

Equalities

Performance Report 2020/21



everyone  PKoffer
has something to offer

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Introduction

We believe that ‘equality is at the heart of what we do’ in Perth and Kinross. Our annual performance report sets out our progress for the period April 2020 - March 2021 in delivering on the revised equality aims and outcomes 2021-25. The report reflects how we put our words into action across our services and where applicable as an Education Authority and Licensing Board.

These outcomes ensure we are fulfilling our statutory obligations in relation to the services we provide and as an employer. The outcomes were reviewed and updated in April 2021 when we produced our **Mainstreaming Report**. This is the 4th annual equality performance report in this format so where possible comparisons have been made to 2019/20 figures.

As an employer, we continue to drive forward the Fair Work agenda to ensure that fairness is at the heart of all our employment practices. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity across our workforce and our Annual Equality and Diversity in Employment Report is included in Page 33 of this report.

Workforce data for 2020/21 is published on our website: [Human Resources Management Information](#)



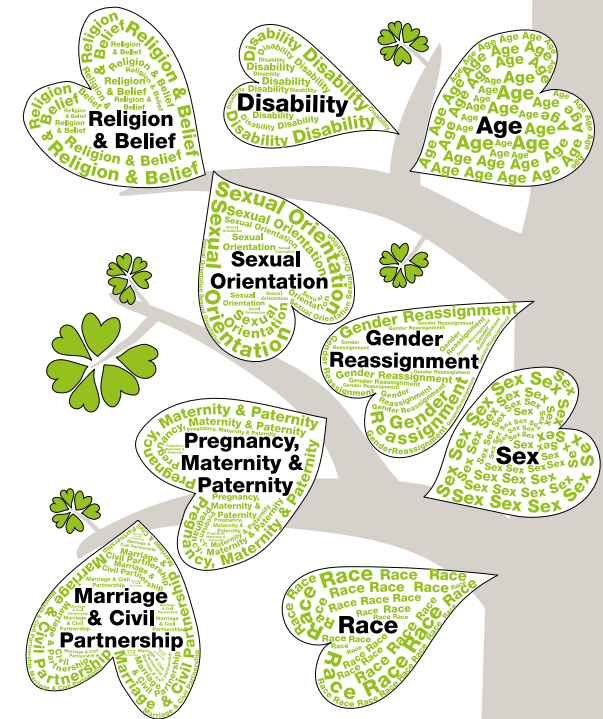
Introduction

Our organisational vision is of a confident and ambitious Perth and Kinross, to which everyone can contribute and all can share. To achieve our vision we will shape relationships and community partnerships built on trust and mutual respect. We are leaders for change and continually challenge ourselves to deliver better outcomes for the people of Perth and Kinross. We support each other, welcome creativity and ideas and build confidence in each other to reach our potential.

The Perth & Kinross Offer aims to enable everyone in Perth and Kinross to play their part in making this a fairer and more equitable place for all. It will mean different things to different people; a new way of working that will help individuals, communities and businesses to share their ideas, skills and connections. Everyone in our active and diverse communities, every person, every group and every organisation, from our independent retailers, our gyms, our firefighters, to our bloom groups, our schools, our NHS, our cyclists, our amazing third sector groups, has something to Offer. This work had already started before the pandemic, but the response to it has proved that we can do things differently and introduce change quickly when necessary. It has also highlighted the talent within our communities with a real willingness to help and a wealth of local knowledge and community connections.

In doing all of this, we need to remember that 'one size does not fit all': what is appropriate for one group of people may not be the right thing to do for another. So, we want to make sure that when we are designing our services, we listen carefully to all of our residents and businesses who use those services, including those who are seldom heard. The Offer has our equalities ethos threaded through it, acknowledging that communities have many strengths and assets and are good at identifying their needs and designing solutions. It also recognises that when people are empowered to do what needs to be done and given equity of opportunity we see improved outcomes. We believe that everyone in Perth and Kinross has something to Offer.

Equality
is at the *heart* of
what we do



Email equalities@pkc.gov.uk



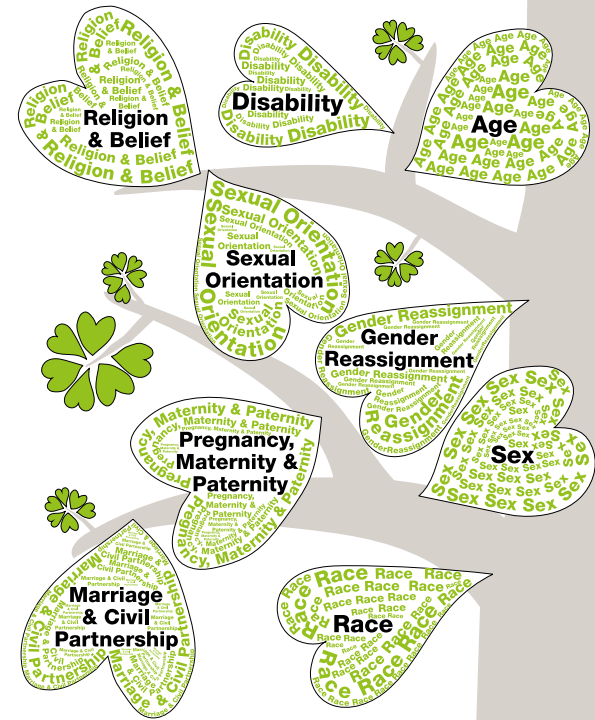
Equality

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Promoting Equalities - requires us to work to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between communities through the delivery of our services and as an employer in relation to the equality-protected characteristics.

Tackling Inequalities - requires us to work collectively to support individuals and communities to reduce local inequalities. Issues such as health, income, gender identity, employment status or housing circumstance can impact on people's life chances and should be considered when tackling inequalities but will also crossover with the equality protected characteristics.



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Our Equalities Policy Statement (revised in June 2020)

We are committed to equality of opportunity both as a service provider and as an employer and value the diversity of the communities in Perth and Kinross. We recognise that social inclusion and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between different groups can only be achieved by incorporating equalities into the planning, implementation and monitoring processes for all our Services. All Scottish public authorities are legally obliged by the Equality Act 2010 to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment; to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between those people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

By working in partnership to promote equality, we believe that we will make better use of all available resources and create better outcomes for those who use our services.

We recognise that discrimination, victimisation and harassment is unlawful and unacceptable and we will take action to prevent this occurring. If this does occur, we will take agreed and appropriate action to deal with it.

We recognise that, when used legally and appropriately, positive action strategies can help to counteract the adverse impact of past discrimination or other causes of disadvantage. We will therefore implement positive action strategies to make our services more inclusive and have due regards to the need to:

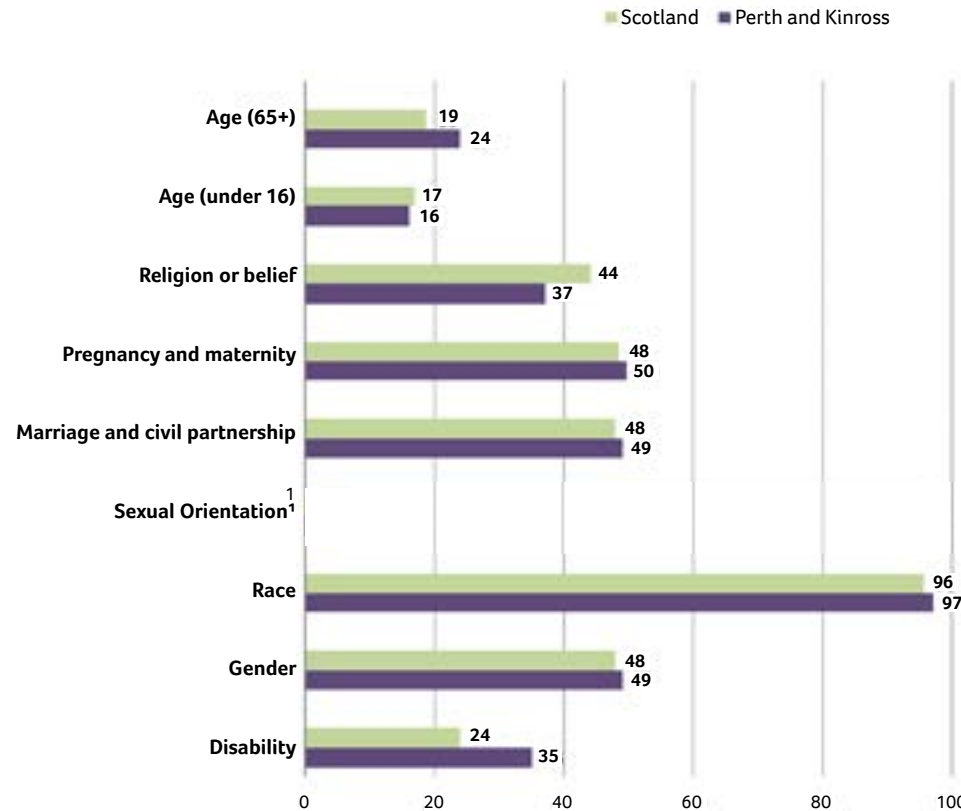
- *remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;*
- *take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people;*
- *encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.*

The policy should be considered alongside other relevant Council policies, guidance and codes of practice where appropriate but in particular those relating to our duties as an employer.

3

The Equality Protected Characteristics in Our Area

There are nine protected characteristics in the Equality Act and these are disability, sex, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, and religion and belief. The Scottish Government Equality Evidence Finder is updated twice a year with data surrounding equality evidence from a wide range of policy areas. Some notable local statistics associated with the protected characteristics include:



24% of the population are age 65+. By 2043 this is expected to increase to 37% (Scotland, 36%).
ONS Population Projections: 2018 Based

16% of the population are aged under 16.
ONS 2019 mid year population estimates

37% of adults identify as having a religious belonging.
*Scottish Household Survey 2019**

50 live births per 1000 women of childbearing age.
NRS Vital Events 2019

49% of adults are married or in a civil partnership.
*Scottish Household Survey 2019**

97% of adults classify themselves as white.
*Scottish Household Survey 2019**

49% of adults identify as male.
*Scottish Household Survey 2019**

35% of adults consider themselves to have a limited long-term physical or mental health condition.¹
*Scottish Household Survey 2019**

¹ No reliable and recent data available for Perth and Kinross.

*Data should be treated with caution and as estimates due to small sample size.

Gender reassignment - The Registrar General maintains a Gender Recognition Register where the birth of a transgender person whose acquired gender has been legally recognised is registered showing any new name(s) and the acquired gender, enabling the transgender person to apply for a new birth certificate. The Gender Recognition Register is not open to public scrutiny. Local information is not available. (*NRS Registration Division 2016*)

4

Assessing Our Equalities Work

Under the Equality Act 2010, we are required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. In addition, under Part 1 of the Act 'The Fairer Scotland Duty', we are also required to actively consider how it can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions.

The **Integrated Appraisal Toolkit** (IAT) was developed internally to assess all proposals against criteria for reducing poverty and socio-economic disadvantage, eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between equality groups.

The IAT should first be used at the initial stages of proposal development to screen the proposal for any likely negative or adverse effects in relation to poverty and human rights. After completing the IAT, it should be evident if a proposal is likely (or not) to have significant implications for reducing poverty and socio-economic advantage; eliminating discrimination; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations between equality groups. If the screening process identifies that there are implications then a full Equality and Fairness Impact Assessment should be undertaken. The current Equality and Fairness Impact Assessment Process was revised in 2018/19 and will continue to be reviewed in light of the coronavirus pandemic and planned changes to the Human Rights based approach.



5 Governance of Our Equalities Work

The content of this report was collated by the **Equalities Operational Group** which is for colleagues across council services to provide evidence to support the delivery of the Equality Outcomes, mainstream equalities work and measure performance. Our Equalities Team Leader leads the group. Due to staff retasking during the early days of the coronavirus crisis the group did not meet for 3 months but virtual meetings restarted in July 2020.

This group is part of a formalised Equalities Governance structure that was put in place in 2017 and remains in place to ensure that the needs of all our local communities are understood by us and our key partners. A diagram illustrating this Equalities Governance structure is available to staff on the [intranet](#).

The other two main groups, which form part of this structure, are the Equalities Strategic Forum and the Community Equalities Advisory Group (CEAG). Both of these are chaired by our local Elected Member Equalities Lead.

