



NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

WORKFORCE MONITORING REPORT

2014

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1. Introduction

Northampton Borough Council celebrates the diversity of our town and the enrichment that a diverse society and workforce brings. We promote equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, and sexual orientation. This report provides data to help us understand the effectiveness of our policies and processes in promoting equality and by analysing the workforce data collected, we can better understand the impact on different groups, identify where there may be gaps and plan our future actions.

This report forms part of our duty to publish an analysis of our equality monitoring data in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

The report covers the period 1 June 2013 to 31 December 2013, this period was selected as it is representative of a period of stability in the levels of the workforce. Prior to this period, more than 200 employees were transferred out of the organisation to LGSS.

2. Methodology

Our aim in collecting workforce and equality monitoring data is to help us identify any patterns of inequality across all the equality strands, or discrimination within our workforce. Pie charts and bar graphs have been used to present the data, this enables us to easily identify any emerging trends and act accordingly. Where the data does not show any significant gaps and we cannot draw meaningful conclusions from it, we have provided limited commentary.

3. Collection of data

Workforce data is collected and stored in the main HR electronic system and is analysed by the HR Service and Quality Team within LGSS.

Monitoring reports on the composition of the workforce have been produced at a Council wide and service area level. Comparator data has been used from the 2011 Census. Using this comparator data allows NBC and all the service areas to establish a baseline for the composition of the workforce, enabling the targeting of future workforce development and identification of diversity issues to support development of equality action plans.

This report includes an analysis of the overall workforce by each of the equality strands.

4. Northampton, the Town

Northampton is the largest District Authority in the UK. At the 2011 Census Northampton's population had reached 212,100. By 2012 ONS mid-year population estimates report a total population of 214,600 and a population aged 16-64 (2012) of 140,900 (65.7%).

Unemployment in Northampton was 8.4% between October 2012 and September 2013 against a national figure of 7.7%.¹

5. Establishment Data

As at 31 December 2013, NBC employed 599 people, of which 486 worked on a full-time basis (representing 81% of the workforce). This figure includes people on fixed-term contracts. If we compare this to the number of full-time v part-time employees in 2012/13 (80%) the percentage difference is negligible.

2011 Census data shows that of those that are employed, 76% are full-time. This demonstrates that NBC are below the norm in terms of people taking up part-time opportunities, this is despite family friendly policies and opportunities for part-time working. Details on how this impact on the gender balance of the workforce is shown in Figure 1 below.

