

Equality and Diversity in Employment



April 2024 to March 2025

Introduction

Our Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027 envisions a Perth and Kinross where everyone can live life well, free from poverty and inequality. Equality and inclusion are integral to our seven priorities, with our Equality Mainstreaming Report playing a key role in delivering these.

As an employer, we support our employees in contributing to our [Corporate Plan](#) objectives and fostering an environment driven by our values: Ambition, Compassion, and Integrity. This has been embedded into our [People and Culture Strategy](#) which was published in 2024. The strategy outlines our position and aspirations for our employees across workforce planning, skills development, health and wellbeing and equality.

Our obligations under the [Equality Act 2010](#) require us to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- foster good relations between people from different groups - this involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups

Our [Corporate Equalities Policy](#) and [Equal Pay Policy](#), along with our Equality and Fairness Impact Assessment tool (available internally only), ensure our employment policies promote these obligations.

This report is focused around the legally protected characteristics established in the Equality Act but also expands these to consider the impact on groups such as Forces Veterans and Unpaid Carers. We have also been specific in our Mainstreaming Report about actions relating to our work as an employer thereby providing a focus and means of measuring progress.

This report highlights our progress, key data, and plans to support diversity and inclusion in employment, including:

1. **Our progress** – an update on progress towards the achievement of the employment-related actions in the Equalities Action Plan 2021 to 2025 included in our Mainstreaming Report
2. **Our data** – data relating to our employees and recent recruitment activity
3. **Our plans** – examples of how our activities and initiatives are supporting diversity and inclusion in employment and our plans to continue to incorporate an equality focus into all our employment practices and to develop Perth and Kinross Council as a role model for other employers

Our progress

Our Mainstreaming Report details our equality aims both for our organisation and the wider community. There are specific employment actions which support the achievement of these.

Creating an inclusive workplace where staff from equality-protected groups will be made welcome and respected in the Council

Our Values and Behaviours Framework remain central to our People and Culture Strategy, shaping day-to-day work, recruitment, and induction.

Initiatives such as Staff Networks (LGBTI+, Disability, and Race) provide support and a voice to specific groups and their allies. Our staff networks participate in shaping policies and practices by using their lived experiences to provide valuable insight and support

Our accreditations and initiatives include:

- **Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award:** reflecting our support for existing and former members of the Armed Forces; we hold network meetings for Reservists, Adult Cadet Forces Volunteers (ACFV) and Veterans to provide the opportunity to share issues and ideas as to how we can further support them

- **Disability Confident Leader Status:** supporting disabled people through the Guaranteed Job Interview Scheme; our Occupational Health provider, along with agencies like Access to Work, helps reduce barriers and make necessary adjustments for our disabled employees, enabling sustainable long-term employment
- **Carer Positive Accreditation:** supporting employees with caring responsibilities through flexible working arrangements and specific carer leave
- **SeeMe Partnership Initiative:** aimed at ending mental health discrimination; we continue to offer mental health first aid training and awareness raising in this area
- **Equally Safe at Work (ESAW) Development Award:** supporting employers to improve employment at work and practice to advance gender equality
- **Workplace Menopause Pledge:** to create supportive, inclusive environments for employees going through menopause, this includes actively supporting employees affected by menopause through policies, training, and workplace adjustment

These initiatives help foster a culture where employees feel seen and supported. For example, feedback from the Carers Staff Network highlighted increased confidence while discussing support needs with managers, contributing to a more open and inclusive workplace.

We regularly take action to raise the awareness of employees of both the importance of embedding equality into our everyday practice and of the activities taking place to do this, for example:

- our Equalities Team regularly share a calendar of equalities activities, which includes both internal and external events; these activities are shared within the organisation via news alerts, managers briefings and learning opportunities, to enhance employee awareness and understanding of various equality issues
- our monthly Health and Wellbeing Briefing consistently features equality-focused content, with a particular emphasis on disability issues; Other health and wellbeing initiatives, such as podcasts, also address equality matters and are accessible to both employees and the wider community
- our dedicated wellbeing groups for both women and men continue to offer tailored support, fostering a sense of community, and addressing specific wellbeing needs unique to each group

- the Carers Staff Network is open to unpaid carers throughout the Council, supports and shapes policy and practice by bringing lived experience from a carer's perspective; this includes the recent development of a managers guide which will raise awareness and highlight the range of support options available to employees/managers
- a group to support current and former members of the Military Services has been established as part of our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant; the group is led by an Elected Member who is our Armed Forces and Veterans Champion for Perth and Kinross

Inclusive communications

We are committed to enhancing our internal communication tools to support accessibility and inclusivity. Currently, we use various formats and continue to review best practice to identify opportunities for further learning and improvement. We highlight accessible options wherever possible. For example, the Health and Wellbeing Briefing is produced using Sway and includes advice on using accessibility mode.

Additionally, guidance is available to provide colleagues with the information needed to support any request for information in another language or format.

