EQUALITY
WORKFORCE MONITORING

2007/08

Human Resources
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1. **Introduction**

The Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) places a general duty on a wide range of public authorities to promote race equality. This duty means that authorities must have due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination;
2. Promote equality of opportunity; and
3. Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Public Authorities have a duty to monitor their employment procedures and practices, and publish the findings of this monitoring. This report is the fifth such report and includes the results of the racial and general equality employment monitoring within the Council for the period 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008.

Under the above Act, the Council has a specific duty to monitor, by racial groups:

1. Staff in post;
2. Applicants for jobs;
3. Applicants for promotion; and
4. Applicants for training.

In addition Authorities that employee at least 150 full time staff (which includes the Council), must also monitor and analyses:

1. Grievances;
2. Disciplinary action;
3. Performance Appraisals (where this results in benefits or sanctions);
4. The number of staff who receive training; and
5. The number of staff leaving the Authority for whatever reason.

The employment monitoring undertaken will enable the Authority to examine the make-up of its workforce and ensure that its equality policy is working. It will also enable the Authority to analyse how its human resource policies and procedures affect different minority groups.

This is the fifth time that the majority of this information has been gathered and analysed. As such there is now comparative data available, which has informed the conclusions drawn. The data available from continued monitoring will be compared to these baselines and used for future comparison.

The report, this year, again also reports on monitoring in respect of disability and gender. It also considers age in relation to the workforce and leavers analysis.
2. **Background Information**

The data contained within the report relates to the period from 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008, and includes all employees (including school based staff), unless otherwise indicated.

The content of this report regarding ethnicity have been structured around the headings contained within the Commission for Racial Equality’s guidance document “Ethnic Monitoring - A Guide for public authorities”, as detailed in Section 1.

The ethnic categories used for monitoring purposes are based on the categories used for the 2001 Census and are recommended by the Commission for Racial Equality as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A - British</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A - Irish</td>
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<tr>
<td>A - Other White Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B - White &amp; Black Caribbean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B - White &amp; Black African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B - White &amp; Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B - Any Other Mixed Background</td>
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<tr>
<td>C - Indian</td>
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<tr>
<td>C - Pakistani</td>
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<tr>
<td>C - Bangladeshi</td>
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<tr>
<td>C - Any Other Asian Background</td>
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<tr>
<td>D - Caribbean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D - African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D - Any Other Black Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E - Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E - Any Other Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Specified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See note *

* The information is based on that declared to the Council by the individuals involved. Some employees and applicants for employment/promotion have chosen not to declare their racial background, and where this has occurred this will be listed as not specified. The Council will continue to make every effort to collect and record the data in respect of its workforce and applicants, however, there is no legal requirement for this information to be provided by them.

As at 31 March 2008 9.6% (796 employees) of the Council’s work force had failed to declare their ethnicity (see Appendix 9a) an improvement from the 10% at the same time last year. This also compares favourably to around 11% in March 2006, 18% in March 2005, 25% in March 2004, 30% in March 2003, 40% in March 2002 and 57% when the first figures were made available in September 2001.

The content of this report regarding disability is based on information declared by employees, using the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995, definition of disability as guidance. The definition is that a disabled person is someone who has, or has had, a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
3. Staff In Post

Best Value Performance Indicators

The Council Monitors its Workforce in accordance with the requirements of the Government's Corporate Health Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's). 2007/08 is the last year where there is a statutory requirement to record, monitor and publish these indicators. Despite this, the Council has decided to continue to record and monitor these Indicators at a local level to ensure that there is a consistent supply of information available in terms of its duties to monitor the workforce. This decision was also influenced following consultation with the other Greater Merseyside Authorities, who have also indicated their intention to maintain these indicators.

The Corporate Health Indicators that refer to race equality monitoring are as follows:

**BVPI11b** - Percentage of the top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities (excluding schools based staff). The out turn figure for 2007/08 was 1.12% which was above the target set. The outturn has been influenced by the addition of 1 employee from a BME background throughout the year. This performance has been considered against the percentage of economically active minority ethnic population within the borough.