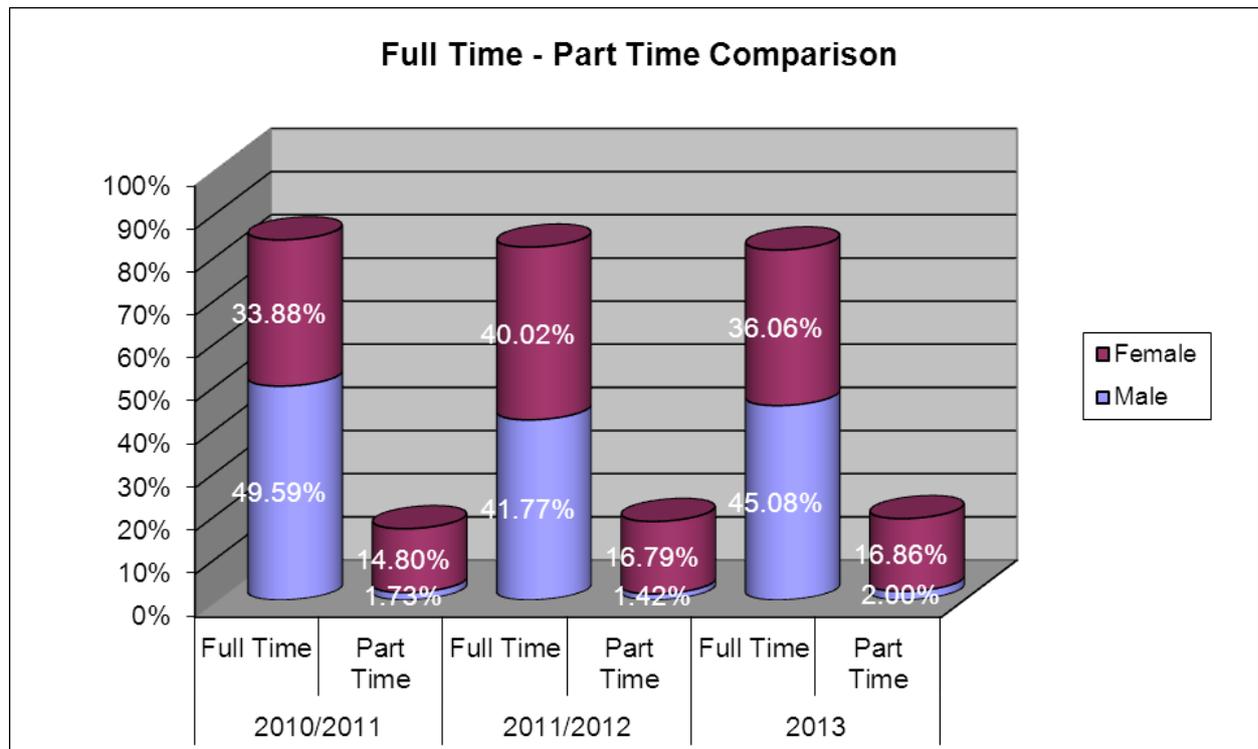


Figure 1 – Full-time/Part-time by Gender

¹ Source: Nomis Local authority profile for Northampton
<http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157159/report.aspx>

The HR electronic system enables the capture of employee data for monitoring purposes against the following protected characteristics:

- ❖ Age
- ❖ Disability
- ❖ Gender reassignment
- ❖ Marriage and Civil partnership
- ❖ Pregnancy and Maternity
- ❖ Race
- ❖ Religion and Belief
- ❖ Sex
- ❖ Sexual orientation

The quality of the data held is dependent on the willingness of employees to provide the information and their need to feel confident that the integrity of the data will be preserved and the data will only be used for monitoring purposes.

In order to reflect the community we serve, we must understand how the community is made up. By looking at the profile nationally and locally, we are able to see emerging trends that could inform workforce development plans. Consideration of Northampton town's profile will help to show if we are effectively reflecting the community.

6. Age

It is well recognised that the UK has an ageing population and the age profile of Northampton Borough Council reflects this, with the highest number of employees in the age group of 40 to 49 years, shown in Figure 2a below. In addition, an analysis of the workforce age profile at NBC for 2013 has identified that the current levels of 50 year olds and over has already exceeded the workforce estimates made by the DWP for 2020 nationally, which means that by 2020, over 60% of our workforce will be 50 years old or over.

Some service areas have an age profile that may affect their ability to deliver a service now or in the near future, the age breakdown for the larger service areas is shown in Figure 2b below.

The removal of the Default Retirement Age could mean that more and more employees are remaining at work for longer. This would mean greater flexibility is required to accommodate potential changing working patterns as more and more employees' request part-time working.

