

Item: 5

Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board: 7 October 2021.

Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Progress Report.

Report by Clerk to the Board.

1. Purpose of Report

To present the Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board's Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes progress report 2021.

2. Recommendations

The Board is invited to scrutinise:

2.1.

That the Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes progress report 2021 for Orkney Islands Council and Education Authority and Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, in so far as it relates to the remit of the Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board.

3. Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Progress Report

3.1.

The Board and Orkney Islands Council have common responsibilities with regard to the General Equality Duty and Specific Equality Duties. In addition, the Board's Members are appointed by the Council and legal and administrative support is provided to the Board by officers of the Council.

3.2.

The Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes progress report, attached as Appendix 1, sets out to describe Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board's ongoing commitment to equality of access and opportunity, and to valuing diversity as a key aspect of performance and service delivery to fulfil the mainstreaming duty.

3.3.

In light of the common responsibilities and shared resources referred to above, the Board's and Council's Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes progress report 2021 is addressed in a combined report.

3.4.

In 2018, the Council and Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board published Equality Outcomes and a related action plan. The action plan sets out how equality and diversity are essential to how the Council operates as an employer and both the Council and the Board operate as service providers. It sets out how the Council and the Board will deliver their Equality Outcomes 2018 to 2022 which are to ensure that:

- People in Orkney have the opportunity to fulfil their potential throughout life.
- Orkney Islands Council is an inclusive employer.
- People in Orkney have an equal opportunity to access and shape public services.

3.5.

The attached report contains information on activity in relation to the Equality Outcomes demonstrating progress against the action plan.

3.6.

As work to deliver the Equality Outcomes has progressed, some of the work has now been integrated into every-day activities and where that is the case, it is noted as mainstreamed on the equality outcomes progress update section of the attached report.

4. Financial Implications

The preparation of the Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes progress report 2021 has been undertaken from existing resources.

5. Legal Aspects

5.1.

The Equality Act 2010 imposes a general equality duty on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

5.2.

The general equality duty is supported by specific duties which are imposed by the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (the Regulations). The key duties are:

- Report progress on mainstreaming the equality duty.
- Publish equality outcomes and report on progress.
- Assess and review policies and practices.
- Gather and use employee information.
- Publish gender pay gap information.
- Publish statements on equal pay.

- Consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement.
- Publish in a manner that is accessible.

6. Contact Officers

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7. Appendix

Appendix 1: Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes progress report 2021.

Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes progress report

2021

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Introduction

Purpose

This report details progress that Orkney Island Council, education services and Licensing Board takes on mainstreaming equalities and the delivery of the equality outcomes committed to in 2018.

The report complies with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 to:

- Report progress on mainstreaming the equality duty.
- Publish equality outcomes and report on progress.
- Gather and use employee information.
- Publish gender pay gap information.
- Publish statements on equal pay.

This report is informed by the Annual Equality Report published earlier this year and which provides detailed information about the data and trends of our workforce diversity. In line with the duty, employee information has been gathered and the report highlights:

- the diverse characteristics of employees and,
- information on the recruitment, development and retention of people as employees.

The organisation

On 31 December 2020, Orkney Islands Council employed 2,692 people. Most of our employees are general staff (86.6 per cent) with the remaining 13.4 per cent teaching staff. The workforce headcount has remained relatively stable with a slight decrease of 1.82% in comparison with the same count for the 2019 headcount.

Our commitment

We are committed to promoting equality, which means recognising that everyone has different needs and taking action to ensure that we are all able to participate in society. Our aim is that Orkney is a community where we all have the opportunity to fulfil our potential.

Orkney Islands Council is the public body responsible for all local government services in Orkney. We have an impact on many aspects of everyday life and our activities touch the lives of everyone living in our island community, from schools to the care of older people. Our councillors meet regularly to make decisions about local services and about various aspects of life. These decisions are then

implemented by our workforce. With equality at the heart of everything we do, we never forget that we are here to serve the public and have a big role to play in improving the quality of life enjoyed by people throughout the islands.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted pre-existing inequalities especially for younger people, black minority ethnic people, people with disabilities and women. Whilst these challenges are significant, they can act as increased leverage to reflect on what our priorities should be and how we make positive progress in these areas.

Mainstreaming equality

Mainstreaming is an approach to delivering equality within an organisation and it contributes to continuous improvement, better performance and better value. It is primarily a long-term strategy aimed at ensuring that equality principles and practices are integrated into every aspect of an organisation from the outset. The focus should not only be internal (mainstreaming equality principles into procedures and systems) but also external (mainstreaming equality principles into policies and customer service delivery). Mainstreaming provides a framework that facilitates and complements equalities legislation and other equality measures.

This simply means integrating equality into our day-to-day work. We take equality and fairness into account in the way we go about our business when acting as an employer, when planning and providing services and when making decisions.

Mainstreaming ensures that equality becomes part of our culture. This benefits both employees and service users who know that they will be treated fairly, and contributes to a continuous improvement and better performance.

Policies and practices

Policies and practices internal to our organisation should not be discriminatory. Equality and diversity issues are fully considered when developing new policies and processes and when they are reviewed periodically.

HR and Performance delivers a programme of workshops and training events for staff to ensure that our human resources policies and procedures are understood. This includes training on Recruitment and Selection, Grievance, Managing Sickness Absence, Dignity at Work and Learning and Development policies. Mental Health and Wellbeing remain a priority for the Council and HR continue to promote a variety of support services and resources that are available for employees and managers.

Communication

All Council documents can be translated or made available in different formats or languages upon request. Signage to this effect is displayed within our Customer Services areas, on our website and on individual documents.

Many members of Orkney's local ethnic communities can speak English. However, to help those who cannot, we are contracted to a telephone interpretation service with

Language Line, a company which can offer a 24 7 interpretation service in 150 languages and which only uses fully qualified interpreters.

We continue to provide audio casting of meetings in the Council Chamber so people can choose to either listen live or listen again to the meetings. Recordings of the meetings are made available via the website and timings are listed in order for people to easily find a specific item along with the relevant committee reports.

ReciteMe is a tool used for translation and accessibility on the Council website. ReciteMe gives obvious translation and accessibility tools that are proven to work across all devices so we can provide improved accessibility for visitors to easily access content more readily.

Improving communication and access



A digital guide is now available for one of Orkney's most popular coastal walks.

Accessible on smartphones and other mobile devices, the new app offers a wealth of information for people enjoying a walk around Mull Head nature reserve in Deerness.

The app has been developed as part of a project by Orkney Islands Council to improve access and interpretation at Mull Head, which also includes the installation of new boardwalks and interpretation panels.

This project enhances the experience of visitors giving those enjoying a walk even greater understanding of what makes the reserve so special.

The app provides images and commentary in both audio and text form, on points of interest at 20 locations.

Assessing impact

The council has systematic arrangements in place to ensure equalities issues are part of decision-making processes. The Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we consider the impact that various policies, strategies, activities and approaches have on different groups, both within our organisation and for the wider public. Equality impact assessments aim to help ensure our services are fair. They provide an opportunity to stop or revise a policy or function which is potentially unfair or unlawful. They identify mitigating actions wherever possible to minimise any adverse impacts. They also identify opportunities for positive impacts such as advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. We use internal and external data to provide evidence for the assessments and consult directly with equalities groups as required. Impact assessments are organic documents and are developed and added to as a project or plan progresses.

There will be areas of service review and redesign following the COVID-19 pandemic and we will ensure that these processes are informed by our Equality Impact Assessment for both services users and employees.