We are committed to complying with our responsibilities under the accessibility regulations for all public sector bodies, ensuring that all print and digital communications are available for members of our teams with different communication needs. A recent audit by the Government Digital Service of one of the Council's standalone websites, [Perth City and Towns](#), has provided valuable insight into further improvements which can be made to ensure the accessibility of this public facing channel. Progress is continuing to implement the actions highlighted by the audit.

We use a range of communication channels and tools to support different access needs in our external communications, including ensuring that video content has subtitles and voiceovers for any visual content and that alt text/image descriptions are used for any images on social media, web pages and in digital documents which supplement or support communication information.

Health and wellbeing initiatives

Health and Wellbeing Passport

We have implemented our new [Health and Wellbeing Passport](#), designed to facilitate discussions between employees and their line managers about factors that may impact their work life. The passport aims to support employee wellbeing by enabling them to share relevant personal information, such as disabilities, health conditions, caring responsibilities, gender reassignment, or religious observances. This tool will help ensure that all employees receive reasonable support and adjustments to succeed in their roles. Work is ongoing to raise awareness of the Health and Wellbeing Passport, specifically to those who work in non-office-based roles, to ensure accessibility for all.

Employee Assistance Programme

Our [Your Care Employee Assistance Programme](#) (EAP) is available 24/7, 365 days a year, providing round-the-clock support. Your Care offers an engaging health management platform that provides access to a range of wellbeing products and services. With a focus on proactive care, Your Care delivers effective, evidence-based interventions designed to help employees live happier and healthier lives. We encourage all employees to take advantage of these resources to enhance their overall wellbeing. The range of wellbeing products and services offered is reviewed regularly to monitor “take up” and to ensure what is in place is making a difference. Work is also ongoing to raise awareness of the Employee Assistance Programme, specifically in areas where employees may not have regular access to internal digital communications.

Menopause Workplace Pledge

Perth and Kinross Council has signed the [Menopause Workplace Pledge](#), demonstrating our commitment to supporting employees experiencing the menopause. By signing this pledge, we are dedicated to creating a supportive and inclusive environment where employees can openly discuss menopause and receive the required support.

Menopause Cafés

To further our above commitment, we have hosted several Menopause Cafés for employees and one which was also open to members of the public. These cafés provide a safe and informal space for individuals to share their experiences and learn more about managing menopause. Most recently, a Menopause Café was held in the Civic Hall on 17 October 2025, coinciding with World Menopause Month. The event was attended by Jenni

Minto, Minister for Public Health and Women's Health, and featured on STV News, helping to raise awareness and reduce stigma around menopause.

Men's Health Awareness

We have introduced a Men's Wellbeing Group, which meets monthly to raise awareness and share experiences about key health issues affecting men and to learn about available support.

People from equality protected groups are supported to access employment opportunities.

We promote inclusivity and provide robust support to protected groups to enhance their employment opportunities.

- **Accessible resources and accreditations:** we support specific groups through various accreditations and accessible resources on our MyJobScotland site. Each page features a BSL video that offers information about living and working in Perth and Kinross, as well as guidance on applying for vacancies.
- **Inclusive recruitment practices:** we make reasonable adjustments to our recruitment processes, including the use of the Guaranteed Job Interview Scheme. Our collaboration with the Perth Autism Support (PAS), funded by the Workplace Equality Fund, has led to the development of an eLearning module and toolkit to support neurodiverse employees in the workplace. In addition, some changes to our recruitment practice makes our recruitment and selection process more inclusive for all.
- The **Skills and Employment Support Team** is a key part of the Council's anti-poverty strategy, offering personalised support to help individuals overcome barriers to employment and build brighter futures. We provide one-to-one guidance, access to training and qualifications, job search support, and connections to local employers. By working collaboratively with partners and communities, we empower people to gain the skills, confidence, and opportunities they need to move into sustainable work and improve their long-term wellbeing.
- **Continuous improvement:** we monitor our recruitment performance through data and feedback from candidates and managers. This allows us to adapt our processes to ensure that everyone feels supported and valued.

- **International recruitment initiatives:** we hold a sponsorship licence and participated in an international recruitment project funded by the Scottish Government for adult social care staff, demonstrating our commitment to diversifying our workforce. We have used the learning from this project to develop support material and induction practices for all employees who are new to Scotland.
- **Flexible approaches to working arrangements:** the Council's Flexible Working Framework was approved by Committee and provides guidance on the options available to employees regarding working hours encouraging discussions about appropriate arrangements to support their personal commitments and work/life balance.

By implementing these support measures, Perth and Kinross Council reaffirms its commitment to being a fair and inclusive employer, dedicated to providing equal employment opportunities for all.

Modern Apprenticeships, Graduate Apprenticeships and Trainee Programmes

We support [Modern Apprenticeships, Graduate Apprenticeships, and Trainee programmes](#). Our Modern Apprenticeship programme has a high achievement rate, contributing to the future talent for the Council and the local area.

Modern Apprenticeship

We offer a Modern Apprenticeship (MA) programme across a variety of job roles including areas which we have identified as being difficult to recruit to.