The 2001 Census shows 900 economically active people from BME groups. This equates to 1.14% of the total number of economically active people in the labour market. The outturn of 1.12% now compares favourably with the percentage of economically active people in the community. The analysis of occupation data “Managers and Senior Officials” is 1.54%. Managers and Senior Officials may be considered as equivalent to the top 5% of earners within a local authority. It is now considered appropriate that the 1.54% figure is the best possible benchmark for targets in relation to the “percentage of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities”, and future targets have been set in an attempt to reflect realistic and achievable progress in respect of reaching this benchmark.

**BPVI17a** - Percentage of authority employees from minority ethnic communities as a percentage of the total workforce (including schools based staff). The out turn figure for this indicator was 0.94%, which was below with the target set for the year of 1.05%. This also represents a slight reduction in the performance for 2006/07, which saw an outturn figure of 0.95%. This was a result of various changes to the monitored group throughout the year. These changes culminated in the overall reduction of 1 within the monitored group. The group ended at 78 people in March 2008, compared to 79 in March 2007. The performance is below the 1.14% number of economically active people from BME backgrounds within the labour market mentioned above. Future targets have been amended to reflect this drop in performance whilst still attempting to set realistic and achievable progress towards this benchmark.
The Corporate Health Indicators also include other indicators in respect of equality monitoring which are:

**BVPI11a** - Percentage of the top 5% of earners that are women (excluding schools based staff). The outturn figure for 2007/8 was 47.7% which was above the target of 47% set for the year. The outturn was lower than originally anticipated, but above target. The figure is affected by the appointment and termination of employees which are undertaken in accordance with fair and equitable practice. The equitable practices naturally inhibit any unlawful manipulation and, therefore, the Council accepts the resultant statistics. It is anticipated that this will still achieve a top position in comparison. Future targets have been maintained.

**BVPI11c** - Percentage of the top 5% of earners who have a disability (excluding schools based staff). The outturn figure for 2007/08 was 1.69% (or 6 employees from a group of 354) which was below the target of 1.9% set for the year. The outturn also represents a slight reduction in performance from 2006/07, which saw an outturn figure of 1.72% (or 6 employees from a group of 347). The reduction in performance resulted from the number of employees within the monitored group remaining static, but the overall size of the group increasing, therefore, reducing the percentage of the group that they represent. At the beginning of 2007 the Council embarked on a partnership with the Coalition for Disabled People and have provided financial and managerial support, supplemented with secondments of two Council employees. Although this has resulted in an improvement in performance in terms of the number of disabled employees within the workforce (see BVPI 16 a below), this improvement has not been reflected in the top 5% of earners group. Work will continue to ensure improvement in respect of this indicator, and despite this drop in performance, targets previously set have been maintained for future years.

**BPVI16a** - Percentage of authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act definition of disability (including schools based staff). The outturn figure for this indicator was 1.23%, which, although below the target set of 1.4%, did represent an improvement from the outturn figure for 2006/07 which was 1.18%. The 2006/07 1.18% was representative of 98 employees from an average workforce of 8276. The 2007/08 1.23% figure was representative of 102 employees from a workforce of 8274. This group, following various changes throughout 2007/08 saw a nett increase of 4 employees who declared disabilities.

**BVPI16b** - Percentage of economically active disabled people within the authority area. The outturn figure for 2007/8 remained at 21.2%, however, it is recognised that no precise figures are available to measure the number of disabled people within the borough.
Additional Workforce Profiling

In addition the Council has undertaken further detailed analysis of the workforce based on the category of employee conditions of service; i.e., Chief Officers, Local Government Service, Soulbury, Craft and Teaching conditions.

These profiles at the March 2005, March 2006, March 2007 and March 2008 are included in Appendix 6, 7, 8a & 9a to the report. They indicate the changes in the work force that are identified under the various Sections of this report.