The impact assessment takes an integrated approach to include assessment of impact relating to socio-economic disadvantage as required by the Fairer Scotland Duty along with care experienced and isles-proofing to take into consideration difference of experiences for those in the isles communities. This approach is now being reviewed following the updated guidance provided by the Scottish Government. This review will also consider best practices approaches to incorporate the Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment and develop through an online integrated impact assessment working group with other Scottish Councils that form the Scottish Councils Equality Network and the Improvement Service.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, specific Equality Impact Assessment guidance was issued to support the development of recovery plans. This guidance outlined the key steps to take when developing proposals, gave specific examples of equality considerations and provided links to emerging evidence of inequalities and impacts identified as a consequence of COVID-19 and associated and developing requirements of lockdown.

Consultation and engagement

The council has a well-developed range of consultation approaches based on partnership working and the National Standards for Community Engagement. There is a Consultation and Engagement Group that meets quarterly that keeps the Community Consultation and Engagement Guide refreshes and facilitates consultation and engagement workshops to staff. These workshops include sessions

on equality and inclusion best practice to further improve the way in which the council engages with the public.

Orkney Opinions is the Council's public consultation group which is made up of local residents who are regularly invited to give their views on specific Council plans or services. It is one of several formats that the Council uses to conduct consultation exercises.

Regular calls for survey topics are circulated throughout the Council and a number of surveys are issued each year. Responses are gathered and collated for analysis to feed back to inform the development of the service or policy being consulted on.

Demographic data such as age group, gender and caring responsibilities are gathered so that the Council can ensure there is a balance of members that reflects the Orkney population. Where it is relevant to a particular consultation, surveys may ask for particular demographic information. This data is also used if a particular subgroup within the membership of Orkney Opinions needs to be consulted, such as isles residents.

Community involvement



The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on many of our community members and the requirement for robust community resilience was identified at an early stage and in particular for the islands communities for whom issues were brought into a sharper focus by remoteness and limited access to services.

The emergency response to these communities was delivered through the community leaders building on the existing work of the Democratic Services team and volunteers who serve on Community Councils. This on-going work provided effective communication channels and helped the Council to gather feedback from communities on the specific challenges they were facing, which included food and fuel shortages on isles communities. This feedback helped to identify priority areas for action such as support to address the affordability of food for isles residents whilst travel restrictions were in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Community Councils played an important role in sharing information regarding the pandemic. Community Resilience Groups were quickly formed for members of each of the twenty Orkney Community Councils to meet via Teams to share information about what was going on in their communities.

Raising awareness

It is important in mainstreaming equality that the Council builds and maintains awareness of our duties as an employer and service provider.

As part of induction to Orkney Islands Council, all new employees are required to complete an e-learning course which aims to raise awareness about the importance of equality and diversity. The course covers equality legislation and is designed to encourage staff to think about and challenge their own perceptions. Equality and diversity awareness is also one of the core mandatory courses and is completed periodically by all staff. Equality and diversity awareness forms part of the induction programme for elected members, as well as ongoing briefings relating to the general equality duty updates on changes to equality legislation other equality related topics.

Increasing awareness of the value of diversity can help further mainstream equality within the Council. In 2019, the Council supported National Inclusion Week and encouraged employees to get involved by signing up for a lunchtime session on topics relating to inclusion and to take a look at the resources being shared throughout the week.

Supporting National Inclusion Week 2019



The Council supported National Inclusion Week 2019 by hosting a number of introductory sessions to tackle some myths and share some tips on particular topics relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. In addition to these sessions, the Council promoted a range of free webinars provided by Inclusive Employers.

A communications plan was shared across the organisation, along with posters to help promote the week.

The events included:

- Trans Awareness webinar hosted by Inclusive Employers.
- Dignity at Work awareness.
- Dementia awareness for Elected Members in partnership with Age Scotland Orkney.
- Inclusive meetings webinar hosted by Inclusive Employers.
- Yoga for menopause.

Work continues to support the integration of equality, diversity and inclusion into our day to day work and supporting awareness events can help give us a platform to increase awareness across the organisation.

Providing inclusive services

Recognising the need for every tenant and customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect and receives fair access to housing and housing services the Housing team have refreshed the Housing Equality and Diversity policy (including Papdale Halls of Residence) and has developed a comprehensive action plan to support its implementation.

The Housing Equality and Diversity action plan includes:

- Development of a data collection procedure and system.
- Development of an appropriate language guide.
- Incorporate specific equality performance indicators within housing policies to support equality mainstreaming.
- Delivery of a programme of staff training on equality themes for all housing staff.

The Housing Equality and Diversity policy and action plan aims to support the commitment to creating an environment where people can live and work free from any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation and to ensuring that these principles also apply to the school care accommodation service.

Connectivity during a pandemic



A key issue for many of our communities in some of the isles and rural parts of mainland Orkney is poor connectivity and lack of digital access. This has had further impact on community members accessing services and remote learning throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Amongst other signposting routes, the Education service issued a survey for parents which indicated that one third of all families in Orkney with school-age children were experiencing difficulties with digital access. With dedicated Scottish Government funding, the Education service has purchased and allocated 165 Chromebooks and 230 iPads and will continue to provide more as resources become available.

The increase in online learning has provided opportunities to many members of our more rural communities and who found it more difficult to access these. There has been an increase in the collaborative efforts to ensure these most disadvantaged are supported.

Connectivity remains a priority in Orkney and the Community Learning and Development Plan highlights that digital inequality, due to the inadequacy of Orkney's broadband and mobile infrastructure is putting individuals, communities and businesses at a disadvantage.

A partnership approach to addressing the ongoing issue of connectivity will continue to progress and will form a key priority in the recovery plans.

Sport and Leisure

Inclusion and equality are an important focus both locally and nationally and evidence shows that people with a disability are amongst the most underrepresented groups of participants in sports and physical activity.

Orkney Islands Council Sport and Leisure team worked in partnership with Scottish Disability Sport to run a Disability Sport Week from 31 July – 6 August 2021 with activities for children with physical, sensory and learning disabilities.

In addition to the activities offered during the week, free training opportunities were also provided and seven people completed the UK Disability Inclusion Training including volunteers, teachers and Council staff.

To ensure that activities for children and young people with additional support needs continue to be offered and developed, an Inclusive Orkney group has been established to support the provision of more opportunities for people with disabilities, from sport and physical activity, to music, arts and crafts.

Transport

We are committed to continue the ongoing programme to improve accessibility to all transport services, taking advantage of contract, vehicle, infrastructure and vessel replacement and renewal opportunities where possible.

A new public bus contract has recently started and will improve the accessibility of public transport around Orkney. There will be 34 new low-floored accessible vehicles being provided to operate the Mainland public bus services.

Work is ongoing developing a series of business cases regarding the inter-island air and ferry networks. Specific public engagement presentations have been made available for each of the Outer North Isles to gather input from isles residents and this feedback will be considered to help inform the outline business case to be taken to the next stage of development.

Additional funding from the Scottish Government has recently been secured to support the operation of the Inter-isles ferry services. Fares have seen a reduction by 38% and concessionary rates of a further 25% are available for older people and those with a disability, and a further 50% discount for younger people. The new fare structure will make travel more affordable for all and engagement on further proposed changes continue with community members via the Air and Ferry Forum.

A Shared British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan for Orkney 2018-2024 Progress

In 2018, Orkney Islands Council produced a Shared BSL Local Plan which set out actions to improve the way BSL users find out about our services and ensure BSL users have equal access to them.

The overarching BSL Local Plan builds on the already established partnership working relationships operating in Orkney and outlines the actions and activities to be undertaken to provide improvements for BSL users. It also seeks to promote greater inclusion for those who face communication barriers.

A BSL Progress Group was set up and meets regularly to review actions and feedback and this has been predominantly focussed on the education side of the plan over the initial few years.