The **Equalities Strategic Forum** - was established in January 2018 to provide a platform to ensure that some local equality protected communities of interest, such as minority ethnic communities, LGBT+ communities and disability groups, are still able to effectively influence discussions at a locality level

despite not necessarily having a visible or large presence in specific localities. This group continues to meet every two months although meetings were put on hold during the early months of the coronavirus crisis restarting again virtually in October 2020.

The Community Equalities Advisory Group (CEAG) - although a long-standing group, the purpose of the CEAG was reviewed in 2017 to ensure that the agenda is driven by community organisations who work with local people from equality protected groups. This group meets three times per year and is for public, third sector and community groups to share their knowledge and experience in relation to equalities. Attendance at the group has increased following the review and has increased networking opportunities available. This group was also affected by the coronavirus crisis but restarted virtual meetings in October 2020.

Although, meetings of these groups did not take place as regularly during 2020/21 contact was maintained with members throughout the pandemic and many of our partner organisations in the third sector and community groups were instrumental in working with us to provide direct community support during 2020/21.

COVID Impact

The last year was very challenging due to the impact of COVID-19 and its associated restrictions. We have had to adapt quickly and respond flexibly, learning lessons along the way. Despite the challenges there are also many achievements in our equalities work to report. Along with our partners and communities, we have continued to deliver essential services every day.

Most significantly, we have all been inspired by the way people have demonstrated tremendous generosity and resilience in helping each other to combat the impacts of the pandemic. It is testament to the character and spirit of the people of Perth and Kinross that we have so many positive stories of how we cared for the most vulnerable in our communities during this time. We are immensely grateful to the many people from all walks of life who have done their utmost to support and assist their loved ones, friends and neighbours over the past year.

However, the inequalities experienced as a result of the pandemic are not going to go away overnight. While we all faced challenging circumstances, it is already evident that the worst of these are felt by those most vulnerable in our society, who may have already faced considerable inequalities before the pandemic. Addressing the long-term equality impacts on our communities is a significant challenge and we are taking this very seriously.

Perth and Kinross has already shown the successes we can achieve when we work together, and we believe that we have the opportunity to continue that way of working through The Perth & Kinross Offer.

Equalities Coronavirus Support in Perth and Kinross

The initial information below summarises some of the main work that members of the Equalities Team were involved in throughout the pandemic over the past year. In addition, our small Equalities Team were also involved in supporting the Community Vaccination Centres from their inception in February 2021. Team members volunteered for different roles within all of our centres in Perth and Kinross.

Community Support 	Keeping in Touch 	Accessible Information 	Calendar Dates 	Impact Assessments 
<p>7,537 Food Parcels delivered by 16 community food organisations in 13 weeks (up to 22/06)</p> <p>Equalities team members re-tasked</p> <p>In response to the 2 Sisters outbreak 1,600 food parcels were provided by the PKC Food Hub over a 14-day period</p>	<p>21 Golf Memories participants and volunteers receive weekly phone calls whilst group has been unable to meet</p>	<p>Community Languages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staying Safe Social Distancing Visiting Supermarkets Public Transport <p>In association with PKAVS Minority Communities Hub</p>	<p>IDAHOBIT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Media Perth Bridge Lit Rainbow 	<p>Assessing the overall community response</p>
<p>257 culturally appropriate food parcels delivered to 105 members of Chinese and Muslim Families and unaccompanied asylum seekers</p> <p>In association with perthshire Chinese Community Association & Perthshire Welfare Association</p>	<p>4x monthly check-in emails with 21 equality and community groups</p>	<p>BSL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Clips Shared Locally Staying Safe <p>In association with Deaf Links and BDA Scotland</p>	<p>EID</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mithal Sweet Treats for Families Perth Bridge Lit Green Pakistani TV Coverage 	<p>Supporting the process for return to schools plan</p>
<p>35 Health & Wellbeing packs for Gypsy/ Travellers in association with MECOPP</p>	<p>Supporting Saint in the Community keeping in touch with participants whilst sessions can't take place, eg Football Memories and Saints Mental Wellbeing</p>	<p>Physical Distancing in Town Centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Braille BSL Easy Read Large Print 	<p>Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perth Bridge Lit Yellow Social Media Virtual Information and Events by Local Community Members 	<p>Co-ordinating consultation with key user groups for physical distancing in town centres</p>
			<p>World Refugee Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treats in Food Parcels for Asylum Seekers/Refugee Families Social Media 	

Equality Aim - Perth and Kinross is a safe, welcoming and accessible area

Equality Outcomes

- 1 *People from equality protected groups will be made welcome and respected in the area.*
- 2 *Staff from equality protected groups will be made welcome and respected in the Council workplace.*
- 3 *Reduce and remove physical and social barriers for those with disabilities to access public spaces.*
- 4 *People from equality protected groups have increased confidence to report hate crime and/or bullying incidents.*
- 5 *Support is provided to those at risk of or who are survivors of gender-based violence.*
- 6 *Pupils from equality protected groups will have a positive school experience and will feel safe and respected in school and when online.*

Equality Aim - Perth and Kinross visibly celebrates equality and diversity

Equality Outcomes

- 7 *Multicultural and equality-related events (including virtual ones) and key dates in the calendar will be visibly celebrated and promoted.*

Equality Aim - Perth & Kinross Council will keep our community informed and engage with them about our services, opportunities and support available to them

Equality Outcomes

- 8 *People from equality-protected groups are provided with accessible information about the services provided by the Council including crisis support in the event of an emergency.*
- 9 *People from equality-protected groups will be supported to digitally participate.*
- 10 *People from equality-protected groups are supported to access employment opportunities.*
- 11 *People from equality groups will be supported to participate in equality conversations around The Perth & Kinross Offer.*
- 12 *People from equality-protected groups with lived experience of inequalities will be involved in shaping our policies to tackle poverty and social exclusion.*

Equality Aim - Perth & Kinross Council will increase people's awareness of equality and diversity

Equality Outcomes

- 13 *A staff learning and development programme for equality and diversity will be delivered and will be extended to partner organisations.*
- 14 *Our school curriculum will include equality and diversity topics.*
- 15 *Our employment policies will reflect that we are a fair and inclusive employer.*
- 16 *People providing externally commissioned, contracted or licensed services on behalf of the Council (including ALEOs) are aware of their responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity.*

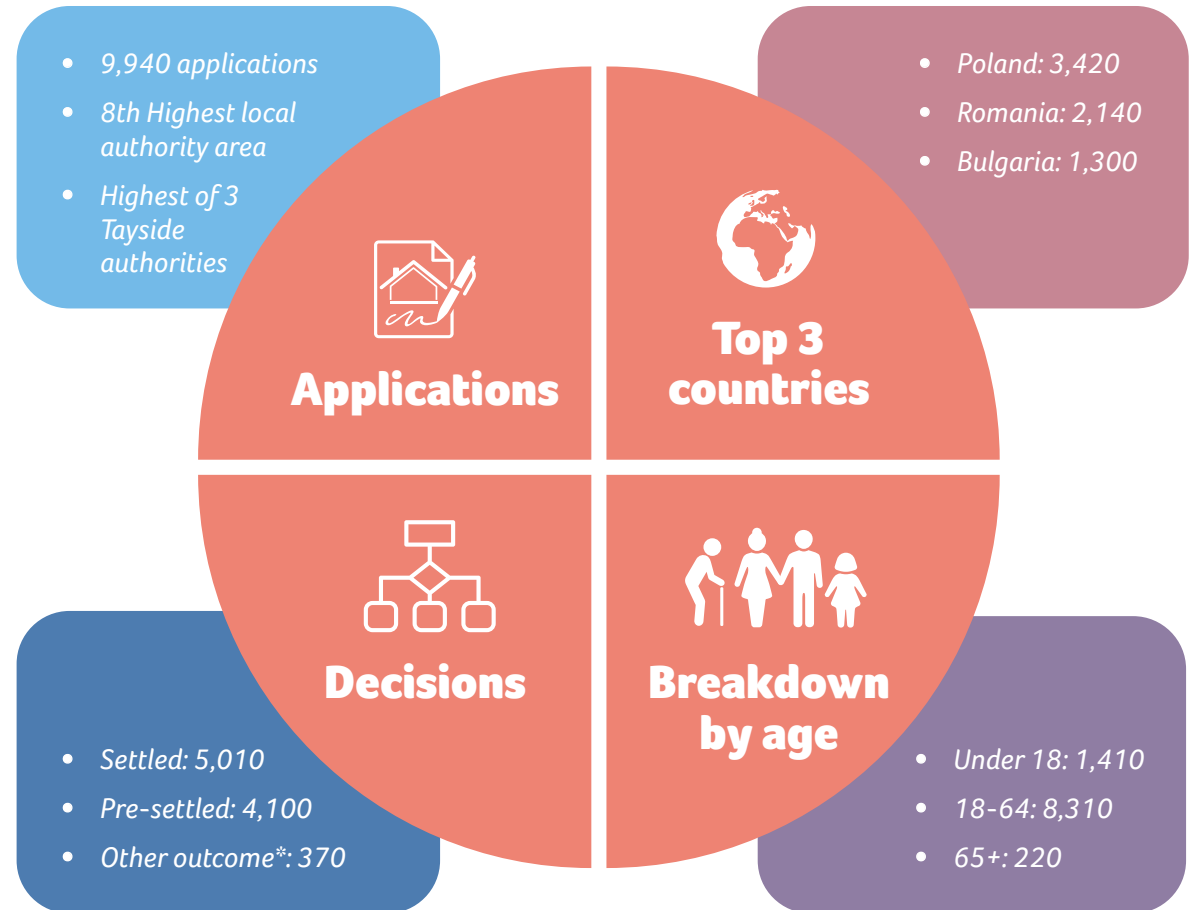
Equality Aims and Outcomes

Equality Aim - Perth and Kinross is a safe, welcoming and accessible area

Equality Outcome 1 - People from equality-protected groups will be made welcome and respected in the area

We have an Equalities Calendar of key dates in place. These events are always popular and help people from different backgrounds and cultures to have a sense of belonging in the local area. These events continued to be celebrated 'virtually' where possible during the pandemic (further detail is provided in Equality Outcome 7).

We have worked closely with our Third Sector Partners (namely, PKAVS, Citizens Advice Bureau and Ethnic Minorities Law Centre) to ensure people from the local area had advice, information and positive messaging around the EU Settlement Scheme who were actively supported to apply to the scheme if they were eligible to do so. The EU Settlement Scheme runs until 30 June 2021. Application figures for the scheme for the Perth and Kinross area for the period ending 31 March 2021 are as follows.



* Other outcome definitions:

A valid application can be refused on eligibility or suitability grounds where it does not meet the eligibility or suitability criteria for the scheme, set out in Appendix EU to the Immigration Rules.

An application is void if it is submitted by someone whose status means that they cannot be granted leave under the Immigration Rules, and there is therefore no legal basis for the Home Office to process it. Examples include applications from British citizens (including dual nationals), applications from those with a right of abode, and applications from those

exempt from immigration control (such as diplomats or those working for prescribed international organisations).

An application is withdrawn if the applicant asks the Home Office, in writing, to withdraw it before it is concluded. Examples include where the applicant applies but subsequently decides to leave the UK or apply for a different status (for example British citizenship) or has made multiple applications.



Based on the original estimated population of 8,000 EU nationals in the area applications remain significantly over that. This was only an estimated population and application numbers will also include applicants who may have had pre-settled and have then transferred to secure settled status.

We continue to provide support to Syrian Refugee families and Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers who have made Perth and Kinross their home under the respective UK Government programmes.

During 2020/21 we provided multi-cultural food deliveries to older and vulnerable members from local minority ethnic communities detailed in the case study below which also provides an example of The Perth & Kinross Offer in action.

Case Study 1

Multi-cultural food deliveries during 1st lockdown

Provided as a result of a lack culturally appropriate food being provided within the Scottish Government Food Parcels.

Community members faced travel restrictions and no local Chinese traditional food supplier exists. Although a small local Halal provider does exist it had limited capacity to meet need on the scale required.

As well as those who were shielding or within vulnerable categories older community members were self-isolating mainly due to increased COVID-19 risks amongst minority ethnic communities and for personal health reasons.

Arrangements were put in place with the Corporate Procurement Team using allocated Scottish Food Aid funding to meet local need during the lockdown period - orders were co-ordinated by the Corporate Equalities Team as part of Coronavirus Crisis Response work.

Between April and August 2020, 8 x fortnightly Chinese food deliveries were made to 22 individuals in 12 households and 7 x fortnightly Halal food deliveries were made to 83 individuals in 27 households (including deliveries to Syrian Refugee families and Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers).