In addition Appendix 8b and 9b now include the age profiles for the groups mentioned above at 31 March 2007 and 2008 respectively.

Workforce Planning

The Workforce Plans produced in respect of the various Council Departments include breakdowns of the workforce by Ethnicity, Gender, Disability and Age and assist further monitoring.
Applicants for Jobs and Promotion

It is vital that the Council’s recruitment and selection procedures are free from unlawful discrimination, as they determine the overall make-up of the Council’s Workforce.

As stated in previous year’s reports the Council’s Recruitment and Selection Code of Practice was fully reviewed and revised in April 2003, post Race Relations Amendment Act. All managers involved in the recruitment and selection of employees where trained accordingly at that time. This training continued as part of the “New Manager” induction process.

The Recruitment and Selection Code of Practice was further reviewed to take into account any issues highlighted from the experience of its use since the previous review and the implications of the impending implementation of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, which took effect from 1 October 2006.

This later review highlighted only minor changes required, which where implemented and publicised.

The Code of Practice will be further reviewed next year to ensure that it reflects changes relating to the recording of information during the recruitment process which will arise from the introduction of the Council’s Recruitment and Selection Module of its Human Resources System. This development will be accompanied by the introduction of on-line application forms, with the R&S Module itself being used to record electronically the full recruitment and selection process. The module will be further developed as part of its second phase of introduction to analysis the information provided by candidates for employment and produce, in future, more detailed information than can currently be produced manually. This will enhance the equality monitoring that then takes place.

Managers continue to be trained on the Recruitment and Selection Code of Practice as part of their induction process. More detailed training on the Recruitment and Selection module will be provided on a one to one basis as managers advertise vacancies within their services.

All Council posts are advertised externally, except in cases were, in accordance with the Council’s Redeployment Policy and recognised good practice, the opportunity may be used as a means of avoiding redundancy.

Advertisements are published in the appropriate media. This as a minimum includes the Council’s “Vacancy List” bulletin, Notice Boards and Web Site, and the Job Centre Plus. In addition, vacancies will be advertised in local, regional, national and/or professional publications as appropriate.

The JobCentre Plus Service mentioned above is part of a Central Government Department Services. To access their services organisations must demonstrate a commitment to equality of opportunity which is supported by appropriate monitoring regimes. The Council currently holds such an agreement with the JobCentre Plus, which is due for review in 2008/9.

As all non redeployment posts are open to competition, the Council can not analyse information in respect of “internal promotions” separately, but the information is contained within the general analysis of recruitment (see Appendix 10).
All applicants are provided with an equal opportunities monitoring form as part of the application package, and are asked to complete and return this with the application form. These are separated from the completed application form on receipt and the information contained within used to produce the recruitment analysis on a month by month basis. This information has been collated for the whole year and is attached as Appendix 10 to the report.

It can be seen from this collated information that 344 (279 in 2006/07, 380 in 2005/06, 652 in 2004/05 and 620 in 2003/04) Council jobs have been advertised during 2007/08. This returns to a level compatible with 2005/06 following the vastly reduced number of adverts placed in 2006/07. The increase reflects the fact that the previous contractions in Council services in 2006/07 have come to an end and that fewer opportunities have had to be used for redeployment purposes as an alternative to redundancy.

In response to these 344 advertisements a total of 3633 (3575, 5122, 5417 & 6310) applications were received. The number of applications received gives a ratio of applicants to vacancies of 10.2 which remains consistent with levels achieved since the current monitoring regime was introduced in 2003/04.

Of the 3633 applications received 2159 were accompanied by the Equality Monitoring form that candidates are voluntarily required to completed. At a return rate of 59.4% this is much lower than that of around 80% return mark achieved in previous years.

Of those with monitoring forms, 58 (78, 136, 107 & 122) were received from Black Minority Ethnic (BME) Groups representing 2.68% (2.18%, 2.66%, 1.97% & 1.9%) of the total number received, but 3.19% of those actually declaring their ethnicity, both of which are increases on last year.