Some of the key actions delivered include:

- BSL pendrive training resource provided to all schools.
- BSL and hearing support resources regularly provided to Nurseries.
- Delivery of short online BSL courses at Stromness Academy and Kirkwall Grammar School.
- Let's Sign established as the resource to be used in Orkney Schools and resources regularly updated and shared.
- Support Deaf Awareness Week to continue to raise awareness and set challenges on finger spelling.
- Class signing projects with signed stories and signed songs.
- S3 Wider Achievement BSL class delivered at Kirkwall Grammar School.

Most recently, 15 people signed up to six BSL sessions with a Deaf BSL Instructor from Glasgow College and some of the attendees are now exploring a BSL Level 1 Course and assessment for certification.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, reminder information was sent to Customer Services teams and the Community Support Hub on contactScotlandBSL services and Language Line which provides video interpreting services on demand.

The BSL Progress Group will now look to bring in other areas of the organisation and wider partnership to support the continued progress of other actions within the plan.

Equal Pay Statement, Pay Gaps and Occupational Segregation

Orkney Islands Council is required to publish information on the percentage difference among our employees between men's average hourly pay (excluding overtime) and our women's average hourly pay (excluding overtime). This is known as the gender pay gap.

The gender pay gap figures are calculated using the average (mean) as well as the median average which gives a greater indicator of any gender inequalities in pay.

The figures have been calculated based on each employee's main post to remove duplication and relief workers have not been included.

There are some service areas that are traditionally more male-dominated, such as Marine Services and now the Towage staff, which are not part of most councils' remit in Scotland. These services are competing for some staff with private industry in the islands such as the oil and renewable energy sectors and therefore the level of pay reflects this.

We are committed to ensuring the process to determine pay and conditions of employment for all our employees should be free from bias and should not discriminate.

Reducing pay gaps at Orkney Islands Council is a long-term goal and we acknowledge that it is affected by societal and educational factors and we employ a complex and diverse workforce across a range of services and professional areas.

A specific integrated action plan relating to tackling the identified pay gaps and occupational segregation for gender, ethnicity and disability within Orkney Islands Council was published earlier this year.

The following data are the most recent snapshot figures as at 31 March 2021 relating to pay gaps and occupational segregation. These figures are used to inform ongoing actions within the plan.

Gender pay gap data

For general staff, the gender pay gap has increased to 19.2% compared with a pay gap of 16.7% in 2019. The mean calculation captures differences across the distribution; where those on high earnings are predominately men, and those on low earning are predominately women, the mean gives a picture of gender differences in income.

It is useful to note that the median pay gap has a 0.2% increase from 2019. The median calculation is less affected by extreme values such as relatively small numbers of high earners. It gives a better indication of typical pay and inequalities experienced by the majority of women.

There has been a 0.8% increase in the percentage of women in the general staff group over the previous two years, and there have been some changes in the demographics of the senior team during this period. This will continue to be monitored to identify any developing trends.

The gender pay gap for teaching staff has decreased to 7.4% in comparison to the 2019 figure of 10.1%.

General staff.		
	Mean hourly rate.	Gender pay gap.
Female.	£12.30.	19.2%
Male.	£15.22.	

General staff.		
	Median hourly rate.	Gender pay gap.
Female.	£10.52.	9.7%
Male.	£11.65.	

Teaching staff.		
	Mean hourly rate.	Gender pay gap.
Female.	£23.30.	7.4%
Male.	£25.16.	

No pay gap has been identified based on the median calculation by gender for teaching staff.

Pay gap for black and minority ethnic staff groups

Our pay gap information for black and minority ethnic staff groups is based on a snapshot date of 31 March 2021.

Identified pay gaps are based on a calculation for black and minority ethnic staff groups in comparison against employees not from a minority group. These calculations do not include the data for employees not stating their ethnic origin.

No pay gap has been identified based on ethnic origin, however we acknowledge that we report low figures for ethnic diversity within our workforce. Work continues to address the gaps in employee diversity data.

General staff.		
	Mean hourly rate.	Pay gap.
Black and minority ethnic.	£15.28.	-16.60%
Not minority group.	£13.10.	
Not stated.	£13.14	

Teaching staff.		
	Mean hourly rate.	Pay gap.
Black and minority ethnic.	£24.67.	-3.38%
Not minority group.	£23.86	
Not stated.	£23.28.	

No pay gaps have been identified based on the median calculation by black and minority ethnic group for general staff or teaching staff groups.

Disability pay gap

Identified pay gaps are based on a calculation for disabled staff groups in comparison against employees with no disability. These calculations do not include the data for employees not providing information in this area.

Work continues to address the gaps in employee diversity data.

General staff.		
	Mean hourly rate.	Pay gap.
Disability.	£12.06.	8.62%
No disability.	£13.19.	
Not stated.	£13.28.	

Teaching staff.		
	Mean hourly rate.	Pay gap.
Disability.	£22.77.	4.95%
No disability.	£23.95.	
Not stated.	£23.19.	

There have been no pay gaps identified based on the mean calculation by disability for teaching staff or based on the median calculation by disability for general and teaching staff groups.

The occupational segregation data reported later in this report shows that the distribution of employees disclosing a disability is predominantly in the lower grades.

Gender balance among managers

The gender equalities statutory performance indicator (SPI) on the top 5% of Council earners who are women is reported annually in the Annual Performance Report. It is also published on the Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Framework website.

The gender equalities SPI is included in this report to enable the data to be considered alongside information on staff profiles and the gender pay gap.

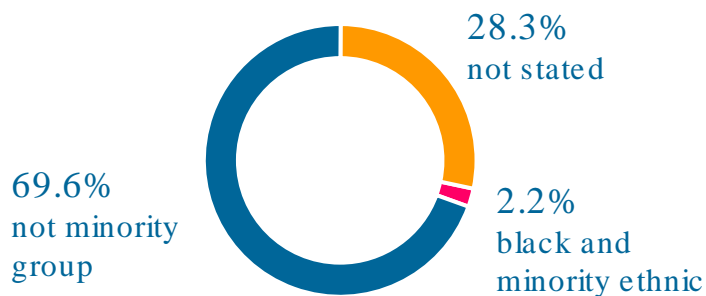
The purpose of this performance indicator is to ensure that there are no barriers for women in our employment and to identify any trends in comparison from previous reports.

Top 5% of earners

Performance indicator.	Target.	Percentage.
The percentage of the highest paid 5% of earners among council staff who are women.	50/50 to 60/40 = Green . 61/39 to 70/30 = Amber . 71/29 to 100/0 = Red .	Men = 71.4% Women = 28.6%

These figures show very little difference from 2019 which reported a figure of 28.9% of women in senior posts.

% of Employees of Black and Minority Ethnic origin in Top 5% Earners



% of Employees with a Disability in Top 5% Earners



Equal pay statement

Orkney Islands Council supports the principle of equal opportunities in employment to ensure that employees are not discriminated against irrespective of any of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010).

We are committed to ensuring that our employees, regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, should receive equal pay for the same or broadly similar work, for work rated as equivalent and for work of equal value.

When new posts are created, or existing posts re-graded, it is the post that is graded, not the post holders. We are committed to the fundamental principle that procedures to determine the pay and conditions of employment of all our employees should not discriminate unlawfully and are free from bias. To achieve equitable pay, we will operate a pay system which is transparent and based on objective criteria. This will be achieved through application of the nationally agreed job evaluation scheme and relevant legislation. For Teachers we will comply with nationally agreed pay and conditions of service.

We continue to work with Trade Unions to maintain fair and non-discriminatory pay and progression systems which are understood and accepted by employees and by the managers who operate the system. All aspects of the pay package will be reviewed and monitored regularly to ensure it delivers equal pay. Any pay inequalities identified which cannot be justified will be eliminated.