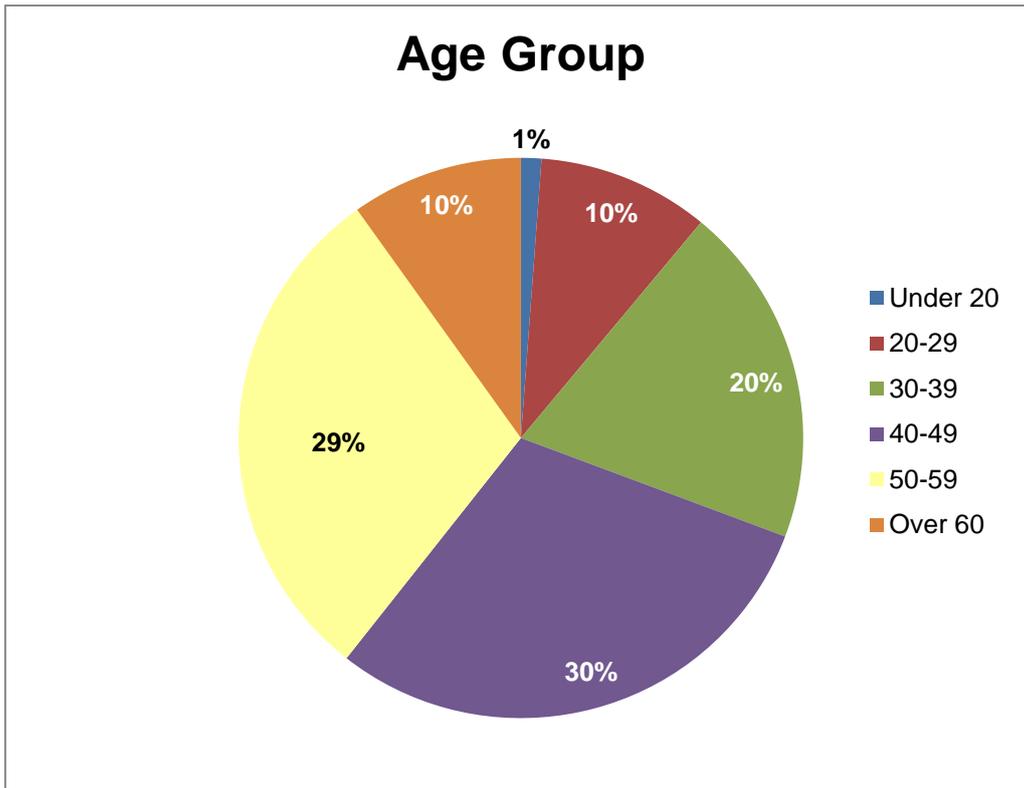


Figure 2a - Age group NBC

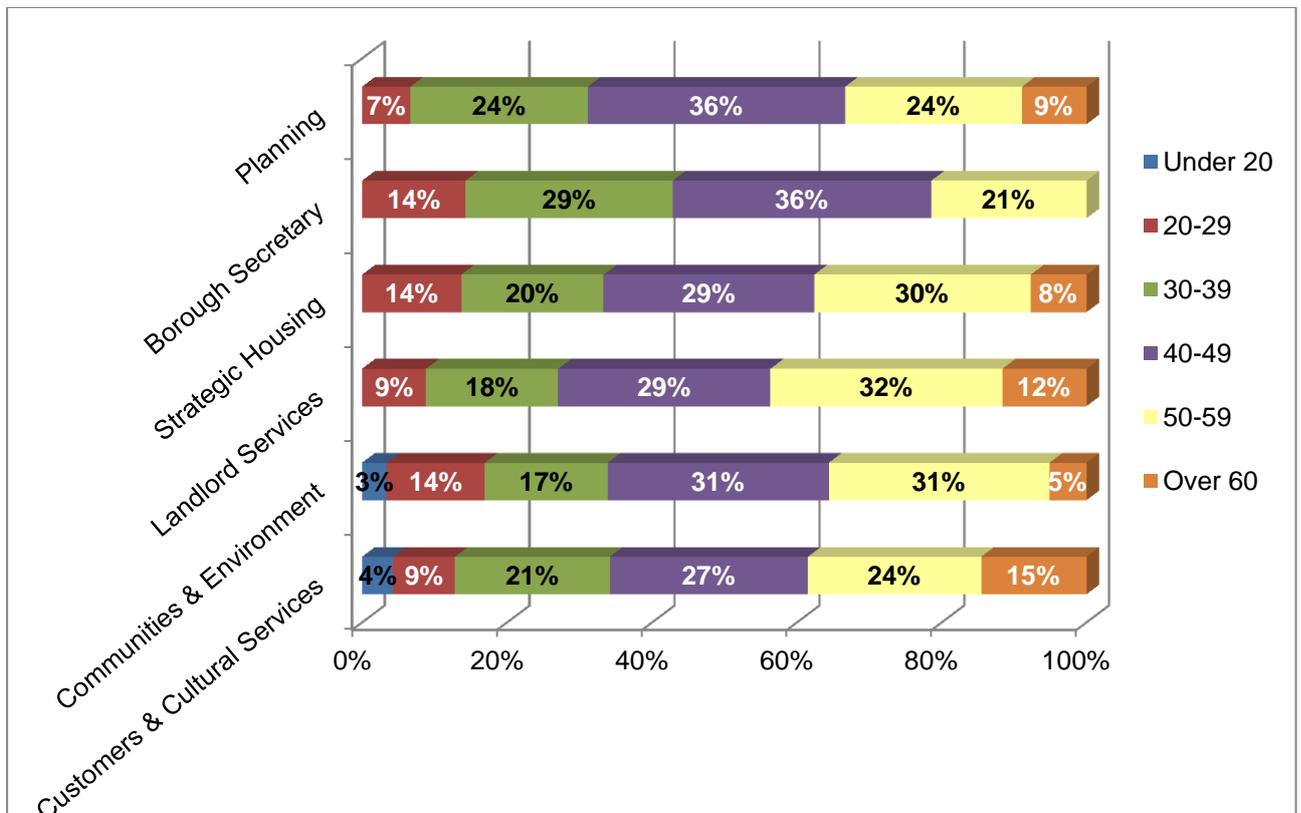


Figure 2b - Age group by Service Area

This emerging pattern must be taken into account in workforce planning, services will need to consider how they can assist employees to remain fully productive until they decide to leave work and also think about how they will manage to retain the knowledge, skills and experience of this valuable pool of workers.

7. Religion and Beliefs

The 2011 Census data for Northampton has been used to compare the Religion and Beliefs breakdown for employees at Northampton Borough Council.