On key dates in the calendar during this period such as Eid and International Refugee Day additional treats were put in the food parcels.

Deliveries were made by community volunteers from Perth Chinese Community Association and Perth Welfare Association to their respective communities.

In return for the support more vulnerable minority ethnic community members were receiving local business owners from both communities (Fast Food establishments) provided free meals to those in need from the wider Perth and Kinross area. One such example being the link-up between Must Eat (a local Muslim-owned business) and St Johnstone Community Trust with free regular meals provided to Saints Mental Wellbeing project users whilst that project was unable to meet.

Equality Outcome 2 - Staff from equality protected groups will be made welcome and respected in the Council workplace

Information on equality and diversity is made publicly available to prospective employees ([Equalities_Leaflet.pdf \(pkc.gov.uk\)](#)) and current employees ([Perth & Kinross Council - Employment information - Employment equality \(pkc.gov.uk\)](#)) as well as forming a core part of the Employee **Induction** programme.

Two established staff networks continued to meet virtually during 2020/21 - the LGBTi Staff Network (established in 2017/18) and the Disability Staff Network (established in 2018/19) whilst a third staff network (called Belong) for Black, Asian and Ethnically Diverse staff (and their Allies) was established following a Black History Month discussion in October 2020. These networks are open to all staff.

We continue to commit to important wellbeing partnership workplace initiatives including the See Me in Work programme with a formal partnership agreement signed by the Chief Executive in February 2020. A number of wellbeing initiatives were put in place particularly to support employees working remotely from home during the pandemic which are detailed in the Case Study overleaf.



Case Study 2

Employee wellbeing

To ensure we are focussed on the health and wellbeing of our workforce and how to support in this area, we have consulted and engaged with our workforce in a number of different ways over the past year. This includes surveys, focussed health and wellbeing ‘temperature checks’, sounding boards and employee forums. The health and wellbeing of our employees is a priority and a number of initiatives have been in place to support employee wellbeing, such as:

- regular health and wellbeing newsletters with suggestions and signposting; audio versions available for those not desk-based;
- monthly slides for ‘Team Time’ reminding employees about self-care and signposting to wellbeing resources;
- a programme of wellbeing opportunities to participate in such as:
 - social interaction to keep people connected: Holly Wreath Making; Latte Lounge (virtual coffee break); Lockdown Lounge (Friday lunchtime listen to music together and chatting online to friends we’ve missed); Literary Lounge (book club); 2 x Step Count Challenges (1 of which was bespoke for PKC);
 - mindfulness and meditation sessions (at least twice weekly);
 - physical exercise sessions provided by our partner Live Active Leisure;
 - resilience workshops;
 - financial wellbeing workshops;
 - workshops for managers to enable them to support their teams;
- conferences and webinars including Martin Stepek (Mindfulness); Emma Bell (Resilience); Michael Byrne (Lived Experience Trauma support); Mindspace Perth, the Lighthouse Perth and Andy’s Man Club;
- a dedicated health and **wellbeing web page** providing tips and signposting.

- bulletins to support new ways of working such as **Managing Teams Remotely**; **Thriving in winter and Spring**; and **Working from Home Like a Pro**, containing reminders such as:
 - take a 10 minute break between virtual meetings;
 - virtual meetings are exhausting, check the purpose and clarity of meetings, before you attend;
 - block time in the calendar for walking in daylight and lunch breaks;
 - use the delay function if sending emails outwith office hours so that the recipient doesn’t feel that they must respond directly;
 - have walking meetings.
- **Listening Ear**, a confidential listening serviced offered by our in-house coaches:
 - resilience coaching;
 - counselling provided by PAM Occupational Health Provider;
 - listening service provided by chaplaincy;
 - signposting to external services such as Mindspace and Breathing Space;
 - a range of elearning modules supporting mental health.

Opportunities were offered at various times of the day from early morning to early evenings, to accommodate different working patterns. Wherever possible, events were recorded so that employees can access these if they were unable to attend on the day.

A dedicated **wellbeing web page** (accessing support tab) was created to signpost employees to the range of services offered nationally, this included for example: PRoMIS Wellbeing Hub; Mindspace; Samaritans; Breathing Space; NH.

Equality Outcome 3 - Reduce and remove physical and social barriers for those with disabilities to access public spaces

We work closely with individuals and organisations in the Third Sector such as the Centre for Inclusive Living; Vision PK and Deaf Links to assess the impact of any decisions which will impact on disability groups. A prominent example during 2020/21 was the implementation of physical distancing measures in streets by Traffic and Network which was required post-lockdown and which is detailed in the following Case Study.

Case Study 3

Physical distancing measures for pedestrians in Perth and Kinross town centres

Lockdown restrictions reduced the numbers of pedestrians in our main streets. When the lockdown restrictions eased pedestrian numbers were expected to increase. To help prevent the spread of Coronavirus some changes were required in main streets across Perth and Kinross to make sure that everyone was as safe as possible when they are out and about and to help maintain social distancing.

Many of the footways in our town centres are too small for the recommended 2m social distancing. Where possible, it was introduced that people should walk along the nearside footway going in the same direction as the traffic. Some straight-on arrows signage will be put in place to help with this. Warning signs will be installed on the footway and on approaches to fixed obstacles.

Pedestrian movement across bridges (for example in Perth and Dunkeld) were also restricted to one-way on each side of the road. There were markings and where space permits a noticeboard (A-board) indicating this.

Pedestrians are also likely to congregate at traffic lights to cross the road. To avoid people having to touch the crossing button, junctions had automated regular crossings programmed into every cycle of lights. The push buttons were taped off to prevent the possible spread of infection.



In Perth City Centre, there are numerous historic vennels between the streets for pedestrian access only. It was recommended that the vennels are signed as one-way. The frequency and proximity of the vennels around High Street mean that neighbouring vennels can be used in opposing directions.

Some wider footways have sufficient space for people to pass each other safely. Signs and markings may not be considered necessary as social distancing should be self-regulating.

In Perth's St John's Centre, there were new entrance and exit systems in place.

Street furniture was added and where it proved problematic for access was removed as required.

Extensive consultation was undertaken with disability groups in advance of these changes being implemented. Information was made available in British Sign Language (BSL); Braille; Easy Read and in alternative language formats making as many people as possible aware of these changes.

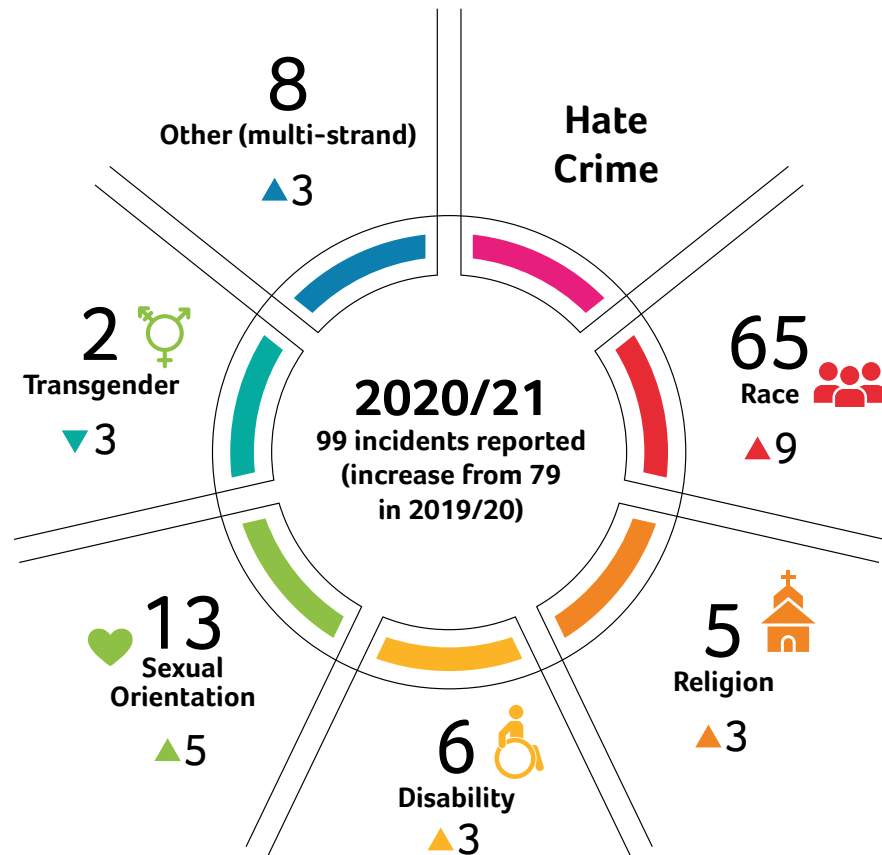
www.pk.gov.uk/article/21717/Spaces-for-People-bid-plans-for-increased-pedestrian-and-cyclist-safety-in-Perth-and-Kinross

Equality Aims and Outcomes

Equality Outcome 4 - People from equality-protected groups have increased confidence to report hate crimes and/or bullying incidents

Unfortunately people still experience Hate Crime and bullying incidents in the local area.

The figures provided by Police Scotland in relation to Hate Crime Incidents Reported to them are detailed below:



Individuals may find it less daunting to report Hate Crimes through a Third Party Reporting Centre. The current Hate Crime Third Party Reporting Centres in Perth and Kinross are:

Centre for Inclusive Living	90 Tay Street, PERTH, PH2 8NP
Perth College UHI	Crieff Road, PERTH, PH1 2NX
Victim Support Perth	Unit B1, Highland House, St Catherine’s Road, PERTH, PH1 5YA
PKAVS Minority Communities Hub	The Gateway, North Methven Street, PERTH, PH1 5PP
ESOL Perth	2nd Floor Drummond House, 6 Scott Street, PERTH, PH1 SEJ

People with disabilities have the opportunity to sign up to the Keep Safe Scheme, which also has our own local Safe Place branding. Individuals with Keep Safe cards currently total 111 and there are 47 organisations designated as Safe Places. The number of Venues did not increase during the Pandemic, as many businesses were not fully operational although the number of individuals rose by 5. There are plans to further promote this scheme during 2021/22 including in rural area.

The Equalities Strategic Forum and Safer Communities Partnership also monitor Hate Crime incidents and undertake awareness raising campaigns.

Within Education & Children’s Services we have an **Anti-Bullying Strategy** which informs our schools own strategy, which takes account of the equality-protected groups. In our local schools during 2020/21 reported bullying incidents totalled 194 and the breakdown below details those incidents relating to equality groups:

- Race and racism - 17
- Religion or belief - 2
- Additional Support Needs - 12
- Actual or perceived sexual orientation - 7
- Sexism and gender - 4
- Gender identity or Trans identity - 1

Equality Aims and Outcomes



Young people from the LGBT+ community continue to receive support through the G.L.O.W. group partnership with LGBT Youth Scotland which continued to be provided virtually during the pandemic. Four secondary schools have LGBT pupil groups.

Young people in schools have also continued to benefit from Show Racism the Red Card Educational Workshops. 2020/21 was the 13th year of our partnership agreement (the longest running local authority agreement in Scotland). Due to restrictions on visits to schools during 2020/21 sessions could only be undertaken virtually by our delivery partner St Johnstone Community Trust. Using Microsoft Teams, four virtual workshops were trialled at Letham, Tulloch and North Muirton Primaries in December 2020 with 81 pupils benefiting. The programme has now recommenced with virtual sessions being delivered to local primary schools. Work in secondary schools was also commissioned from the Anne Frank Trust and plans are in place for this to commence in the next Academic Year as soon as it is safe to do so.

Equality Outcome 5 - Support is provided to those at risk of or who are survivors of gender-based violence





At the time of producing this report the Violence Against Women Partnership were still compiling their Annual Report for 2020/21 so information will be linked as soon as it is available.

Equality Outcome 6 - Pupils from equality-protected groups will have a positive school experience and will feel safe and respected in school and online

Pupil Equity Fund

Within Education & Children's Services 2020/21 was the fourth year of the Pupil Equity Fund allocated directly to schools and targeted at closing the poverty-related gap. Spending on resources continues to mainly target aspects of early vocabulary and language, literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing including a focus on self-regulation and growth mindset.