Our objectives are to:

- Eliminate any unfair, unjust or unlawful practices that impact on pay.
- Take appropriate remedial action where required.

We are committed to equal pay in practice and will continue to:

- Review existing pay and conditions systems in operation and plan and implement appropriate actions in partnership with the recognised trade unions.
- Implement transparent pay and conditions packages ensuring relevant information is available to employees.
- Provide training and guidance for managers and supervisory staff involved in decisions about pay and benefits.
- Undertake regular monitoring to examine existing and future pay practices for all its employees.
- Respond to grievances on equal pay timeously, openly and fairly in accordance with our grievance procedure.

We continue to develop systems which will allow us to expand on the information published on occupational segregation and our policy on equal pay to improve our ability to identify and address any inequality as required by the specific duties.

Occupational Segregation

Occupational segregation is the concentration in particular grades and occupations of certain groups of employees.

There is evidence of occupational segregation based on gender based on the figures below. There are high concentrations of women within the lower grade posts. These grades contain the traditionally female dominated roles such as Social Care Assistants, Home Care workers, Cleaning and Administrative staff. Unlike some Councils OIC continues to retain lower-paid roles such as cleaning, which has an impact on gender pay gap figures particularly when making comparisons with benchmark data.

Figures show that more women are in lower graded posts within the Council and more men are holding higher grade posts. This changing point is around grade 7 and grade 8 posts.

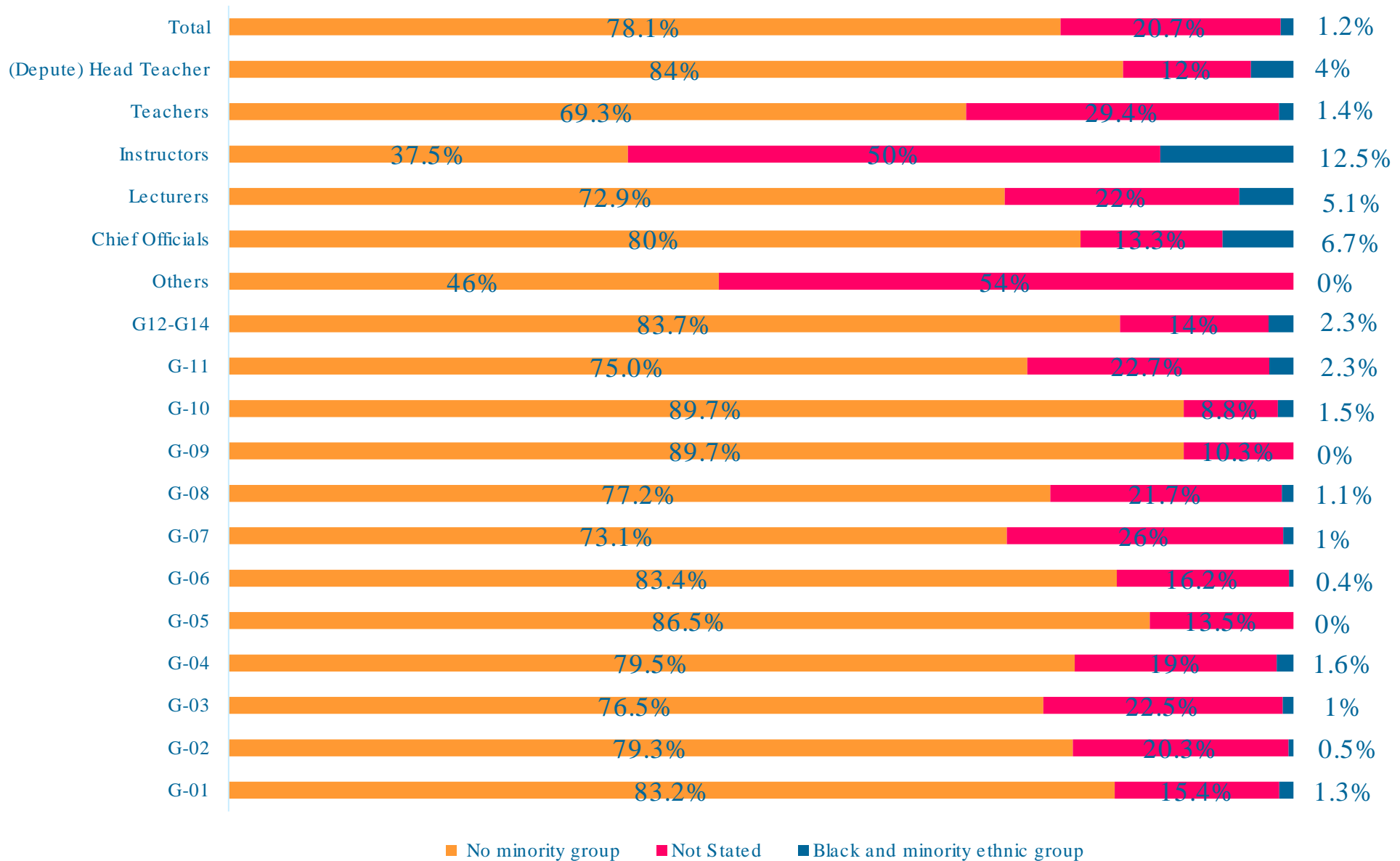
The figures also indicate that just over 80% of teachers are women, whereas the Heads and Deputy Heads show a more even split of posts held based on gender where 52% of post holders are women and 48% are men.

There is evidence of occupational segregation by disability with figures indicating the distribution of employees disclosing a disability is predominantly in the lower grades. It is worth noting that 21.4% of general staff and 34.1% of teaching staff have not provided information relating to disabilities. Whilst there has been an increase in declaration rates year on year, there is still work to do in this area.