These applications resulted in a total of 311 appointments. Of those appointed 4 (3, 3, 9 & 8) were from BME Groups, representing 1.29% (1.16%, 0.82%, 1.4% & 1.3%) of the total. Compared to the baseline set last year (first figures in brackets) it can be seen that both a larger percentage of the applications were received from BME Groups, and the percentage of those who were successful has also increased.

The improvement in terms of the increased percentage of applicants received, and appointments made from the BME applicants continue to reflect the work undertaken. It also reflects that the Council has been successful in attracting candidates with the right skills, ability, experience and qualifications required.

The work referred to above will continue to be implemented to ensure continued improvement. This further work is needed to attracted increase numbers of BME applicants, whilst ensuring that the higher percentage of those candidates with the right skills, ability, experience and qualifications reflected this year maintained and improved upon.

In terms of recruitment and selection, Race Equality is not considered in isolation, or at the expense of other minority groups.
The analysis of information within Appendix 10 in respect of disability identifies that although the number of disabled employees recruited in 2007/08 has reduced to 6 (in 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06 the figure remained the same at 9, increasing to 10 in 2006/07), as the total number of employees recruited has changed, the percentage this represents is 1.93%. This compares reasonably with the performance in previous years, i.e. 1.45% in 2003/04, 1.43% in 2004/05, 2.49% in 2005/06 and 3.87% in 2006/07. This performance has helped the Council to reflect improvement in respect of its performance against targets set in respect of BVPI16a (the percentage of authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act definition of disability). It reflects the work described in Section 3 regarding the partnership with the Coalition for Disabled People.

Finally, the monitoring of recruitment in 2007/08 has highlighted, as described above, a dramatic reduction in terms of the voluntary return of Equality Monitoring forms from candidates. As previously stated the return rate of 59.4% is much lower than that of around 80% return mark achieved in previous years. To address this, and in accordance with the Council strategy to increase the use of electronic transmission of information, the introduction of the new Recruitment and Selection database is being accompanied by the introduction of an on-line application package. This package will include a revised Equality Monitoring form. The aim of this is to ensure that a larger percentage of forms are actually returned by applicants. This will be achieved by both making the form accessible as part of the application, and storable in terms of the applicant creating an individual account which will be update when submitting each application, as oppose to the current situation where a new form must be fully completed each time a paper application is submitted.

This revised monitoring form has also been expanded to collect information regarding religion and will be used as a pilot in terms of assessing people's willingness to provide this information. It is hope that the information returned will confirm a willingness to respond in terms of the provision of this type of information, and also that the information will be used to expand the monitoring undertaken and reported on in the next year.
5. Applicants for, and the number of staff who receive, training.

The obligations under the Race Relations Amendment Act require the Council to monitor applicants for, and staff taking part in, training.

The Council supports and provides training to address needs that are identified through the performance appraisal system and supervision. All training is aimed at providing the skills and knowledge needed by employees to undertake the duties of their roles within the organisation.

Information is collected relating to applicants for training, in respect of all Corporate Internal Training (see Appendix 11) and the specific Adult Social Care and Health Training Plan (see Appendix 12) and the Children’s Division of Children and Young People’s Department Training Plan (Appendix 14).

In relation to External Courses, application is made directly by the appropriate Service Department/Division, with no involvement of the Corporate Training Section. It is not currently possible to monitor these applications, with the exception of applications in the Adult Social Care and Health Department and the Children’s Division of Children and Young People’s Department. The latter are the subject of consultation with the Training Section, and as such, information is readily available (see Appendices 13 and 15).