MAs are available to all ages, however, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) prioritise their funding, for those aged 16 to 24 years. Enhanced funding is available, to offer additional support and/or adaptations to disabled and/or care-experienced apprentices aged 20 to 29 years who have a demonstrable need for significant additional support and/or adaptations to enable them to progress their apprenticeship.

Our Youth Pathways Team promote vacancies across the local area, through promotion at secondary schools, Perth Autism Support (PAS) and Fun Young Individuals (FYI) young carers group.

Achievement rates of our modern apprenticeship programme have remained high with 100% of apprentices completing the MA programme in the last financial year and

achieving a positive outcome including 94% who secured employment, contributing to the future talent to both the Council and the local area.

Our website includes a dedicated equality leaflet, advice on applying, and an accessible video on preparing for interviews. We guarantee an interview for candidates with disabilities who meet the criteria for the advertised position, ensuring they have the support needed to succeed and for applicants to our Modern Apprenticeship programme who have experience of care.

To support MA candidates, we offer a visit to the interview setting prior to the interview. A small number of candidates have taken advantage of this opportunity, and it has been shown to reduce anxiety. Additionally, we offer one-on-one meetings with interested candidates to build their confidence prior to applying for posts. This allows for a thorough explanation of the opportunity and a discussion of expectations and responsibilities, further reducing anxiety and ensuring a clear understanding.

Graduate Apprenticeships

We offer Graduate Apprenticeships and provide an opportunity for individuals to achieve a degree while working, graduate work experience opportunities have taken place in Economic Development, Energy, Transport, Planning, Civil Engineering, Cyber Security and Climate Change.

Professional Trainee Scheme

We have a Professional Trainee Scheme for individuals who already hold an HNC qualification, or higher, and will support them to complete either a postgraduate qualification or a relevant technical qualification, creating a workforce plan for future talent.

The MA report for the 2024/2025 period, provided by Skills Development Scotland, recorded the following key statistics:

- learning difficulties/disabilities: 34.8% of our learners identified as having a learning difficulty or disability, which is above the national average of 17%
- care experience: 2.5% of our learners identified as being care experienced, just above the national average of 2.4%

- **Minority Ethnic Groups:** 4.3% of our learners identified as being from a minority ethnic group, compared to the national average of 4.5%.

A staff learning and development programme for equality and diversity will be delivered and will be extended to partner organisations.

We are committed to fostering an inclusive environment through our comprehensive staff learning and development programme designed to enhance understanding and skills in equality and diversity across all levels.

- **E-learning Modules:** we offer modules on Unconscious Bias, Trans Awareness, Sexual Harassment and Mental Wellbeing.
- **Neurodiversity Awareness:** a new e-learning module – Neurodiversity at PKC – codesigned with PAS and our employees was launched in 2025 to coincide with World Autism Acceptance Week. The module is designed to deepen understanding of neurodiversity, help us appreciate the strengths and talents of neurodiverse people and the legislation that protects against discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - **Neurodiversity Toolkit:** this resource had been developed to raise awareness and understanding as well as support our neurodiverse employees, their colleagues and managers, as well as providing advice on fostering a more inclusive recruitment and selection process.
- **Hate Crime Legislation:** a new module covering the hate crime legislation introduced earlier this year has been developed and delivered to employees. Additional sessions are planned for the coming year.
- **Effective use of the Equality and Fairness Impact Assessment Tool:** training material is used to deliver a session for employees to raise their awareness of how to get the most out of the assessment process through early use and data analysis and how to address the conclusions that are reached.
- **Leadership and Management Induction:** we have launched a comprehensive Leadership and Management Induction Toolkit, designed as a one-stop resource for managers across the organisation. The toolkit supports new and existing leaders in understanding the Council's values, culture, and expectations – particularly the importance of equality, diversity, and inclusion as embedded within our Values and

Behaviours Framework. It also offers practical tips for increasing political awareness and navigating the political landscape, along with effective management practices.

- **Unpaid Carers Awareness:** an e-learning module was co-designed with the Carer's Staff Network; this resource was developed to raise awareness amongst line managers about the daily struggles that can be faced by working carers

Our employment policies reflect that we are a fair and inclusive employer.

At Perth and Kinross Council, we are dedicated to being a fair and inclusive employer, and our employment policies are vital to this commitment.

- **Reflecting accreditation and equality:** Our employment policies not only reflect our accreditation status but also meet the requirements of these programmes. We have enhanced our employment policy template to include a statement on equality and are actively updating all existing policies to align with this new format.
- **Adherence to Fair Work Principles:** As a supporter of the Scottish Government Fair Work Framework and a Living Wage employer, we believe in providing all employees with an effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment, and respect. This principle is fundamental to Fair Work, and we strive to ensure every employee can be heard and is supported by our [Fair Work First Statement](#).
- **Inclusive consultation and engagement:** We engage with trade unions, staff networks, relevant groups, and our wider employee base through focus groups and engagement events. Regular employee surveys are conducted to gather valuable feedback, which plays a crucial role in shaping our employment policies and practices.
- **Equality and Fairness Impact Assessment:** At the initial stages of our employment policy development process, we conduct an Equality and Fairness Impact Assessment. This ensures our proposals comply with the Equality Act 2010 and helps identify any issues that need to be addressed before finalising policies. The assessment outcomes are shared on our website once any necessary adjustments have been made.