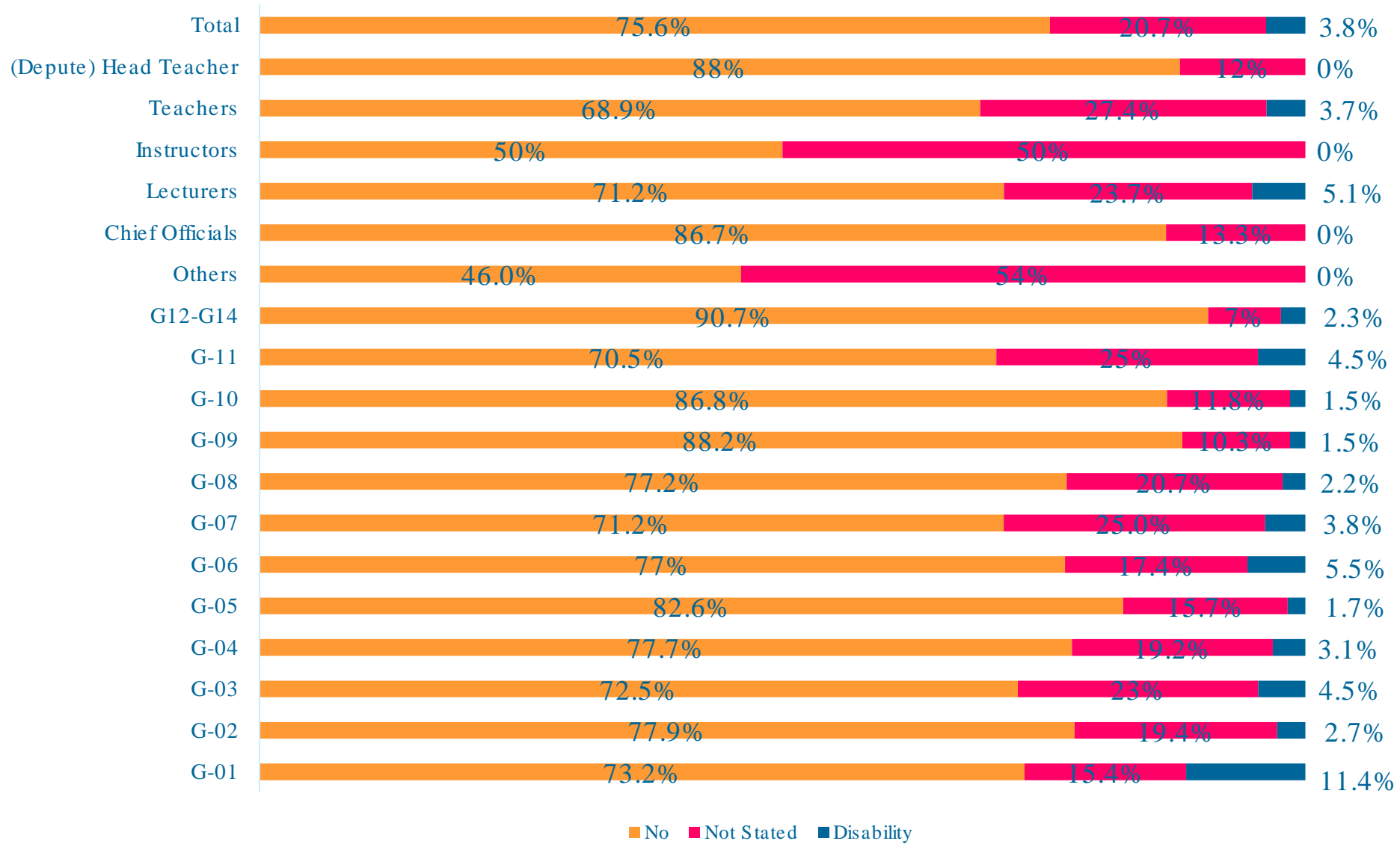
Figures for occupational segregation based on ethnicity are very low and higher levels of representation appear to be at grade 4 posts and within our Lecturer and Teacher posts.

Occupational Segregation by Service and Gender.												
	Corporate.		Chief Exec.		Development and Infrastructure.		Education, Leisure and Housing.		Orkney Health and Care.		All OIC.	
Grade.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.
G-01.	81.3%.	18.7%.			66.7%.	33.3%	38.1%.	61.9%.	100%.		75.2%.	24.8%.
G-02.	92.1%.	7.9%.				100%.	75.5%.	24.3%.	80.5%.	19.5%.	77.5%.	22.5%.
G-03.	94.4%.	5.6%.			31%.	69%.	87.4%.	12.6%.	71.4%.	28.6%.	76.5%.	23.5%.
G-04.	100%.		78.6%.	21.4%.	14.5%.	85.5%.	82%.	18%.	88.8%.	11.2%.	74.3%.	25.7%.
G-05.	85.7%.	14.3%.	86.4%	13.6%	33.3%.	66.7%.	87.3%.	12.7%.	85.3%.	14.7%.	75.8%.	24.2%.
G-06.	30%.	70%.	100%.		26.7%.	73.3%.	86.5%.	13.5%.	92%.	8%.	79.1%.	20.9%.
G-07.	88.9%	11.1%.	100%.		37.5%.	62.5%.	87%.	13%.	61.5%.	38.5%.	77.9%.	22.1%.
G-08.	80%.	20%.	85.7%.	14.3%.	31.3%.	68.8%.	66.7%.	33.3%.	87.5%.	12.5%.	62%.	38%.
G-09.	33.3%.	66.7%.	85.7%.	14.3%.	38.5%.	61.5%.	69.2%.	30.8%.	42.9%.	57.1%.	48.5%.	51.5%.
G-10.	25%.	75%.	75%.	25%.	35.3%.	64.7%.	70%.	30%.	87.9%.	12.1%.	67.6%.	32.4%.
G-11.	50%.	50%.	75%.	25%.	12.5%.	87.5%.	50%.	50%.	83.3%.	16.7%.	50%.	50%.
G12-G14.	40%.	60%.	16.7%.	83.3%	12.5%.	87.5%.	50%.	50%.	100%.		30.2%.	69.8%.
Chief Officials.	33.3%.	66.7%.	33.3%.	66.7%.		100%	33.3%.	66.6%.	100%		33.3%.	66.6%.
Instructors.							62.5%.	37.5%.			62.5%.	37.5%.
Lecturers.							61%.	39%.			61%.	39%.
Other.					6.3%.	93.8%.	55.6%	44.4%	50%.	50%.	19%.	81%.
(Depute) Head Teachers.							52%.	48%.			52%.	48%.
Teachers.							80.7%.	19.3%.			80.7%.	19.3%.
Grand Total.	78.3%.	21.7%.	81.7%	18.3%.	22.3%.	77.7%.	78.1%.	21.9%.	85.6%.	14.2%.	71.3%	28.7%

Occupational segregation by ethnicity.



Occupational segregation by disability.



Equality outcomes progress

Orkney Islands Council's Equality Outcomes Action Plan published in 2018, explains how equality and diversity are essential to how we operate both as an employer and as a service provider.

It sets out our Equality Outcomes for 2018 – 2022 making a commitment to ensure that:

- People in Orkney have the opportunity to fulfil their potential throughout life.
- Orkney Islands Council is an inclusive employer.
- People in Orkney have an equal opportunity to access and shape public services.

Our equality outcomes help us to deliver on our duties under equality legislation. This report provides an update on our progress against the action plan that will deliver these outcomes.

We believe strongly that equality sits at the heart of everything we do – as an employer and as a service provider.

In 2018 we set an ambitious set of equality outcomes, drawing on local and national evidence as well as best practice examples to set out an action plan that will support delivery of these.

This is our second update on the progress we have made against our four-year equality outcomes. We are committed to ensuring that Orkney Islands Council is an organisation where our colleagues are treated with dignity and respect, building an inclusive culture that enables people to do their best.

Whilst we have made some significant progress since the last progress report in 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 has impacted the way in which many of our services are delivered and the ways in which many of our employees are required to work. There is much more still to do, and we need to maintain our momentum to continue to improve and to adapt to the ongoing challenges and inequalities that are being faced by many of our community members.

People in Orkney have the opportunity to fulfil their potential throughout life.

Carry out an audit of existing pathways from education into positive destinations and employment by protected characteristic.

In progress.

With early work in this area highlighting a lack of consistent data collection within the relevant workstreams, significant progress has been made in relation to embedding more cohesive data collection across the organisation and with partner agencies.

The recently formed Local Employability Partnership (LEP) is taking a lead in the development and implementation of a local data dashboard to effectively monitor, analyse and report on distribution of positive and negative outcomes and inequalities with the local authority area in relation to employment and positive destinations. This will provide current and local data to inform decisions and to identify improvement measures and to evaluate the effectiveness of these.

A Positive Destinations Monitoring Group was established with representation from Community Learning and Development (CLD), Schools, Skills Development Scotland (SDS), Orkney College and Third Sector. This groups aims to ensure that all young people are supported through the world of work and onwards into a positive destination. This work has resulted in the improvement of data capture for all pupil destinations now being accounted for and regularly reported in the Orkney Schools Attainment report. Work continues in this area with the Positive Destinations Working Group.

From 2020 the Community Learning and Development Team, within Education, Leisure and Housing, have taken on responsibility for employability support including the No-One Left Behind agenda. We will likely see an increase in the number of people supported by Council funded/ operated employability programmes as No-One Left Behind is rolled out. Employment has also been identified as a core area of interest for the COVID Economic Recovery Steering Group.