Corporate, Adult Social Care and Health Services and the Children’s Division of Children and Young People’s Department Internal training is organised by the Training Section. Monitoring of staff attending such training is undertaken course by course, by means of two ways. Firstly the drawing down of information from the Equalities Monitoring Form which staff are asked to complete at the end of every event they attend, completion is voluntary and information can also be submitted anonymously. Secondly data on ethnicity etcetera, is extracted from the Training Booking System. This has a feature that draws down this type of information from the HR Database. This feature is activated when an individual booking is made provided the data is present. Some staff prefer not to declare this type of information.

Please note however much of the Adult Social Care and Children and Young People’s training is targeted at staff of partner agencies as there is a responsibility on the Council to provide training for the borough’s workforce in these areas, not only its own employees. At this stage it is not possible to collect this type of data from these training participants both from a policy and systems position. This accounts for the large numbers in the not specified category.
Analysis of the information about those attending Internal Training (see Appendix 11, 12 and 14) shows:

- **Corporate Training:** Out of those declaring their ethnicity 1.6% were from a minority background. This compares with a figure of 0.94% as the percentage of employees from minority ethnic communities as a percentage of the total workforce. The total workforce figure, however, includes school based staff, very few of whom undertake the Corporate Internal Training.

- **Adult Social Care and Health and Children’s Division of Children and Young People’s Department:** Out of those declaring their ethnicity, 1.89% of those undertaking training (which includes employees from Adult Social Care and Health and Children and Young People’s Services Departments) were from a minority background. This compares with a figure of 0.94% of employees in the workforce from minority ethnic communities, as a percentage of the total workforce.

This higher figure, however, is accounted for by the fact that a number of employees from BME backgrounds have attended a number of different training courses, throughout the year, with these training courses aimed at the particular staff groups which contain employees from BME backgrounds within both of those departments e.g. Social Work, Red Bank, etc.
6. Grievances

Individual employees who submit a formal grievance are monitored, and the information collated is contained within Appendix 2. This relates to those formal grievance instigated in 2007/8.

From this information it can be identified that during the course of the year their have been a total of 43 individual grievances raised by employees. This figure has increased from the figure of 30 raised in 2006/7, however, this is a continuation of the affects of the introduction of the Statutory Grievance Procedure, introduced under the Employment Act 2002 (Dispute Resolution) Regulations 2004. This requires that any complaint raised by an employee must be dealt with as a grievance, and requires employees to raise grievances before the submission of Employment Tribunal claims.

Of these 43 grievances raised 42 came from employees with British backgrounds, and 1 came from an employee who has not specified their background. Given the relatively small percentage of the workforce that comes from BME backgrounds, and the small number of grievances submitted it is to be expected, on a proportional basis, that this would be the case. The ethnicity figures for 2007/08 reflect similar levels and findings to the previous year.

Three employees with disabilities raised grievances against the Council, but none of these grievances related to the employees' disability.

Of the grievances raised by the 43 employees, 23 came from males and 22 from females. Given that the workforce is predominantly female (75%), a higher proportion could be expected to be female. Further investigation, however, has highlighted that none of the grievances were in any way related to gender issues.

In addition to the Individual Grievances referred to above, the Council has received collective grievances from the Trades Unions relating to potential Equal Pay and Equal Value claims. These collective grievances relate to large numbers of employees from both genders. The Council is, of course, well underway in terms of the implementation of its Pay and Grading Review which is scheduled for completion by March 2009. This will address any issues of pay inequality, and has undertaken considerable work and committed considerable resources to compromising retrospective claims.
7. Disciplinary action

The obligations under the Race Relation Amendment Act require the Council to monitor action to examine whether some racial groups face formal disciplinary actions more or less often than others.

The information contained within Appendix 1 relates to formal disciplinary action taken against employees throughout 2007/8, broken down by racial group.

Due to the requirements to protect the confidentiality of the individual concerns this information is simply shown as total figures across the whole organisation, as to break down further by department and level of sanction, could possibly result in the identification of employees involved.

From the analysis it can be identified that of the 66 employees (increased from 64 last year) were subject to formal disciplinary action. Of these 61 were British, 1 from a minority ethnic background, and 4 had not stated their ethnic background.