Pupil Equity Fund

£1,669,113 (+£1,713)	£108,082 (+£6,082)	£66,964 (+£6,236)	£93,044 (-£10,636)
			
Total Allocation	Highest Primary School Allocation (Inch View)	Highest Secondary School Allocation (Perth Grammar)	Highest All-Through School Allocation (St John's)

Schools track improvements using a range of qualitative and quantitative data. Secondary schools have been working on interventions such as self-regulation and improving partnerships with parents. Primary schools have been developing effective early interventions for gaps in core areas spelling, vocabulary, writing, numeracy and reading. Also there is increased evidence of interventions to improve confidence and self-efficacy in pupils through outdoor learning, digital learning and self-regulation.

Specific resources directed at supporting identified pupils with their learning in these areas have been purchased. Additional support staff and teaching staff hours have been engaged with funding to support the interventions with small groups and individuals.

Since 2018/19, the service has also led the support for the arrival of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking young people through the National Transfer Scheme. A dedicated social worker was appointed on secondment for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children in November 2018 and a Senior Social Care Officer was appointed in May 2019. During 2020/21, PKC continued to accept unaccompanied asylum seeking young people through the National Transfer Scheme. The social worker and Senior Social Care Officer posts were made permanent.

We are now supporting 17 young people and plans are to continue to accept young people on a voluntary basis. We have ran successful recruitment campaigns for Host Families and they are located within the Perth and Kinross area. The young people are settling in Perth, with most attending Perth College and engaged in learning and educational opportunities, as well as local groups and clubs (pre-COVID-19).

We also continue to provide English as an Additional Language (EAL) service in schools, which supports EAL children, age 3-18 and sees community bilingual staff (Polish Community Link, Community Learning Assistant (Urdu) and Romanian-speaking pupil support assistant) offer support to families. There are over 1,400 EAL pupils in local schools and nurseries, with over 230 being supported by the EAL service.

Equality Aim - Perth and Kinross visibly celebrates equality and diversity

Equality Outcome 7- Multicultural and equality-related events (including virtual ones) and key dates in the calendar will be visibly celebrated and promoted

We continue to arrange delivery of an extensive and popular multicultural events and community lunch club programme with our communities and partner organisations in the Third Sector. Despite the restrictions imposed by the coronavirus pandemic during 2020/21 we continued to celebrate significant events virtually. A particularly successful and visible way of doing so was by use of the Perth Bridge Lighting Scheme with the Perth Bridge (and other buildings) being lit up in colours relevant to the event in question. Events included:

International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia

Eid

Diwali

Perthshire Pride

Gypsy/Roma/Traveller History Month

World Refugee Day

Polish Independence Day

World Aids Day



Equality Aim - Perth & Kinross Council will keep our communities informed and engage with them about our services, opportunities and support available to them

Equality Outcome 8 - People from equality protected groups are provided with accessible information about the services provided by the Council including crisis support in the event of an emergency

We continue to provide updated [equalities content on the PKC website](#).

Following the introduction of the British Sign Language (BSL) Plan in October 2018 we continue to have a dedicated [BSL](#) section on our website containing the Plan itself and information about all Council services and The Perth & Kinross Offer translated into BSL with other key messages added to this as required.

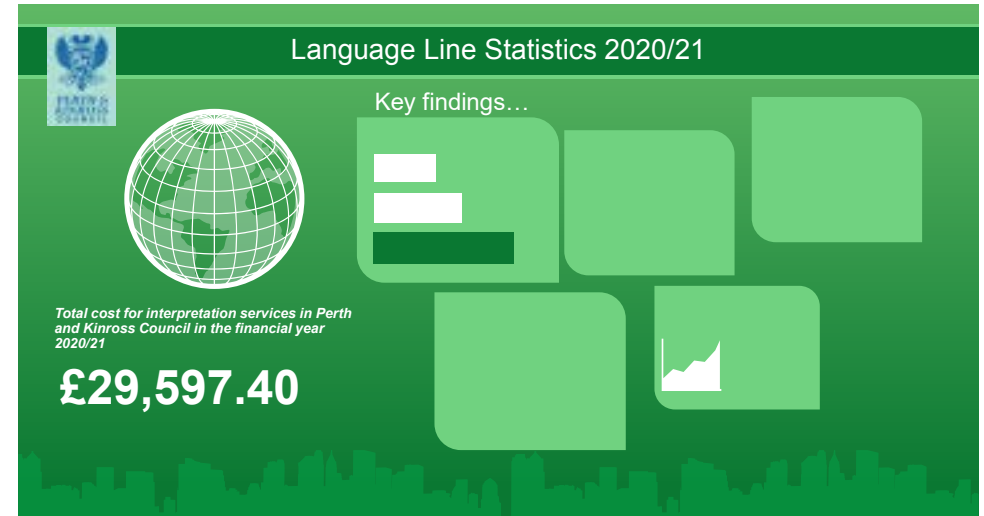
We continued to offer a dedicated [page](#) on our website offering signposting information and advice to EU citizens and local businesses, in particular around the EU Settlement Scheme.

During 2020/21 a dedicated Coronavirus Information page was added to our website and updated throughout with relevant community related information on advice and support.

It is acknowledged that online information is not suitable for everyone and to that end a Digital Inclusion Working Group was set up as part of the recovery response to the pandemic (further detail is provided in Equality Outcome 9).

Council committee meetings are also filmed and continued to be made publicly available despite meetings taking place virtually during the Pandemic.

Some of our customers may require support from interpreters to access the services they need.



During the financial year 2020/21, PKC has seen a significant increase in the use of interpretation services through Language Line seeing a significant cost increase on the year previous. Costs were particularly high during August and September, which we can attribute to local outbreaks (such as 2 Sisters Factory in Coupar Angus) where high numbers of EU nationals were affected. Since then service use has remained higher than in the previous year. Given that the pandemic has also limited face-to-face contact services, the interpretation service has become a more prominent way of contacting us and our services have continued to advertise the available support on social media platforms throughout the year.

Romanian is by far the top language requested with a total of 834 requests made which accounts for 65% of all requests made over the year, followed by Polish (20%) and Bulgarian (5%). Again, this is a significant change on the year previous where Polish was the most requested language.

A total of 23 languages were used during the year which is an increase of 11 on the year 2019/20.

Welfare Rights and Housing services continue to be the highest using departments.

We also continue to implement our Gaelic Language Plan. The Adult Literacies Partnership, comprises of the following organisations - CATH, Perth College, Murray Royal Hospital, PUSH and HMP Perth. During the pandemic groups were not able to meet so links were offered to existing platforms for virtual learning.

As well as being the main users of interpreting and translation support within the Council, both Housing and Welfare Rights provide services which place equalities firmly at the heart of what they do. For example, within Housing there are specific equalities indicators within the Annual Scottish Social Housing Charter submission, evidenced by services such as:

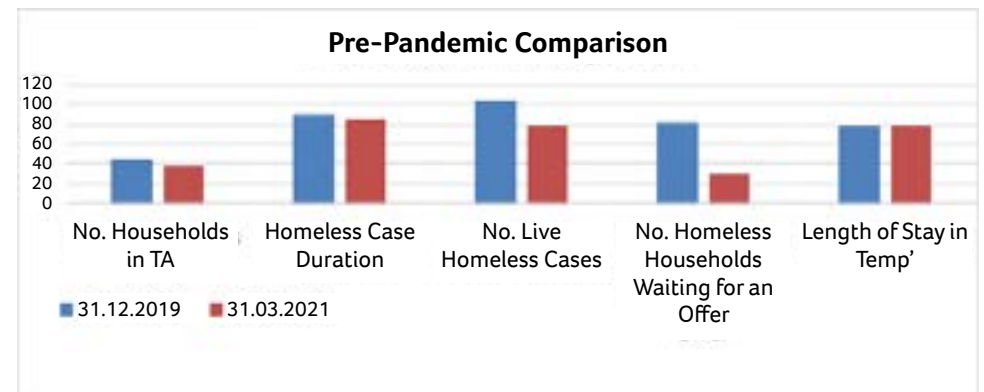
- a continued digital inclusion service for Housing tenants;
- self-assessment of the Gypsy/Traveller **Minimum Site Standards - Scottish Government** with an Improvement Action Plan implemented; and
- continued overview of the Syrian Refugee Integration Programme (Home Office Resettlement Scheme), with contract now in place with Scottish Refugee Council for support.

The pandemic presented a range of significant service delivery challenges for Housing services and the service had to work at pace to develop new ways of working, to ensure business continuity and to minimise the disruption for our customers.

During the initial period of the pandemic, the restrictions created housing supply issues with a 23% reduction in the number of social housing lets completed across our Common Housing Register partnership in Quarters 1 and 2 of 2020/21. Homeless presentations also reduced by 10% during this period.

The demand for temporary accommodation was broadly in line with pre-pandemic levels but throughput into secure tenancies was initially impaired by the restrictions so there was increased pressure on our temporary accommodation stock.

The undernoted chart compares the position at the end of 2020/21 with a pre-pandemic position at the end of Quarter 3 of 2019/20. The chart shows that, despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, we further improved or maintained the position in relation to these key indicators.



Pre-pandemic, we offered advice on homelessness through a range of platforms including:

- web-based advice including a Housing Options Self-Assessment tool;
- telephone and text messaging advice;
- face-to-face advice during working hours - no appointment system so people could walk in and be seen anytime;
- an out-of-hours service which is available at all times outwith office hours. This is managed from Greyfriars House which is our direct-access hostel;
- providing housing surgeries at a range of services - social work, third sector partners, health etc;
- information available on our various social media platforms.

Equality Aims and Outcomes

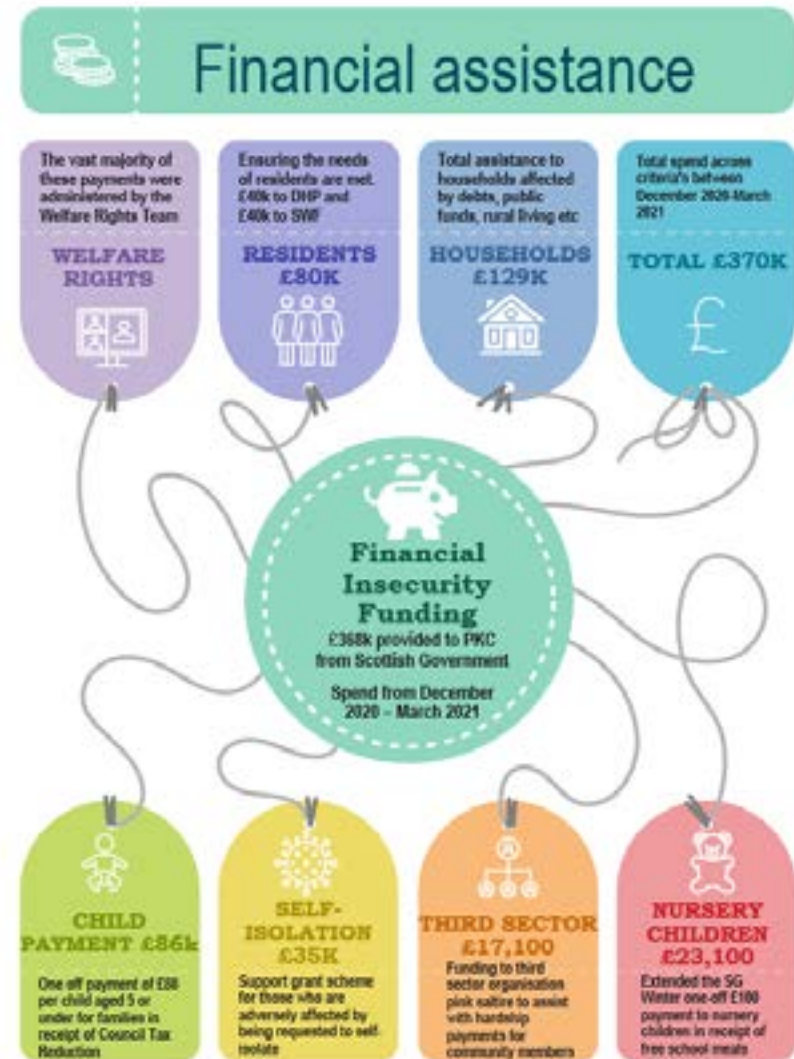
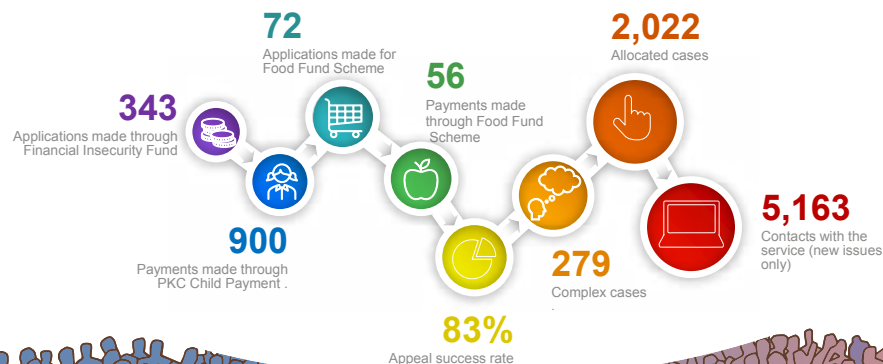
The restrictions associated with the pandemic meant that the face-to-face, walk-in option was not possible as our office was closed in line with Government guidance. However, if a face-to-face appointment was required due to the person's circumstances, people could present to Greyfriars.