- **Worker Protection Act (2023):** Introduction of enhanced anti-harassment measures in October 2024, aligned with the Worker Protection Act (2023), including updated policy and initial awareness campaigns.
 - Use of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) e-learning as an interim training resource

By embedding these practices into our employment policies, we demonstrate our unwavering commitment to fostering a workplace that is fair, inclusive, and supportive for all.

Data collection

To support our efforts in effectively delivering our Mainstreaming Report commitments, we actively engage in understanding our employees and candidates through data collection and analysis. We communicate with employees and raise awareness of our equality and inclusion initiatives. We have procedures in place to record protected characteristic information. However, providing this information is voluntary, resulting in inconsistent data levels. Understanding our workforce and the issues that are important to them is essential for developing an inclusive workplace.

Improved data will enable us to incorporate future positive action strategies for these groups within our workforce planning activities and policies.

Actions taken

- **Promotion of the data recording mechanism:** we have published articles on our intranet site encouraging completion of equality data in personal records.
- **Recruitment data review:** we reviewed our recruitment equality data collection process. This initiative has enhanced the accuracy and quality of data integrated into employment records and enables us to refine our recruitment policies and practices. These improvements aim to foster a more inclusive recruitment process, supporting our commitment to diversity and equality.
- **Support for unpaid carers:** ongoing development work will allow carers to update their personal information on MyView within the Equal Opportunities section. By collecting and updating this data, we can better understand the needs of our

employees who are carers. This enables us to provide targeted support and resources, ensuring that carers feel valued and supported in their roles.

- **Pay gap analysis:** as mentioned, we are participating in a pilot programme run by the Scottish Personnel and Development Society aimed at expanding pay gap analysis and applying a consistent approach across all Councils.

The actions, along with ongoing promotion of the importance of comprehensive data, have resulted in improved levels of data collection as can be seen in our workforce data information below.

Our data 2024 to 2025

We have noted below information about our workforce and our recruitment process. Figures used are as of 31 March in each year (2024 and 2025).

Employees in post

Sex

Category	Number 2023/2024	Percentage 2023/2024	Number 2024/2025	Percentage 2024/2025
Female	4,331	73%	4,324	73%
Male	1,573	27%	1,579	27%

Note: We do not hold information on other gender identities therefore the options of male and female are the only categories available. We also do not currently offer the opportunity for employees to indicate if the gender that they identify with is different to that they were assigned at birth.

Age

Age group	Number 2023/2024	Percentage 2023/2024	Number 2024/2025	Percentage 2024/2025
16 to 19 years	36	0.6%	28	0.5%
20 to 29 years	661	11.2%	636	10.8%
30 to 39 years	1,231	20.9%	1,287	21.8%
40 to 49 years	1,577	26.7%	1,555	26.3%
50 to 59 years	1,799	30.5%	1,818	30.8%
60 to 64 years	480	8.1%	467	7.9%
65 years and over	120	2.0%	112	1.9%

We continue to have a normal distribution across the age groups with an average age of 45 years; however the peak is within the 50 to 59 years band with 30.8% of employees aged 60 or older; along with a reduction in the proportion of employees under 30, indicates an aging workforce.

Disability

Yes 2023/ 2024	No 2023/ 2024	Prefer not to say 2023/ 2024	Not known 2023/ 2024	Yes 2024/ 2025	No 2024/ 2025	Prefer not to say 2024/ 2025	Not known 2024/ 2025
2%	11%	7%	80%	2%	11%	7%	80%

The disability profile has remained unchanged over the 12-month period including the percentage of employees who have either not provided information or preferred not to respond despite efforts being made to encourage disclosure. Male employees have a higher incidence of declaring a disability (2.4% of male employees compared to 1.8% of female employees).

Ethnicity

BME 2023/ 2024	White 2023/ 2024	Prefer not to say 2023/ 2024	Not known 2023/ 2024	BME 2024/ 2025	White 2024/ 2025	Prefer not to say 2024/ 2025	Not known 2024/ 2025
1.5%	87.5%	5.0%	6.0%	2.0%	86.0%	5.0%	7.0%

The ethnicity profile has experienced a slight change over the past 12 months; we have observed a 0.5% increase in our Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) disclosures. However there has been a slight increase in the Not Known category; this doesn't necessarily indicate that we have more BME employees, just that fewer have disclosed as white.