Although it may appear from this information, that the number of employees from BME backgrounds may be high at 1.5% when compared with a representation of 0.94% in the whole workforce, further investigation has highlighted that the action taken in this one case was appropriate to the circumstances of the individual case, regardless of ethnicity. The proportion of 65:1, however, has reduced when compared to that of 62:2 in 2006/7.

Two employees with disabilities were the subject of disciplinary action by the Council, and this action was not related to disability in any of these cases.

Of the 66 employees subject to disciplinary action the number of males and females were approximately the same. This initially appears disproportionate given that the Council’s workforce is dominated by a 3:1 female to male ratio. Investigation has indicated that none of the actions taken were gender biased, but were as a direct result of the individual employees actions.
8. **Performance Appraisals (where this results in benefits or sanctions).**

The guidance available in respect of the obligations under the act appears to indicate that the Council should monitor Performance Appraisals that mark or rate performance, or where they result in benefits or sanctions, being imposed.

The Council, as part of its Performance Management Systems uses a system of Individual Performance Appraisal. This Appraisal concentrates on the setting and achievement of specific objectives. As this system does not mark or rate performance, or result directly in benefit or sanction it has proved extremely difficult to develop an objective system of measurement to fulfil this part of the monitoring.

Should the Appraisal identify that an employee was not performing to agreed acceptable standards, then this would be dealt with under the Council’s Employee Performance Improvement Procedure (this replaced the previous Capability Procedure from 1 October 2006).

The review of this procedure was subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment. For the purposes of the obligations under the Act, the ethnic backgrounds of the employees subject to these procedures are monitored.

The results of this analysis are included in Appendix 3 to the report, from which it can be identified that 14 employees where subject to the procedure in 2007/8. Of these 13 were of British and one from BME backgrounds. One of the 14 had declared a disability, and 10 employees where male compared to 4 females.

In all cases the employees were subject to this procedure due to the fact that they were experiencing difficulties in carrying out their job or significant element of their job due to a personal or professional lack of competence. A clear distinction is drawn in the procedure between poor performance due to capability (what someone cannot do even when trying their best) and poor performance due to a willful refusal or disinclination to work (what someone will not do) or a deliberately not doing work as directed. The former is a matter of competence and is dealt with under disciplinary procedures, and monitored in Section 7. In all of the cases in 2007/08 the issue was poor performance due to capability, and investigation indicates that this did not relate to either race, disability of gender.

Employees who are unhappy with the outcome of their Performance Appraisal are able to raise this under the Council’s Grievance Procedure, and therefore, any employee who believes that they have suffered detriment as a result of the appraisals is monitored and included in the information at Section 6.
9. The number of staff leaving the Authority for whatever reason.

To fulfil the obligations and duties under the Act, the Council must monitor the number of employees from each racial group who have left employment for whatever reason during the reporting period.

Included in Appendix 4 is information in respect of the leavers recorded during the period 1 April 2007 and 31 March 2008. From this information it can be identified that 918 employees left the employment of the Council during the twelve month period, compared to 821 in the previous year. Of these 16 (or 1.74%) were from BME backgrounds, which is a slightly higher proportionate to the percentage of the workforce that is indicated in Section 3.

In addition the Council monitors the feedback received by those employees who elect to participate in the Exit Interview Scheme (appendix 5). The number of leavers this year has increased, and the number of employees opting to participate in Exit Interviews has also increased to 163. When compared to the previous year the proportion of those increased number of leavers participating has in fact reduced at 17.75 %, compared with 152 (18.5%) in the previous year. The analysis of the ethnic background of the 163 employees who voluntarily elected to participate are included in Appendix 5. Of the total participation 3 employees were from Minority Ethnic Backgrounds (or 1.84% of the sample). This indicates that a higher proportion of the sample were from BME backgrounds than the proportion of leavers from the whole group. It is also an increase on the 0.65% of the sample from the previous year.