However, despite the operational challenges, we have:

- maintained 24/7 access to homelessness service throughout the pandemic through the implementation of robust risk assessments and guidance available from Public Health;
- continued to engage face-to-face with individuals and residents in our temporary accommodation properties;
- had key staff working from our main office throughout the pandemic using a hybrid-working approach;
- continued to develop the planned enhancement of the self-serve aspects of our housing management system;
- worked with partner agencies to provide translation and interpretation services where required;
- provided immediate access to temporary accommodation for anyone who required this.

Welfare Rights continue to make a range of their **information publically** available particularly evident during the coronavirus in relation to crisis support grants.

Welfare Rights High Level Statistics



Other parts of our organisation also demonstrate through their Annual Service Performance Reports how their work on a daily basis contributes to this particular outcome.

Case Study 4

Perth Golf Memories Group

Group usually meets every Monday morning but had to cease during the 1st lockdown.

21 participants, carers and volunteers received a weekly phone call each Monday morning instead from a member of the Equalities Team whilst the group was unable to meet with signposting to appropriate advice and support given when required.

Working closely with the venue at Noah's Ark Golf Centre a Risk Assessment was undertaken prior to the group undertaking a safe return with COVID-19 Protocols in place.

Those group members and volunteers who were able to do so returned to the group for a trial session in July before returning for a further 7 x weekly sessions in August and September and a further 9 x weekly sessions between October and December.

8 participants and 6 volunteers were able to safely return for the sessions prior to the most recent lockdown in January when the group had to cease again and the weekly phone calls were reinstated.

Case Study 5

Pink Saltire LGBT+ Community Support during Pandemic

£17,100 grant provided to Pink Saltire by Perth & Kinross Council from December 2020 to March 2021.

187 individuals or families supported.

100% rated the service as 5-star 'Excellent' in feedback analysis.

61% of service users were female.

36% of service users were unemployed.

91% learned more about LGBT+ services.

65% now know where they can turn for further support.

102 mobile top-ups issued to keep people connected.

235 supermarket vouchers issued to keep people fed.

13 laptop devices issued to enable digital access.

293 welfare and support calls to service users.

Case Study 6

Multi-Agency Response - COVID-19 Outbreak Coupar Angus (2 Sisters Factory)

The COVID-19 outbreak in Coupar Angus was a major incident during the pandemic. Within two weeks of the first positive test a total of 201 cases were recorded in Coupar Angus, the factory was closed. By working together with the factory, our Community Planning partners and volunteers, a plan was pulled together to ensure workers and families were supported. Through welfare checks and the provision of food, this enabled workers and families to stay at home safely during the self-isolation period and reduce transmission within the local community. We also worked in close partnership with NHS colleagues to support the Test and Protect system to again help stop the spread of the virus within the local community. Within 48 hours community volunteers and staff, delivered over 700 food parcels and carried out doorstep welfare checks to every affected household.

As the workforce were predominantly foreign nationals spanning 17 different languages, we distributed information in various languages explaining the situation, encouraging employees to attend a dedicated test centre and giving contact details for welfare support. We maintained communication throughout the period across various social media platforms to ensure people received the information they needed. Support from PKAVS Minorities Hub was essential in ensuring communications reached those members of the workforce and their families who were foreign nationals.



Equality Outcome 9 - People from equality-protected groups will be supported to digitally participate

Members of equality-protected groups benefited from digital devices allocated through Connecting Scotland funding during 2020/21. The Equalities team worked closely with Housing colleagues and devices were allocated to community members from Minority Ethnic communities who were digitally excluded due to age or health conditions.

We also formed a Digital Participation Working Group in 2020/21. The broad remit of the Working Group is to increase digital participation in order to improve wider life chances for people in Perth and Kinross, and specifically to:

- *identify current types and levels of digital participation in Perth and Kinross;*
- *identify barriers to participation, or reasons for non-participation; and*
- *recommend key actions to reduce or eliminate barriers.*

To those ends an Action Plan is now being progressed.

Equality Outcome 10 - People from equality-protected groups are supported to access employment opportunities

We provide an employment support service (Employment Support Team) which assists people with learning disabilities, autism, acquired brain injury, or mental ill health to access employment opportunities. Their work during 2020/21 is outlined in the Case Study on the next page.

Within Perth and Kinross there is also an Employability Network which currently has 35 member organisations supporting individuals into work or employability related activities. There are 4 Employability Network meetings annually involving networking, speakers, delivering various information related to supporting individuals with support needs. The Employability Network has its own website www.pkemploy.net with a specific section for employers. Perth and Kinross Employability Network co-ordinates an Employers Gold star award for inclusive employers.

Other support for equality protected groups comes from the Skills and Employment Initiatives, utilising a blend of local council and national funding. This includes incentivised employment and grant funding towards skills and accreditations to help individuals progress in their employability journey. The national No One Left Behind Strategy and European Social Fund programmes have enabled the Employment Support team to increase services offered to protected groups. Individuals who register for support with one or more barrier to employment (many of the characteristics covered directly or indirectly) will receive a tailored support package. This support involves a designated key worker to aid progression, offer assistance in job creation by incentivising employers, sustaining those individuals in new posts and/or episodes of funded training and development opportunities.

Case Study 7

Perth & Kinross Council Employment Support Team (EST)

The Employment Support Team supported 148 individuals to prepare for, access or retain paid employment.

The EST supported 8 individuals employed by PKC and 4 to undertake work experience/volunteering/employability activities within PKC.

COVID-19: To support other services from April 2020 most of the Employment Support Team were retasked for 6 months with one team member remaining to be a point of contact for essential support (remotely) for service users.

When the service remobilised a supported employment service was again delivered offering service users advice and support from their own specialist support worker. Nearly all contact with service users was via telephone, MS Teams or Zoom but where necessary face-to-face meetings took place in line with risk assessments.

The team has formed a new Remote Employability Hub to support jobseekers who are referred to the team.

Many EST service users were impacted by COVID-19 and 6 individuals were hospitalised due to a decline in their mental health. Individuals were also negatively affected through the furlough scheme and associated reduced income. Service users have struggled with the loss of structure, routine and social contact leading to increased stress and anxiety.

Going forward the Employment Support Team expect an influx of referrals due to the long term impact of COVID-19 on peoples lives and mental health.

The EST regularly engaged with and advised new and existing employers who are based throughout Perth and Kinross. There is information on PKC website specifically for employers: www.pkc.gov.uk/article/17218/Information-for-employers

The EST promote and co-ordinate activities for Duo Day which is an annual event to work with employers to promote supported employment. This year Duo Day will take place in November 2021. PKC offers various work experiences to support this event. Due to COVID-19 the 2020 event did not take place: www.suse.org.uk/duo-day/

The EST attend and provide information at career events in Perth and Kinross high schools, this did not take place in 2020 due to COVID-19.

The team deliver transition work skills courses for pupils with additional support needs who are approaching end of school. Again, this did not take place due to COVID-19.

The EST attend College information sessions informing of the supported employment service and Employability Network members, this did not take place due to COVID-19.

The EST attend Secondary school transition meetings where employment may be an option for the young person, this did not take place due to COVID-19.

A team member attends Local Authority Supported Employment Network meetings (LASEN).

Equality Outcome 11 - People from equality groups will be supported to participate in equality conversations around The Perth & Kinross Offer

The Perth & Kinross Offer Equalities Conversations aim to better understand the experiences of local equalities groups, identify priorities and develop ways for individuals, communities, public, private and Third Sectors to work together. This process was initiated by the Equalities Strategic Forum and we are using the Place Standard tool to structure the conversations in this exploratory stage.

From the conversations, we want to find out:

- *the extent to which people feel heard and able to influence local decisions;*
- *the issues that are important to people;*
- *any barriers or disadvantage that people experience.*

To date, we have had 16 conversations with 76 people from a range of groups. Those conversations have taken place in Perth, Crieff, Kinross and online. We have heard from people from the local South Asian, Chinese, Gypsy/Traveller and LGBT+ communities and at the Perth Six Circle Project. We have spoken to young people, older people, disabled people, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) learners and people with learning disabilities. Conversations started just before the first lockdown in 2020 and at the time of writing, we are still in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although this has limited the number of people and the different groups we have been able to talk to, the conversations to date have provided rich and useful information, insights and connections. Through this we have been able to answer the questions we set out to and to identify important issues to investigate further. A full report of these initial conversations is available upon request from equalities@pkc.gov.uk



Equality Outcome 12 - People from equality-protected groups with lived experience of inequalities will be involved in shaping our policies to tackle poverty and social exclusion

Teams across Communities have a key role in giving every child the best start in life and in helping to develop responsible and informed citizens. We continue to work with all partners to achieve positive outcomes and deliver the Fairer Futures ambition to give every child a strong start and equal footing in life in respect of chances, choice and confidence. Overcrowding, homelessness, dampness, fuel poverty, poor neighbourhood condition, and negative aspects of place and community can have a detrimental impact on our children and young people's developmental milestones, educational attainment, emotional wellbeing and wider outcomes in life. Our contribution includes preventing and responding to homelessness by ensuring that families have immediate access to good-quality housing. We recognise that good-quality affordable housing, of the right size and close to family networks, employment and education can positively impact on children and young people. Through our Common Housing Register and Housing Options approach, we aim to meet the housing needs of households in our communities. We recognise the significant challenge faced by all services and communities in tackling and mitigating the impact of child poverty.

Open space allows children and young people to be physically active and challenge themselves so they sleep and eat well and form healthy habits. We know that children and young people who play outdoors often have better social networks, are more confident and are more involved in their local communities than those who are outside less often. We recognise that communities value opportunities that enable children to play outdoors including green space, parks and in their local streets. Our contribution is significant. Our Community Greenspace team ensures the provision and maintenance of 142 high-quality play parks, paths and open spaces, along with a range of activity programmes and educational events that encourage family activity and sport. Our local spaces are

well-designed, maintained and free to use, so all children and young people can get involved - regardless of their background, gender, age, stage or ability.

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 requires Local Authorities and Health Boards to report jointly each year on activity they are taking and will take to reduce child poverty. Our cross-cutting programme for addressing Child Poverty involves all Council Services and Community Planning partners. The focus for workstreams being:

- *maximising income from employment;*
- *reducing the cost of living;*
- *maximising income from social security and benefits in kind;*
- *breaking the cycle of poverty.*

We are working with our Community Planning Partners to tackle inequalities and The Perth & Kinross Offer is at the heart of our overall approach so that everyone in Perth and Kinross can live life well. We are determined to build new relationships within our communities as we know communities are better at identifying their needs and designing solutions. In taking forward The Perth & Kinross Offer and, with a particular focus on equalities, the Equalities, Empowerment and Fairness workstream has specific aims:

- *We want to work with our partners (NHS Tayside, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue, local charities, community groups and Third Sector organisations) and communities to tackle inequality and provide better outcomes for individuals, building stronger communities.*
- *We want to work in partnership to redesign how we deliver services based around what we hear from our communities.*

These aims will be supported by working with our CPP partners to take forward specific priorities:

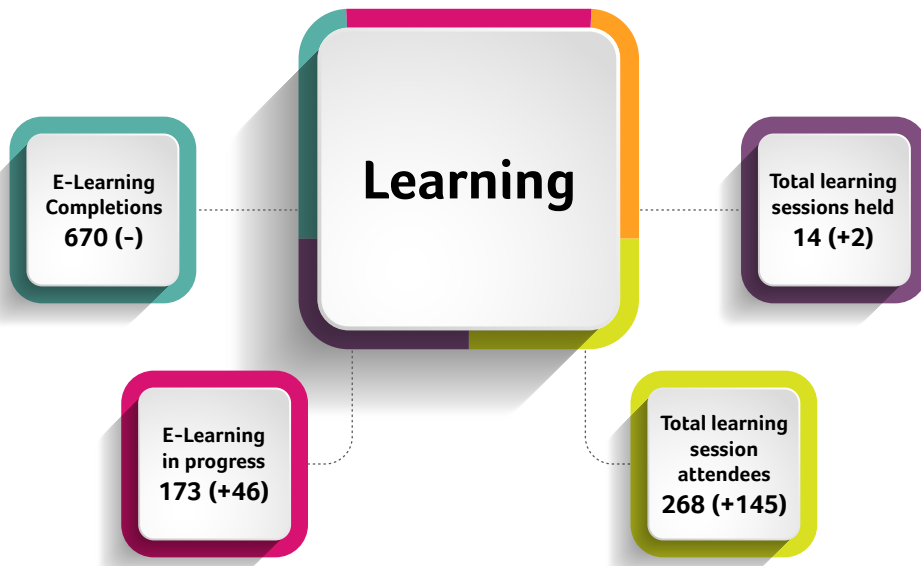
- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 <i>Poverty (including child poverty, fuel poverty and food poverty)</i> | 3 <i>Skills, Learning and Development</i> |
| 2 <i>Mental and Physical Wellbeing</i> | 4 <i>Employability</i> |
| | 5 <i>Digital Participation.</i> |

Equality Aims and Outcomes

Equality Aim - Perth & Kinross Council will increase people's awareness of equality and diversity

Equality Outcome 13 - A staff learning and development programme for equality and diversity will be delivered and will be extended to partner organisations

We ensure that equality issues are a key element of our staff learning and development programme. We continued to deliver our learning programme with virtual sessions during 2020/21 which actually saw attendances increase as many staff found this a much more flexible way of attending sessions.