Sexual orientation

Description	2023/2024	2024/2025
LGBTi+	1.6%	1.7%
Heterosexual	48.5%	51.0%
Other	0.0%	0.1%
Prefer not to say	1.7%	1.7%
Not known (no disclosure)	48.2%	45.5%

The disclosure rate for this category has increased from 2023/2024 which was 51.8% to 54.5%. The highest disclosure rates were observed among those identifying as heterosexual (51%).

Religion and belief

Description	2023/2024	2024/2025
Christian	17.4%	13.2%
Other religions	1.5%	6.2%
None	29.7%	31.8%
Prefer not to say	2.5%	2.6%
Not known (no disclosure)	48.9%	46.2%

The disclosure rate for this category has increased from 2023/2024 which was 51.1% to 53.8%. The highest disclosure rates were observed among those that do not identify with any religion.

Recruitment and selection

We gather equality information from applicants and monitor recruitment performance to ensure inclusivity. Other than applicant eligibility for consideration under the interview guarantee scheme (part of our Disability Confident commitment) the information gathered is not provided to the interview panel.

The table below shows recruitment equal opportunities monitoring for April 2024 to March 2025. It shows the number of applicants identified by their protected characteristic and the number of those applicants who were appointed. The information is based upon equalities monitoring questionnaires, whilst completion is mandatory applicants have the option to select “prefer not to say”.

To provide meaningful comparisons for each protected characteristic, the success rates for each underrepresented group have been measured against the success rate of its comparator. A success rate measures the percentage of the group that were successful in gaining employment and is a more accurate way to establish potential barriers to employment.

Protected group	Number of applicants	Number of applicants shortlisted	Number of offers made	% of applicants ↓	% of group shortlisted ←	% of shortlist ↓	% of group offered employment ←	% of shortlisted group offered employment ←	% of offered employment ↓
Female	5,101	1,452	543	64%	28%	68%	11%	37%	70%
Male	2,728	654	212	34%	24%	30%	4%	15%	27%
Prefer not to say	137	44	24	2%	32%	2%	0%	2%	3%
BME	1,010	208	47	13%	21%	10%	1%	3%	6%
White	6,727	1,888	708	84%	28%	88%	14%	49%	91%
Prefer not to say	229	54	24	3%	24%	3%	0%	2%	3%
LGBTI+	329	88	30	4%	27%	4%	1%	2%	4%
Heterosexual	7,229	1,950	703	91%	27%	91%	14%	48%	90%
Prefer not to say	408	112	46	5%	27%	5%	1%	3%	6%
Disabled*	344	82	19	4%	24%	4%	0%	1%	2%
Non-disabled/no response	7,622	2,068	760	96%	27%	96%	15%	52%	98%

Protected group	Number of applicants	Number of applicants shortlisted	Number of offers made	% of applicants ↓	% of group shortlisted ←	% of shortlist ↓	% of group offered employment ←	% of shortlisted group offered employment ←	% of offered employment ↓
Carer	1,044	262	84	13%	25%	12%	2%	6%	11%
No/Prefer not to say	6,922	1,888	695	87%	27%	88%	14%	48%	89%
Other religions	644	115	35	8%	18%	5%	1%	2%	4%
Christian	2,341	611	196	29%	26%	28%	4%	13%	25%
No religion	4,460	1,284	501	56%	29%	60%	10%	35%	64%
Prefer not to say	521	140	47	7%	27%	7%	1%	3%	6%

Notes

% of applicants indicates the percentage of the total number of applicants (7,966) represented by the protected group category.

% of group shortlisted indicates the percentage of applicants in the protected group category who were shortlisted for interview.

% of shortlist indicates the percentage of the total number of applicants shortlisted (2,150) represented by the protected group category.

% of group offered employment indicates the percentage of applicants in the protected group who were offered employment.

% of shortlisted group offered employment indicates the percentage of the number in the protected group category who were shortlisted and subsequently offered employment.

% of offered employment indicates the percentage of the total number of applicants who were offered employment (779) represented by the protected group category.

*Relates to those who indicated they were eligible for the guaranteed interview scheme.

The points below relate to key findings from the data gathered.

Sex

- We attract a lower proportion of female applicants than is represented in our workforce (64% versus 73%).
- When looking at the percentage of the total number of applicants shortlisted/appointed, females form the higher proportion of candidates and at higher levels than originally applied, meaning 68% of female applicants were shortlisted, and 70% received offers compared to being 64% of applicants.
- There is evidence of occupational segregation where females dominate, and which are among our most frequently advertised positions, such as social care and teaching roles. This, along with the significantly higher number of female applicants, may have resulted in all-female candidate pools and consequently all female short leets.
- The overall offer rate for females has dropped slightly, suggesting a need to monitor whether changes in recruitment volumes or role types are affecting outcomes.

Ethnicity

- BME applicants represented 13% of the total applicant pool, while 84% identified as white. According to the census data 2022 for Perth and Kinross, approximately 3.2% of the population identifies as BME and is not classified as white.
- Whilst the above figure is encouraging, we continue to work to generate diverse candidate pools, and we will examine the need for more targeted recruitment activity to achieve this.
- Among BME applicants, 10% were shortlisted compared to 88% of white candidates. In addition, 6% of BME applicants shortlisted received job offers compared to 91% of white applicants. This drop from shortlisting to appointment could suggest potential barriers in the selection process and merits further investigation to identify if further work is required to ensure equitable opportunities for BME candidates.