With the ongoing impacts from COVID-19 restrictions, it has been identified that there will be increased challenges on all partners to ensure all young leavers achieve positive destinations in future years. The continuing work of the Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) is vital in this area. The DYW continues to develop partnerships between business, college and schools to provide a wider range of options to enable young people to achieve their individual learner pathways. This will support and inspire all Orkney's young workforce to achieve sustainable positive destinations when they leave school.

The development of work placement opportunities has been a priority for DYW Orkney and work has been undertaken to improve this area over recent years. There are well established collaborative partnerships in the DYW programme and further work is planned to progress these to enhance the opportunities available to pupils.

A work placement qualification (SCQF level 5) has been trialled and WorkIT has been introduced to support the facilitation of placements and qualifications. Work to improve the work placement offer continues, ensuring WorkIT is used universally to source and secure placements.

It is noted that this work has been impacted by COVID-19 and many young people have not been able to complete their planned work experience during 2020-21.

Further development of collecting appropriate data including equalities data across the partnership with the use of a shared data template and with the process for data collection to be formalised and agreed by the LEP.

The Council has recently confirmed support for up to twenty Kickstart posts for young people as part of efforts to provide high-quality 6 month work placements for those deemed at risk of long-term unemployment. As a Living Wage employer, the Council has committed further funds to bridge the gap between the national minimum wage funded by Kickstart and the Scottish Living Wage to further tackle the inequalities for some members of the Orkney community.

Work is now underway to identify possible work placements within the Council for those eligible for them. This will include linking to other schemes such as the Employer Incentive Scheme which funds 50% of wages over a 12 month period, to stretch those opportunities for young people to 18 months where possible.

The Community Learning and Development team is working in close collaboration with Human Resources to develop and encourage supported and inclusive employment opportunities, further progressing the No One Left Behind agenda which is focussed on co-ordinating and delivering effective support to those who need it the most.

The Orkney Local Employability partnership has reviewed the employability provision and has produced an overview guide to simplify the routes available for people in Orkney into employment. The information will also be reviewed and analysed by the partnership to identify areas of strength, overlap and gaps to better plan services to meet local needs.

Audit the existing modern apprenticeship scheme by gender and work with stakeholders to identify opportunities for increased promotion of gender balance in particular courses and schemes.

In progress.

Work continues to progress well in this area and is closely linked with the first action.

Current data shows that:

18.2% of Modern Apprenticeship starts in Orkney in 2020/21 were female in comparison to 39.7% in Scotland.

9.5% of Modern Apprentices undertaking a STEM framework in Orkney were female in comparison to 11.4% in Scotland. The highest MA framework uptake for females in Orkney were Social Services and Healthcare and Aquaculture and Construction: Building for males.

23.7% of Modern Apprentices in Orkney self-identified as disabled in comparison to 13% in Scotland.

Data collection continues to be developed and analysed in order to better inform actions to increase promotion of gender balance in particular courses through a partnership approach.

Orkney College has plans to introduce SVQs and Modern Apprenticeships in hospitality, agriculture, engineering and farm management and have doubled the number of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics subjects offered in the past three years.

One of the Equality Outcomes for Orkney College is to ensure that gender balance is encouraged for courses where statistics suggest that they are male or female dominated and this work is supported by the Orkney College Gender Action Plan. Gender imbalance has been identified in Computing/IT, Construction/Carpentry and Joinery, Care, Art and Business.

It has been identified that progression routes and work placements available for engineering and STEM programmes is limited and work in this area continues through a variety of work streams. Workforce planning processes include the review of vacant posts to consider graduate trainee posts of modern apprenticeship opportunities and the pay gap and occupational segregation reporting by service area helps to inform actions in this area.

Challenge gender stereotypes that influence education, training and career choices through inclusive communication and awareness raising opportunities including national awareness days.

In progress.

Progress in this area is closely linked with the first action and work continues in developing and embedding this theme in partnership through the Inclusion and Diversity sub-group of the LEP.

A STEM Orkney facebook page has been set up by OIC Education Support Officer (STEM) to share events and celebrate successes around all things STEM education. Events such as International Women in Engineering day are promoted alongside showcasing local role models in this sector.

In partnership with STEM Orkney, DYW hosted a STEM Ambassador Information Event in May 2021. This free event aimed to help individuals and employers learn more about the STEM Ambassador programme which include showcasing different roles and pathways into industry and to raise the aspirations in young people, helping them meet a range of role models and encouraging them to think about their future.

The no wrong path campaign is well supported locally and is important in highlighting that many people in interesting jobs don't necessarily take a straight, obvious or traditional path to get there. The DYW further support an inclusive showcase of local role models in employment with the sector spotlight

Work has been undertaken through the Inclusion and Diversity sub-group of the LEP to produce an Inclusion and Diversity campaign pack 'Enabling Work for All'. The communications pack aims to help and support all members of the LEP and partner organisations around Orkney to encourage the wider community to view having a diverse and inclusive workforce as the norm. It aims to celebrate diversity in all its forms with a particular emphasis on those who have faced barriers into employment due to a disability, mental health or being care experience, or based on their gender, race or sexual orientation.

Together with the long-running campaign, partners are also encouraged to participate in national campaigns or days of action which have a particular focus. The Inclusion and Diversity sub-group will create content that can be used by all partners. Progress on the implementation of this will be reported in the next outcome progress report.

Deliver actions relating to closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children in the Education Improvement Plan.

In progress.

Progress in this area is closely linked with the first action and work is underway to develop and embed this theme with the Inclusion and Diversity sub-group of the LEP.

National attainment figures for 2018/2019 showed that in Orkney, there appears to be no significant relationship between the Scottish Index of multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and attainment. It was identified that the attainment gap in Orkney is low and further consideration was needed to link more relevant measures of deprivation in Orkney to attainment.

In 2019-2020 significant work was carried out by all schools, led by the link Attainment Advisor, particularly around better understanding the poverty related attainment gap. This work helped to develop an understanding of where the targeted support should be focused using the Pupil Equity Funding to support improvement. Orkney Islands Council has been part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) since 2017 and receives funding through the Pupil Equity Fund and the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund. Work is now underway to further embed the use of outcomes and measures in authority and school improvement planning.

Evidence shows that children and young people who are 'Care Experienced' have the poorest outcomes of all children and young people in Scotland. A Care Experienced Group has been formed to help with engagement with care experienced children and young people so that they can help to improve the services provided.

Analysis of school leaver destinations during the academic year 2019-20 was included in the Orkney Schools Attainment Report Session 2019 to 2020, reported to committee in March 2021.

COVID-19 and its associated economic downturn have created a very difficult and uncertain environment for young people starting out in life. Service providers in Orkney are conscious that we will need to step up provision for school leavers to mitigate this disadvantage.

DYW Orkney aims to increase the range of high-quality work experience and work placement opportunities for young people and support the development of new courses in the STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and maths).

The Children's Service Plan 2021-23 contains a suite of performance indicators which will enable partner agencies to better measure the collective progress towards the eight target outcomes of Getting it Right for Every Child framework.

A key issue for children and families in some of the isles and rural parts of mainland Orkney is poor connectivity and lack of digital access, which has made remote

learning challenging. The Education service issued a survey for parents which indicated that one third of all families in Orkney with school-age children were experiencing difficulties with digital access. With dedicated Scottish Government funding, the Education service has purchased and allocated 165 Chromebooks and 230 iPads and will provide more as resources become available.

It is acknowledged that work now continues to develop the understanding of how the attainment gap may have changed during lockdown.

Implementation of Anti-Bullying Policy for our Children and Young People.

In progress.

The Anti-Bullying Policy for our Children and Young People was launched in August 2018 and sets out a strategic approach to addressing bullying and provides clear definitions and guidance for schools and settings to review or develop local anti-bullying policies to address and monitor any incidences of bullying.