In September 2020 we produced our first **Equalities Newsletter** for all staff and Elected Members and produced 5 in total by April 2021.

Equality Outcome 14 - Our school curriculum will include equality and diversity topics

Particular aspects of the school Health and Wellbeing (HWB) curriculum relate specifically to learning about equality and diversity.

The Relationships Sexual Health and Parenthood element of the HWB curriculum addresses learning about positive relationships and outcomes which specifically address learning about equality and diversity are detailed at third and fourth levels.

Specific benchmarks identify that children and young people will:

demonstrate respect and understanding of the diversity of loving and sexual relationships, for example, LGBTI relationships, marriage, living together, co-parenting;

and that learners:

understand and respect diversity in sexuality, for example, sexual orientation and gender identity.

The service supports all children to be included through overarching promotion of equality and diversity and have reviewed procedures to ensure they are inclusive and accessible regardless of the protected characteristic and schools would manage individual cases should those arise.

Schools work closely with partner agencies to support individuals with specific needs and some schools run groups to meet these identified needs where that might be appropriate.

Equality Outcome 15 - Our employment policies will reflect that we are a fair and inclusive employer

We produce an Annual Equality and Diversity in Employment Report and the 2020/21 version is included as appendix 1.

In 2020/21, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic we:

- *published refreshed Homeworking Guidance - to ensure staff who were now working at home were working safely;*
- *allocated staff work to enable them to work at home, including staff who were self-isolating/shielding, wherever possible. No detriment was applied if Council was unable to allocate work or if work could not be reasonably undertaken at home due to individual circumstances, ie salary paid as normal;*
- *introduced measures to enable staff who required office accommodation for health and wellbeing reasons to be allocated work space as soon as restrictions allowed;*
- *gave managers greater discretion to agree individual flexible working arrangements to ensure staff could work at a time that fitted their caring responsibilities, home schooling etc. No detriment was applied if staff unable to fulfil their normal contractual obligations in those circumstances;*
- *ensured that staff who were unable to work due to COVID-19 (or as a result of contact/track and trace) did not suffer any detriment, ie paid special leave applied and absences were not recorded as sickness;*
- *introduced a virtual induction programme for new starts to support them take up job offers, with an updated manager's checklist to be used during the pandemic and support virtual induction. Materials accessible online for all: [Perth & Kinross Council - Employment information - Induction \(pkc.gov.uk\)](https://www.pkc.gov.uk)*
- *reviewed risk assessments to ensure safe systems of work;*
- *published all guidance, including FAQs on the external staff site to ensure staff to access content from any device;*
- *Brexit - Regular communications and an opportunity for employees to have a one to one appointment with a specialist solicitor from the Ethnic Minorities Law Centre to discuss and access support with application for pre/settled status;*
- *in 2020, dyslexia awareness **guidance** was created following sessions to raise awareness and hear about colleagues lived experiences. Guidance for managers on making **mental health reasonable adjustments** has also been implemented.*

Equality Aims and Outcomes

Equality Outcome 16 - People providing externally commissioned, contracted or licensed services on behalf of the Council (including ALEOs)* are aware of their responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity

This outcome cannot be achieved without a range of work with partner organisations and, to this end, the Council budget-setting process mainstreamed the previously commissioned three-year funded equality-related projects totalling £180,000 from the Third Sector. These organisations provide regular monitoring information and '*community intelligence*', which help us plan our services accordingly. These organisations are represented at the Equalities Strategic Forum along with our partner ALEOs. Specific **procurement equalities guidance** for prospective tenderers and suppliers remains in place.

Our Licensing Board ensures that equality issues are given consideration in its decision-making process and Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken for reports that go to Licensing Board.

**Arms Length External Organisations*

Case Study 8

PKAVS Tampon Taxi Service

PKAVS Tampon Taxi is an excellent example of a service provided by one of our externally commissioned partner organisations in the Third Sector which found new ways to provide support as community needs changed during lockdown. PKAVS recruited volunteers and staff to distribute free period products to people across the region.

The element of the service which is less quantifiable and therefore not reflected here is its friendly, approachable nature; the accessible channels through which to ask uncomfortable questions; and the awareness-raising and dismantling of stigma which we have sought to achieve over the lifetime of the project.

Figures and trends are based on:

- 255 individual orders;
- 63 monthly subscription sign-ups since this was added to the service in November 2020;
- an estimate of products given out via the Give or Take Box in Perth City Centre.

Figures do not account for the products placed in community larders and other sharing points throughout Perth and Kinross in the period April-June 2020, as these were not monitored for general trends. It is estimated that this is around 1,000 additional products.

Give or Take Box

In the period the box was available in 2020 (April-August), we estimate approximately 5,000 products were made available. Trends are anecdotal and based on the experience of filling the box daily:

- *night time pads were the most popular option, disappearing very quickly after being topped up;*
- *day time and teen pads were also popular, and would usually be finished within a day of being topped up;*
- *tampons, of any variety, were always the last to go, though they were taken when they were the only option.*

The new collection point was set up on 7 January 2021. Trends seem similar.

Home Deliveries

1,203 products have been delivered to 318 households in the lifetime of the project. This includes the deliveries made for the subscription service which was launched in November 2020.

One-off Deliveries

One-off deliveries have been available since March 2020 and offer an insight into the popularity of products over time. We started off with a much smaller range of products, meaning that figures will reflect the relative newness of some additions. Reusable products are only available via this element of the service.

Equality and Diversity in Employment

April 2020 - March 2021

everyone PKoffer
has something to offer



PERTH &
KINROSS
COUNCIL

Perth & Kinross Council's commitment to equality in employment, including compliance with the **Equality Act 2010**, is reflected in our Corporate Equalities Policy and our Equal Pay Policy which provide the frameworks within which we work.

Our organisational vision is of a confident and ambitious Perth and Kinross, to which everyone can contribute, and all can share. A key element of The **Perth & Kinross Offer** is to enable everyone in Perth and Kinross to play their part in making this a fairer place for all - where everyone can live life well.

We are committed to ensuring equalities is intrinsic in the way we work; the way decisions are made, the way people behave, how we perform and improve our services. We use tools such as the **Equality and Fairness Impact Assessment** (EFIA) to ensure that equalities is a key component of our work and not an afterthought.

The Council's latest **Equal Pay Statement**, as at January 2021, also sets out our commitment to the principle of equal pay for all our employees and to reducing occupational segregation in our workforce.

This report provides:

- *an overview of progress and our achievements in progressing equality and diversity in employment between April 2020 and March 2021;*
- *the results of our equal pay audit (April 2020 - March 2021);*
- *sets out our plans for further embedding equalities into the services we provide and as an employer, ensuring equalities is at the heart of everything we do.*

It is recognised that during the period covered by this report, the Council was responding to the Covid-19 pandemic as a Category 1 Responder and required to rapidly adapt to provide essential operational services. It is also acknowledged that whilst everyone has been affected, Covid-19 has exacerbated inequalities that exist and has had a disproportionate impact on many who already face disadvantage and discrimination.

2 Promoting Equality and Diversity in PKC

Employment monitoring provides a focus on workplace equality issues when carrying out policy review and development. Analysis of the data collated revealed no new significant trends emerging in any of the protected characteristics. More detailed information is available, on request, from Human Resources.

During April 2020 to March 2021, Perth & Kinross Council carried out a wide range of work that challenged discrimination, valued diversity and advanced equality of opportunity in employment. Highlighted below are some of our key achievements and progression during this period.

COVID-19

During the pandemic, a key priority for the Council has been supporting our employee health and wellbeing, particularly during periods of significant restrictions and with new ways of working, whilst continuing to apply Fair Work principles. Support has included:

- *staff asked to follow health protection advice to protect their health and safety;*
- *provision of relevant personal protective equipment (PPE) and continued risk assessment to ensure safe systems of work, in a rapidly changing situation;*
- *staff required to shield or self-isolate provided with, where possible, alternative work or arrangements to homework;*
- *increased flexibility for employee's home working to balance caring responsibilities, home-life issues and work, with managers having greater discretion to agree individual flexible working arrangements. Refreshed Homeworking Guidance published to ensure staff at home were working safely along with online DSE assessment and provision of the correct equipment;*
- *individuals did not experience any financial detriment if unable to fulfil their normal contractual obligations due to circumstances arising as a result of the pandemic. This was in accordance with our national terms and conditions. COVID-19 absences were not recorded as sickness;*
- *a wide-ranging health and wellbeing programme, aligned to the 4 pillars of wellbeing, which are physical, emotional and social, financial and workplace.*

Numerous events, communication and signposting to sources of support both internal and external to the Council and in collaboration with partners, eg NHS, tailored to specific issues highlighted during the pandemic such as domestic violence, gambling drugs and alcohol. Examples include virtual wellbeing conferences with external speakers (recorded for employees unable to attend), weekly podcasts, opportunities for socialisation eg, lockdown lounge, regular newsletters and monthly cascade of key wellbeing messages to employees;

- *additional guidance to support managers, eg managing remotely, conducting online interviews, virtual induction etc;*
- *introduction of measures to enable staff who required office accommodation for health and wellbeing reasons to be allocated workspace as soon as restrictions allowed;*
- *all guidance, including FAQs, published on the external staff site to allow staff to access content from any device.*

In addition to the above measures as a direct result of the pandemic, the following examples of progressing equalities in our workplace were implemented during this time period and span a range of protected characteristics:

- *the Council's **employment policies, guidance and information** moved to the PKC website, increasing accessibility for all employees;*
- *introduction of regular **equalities** newsletters promoting awareness of key issues, initiatives, campaigns and calendar dates;*
- *positive action in recruitment by promoting our apprenticeship employment opportunities to equality protected groups;*
- *a variety of online **Learning Opportunities** to raise awareness and increase knowledge across our workforce including Understanding HIV; Show Racism the Red Card; Trans Awareness, Deaf and British Sign Language, Wearing the Hijab;*
- *PKC DisABILITY and LGBTI staff networks moved online due to the pandemic and continue to meet virtually monthly. A new staff network, BELONG, was created following Black History month, see overleaf;*

2 Promoting Equality and Diversity in PKC

- regular engagement with our workforce, using a range of virtual engagement methods such as pulse surveys, sounding boards, giving employees an opportunity to participate in topics which are of most interest to them; provide a space to influence practice; and share their creativity to improve our support for employees;
- In December 2020, the Council commissioned unconscious bias training for 15 employees with a view to this being developed into learning for all employees.

Age

Young People

The percentage of our workforce aged between 16 and 24 years has decreased from 5.3% to 4.9%. This is mainly due to:

- a reduced number of opportunities offered, particularly modern apprenticeships, in the last year due to the pandemic and the challenges around supporting a new employee, particularly in a virtual environment and prioritising supporting existing employees; and
- a significant increase in the number of young people, under the age of 25, with permanent contracts, choosing to resign. Further analysis of the cohort of leavers will be carried out and an action plan developed during 2021-22.