Disability

- Currently, 4% of our applicants identify as disabled, while 9% either report no disability or choose not to disclose their status. The shortlisted group reflected these figures.
- Although the numbers shortlisted within each group were relatively similar - among disabled applicants, 24% were shortlisted and 27% of non-disabled applicants were shortlisted. However, only 2% of disabled applicants received job offers in comparison to 98% of non-disabled/undisclosed applicants receiving offers.
- To promote inclusivity, we participate in the Guaranteed Job Interview Scheme (GJIS), which ensures that disabled candidates who meet the essential criteria for a position are guaranteed an interview. While this initiative aims to enhance accessibility, it is worth noting that, despite a higher shortlisting rate of 24% for disabled applicants, 2% receive job offers and will require further review of our selection processes including interviews to identify any barriers in role composition and processes.

Sexuality and religion

- Our figures in these categories demonstrate a consistency across applicant, shortlisting and appointment figures indicating a fair and equitable process.
- However, the sexuality data includes a high level of “prefer not to say” responses suggesting that more work is needed to ensure that we are seen as an inclusive and supportive employer for those in the LGBTI+ community.

Overall

Our data shows a need to attract a more diverse candidate field and encourage disclosure of equality information. While the increase in BME applicants is a positive development, the significant disparities in shortlisting and offer rates highlight the need to regularly review our recruitment processes, to ensure that we attract a more diverse workforce – **there continues to be a need to attract a more diverse range of applicants**. Ensuring that everyone feels able to apply for any vacancy to ensure it our recruitment process is inclusive.

It is important that applicants and existing employees feel comfortable sharing information regarding their protected characteristics. Increased disclosures will provide us with a

greater understanding of the work needed to ensure everyone feels welcome at Perth and Kinross Council. **We need to take further action to encourage disclosure of equality information.**

It is important to acknowledge that difference or outcomes are often not related to a single issue therefore there is a need to consider and act relating to:

- **intersectionality:** equality is not one-dimensional – we recognise that individuals may experience overlapping forms of disadvantage based on multiple protected characteristics, such as gender, ethnicity, disability, and caring responsibilities; our future approach will include intersectional analysis to identify compounded barriers and tailor support accordingly; for example, recruitment strategies will consider how ethnicity and disability intersect to influence outcomes, ensuring that interventions are holistic rather than isolated
- **process impact:** the impact of one process can influence the outcome of another, for example our recruitment process and the profiles of those offered employment have a direct impact on our pay gaps

Pay gaps

Our latest pay gap insights relate to data gathered in April 2025. It considers information relating to gender, disability, and ethnicity. However, it should be noted that while we have information on gender for all employees, for both Disability and Ethnicity, the analysis detailed is based on the availability of data volunteered by employees. Calculations are based on average hourly rates of pay and do not include any additional payments such as overtime, temporary higher duty payments/ acting up allowances or part time additional hours.

Sex

Female hourly rate 2023/2024	Male hourly rate 2023/2024	Pay gap % 2023/2024	Female hourly rate 2024/2025*	Male hourly rate 2024/2025*	Pay gap % 2024/2025*
£21.34	£21.80	2.1%	£24.14	£23.70	-1.9%

*Figure reported to Local Government Benchmark Framework (LGBF)

The overall average hourly rate (and therefore the pay gap) is most heavily influenced by the distribution of males and females across grades.

We also report the percentage of females in our top 5% of earners to the LGBF. For 2025, this figure was 54.74% - broadly similar to the figure of 55.6% reported in 2024.

Ethnicity

BME hourly rate 2023/2024	White hourly rate* 2023/2024	Pay gap % 2023/2024	BME hourly rate 2024/2025	White hourly rate* 2024/2025	Pay gap % 2024/2025
£19.15	£21.53	11.1%	£22.99	£24.96	7.55%

*This figure makes a comparison between white and non-white employees; the data attributed to the white category includes employees who are white but also includes employees who prefer not to answer or have not disclosed.

The pay gap for 2024/2025 excluding employees who have not responded would increase to 8.18% in favour of employees who are in the white category compared to 12.2% the previous year.

Disability

Identified as disabled hourly rate 2023/2024	Identified as not disabled hourly2023/2 024 rate *	Pay gap % 2023/2024	Identified as disabled hourly rate 2024/2025	Identified as not disabled hourly rate * 2024/2025	Pay gap % 2024/2025
£19.74	£21.72	9.1%	£22.24	£24.72	10.04%

*This figure includes employees who have stated they are not disabled but also those who have chosen not to disclose this information. The pay gap for 2024/2025 excluding employees who have not responded would increase to 12.33% in favour of those who self-identify as non-disabled compared to 9.1% the previous year.