The majority of schools and settings have updated their local Anti-bullying policies and use SEEMIS management information system to record incidents of bullying.

All primary schools are implementing Jigsaw as a key resource for their health and wellbeing curriculum. Additional resources including those on relationships have supplemented this programme and help to develop good practice in tackling unwanted behaviours.

Feedback from the Orkney Youth Forum identified the need for education around the LGBTI+ community to address stigma and misunderstanding of LGBTI+ people in Orkney and recognising that LGBTI+ young people may experience homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying which can result in feelings of exclusion, being disrespected or feeling unsafe. Engagement sessions with pupil councils also highlighted the need for more education about sex and relationships, how to keep safe, how to recognise abusive behaviour, sexual violence and toxic relationships and what to do about them. Some LGBTI+ training and awareness was delivered with Head Teachers and Tier 3 managers. Actions relating to this are included within the Children's Services Plan and further work is being considered through the Northern Alliance partnership.

Orkney Islands Council is an inclusive employer.

Review of flexible working plan for ageing workforce and review of sickness absence process to be more inclusive of age-related conditions and mental health of older workers.

In progress.

Previous work has been undertaken to incorporate resources and services such as the Workplace Mental Health Support Service delivered by Mencap as part of the Access to Work programme, into our Sickness Absence Management process and training. The Workplace Mental Health Support Service is a free service that people in employment can access independently and is designed to support colleagues who have a mental health condition (diagnosed or undiagnosed) that has impacted their work.

Specific actions relating to this outcome are being delivered through the Pay Gap and Occupational Segregation Action Plan, including:

- Delivery of flexible working policies including homeworking / remote working.
- Develop inclusion passport to better support unpaid caring responsibilities (including adaptations for menopause).
- Offer mid-career reviews to all employees.
- Develop and promote additional manager and employee guidance for supporting women with the menopause.

HR System development has included the requirement for the reason for absence as mandatory in the reporting which is enabling greater consistency and accuracy in the statistics available. The impact of COVID-19 has affected the rollout of key elements of the development of the HR systems. The baseline data will be established and will continue to help inform and prioritise the activities and interventions offered to improve flexibility and inclusion.

Work continues to raise awareness and provide guidance to line managers to utilise the reporting functions available to best support their teams and inform people management practices to develop best practice in this area.

Review Employee Survey responses by age to assess baseline evidence and to develop proactive age-inclusive communications, promotion and development opportunities.

In progress.

Any highlighted differences in survey data by age and gender are being fed into the ongoing work to develop the three key thematic areas identified following initial analysis of the overall survey results.

Age-inclusive actions are being delivered through the Pay Gap and Occupational Segregation action plan as well as through work progressed by the Workforce Re-integration workstream following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Carry out regular employee surveys.

In progress.

There has been no significant progress on this action due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, plans are in place to gather employee feedback on the working arrangements during the pandemic and to better understand ongoing and developing requirements around staff wellbeing and will be used to inform next steps regarding this action.

Delivery of Mentally Healthy Workplace Plan and communication plan to increase awareness relating to mental health and wellbeing.

Ongoing – move to mainstreaming.

Promotion of activities are continuing to increase awareness of mental good health and wellbeing across the organisation. Activities have included exercise sessions promoting better musculoskeletal health, mental health awareness workshops, mindfulness programmes and bringing back the balance yoga sessions.

Significant work has been delivered in this area throughout the pandemic. The Council website was identified as the best means of sharing information relating to mental health and wellbeing for all employees, specifically in relation to dealing with the associated impact of COVID-19 and the restrictions during lockdown. A section of the COVID-19 information pages was developed to provide information and signposting on a variety of themes including:

- Resources for a mentally healthy workplace including links to iLearn courses on relaxation, dealing with stress and recognising stress.
- Information and resources from the Educational Psychology team ranging from more general guidance on supporting mental health and wellbeing, to comprehensive information for staff supporting vulnerable children, those working in the Hub provisions and for teaching staff and other professionals supporting young people with school closure and the impacts of COVID-19.
- Wellbeing advice for working from home.
- Coronavirus and your wellbeing advice and guidance from Mind the mental health charity.
- COVID-19 and your mental health resources produced by Caring for People, a task-force made up of public and voluntary organisations in Orkney to help people recover and build resilience in challenging times.
- Information and links to the Grampian Psychological Resilience Hub which was set up to directly respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a virtual hub providing support by telephone for self-referral regarding mental health and wellbeing.

Regular communications were provided to employees to signpost to the resources online and to highlight other sessions including:

- Weekly online mental wellbeing and resilience training sessions.
- Promotion of Time to talk day in February 2021 with tips and suggestions on how line managers can keep in touch with team members and team members can keep in touch with colleagues to support each other and reduce the impact of isolation, loneliness and to get people talking about mental health.
- Targeted information and resources around specific days throughout the year including when clocks went back and in preparation for the Christmas period.

The reduction in work related stress figures is a longer-term goal and it is recognised that the pandemic has had a significant impact in this area and will continue to do so

for the near future. Work continues with the HR system development and roll-out to ensure improved reporting ability. This will provide greater insight into the ongoing impacts of stress and mental health and wellbeing and help to inform ongoing actions to increase awareness and to provide targeted support to staff groups where required.

Review of jobs appropriate to be undertaken remotely.

In progress.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant impact on this action. During the lockdown period, many office-based jobs have been required to be delivered from home and the IT infrastructure, management practices and many work-related processes rapidly developed in order to accommodate this. As part of the Workforce Re-integration workstream, flexible working, home working / remote working policies have been adapted and produced with a view to providing a framework for a longer-term vision for flexible working practices. This work will inform HR Strategy and longer-term workforce planning as well as support the delivery of associated workstreams such as the pay gap and occupational segregation action plan.

Plans are in place to gather employee feedback on the working arrangements during the pandemic and to better understand ongoing and developing requirements around staff wellbeing and will be used to inform next steps regarding this action.

People in Orkney have an equal opportunity to access and shape public services.

Further develop guidance for inclusive engagement and embed within the Council's Community Consultation and Engagement guide and in-house training.

Ongoing – move to mainstreaming.

The Council's Community Consultation and Engagement Policy was launched in 2019, bringing a greater focus on areas such as engaging with seldom heard groups, peripherality and island-proofing and the Fairer Scotland duty to better consider the impact of socio-economic deprivation on groups.

Training sessions have previously been provided by the Consultation and Engagement Officers Group with topics including consultation and engagement with young people, inclusive communications, making meetings accessible guide and mainstreaming participatory budgeting.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the way in which engagement and consultation activities have been able to be delivered. This has meant that many of the consultation events have needed to be moved to predominately online and needing to factor the needs of remote and rural communities, often with the need for a blended approach.

The Orkney Community Wind Farm Project is a good example of an adapted and inclusive approach to consultation during the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Working from a baseline of making the non face-to-face consultation as close as possible to the experience that people would have had at a face-to-face event, a video presentation of the team talking through the consultation boards was provided. This was delivered alongside an online survey and plain English document giving more detail of what was included on the boards. A virtual live event was also facilitated and everything for this event was provided on one webpage for ease of access. The option for telephone discussion was also provided for those who online wasn't an option, as well as feedback by writing or email.

In addition to these events, other opportunities to consult and engage with community groups were identified and included video sessions with schools, community podcasts, community council conference and the use of Facebook.

Feedback from these approaches has been shared with the Consultation and Engagement Officers Group for further analysis and development of training sessions. These sessions had been planned for mid-2021 but have been postponed until later this year.

Prior to an election, review and develop inclusive practices to support participation in the democratic process.

In progress.