Employment Opportunities

Period	Number of MA Opportunities	Cumulative Total	Number of Professional Trainee Opportunities	Cumulative Total
2014/15	71	185	5	20
2016/17	58	329	13	43
2018/19	57	444	0	47
2020/21	40	535	0	48

Achievement rates of our modern apprenticeship programme has increased in 2020/21 with 92.5% of young people completing the MA programme and achieving a positive destination, contributing to a pipeline of future talent to both the Council and the local area. Our National Training Provider recognised the Council's continued provision in its recent report, stating:

- "Work-based learning is meeting the needs of employers with employers saying they would recommend the provider and give a 5 out of 5 for support, advice and guidance overall";

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- *“They work collaboratively with all stakeholders and senior managers to ensure the offering is fit for purpose for both learners and employers with a focus on long term opportunity beyond the end of the MA learning journey. This enables a strong and robust programme to be in place to set the learner up for success”;*
- *“Particularly handled COVID well with contact via teams for learners to be able continue to be supported and motivated.”*

Despite the challenges of the past year, we have continued to work in partnership with Perth Youth Services. Support moved online to include virtual presentations to groups and on a one-to-one basis, across the range of protected characteristics, to ensure young people are aware of options and support available within our Modern Apprenticeship Programme.

Professional Trainees

In 2012, the Council committed funding to create employment opportunities for young people in the area; this included professional trainee roles whereby a graduate would complete a postgraduate qualification to become qualified in a profession or alternatively a young person would undertake a relevant technical qualification, creating a pipeline of future talent. Whilst no new professional trainee opportunities have been created in recent years, other routes, such as graduate apprenticeships, are being explored to continue to invest in our young workforce and contribute to our future workforce planning needs.

Graduate Apprenticeships

Four young people have continued to make good progress on the Graduate Apprenticeship qualification in Social Services and Healthcare (Children and Young People) throughout 2020/21, despite the difficult circumstances and are on track to complete next year.

Graduate Work Experience

Four Service funded Graduate Work Experience opportunities have continued to progress within Economic Development, Energy, Transport Planning and Climate Change.

Care Experience

Engagement with our care-experienced young people has continued virtually with ongoing support to apply for modern apprenticeship opportunities, see below. However, the opportunity to provide work experience placements for care experienced young people in Perth and Kinross has been significantly impacted due to the pandemic.

- *13.9% of applicants for MAs stated they were care-experienced*
- *10% of vacancies were filled by young people who said they were care-experienced.*
- *1.7% - National Average for Care-Experienced MA starts in 2020/21*

Apprentice Employer Grant

Skills Development Scotland sought applications for the above grant from employers of apprentices recruited during December 2020-21. Following engagement with local groups, it has been decided the grant will be used during 2021/22 to support young people from disadvantaged cohorts into work, including a new modern apprenticeship in Community Development and football coaching for young refugees/BAME communities.

Kickstart

The Council registered to become an employer for the **Kickstart** scheme, an initiative to support recovery from the pandemic, specifically for young people aged 16-24 years on Universal Credit who are at risk of long-term unemployment. The scheme is due to run until December 2021; during 2020/21, the Council has submitted 28 opportunities with recruitment of new employees ongoing.

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Other Employees

The age profile of the Council's workforce has remained relatively steady, with approximately 67% of our workforce aged over 40 years. 7.7% of our workforce is aged 60-64 years, a slight increase from 7.2% in 2019/20. It was also noted that there was a rise in the number of employees over 60 years exiting the organisation, with over a third of these being teaching staff.

Preparation for Retirement

Three virtual pre-retirement courses (see below) were offered to all employees considering retirement within the next three years. The course is intended to give a positive and realistic approach to a financially secure retirement and aims help individuals make informed choices about retirement.

Date	Course	Number of attendees
25/08/2020	Pre-Retirement	5
25/01/2021	Pre-Retirement	14
31/03/2021	Pre-Retirement (teachers)	31

Disability

The percentage of our workforce who disclose they have a disability continues to gradually increase, with 1.6% considering themselves as having a disability compared with 1.5% in 2019/20. It is understood that many employees who have a disability or medical condition within the meaning of the Equality Act (2010) may not regard themselves as having a disability or choose not to self-declare when they join the Council. Others may acquire a disability or medical condition during their working life and similarly choose not to disclose, update their record or understand what is meant by 'disability' within the meaning of the Equality Act (2020).

In previous years, occupational health has advised that around one in three management referrals were identified as likely to be covered by the Equality Act (2010) which suggests that despite low disclosure rates, the employment rates of Council employees with a disability or health condition covered by the Act may be closer to the figures published by the [House of Commons Library](#) (updated 24 May 2021) which estimates that 20% of the **working** age population have a disability. Around one in four people (ref 1) are estimated to be affected by mental health problems in Scotland in any one year. Approximately one in five (ref 2) of the working age population reported a mental health impairment (21.5%).

Modern Apprentices

In 2020/21, 6% of our Modern Apprentices disclosed they have a disability compared with the national average of 13%. The Annual Participation Measure Report 2020/21 from SDS state a decrease of 2.4% MAs declaring a disability overall, citing the pandemic as a possible reason.

The Council continues to be a Disability Confident leader, supporting disabled people into work through the [Guaranteed Job Interview Scheme](#). Our Occupational Health provider gives advice along with relevant agencies, such as Concept Northern and Access to Work, in order that we can, where possible, reduce the barriers and make adjustments to enable our disabled employees to effectively use their talents and abilities in our workplace, thereby sustaining their employment.

2 Promoting Equality and Diversity in PKC

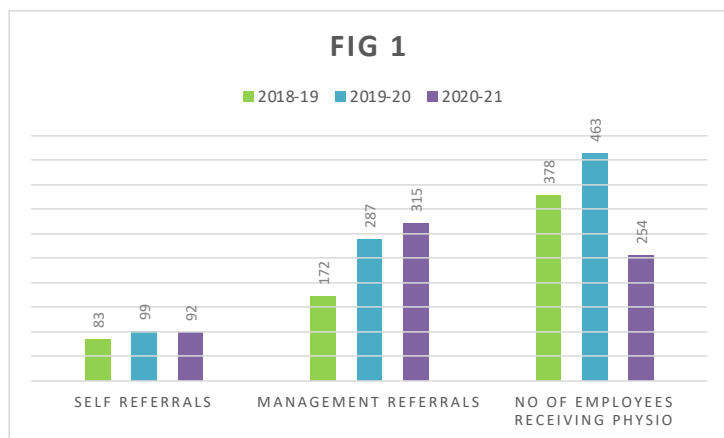
The number of applications received from disabled candidates reduced substantially during the year, however, as a percentage of overall applications received, this increased from 5.4% in 2019/20 to 8.0% in 2020/21. Homeworking, as a result of the pandemic, may make employment more accessible for some disabled people, and contribute to a higher number of applicants as well as future employees.

The number of employees, who have disclosed their disability, who left the organisation reduced by 50% in the past year, which may be an indicator that disabled employees are able to sustain their employment with PKC.

The Scottish Government has set out its ambitions for disabled people in [A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People: delivery plan](#), with one of the five ambitions being 'Decent incomes and fairer working lives'. See Future Actions on our proposals to contribute to these ambitions.

Occupational Health

We have continued to provide occupational health services including physio and counselling, and advice for managers. Counselling (self-referral and management referrals) has continued to see an increase in demand whilst physiotherapy provision has decreased over the past year, see Fig 1 below.



Our highest cause of absence remains mental health issues so the increase in use of our counselling provision is not unexpected. Whilst the number of days lost reduced slightly from 2019/20 by 844 days, the national picture indicates a rise in mental health, stress and anxiety as a direct consequence of COVID-19, through changes in work, finances, managing relationships and caring responsibilities. Some of the wide range of supportive measures introduced during the pandemic to support the wellbeing of our staff are outlined within this report and will continue to be a key priority as part of our recovery.

Whilst the number of musculoskeletal absences in the past year has reduced by almost 50% compared to 2019/20, it continues to be one of the top 3 reasons for absence. Similarly, referrals to physiotherapy have also significantly reduced. COVID-19 may have resulted in delays to hospital treatment or operations relating to this category. All staff who have been working from home during the pandemic were asked to undertake a DSE assessment for their workstation. A new homeworking DSE assessment has been introduced to ensure people's homeworking environments are safe and supports their health and wellbeing.

Healthy Working Lives

During the pandemic, employee wellbeing has been a key priority and focus. As well as the measures outlined elsewhere within this report, other support introduced has included:

- *introduction of a Health and Wellbeing Champion;*
- *implementation of a Health and Wellbeing programme to continue to deliver a range of learning opportunities which promote physical and mental health and wellbeing;*
- *introduced a wide range of guidance and FAQs, covering topics such as annual leave, self-isolation leave, recording COVID-19-related absences and working from home, extension of flexible working arrangements;*
- *maintained Healthy Working Lives Bronze and Silver Awards.*

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Other Developments

- Introduction of guidance for managers on making **mental health reasonable adjustments**.
- **Dyslexia awareness guidance** developed following sessions to raise awareness and hear about colleagues lived experiences. This will enable the building of knowledge and confidence for managers and employees who have dyslexia.
- **Connection Events for Modern Apprentices incorporating relevant National Mental Health First Aid Training** were well attended and received positive feedback. Further learning is planned for 2021/22.
- **Meeting with Scottish Stammering Network** to learn more about the challenges in employment for individuals who stammer.

SEX

Women represent 73.2% of the Council's workforce, which has remained consistent over the past few years. 34.6% of female employees work part-time compared with 3.7% of male employees.

A greater proportion of males (38%) make up our modern apprentices; this is a significantly greater number compared with the number of males in our overall workforce. Contributing factors may include the range of occupational areas available, regular meetings with Skills Development Scotland Careers Coaches and encouraging positive action in predominantly one gender roles, with successes in recruiting a female to an HGV mechanic and males into early years and adult social care apprenticeships.

Equally Safe at Work

To support our work with **Close the Gap**, we continue to work closely with the Perth and Kinross Violence Against Women Partnership to understand the issues and inform our work in supporting employees who experience gender-based violence. Although not directly in the report reference period, work has commenced and will continue on achieving accreditation. Work is also progressing on the development of awareness raising events and learning.

Learn to Programmes

Our Learn to Programmes, in collaboration with local universities, have successfully contributed to the growth of early years and primary teaching recruitment challenges. During 2020-21, the pandemic presented challenges to students' learning with teaching moving online and delayed practical placements. However, 6 Early Childhood Practitioners and 6 Primary Teachers continue to make good progress. We continue to proactively promote these opportunities to males as these roles are traditionally being carried out predominantly by females, promoting gender diversity.

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Race

The majority of Perth & Kinross Council's workforce describe themselves as White Scottish or White Other British with 270 employees (4.7%) from minority ethnic communities.

Modern Apprentices

The number of minority ethnic modern apprentices has decreased significantly in the past year to 5.3% (10.5% in 2019/20) but continues to be higher than the national average of 2.7%. We will continue to build on connections with local groups to promote our vacancies to encourage more young people from ethnic minority groups to apply. The work planned as a result of the Apprentice Employer Grant (see above) will also potentially contribute to increasing applications.

BELONG Staff Network

As part of Black History Month, in October 2020, ethnic minority colleagues were invited to have a conversation about their experiences of working with PKC which led to the set-up of the Belong Staff Network which aims to provide a social and support network to staff who are from ethnic minority groups and any of their allies.

The Network meetings are open to all PKC employees and provides:

- *a space for the safe discussion on issues relating to racism, discrimination and valuing diversity in the workplace;*
- *information about relevant events within and outwith PKC which can raise awareness of race equality, promote anti-racism and highlight positive messages of diversity;*
- *inform PKC policy with respect to race equality and inclusion; and*
- *provide a welcoming environment for all staff.*

Support for EU Nationals

We have continued to issue regular communications to raise awareness of the requirements of our Non-UK EU/EEA employees as a result of Brexit. Since 1 April 2020, 29 one to one appointments have been held with a specialist solicitor from the Ethnic Minorities Law Centre, providing advice and support to employees.

The number of ethnic minority applicants reduced in the last year, which may be as a result of Brexit and reduced travel due to the pandemic. Continued analysis of this group will provide further evidence of this and can be used to contribute to workforce planning.