Meaningful and statistically reliable information can only be produced when we have more accurate information through employee self-disclosure of disability within the meaning of the Equality Act (2010). Efforts to support this continue to be made via ongoing communication with employees to encourage completion of this information.

Our plans

Recruitment

To continue to improve as an organisation, we must have the people with the right skills, talents and behaviours delivering and supporting the services our communities rely on.

We have implemented several tools and commitments to support our corporate priorities such as a pilot summer work experience programme for senior school pupils that will contribute to our pipeline of talent. This supports our priority of enabling our young people to realise their full potential and tackling poverty.

Accreditations such as Disability Confident, Apprenticeship and Trainee programmes, enhanced equality information on MyJobScotland, the use of Values-Based Recruitment, and continually improving our data collection practices also support our vision and priorities for Perth and Kinross.

Our aim is to attract talent while creating opportunities for underrepresented groups. Future initiatives will include:

- **Skills Academy for hard-to-fill occupational roles:** working in partnership with the Council's Skills and Employment Support Team, the People and Culture Team are in ongoing discussion to explore the feasibility of delivering skills academies to a group of interested and suitable people in hard to fill, entry level occupational areas; this can include short-term work experience to gain a greater insight into the role and enhance their learning and skills
- **expanding early career pathways:** building on our existing apprenticeship and trainee programmes, we are refreshing our strategic approach to Modern Apprenticeships and exploring Foundation Apprenticeships for senior school pupils; these initiatives will complement our summer work experience pilot and strengthen our talent pipeline by providing structured pathways into employment for young people
- **data monitoring:** regularly monitor recruitment data and success rates will help identify trends and areas for improvement; this data-driven approach will enable us to make informed decisions and adjustments to our diversity and inclusion strategies.

- **support for Armed Forces Veterans:** we are progressing our work with the Careers Transition Partnership to allow us to promote our vacancies to armed forces veterans, ensuring they are aware of the opportunities available to them

Health and wellbeing

It is important that we continue to collaborate with employees to create and sustain a healthy working environment and a positive wellbeing culture to ensure that all employees can live life well. To support this, we have implemented a range of support mechanisms along with a Health and Wellbeing Plan. This plan is continually refined through the analysis of wellbeing data and feedback from various sources, including a focus group of employees from across Council departments.

Our approach to employee support focuses on ill health prevention, early intervention, and building resilience, particularly during times of change. Given our geographically and culturally diverse workforce, it is essential to equip managers with the tools and support needed to effectively manage their teams. Our Health and Wellbeing Framework is principles-led, evidence-based, and outcome-driven. It is supported by our Occupational Health Service, which offers advice and specific services such as physiotherapy, counselling support, and health surveillance to help employees remain at work and in continued employment despite health changes.

Future activities will include:

- **review of our health and wellbeing offer:** we will develop the range of Health and Wellbeing support already in place, in line with the needs of our workforce, improving and adding to our offer as required; we will continue to develop and improve the communication and accessibility of our offer to ensure benefits are available, equally, to all employees; we will work with front line and remote workers to develop and implement support packages, unique to their needs, to promote wellbeing and help employees remain at work and return to work
- **managing wellbeing:** we will review guidance to ensure managers and employees are supported throughout the process of managing sickness absence and managing employees back to work, in a way which meets their needs and adapted to suit the environment they work in; we recognise that this cannot be achieved through a one-size-fits-all approach so to support, coaching sessions will be arranged for those new to the management of sickness absence, or those who haven't undertaken this in a

while; these sessions will be aimed at growing the confidence of managers to support sickness absence management in their area

- **Disability Confident Leader Status:** we will build on our Disability Confident Leader Status; as part of a geographical group of employers, we aim to adopt best practices from others and support other employers in Perth and Kinross in their accreditation efforts
- **health and wellbeing champions:** we are looking to introduce wellbeing champions throughout the organisation, responsible for promoting a culture of wellbeing, marketing wellbeing initiatives and leading by example
- **mental health support:** recognising that mental health issues remain our highest cause of absence; we will continue to review and enhance the suite of information and tools; we will also promote the mental health support service Your Care, the Health and Wellbeing Passport and explore additional external support options; this will complement our ongoing efforts to increase managers' knowledge and skills in supporting colleagues with mental health issues and fostering a healthy workplace; Mental Health First Aid Training will continue to be offered to managers and employees with the emphasis on utilising this training back in the workplace, to break down stigma and encourage open conversations; Mental Health First Aiders may form part of the Wellbeing Champion role
- **Menopause Cafés:** building on the success of our initial Menopause Cafés, we are committed to supporting this initiative on a regular basis; the cafés will continue to provide a safe and informal space for employees and members of the public to share experiences, seek advice, and learn more about managing menopause; by fostering open dialogue and understanding, we aim to create a more inclusive and supportive work environment; this initiative not only benefits our employees but also extends our support to the wider community, reinforcing our commitment to health and wellbeing
- **men's health awareness:** we have introduced a Men's Get Together to raise awareness and share experiences about key health issues affecting men and to learn about available support

Employment policy and practice

We are dedicated to developing employment policies and practices that not only support and enable the delivery of our corporate priorities for the people of Perth and Kinross but

also ensure that our colleagues feel supported at work and can maintain a healthy work-life balance.