The Scottish Parliament election on 6 May 2021 was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and plans and communications supporting people in Orkney to prepare and participate in the voting process, were focussed on the specific requirements relating to the restrictions in place during that period.

All households were written to providing information on current registration to vote and information on postal voting and ongoing communications through a variety of channels were aimed at encouraging people to apply for postal voting if this would be the best option for them.

The Council aimed to provide as much support and assistance to enable everyone to cast their vote. One example of this was shared through the Council news stories:

Every effort is made by Council staff to ensure that everyone who wanted to vote could.

One member of the community contacted the Council to say they were stuck in hospital and had no-one to collect their postal vote form from their home. The team at the Council contacted NHS Orkney to confirm that it was appropriate and then ensured a new postal vote form was delivered personally to the patient to allow them to cast their vote.

OIC Returning Officer John Mundell said: “This is just one example of how our staff go the extra mile to help ensure everyone who wishes to vote can do so. They also went over and above to make sure folk didn’t miss out on the postal vote deadline last month (April) with staff working during the long bank holiday weekend to ensure poll cards were issued.

“I regularly hear of members of the workforce who raise the bar in their efforts for Orkney residents. This is yet another shining example.”

Work continues to review resources available nationally to improve the inclusive participation in the democratic process and feedback following the most recent vote will also be used to inform future actions.

Audit of existing elected office by protected characteristic and prior to an election, engage with stakeholders to develop an action plan to promote inclusion.

In progress.

In November 2019 Orkney Islands Council formally adopted the Family Leave Guidance for councils that had been endorsed by CoSLA ensuring that there is a consistent approach for those elected members who wished to take appropriate leave at the time of birth or adoption and to help remove the barriers that deter women and younger people for election.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, work has been focused around the Scottish Youth Parliament Elections in 2021 and young people in Orkney have been encouraged to stand as a candidate for the constituency. The Community Learning and Development team provide comprehensive support, advice and guidance with the candidacy training and campaign process.

The previous MSYP election in 2019 saw an all-female candidate list from Orkney and the representation in the previous two parliaments being all-male. Experiences from previous and current MSYPs have been showcased through a variety of channels to continue to encourage a diverse representation from Orkney's young people in the lead up to the elections in 2021.

The Orkney Youth Forum is one of the many initiatives supported by the CLD to empower young people in Orkney. Through these initiatives, young people take a lead in organising and running key events such as the biennial Chamber Debate, Youth Awards Ceremony and Youth Conference. The Orkney Youth Forum sends a representative to a number of groups, including the Orkney Children and Young People's Partnership, and are valued voices helping set priorities and influence decision-makers.

Next steps include utilising The Parliament Project Get Ready to Run webinars, and Elect Her webinars including What's it like being a disabled woman in politics? These programmes are due to launch later in September 2021 will be shared through a variety of channels in the lead up to the elections in 2022.

Work will continue to better understand potential barriers into elected office for particular groups and will help to inform ongoing actions to address these barriers.

Improve the accessibility of services provided online through the delivery of the Customer Services Platform and Council Website redesign.

Ongoing – move to mainstreaming.

This action is closely linked to the delivery of the Customer Services Platform (CSP) project and the final work plan for the CSP has now been delivered. The CSP is providing more accessible information on the Council and its services with the ability to carry out transactions on a 24/7 basis. This provision runs alongside the option for non-digital alternatives to provide choice to customers and greater flexibility of accessibility.

Work is underway to build on the previous website design review to further improve usability and accessibility. With the introduction of a new accessibility checker the website has improved from a score of 74% to 98% and user experience has been improved to 99% with no mobile layout issues.

The assistive software Recite Me, enables enhanced accessibility to the website and documentation including translation, text simplifier, screen masking and the ability to personalise the settings to suit individual needs and preferences.

Further development of the CSP is business as usual and a summary of the improvements made to the accessibility of services provided online will be reported in the final Equality Outcomes 2018-2022 report due in September 2022.

Audit existing processes for recording personal information to ensure it is inclusive of gender identity requirements.

In progress.

The Council recruitment processes have been reviewed following the revised Census 2021 data collection in this area and now mirrors these categories to improve recruitment reporting through My Job Scotland and to enable better benchmarking at a national level.

There has been wide-ranging work at a national level in this area of data collection. Recent research on equality data collection has been published in the Understanding Equality Data Collection in the Scottish Public Sector report, commissioned by the Scottish Government. This report reviews the barriers and challenges in relation to sex and gender. There is ongoing development work through a Scottish Government Working Group looking at the way data on sex and gender is collected and published with a view to guidance being provided for public bodies.

We remain committed to a full review of the collection of equalities data once further recommendations and guidance has been identified. This will ensure that we operate with a model of best practice, provide robust and consistent methods of equality data collection that can be adopted across the organisation, and will enable better benchmarking.

Further progress in this area will be provided in the final Equality Outcomes 2018-2022 report due in September 2022.

Implementation of the British Sign Language local plan in partnership with OHAC.

In progress.

The British Sign Language (BSL) Local plan was developed in partnership with OHAC and Orkney College UHI and was launched in October 2018.

The BSL Progress group meets on a monthly basis to progress the actions within this plan. The primary focus for this group has been centered around actions relating to children and young people and education. Resources have been purchased for each of the schools and training has been delivered around BSL.

Most recently, 15 people signed up to six BSL sessions with a Deaf BSL instructor from Glasgow college and some of the attendees now wish to continue to the BSL Level 1 Course and assessment for certification.

Further details of progress against the BSL Local Plan are contained within the mainstreaming report.

Consult with taxi and private hire car operators and the public to identify any unmet need in relation to wheelchair accessible vehicles and promote a list of wheelchair accessible vehicles on the Council website.

In progress.

In 2019, consultation was undertaken with taxi and private hire car operators, representatives of persons with disabilities and the public to identify any unmet need in relation to wheelchair accessible vehicles in Orkney.

Ten responses were received from the survey and nine of those were in favour of more Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles. In addition to the survey responses, feedback from an accessible travel event, hosted by Disability Equality Scotland and the Scottish Government's Accessible Travel Framework for Scotland were considered when recommending options for approval.

It was agreed by the Licensing Committee that the Council would encourage operators to deploy increased numbers of wheelchair accessible vehicles in their taxi and private hire fleets, and to advertise their WAVs more, without introducing formal requirements

This position will be reviewed over the following three years, with a report to Committee in 2023 detailing the outcome of the review and recommending any necessary amendments to the policy.

A list containing details of providers with wheelchair accessible vehicles is available on the Council website. There are currently three providers of Private Car Hire WAVs on this list.

Meeting the specific duties of the Equality Act

Duty.	Requirements.	Frequency.	Last published.
Mainstreaming progress.	Publish a report on progress made to make the equality duty integral to the exercise of functions.	At least every two years.	This report September 2021.
Equality outcomes.	Publish a set of equality outcomes using available evidence relating to protected characteristics.	At least every four years.	April 2018.
Progress against equality outcomes.	Publish a report on the progress made to achieve the equality outcomes.	At least every two years.	This report September 2021.
Equality Impact Assessments.	Conduct equality impact assessments for new and revised policies, plans and processes and publish these.	Ongoing.	Ongoing on our website.
Gather and use employee information.	Gather information on staffing mix and recruitment and development against protected characteristics.	Annual.	April 2021.
Include employee information in mainstreaming report.	Include employee information and progress made in gathering and using this in mainstreaming report.	At least every two years.	April 2021.
Gender pay gap information.	Publish percentage difference between hourly pay rates for men and women.	At least every two years.	This report September 2021.
Statement on equal pay policy and occupational segregation.	Publish equal pay policy and analysis of employment by grade or role for men and women, disability and race.	At least every four years.	This report September 2021.