The issues raised are examined to identify whether or not there is any correlation between those issues and the ethnicity of the leaver, and to date no such correlation has been found.

Work will continue to encourage increased participation, given the lower number of employees leaving who volunteer to take part in Exit Interviews. Consideration has been given to making participation compulsory, however, this is not always practical given the timing of, and reason for, the termination of employment.

Because of the relatively low number of those employees voluntarily participating in the Exit Interview process, and to ensure that the information available in terms of the requirements to monitor is maximised a further extension to the approach has been adopted. The Equality BVPI's are monitored each month and this highlights those employees from BME backgrounds and/or who have a disability who leave. Since April 2007, departmental HR management is contacted in respect of all such employees identified as leaving, and they are asked to confirm the background to their termination. To date feedback received in respect of all cases has not highlighted any issues relating to either ethnicity of disability.

The gender mix of the 918 leavers is proportionate to that of the work force, i.e.. 28% male and 72% female, and approximately matches the mix identified in previous years.
The percentage of leavers who have declared disabilities (1.63%) is higher than that represented in the workforce (1.23%). The number leaving (15) is also lower than last year (19) and lower than the number of new employees declaring disabilities and new declarations from existing employees. This accounts for the increase in performance in terms of the outturn in respect of BVPI16a. The Council is maintaining its partnership with the Coalition for Disabled People which in some way accounts for this improvement in performance and these actions should be reflected by continuing improvements in performance of this indicator in future.

The analysis undertaken and represented in Appendix 4 includes a breakdown by Age Range of the 918 employees who have left the Council’s employment in 2007/08. The analysis shows a roughly even spread of leavers across the central four age bands, with a lower percentage in the younger and older bands. This matches the pattern identified when the first analysis was undertaken in respect of 2006/07.

When this is compared to the age makeup of the whole workforce, described in Appendix 9b, however, the higher percentage of leavers within these bands is representative of the higher percentage of the workforce within these bands.

This may change given that belief is that the Council’s workforce is generally ageing. The number of employees within the 65+ banding, as expected, has also increased as a result of the Council’s progressive decision not to adopt a default retirement age following the introduction of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations in October 2006. At March 2008 the number of employees within this band was 112 (1.35% of the workforce), compared to 105 (1.27%) in March 2007.

The Council’s position will continue to be monitored and reported on in future reports.
10. General Conclusions

The specific conclusions identified as a result of the monitoring of this information have been highlighted in each of the relevant sections.

Generally the ongoing monitoring and reporting of this information will ensure that the Council complies with its statutory responsibilities, meets the required standards of performance and achieves the targets detailed in its Equality Action Plan.

The information obtained will also be used by the Council to inform future planning and policy development. It will also be used by the Council to ensure that equality is promoted and that unlawful discrimination does not occur in the area of employment.

11. Publishing Results

Publishing the results of monitoring, impact assessments, and consultation

Progress against the Corporate Equality Action Plan is reported to the Council’s Executive in the quarterly Corporate Performance Management Report basis.

Annual Workforce Equality Monitoring Reports are reported to Chief Officers and Executive every spring. Annual Equality Progress Reports are reported to Chief Officers and Executive every autumn.

The Council’s decision-making processes are published upon the Council’s Website and include reports on Equality Impact Assessment. These are available to anyone who requests them.

The results of Service Function Equality Impact Assessments are published on the Council’s Website.

In line with normal requirements related to information for the public, information produced will be available in different formats on request. (Large print, on tape, translated, in Braille etc.)

In addition, the Council publishes an annual Service Equality Monitoring Report.

Your views are important to us

Comments concerning this document or St. Helens Council’s equality and diversity performance are very welcome.

You can send comments to us in the following ways

Email – contactcentre@sthelens.gov.uk

Phone - 01744 456 789

Or write to

Equality Lead, Human Resources, St. Helens Council, Town Hall, Victoria Square, St. Helens, Merseyside, WA10 1HP.