils through Infinistats system and other shared information and as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, Tower Hamlets is:-

- 24<sup>th</sup> for female representation in the workforce at 54.85%
- 21<sup>st</sup> for top 5% earners who are female at 48.28%
- 2<sup>nd</sup> for Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic representation in the workforce at 61.75%
- 3<sup>rd</sup> for top 5% earners who are Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic at 41%
- 17<sup>th</sup> for disabled representation in the workforce at 6.70%
- 13<sup>th</sup> for top 5% earners who are disabled at 6.70%
- 12<sup>th</sup> highest average workforce age at 47.5 years

### **14. Culture – NEW (section 9 in the action plan)**

The objective of actions under this part of the strategy and corresponding action plan is to create a more inclusive culture of belonging, moving from equality to equity of outcomes and to embed EDI work in everything the Council does.

The work will help the Council to address culture, which was one of the key areas for improvement in the Best Value Inspection report.

Actions related to this section of the strategy focus on:

- Move towards equity of outcomes – inclusion to belonging and equality to equity
- Consider Out of the Shadows/Guardianship programme
- Utilise allyship group to grow role of allies and active bystanders
- Grow and cultivate safe spaces
- Take systemic approach to become an anti-racist organisation
- Improve Equality Impact Assessment process
- Utilise Business Disability Forum (BDF) and Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI) resources
- Address culture around women in the council and decrease in female representation in workforce

## 15. Socio-economic – NEW (section 10 in the action plan)

Nationally, employees from working-class backgrounds are paid thousands of pounds a year less than those from better-off backgrounds when working in the most prestigious roles. Over recent years there has been a focus on tackling racial inequality and gender pay gaps. But diversity efforts are flawed if socioeconomic background is not included. These aren't either/or issues; they complement each other. Inequality based on social class has to be as much a focus as other diversity concerns. It cannot be the poor relation.

The objective of actions under this part of the strategy and corresponding action plan is to introduce socio-economic considerations into the Council's EDI work.

The work will allow consideration of socio-economic factors, which underpin and contribute to inequality and so to tackle inequality, we need to define socio-economic factors, collect data on them, report and take action.

Actions related to this section of the strategy focus on:

- Consider reporting class pay gap

Adopt Social Mobility Foundation guidance and data collection methods

## 16. Neurodiversity – NEW (section 11 in the action plan)

The objective of actions under this part of the strategy and corresponding action plan is to provide support for neurodiverse employees and increase understanding within the organisation of neurodiversity.

The work will help the Council put in place specific support for neurodiverse employees and resources for managers of neurodiverse employees.

Actions related to this section of the strategy focus on:

- Develop a Neurodiversity Plan for the whole employee lifecycle
- Work with Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programme providers to build capacity around neurodiversity
- Utilise Business Disability Forum (BDF) and Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI) resources on neurodiversity
- Explore ways to collect data on neurodiversity

## 17. Disability – NEW (section 12 in the action plan)

The objective of actions under this part of the strategy and corresponding action plan is to breakdown the barriers that disabled employees face.

Disabled representation within the workforce is increasing but the experience for disabled employees is not always positive – e.g. they are overrepresented in relation to grievance complaints made.

Actions related to this section of the strategy focus on:

- Reduce amount of missing and not declared disability data
- Review and update all disability related policies and procedures



- Consider redesign of reasonable adjustments approach
- Review reasons why disabled employees are overrepresented in terms of Grievance Policy
- Consider seeking Disability Confident Leader status

## 18. Care experience – NEW (section 13 in the action plan)

The objective of actions under this part of the strategy and corresponding action plan is to put in place actions to address the experiences of care leavers and care experienced individuals.

The work will support the fact the Council has adopted care experience as an additional protected characteristic.

Actions related to this section of the strategy focus on:

- Introduce definition of Care Experience
- Develop pipelines of entry for care leavers
- Consider additional data collection and reporting for care experience

## 19. Other equality work

### **Stonewall**

The Council submits to the Top 100 Employers Index annually. There is a specific action plan for this work and a working group to oversee its delivery.

As part of the submission, the Council takes part in the Stonewall employees survey, which is open for all employees to complete and is promoted through TH Now, The Bridge and plasma screens.

### **Staff Networks**

The Council's employees networks continue to hold events and draw attention to issues that are specific to their membership, as well as jointly on issues that intersect a number of protected characteristics. They are key in supporting the work the Council is doing to achieve a workforce that reflects the community and are engaged and consulted on directorates work and action plans.

The Young Employees' Network (YEN) was introduced in 2024 to support the Council in recruiting and developing a younger workforce.

### **Investors in People**

The IiP standard, under which the Council is currently assessed at Silver, does not have a specific equality element to it, however the work of the employees networks, feedback from them, and wider equalities work and engagement related activities across the Council, are integral to the assessment.



## 20. Monitoring

Updates on delivery of the strategy and action plan will be provided to HR Committee, MAB, ONS and Cabinet. The proposal is to do this on a quarterly basis.