When developing policies and practices, it is key to engage with those who will use them. We actively collaborate with recognised trade unions, colleagues, and specific groups to understand their priorities, challenges, and experiences. This engagement helps us to codesign policies that reflect the lived experiences of our employees and citizens of Perth and Kinross. For example, we have involved staff groups in the consultation process for developing the People and Culture Strategy and have held discussions with our Carers Group regarding the implementation of new Carer Leave legislation.

Future activities will include:

- **encouraging disclosure:** we aim to create a safe and supportive environment where employees feel comfortable disclosing their protected characteristics; we can achieve this through clear communication, confidentiality assurances, and demonstrating the positive impact these disclosures have on our policies and practices
- **MyView App Launch:** the launch of the MyView App will allow employees to easily update their personal information without needing access to a computer, ensuring accessibility for all
- **reviewing equality information categories:** we will update the equality data fields in Resourcelink to align with census categories and improve the quality of information we hold – particularly around disability, carers, and veterans; this will support more inclusive policy development, better workforce insights, and improved support for underrepresented groups (this is currently undergoing testing)
- **ongoing collaboration:** we will continue to work with trade unions and staff network groups to identify key issues that our employment practices need to address and develop policies to meet these needs
- **policy review:** we will review our employment policies and practices in line with best practice approaches
- **Supreme Court ruling:** following the UK Supreme Court’s 2025 ruling in For Women Scotland Ltd versus The Scottish Ministers, we will review our equality and inclusion policies to ensure they reflect the clarified legal definitions of “sex” under the Equality Act 2010. While the ruling confirms that “sex” refers to biological sex, we remain

committed to upholding protections for all employees, including those with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

- **Preparing for legislative changes:** we are committed to staying ahead of legal developments that impact equality and inclusion; we are monitoring developments on two significant legislative proposals:
 - the **UK Employment Rights Bill**, which is expected to modernise workplace protections by introducing measures such as enhanced flexible working rights, stronger protections for vulnerable workers, and potential day-one rights against unfair dismissal; these provisions are still under parliamentary debate and may change before the Bill becomes law
 - the **Scottish Human Rights Bill**, which is currently under consultation and aims to embed a range of economic, social, and cultural rights into Scots law; its scope and implementation timeline are still being shaped through stakeholder feedback

Proposed initiatives include:

- **training and awareness:** continue to promote anti-harassment policies and deliver targeted training; a new harassment-specific e-learning module is being developed to replace VAWG content and provide broader coverage
- **accessible reporting:** establish and promote a clear, easy-to-use reporting mechanism for harassment concerns; this was discussed at EJCC in 2024 and remains a priority for implementation
- **Union collaboration:** work closely with trade unions as a potential first point of contact for employees experiencing harassment; this partnership will support joint working with early intervention and improved data collection on reports and actions taken

Proposed initiatives for inclusive communications

To further improve inclusive communications within Perth and Kinross Council, we propose the following initiatives:

- **eLearning:** we are in the process of developing an eLearning module to support the creation of inclusive communication at source so that all our people have the skills

and knowledge available to them on how to do this; this has continued to develop over the past year and is intended to be launched in the year ahead

- ongoing collaboration and feedback: we are continuing to learn from our people and other organisations about best practice in inclusive communication and will review and update our practices and learning material to make further improvements
- technology: we are investigating technological solutions, including AI and automation where appropriate, which will make the creation of inclusive communication easier, including the use of text-to-speech tools to create simple voiceovers for text-based short videos and to make the creation of accurate subtitles easier

Impact and engagement

Embedding Employee Voice Staff networks and engagement forums are central to shaping our equality agenda. Feedback from groups such as the Carers Network and LGBTI+ Network has directly influenced initiatives like the Health and Wellbeing Passport and flexible working guidance. Moving forward, we will:

- introduce quarterly feedback sessions with staff networks
- publish “You said, we did” updates to demonstrate how employee input drives change
- expand collaboration with external partners to benchmark and share best practice; this approach ensures that our policies reflect lived experiences and remain relevant to the needs of our workforce

Turning data into action

Our workforce and recruitment data highlight progress and areas for improvement. For example:

- **BME representation:** while BME applicants make up 13% of the applicant pool, their appointment rate remains lower than white applicants; we will review selection processes and introduce targeted outreach campaigns
- **disability inclusion:** despite strong shortlisting rates for disabled applicants, appointment rates are low; we will audit interview practices and provide additional training to hiring managers

- **disclosure rates:** increased disclosure of sexual orientation and religion is encouraging, but high “prefer not to say” responses suggest more work is needed to build trust; by linking these insights to specific actions – such as inclusive recruitment training and improved communication – we aim to close gaps and create measurable impact

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