Teaching in a Diverse Scotland

In response to **Teaching in a Diverse Scotland: Increasing and Retaining Minority Ethnic Teachers**, commitment has been given to supporting this recommendation with actions including further breakdown of our equalities data for teachers and asking our BME teachers if they would be willing to be part of new recruitment materials to encourage others into the profession.

The Scottish Government is determined to show leadership in advancing race equality, tackling racism and addressing the barriers that prevent people from minority ethnic communities from realising their potential, as set out in the **Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016 to 2030**. In this connection, the Council has committed to undertake a number of actions in response to the Government's Race, Equality, Employment and Skills: Making Progress Report, including:

- *development of an action plan for the Belong Staff Network for 2021;*
- *promote key posts to equality groups (eg Modern Apprenticeships, Kickstart) and monitor uptake;*
- *ensure our race equality work is promoted in a positive manner to employees and potential employees, via our social media channels and on our website, so that we are regarded as an employer of choice who values diversity.*

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Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation

Since the Council introduced monitoring of religion or belief and sexual orientation in 2014, employee disclosure rates have continued to improve. It is likely that, as employees can update their own employee record, this has led to an increase in disclosure rates. Work to promote awareness and involvement in activities may also have increased confidence in sharing this information.

	31 May 2014	31 May 2016	31 May 2018	31 May 2020
Religion or Belief	6.3%	10.5%	19.3%	34.6%
Sexual Orientation	6.2%	10.6%	19.4%	35.7%

Despite the pandemic, the Council continues to mark events to promote equalities. Examples include:

- during LGBT History Month (February) and due to the pandemic, a virtual programme of events and learning resources, offering staff the opportunity to get involved was made available;
- June Equalities Newsletter highlighted Global Pride month, giving information on the history;
- Rainbow Laces Day was held in December, to celebrate and highlight issues of homophobia. Staff got involved by wearing the laces and sharing photos;
- Perth Bridge was illuminated on 20 November in blue, pink and white to honour Transgender Day of Remembrance.

Support for Veterans

An application for a gold award in recognition of the Council's commitment to supporting defense personnel, reservists, cadet force adult volunteers and their families was submitted in March 2021. Although not within the reference period of this report, it has recently been announced that Perth & Kinross Council are to receive the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award for its commitment as an employer to the **Armed Forces Covenant**.

Support for Carers

Due to COVID-19, many more employees have been working from home with local arrangements, such as more flexibility about when they work, in place to support those with caring responsibilities to be able to continue to work.

The pandemic also saw the annual **Carers Connect** event, delivered in partnership with the Perth and Kinross Health and Social Care Partnership, Carers Voice and other stakeholders, move online. The event, held on 26 November 2020, was promoted, to all staff with caring responsibilities who were encouraged to attend.

The Council continue to participate in and hold 'Established Status' under the **Carer Positive Scheme** and are in discussions to progress to the Exemplary level.

3

Equal Pay Audit

The Improvement Service introduced a Gender Equality Indicator in 2016/17 which reports on the gender pay gap in Scottish Councils. This is calculated based on average hourly rates of pay.

Scottish Councils Statistics

The 'All Scottish Councils' pay gap for 2020/21 is not yet available, however, the 2019/20 figure was 3.4%.

Comparison with Scottish Statistics

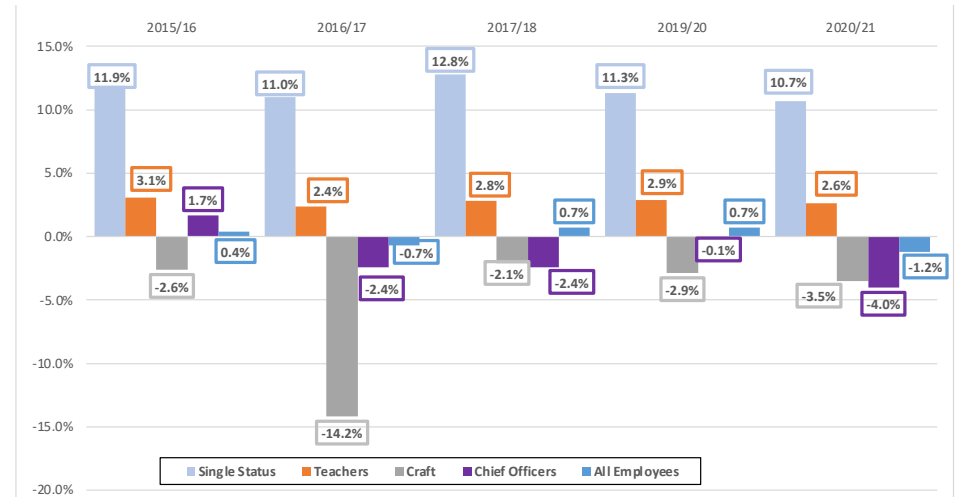
The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) is the source for calculating the pay gap which is published late autumn every year.

In Scotland, the gender pay gap is now reported using the mean and median figures. The mean is the difference between the average of male and female pay and the median is the difference between the midpoints in the ranges of male and female pay. The mean is the preferred comparator as it takes into account the outliers and reflects the structural inequality between gender, including issues relating to vertical occupational segregation.

	PKC	SCOTLAND (2020 results) ¹
MEAN (Average) Pay	-1.2%	10.4%
MEDIAN	5.8%	10.9%

¹ <https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/Working-Paper-22---Gender-Pay-Gap-Statistics-2021.pdf>

Gender Pay Gap - Employee Group Trends



The 2020/21 audit covered all employee groups and included an analysis of the protected characteristics of sex, age, age and sex combined, ethnicity and disability. It is based on the number of contracts which are held by males and females as of 31 March 2021.

Reasons for Reduction in Basic Pay Gap for Single Status

Education & Children's Services has increased the number of Senior Early Childhood Practitioners by 10, Early Childhood Practitioners by 39 and Play Assistants by 12 of which 5 are males.

Following analysis of all pay grades there are no significant other factors which have contributed to the pay gap.

Reason for reduction in Basic Pay for Teachers

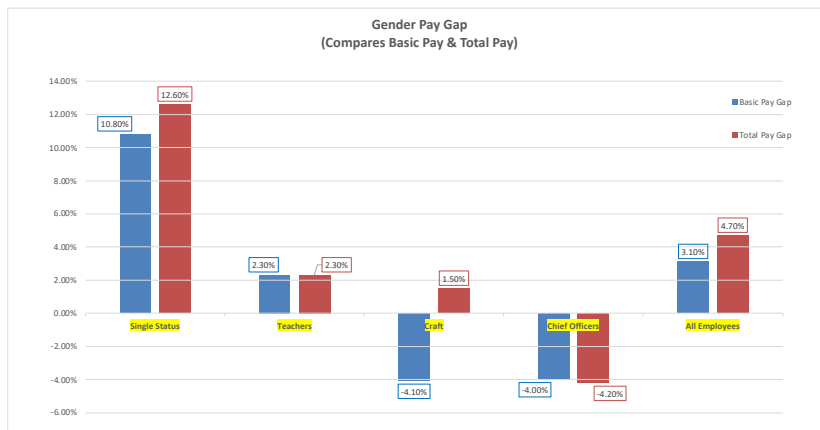
The pay gap narrowed from 2.9% to 2.6% in 2020/21. This was influenced by a change in the gender profile of the top 10 highest paid Headteachers/Depute Headteachers.

Other Employee Group Analysis

There was no cause for concern to the pay gap for Chief Officers and Craft Employees.

Basic Pay Compared to Total Pay

In accordance with the Equality & Human Rights Commission best practice guidance, this audit also compared total pay within each employee group. Total pay is average full-time equivalent salary plus other payments including shift allowance, night allowance, overtime, call-out, premium payments for public holiday working, standby payments and acting up allowances.



Total Pay Gap

The total pay gap is wider than the basic pay gap because of gender differences in the payment of allowances. This is due to overtime working being predominately carried out by male employees.

The reasons for this can be attributed to occupational segregation where custom and practice has evolved and in some parts of the Council overtime working by full-time males is relied upon for service delivery. In addition, societal issues tend to place greater restrictions on the availability of full-time females to work additional hours, where these are offered, as they are more likely to have caring responsibilities.

Occupational Segregation

We are continuing to work with Services to address horizontal and vertical segregation which remains a significant factor in influencing gender pay gaps. However, it should be recognised that occupational segregation is a long-term issue which is difficult to tackle and requires sustained focus and commitment.

Pay Gap Results by Other Protected Characteristics

Analysis is undertaken on all the protected characteristics (age, age/sex, disability and ethnicity). It is noted that the disability pay gap and ethnicity pay gap are higher than the 'all employees' results.

- Disability pay gap is 5.2%. However, meaningful and statistically reliable information can only be produced with more accurate information through employee self-disclosure of disability within the meaning of the Equality Act (2010).
- Ethnicity pay gap is 10.6%. In Single Status, 82% of all ethnic minority employees are in posts within GE & TAS grades. In Teaching, 85% are in Probationer or Main Grade teaching posts.

Equal Pay Audit 2020/21 Conclusion

Overall, the findings of the audit continue to be positive. However, as stated earlier, it should be recognised that occupational segregation is a long-term issue which is difficult to tackle and requires sustained focus and commitment.

Human Resources will continue to work with Service Management Teams as part of Corporate/Service workforce planning activity, to implement positive action strategies to improve employee diversity across all grades/roles and occupational areas, including working towards eliminating occupational segregation.

At PKC, we are proud of our achievements but know that there is more to do in order to foster better relations and advance equality of opportunity. Everyone is protected by the Equality Act and has at least one of the protected characteristics, so the Act protects all of us against unfair treatment. In recognising this, a number of our future actions outlined below incorporate more than one of the protected characteristics, ultimately making the Council a fairer, better place for all to work. These actions will be progressed over the next 12 months and beyond, as it is acknowledged that it will take time for some of these actions to make a difference.

All

- *The health and wellbeing of our workforce will continue to be a key focus as part of our recovery from the pandemic, with the need to ensure our people are resilient and can live life well. This will include continuing to deliver a range of learning opportunities which promote physical, mental and financial wellbeing.*
- *Continue to monitor equalities data and take appropriate actions, with a view to addressing any issues identified. Where appropriate, relevant actions will be incorporated into our corporate workforce planning.*
- *Improve the presentation of equality information on [myjobscotland](#) to encourage greater diversity of applicants.*
- *Implement unconscious bias learning for our workforce and managers to raise awareness of the importance of being aware of unconscious bias and how not to let it affect behaviours or decisions.*
- *Further engagement with staff to understand any barriers particular groups face in trying to progress within PKC as part of our review of internal mobility.*

Age/Sex/Race/Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation/Disability

- *Integrate actions into the review of recruitment and selection to encourage greater workforce diversity to better reflect our communities.*
- *Review our approach to encouraging employees to disclose sensitive equality information through engagement with our relevant staff groups and trade unions, with a view to continuing to increase the number of staff who are disclosing equality monitoring information by making them aware why it is important and what we will do with the information.*
- *Integrate actions within [Corporate Workforce Plan 2021-2023](#) to proactively identify opportunities to positively influence occupational segregation.*

Age

- *Continue to offer a programme of connection events and opportunities for our young workforce that enhances their equality and diversity awareness.*
- *Provide targeted communications to employees who may be interested in the Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions scheme (LGPS members).*

Disability

- *Covid recovery is anticipated to enable us to develop positive action strategies to attract/retain people with a disability or medical condition within the meaning of the Equality Act (2010), including further opportunities for home working.*
- *In conjunction with Stammering Awareness Day 2021, raise awareness of stammering, the impact on people who stammer and ensure that our recruitment information accurately reflect the skills required in a role and don't exclude potentially excellent candidates. Adopt appropriate recommendations from Scottish Stammering Network to help support employees throughout their employment.*

4

Future Actions

Sex

- As part of Equally Safe at Work pilot accreditation scheme, introduce Gender-Based Violence guidance and e-learning module. The aim will be to:
 - raise awareness;
 - help both managers and employees to support an individual who may be experiencing gender-based violence;
 - help employees who may be experiencing gender-based violence; and
 - signpost to sources of support.

Race

- Implement measures from the **Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit** to support recruitment from minority ethnic communities.

Support for Carers

- Encourage employees to identify themselves as an unpaid carer in an aim to establish peer support and to gain feedback on processes for unpaid working carers.
- Explore progressing as a Carer Positive employer to Exemplar level.

Source:

- 1 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2019-volume-1-main-report/pages/5/> -
- 2 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/generator?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/bulletins/disabilityandemploymentuk/2019/e74605de&format=csv>



Equality
is at the *heart* of
what we do

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