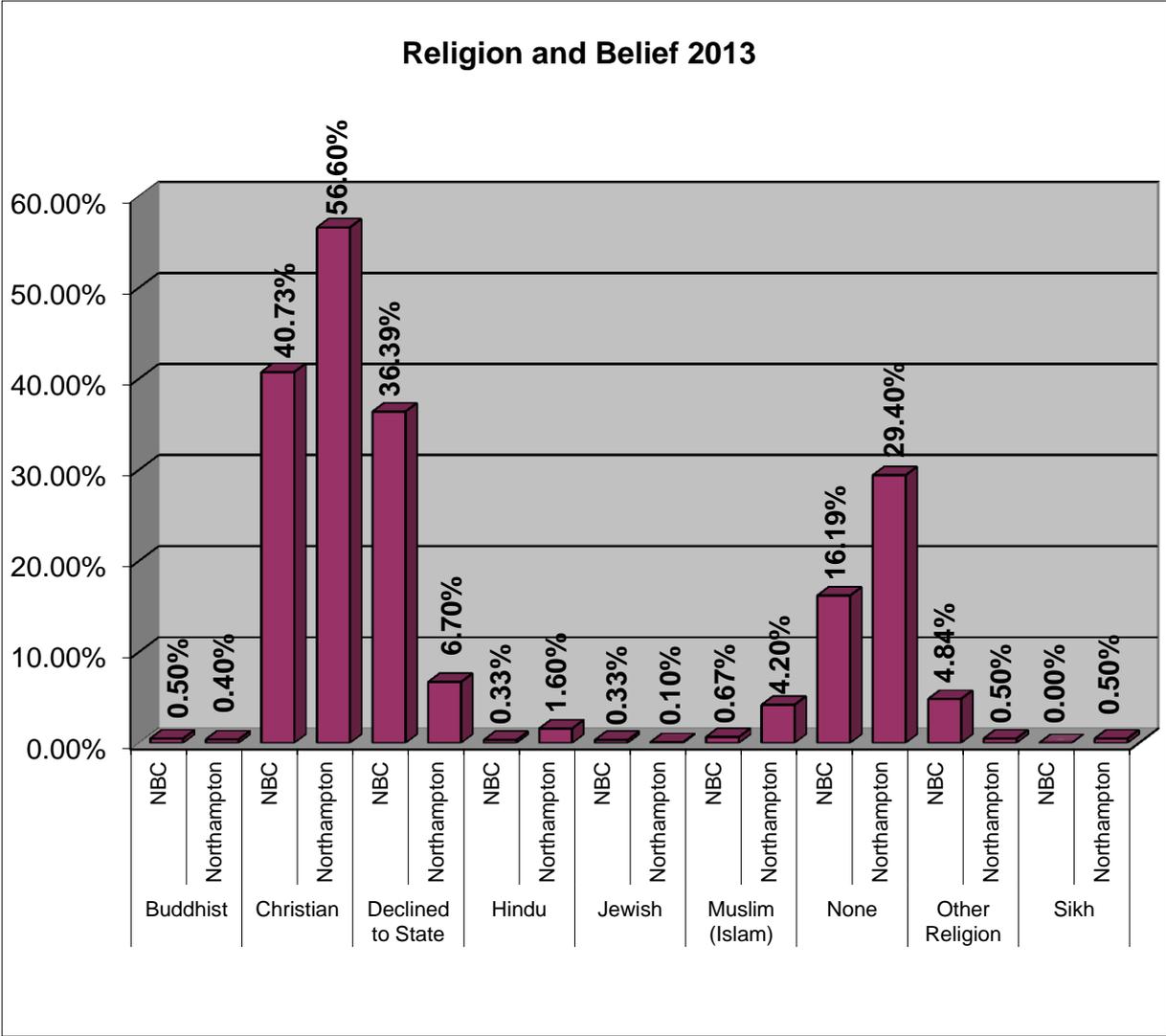


Figure 3 – Religion and Beliefs for NBC and Northampton

This graph shows that NBC have a lower percentage of employees declaring the religion and belief as Christian than Northampton as a whole, but there is still a high percentage of employees who declined to state their religion and belief.

Note: "Not Stated" combines Declined to Answer and Did Not Answer

8. Marriage and Civil partnership

The Office of National Statistics, Neighbourhood Statistics for 2011 indicate that in Northampton only 0.09% of households declared to be in a same-sex civil partnership. In NBC, 0.14% of the workforce declared they were in a same-sex civil partnership, much higher than the percentage for Northampton.

9. Race

According to 2011 Census data 15.5% of people are from an ethnic group other than White.

For NBC, the percentage of employees who declared their origin as White (including White British, White Irish, Other White Background) is 67.11%. For Asian employees (including Bangladeshi, Indian, and Other Asian) the percentage is 1.17%; Black (including Black African, Black Caribbean, and Other Black) the percentage is 2.87%; Mixed origin, (including White & Black Caribbean, White & Asian and Other Mixed) the percentage is 1.00%; and Chinese & Other (including Chinese and Other Ethnic Group) the percentage is 0.67%.

If you compare these figures locally and regionally using the 2011 Census data, you can see that NBC are below the percentage figure for all ethnic groups. It needs to be borne in mind that 27.21% of NBC employees did not wish to declare their ethnicity, or answer the question, therefore the makeup of this group cannot be determined, which could potentially shift the categories in either direction.

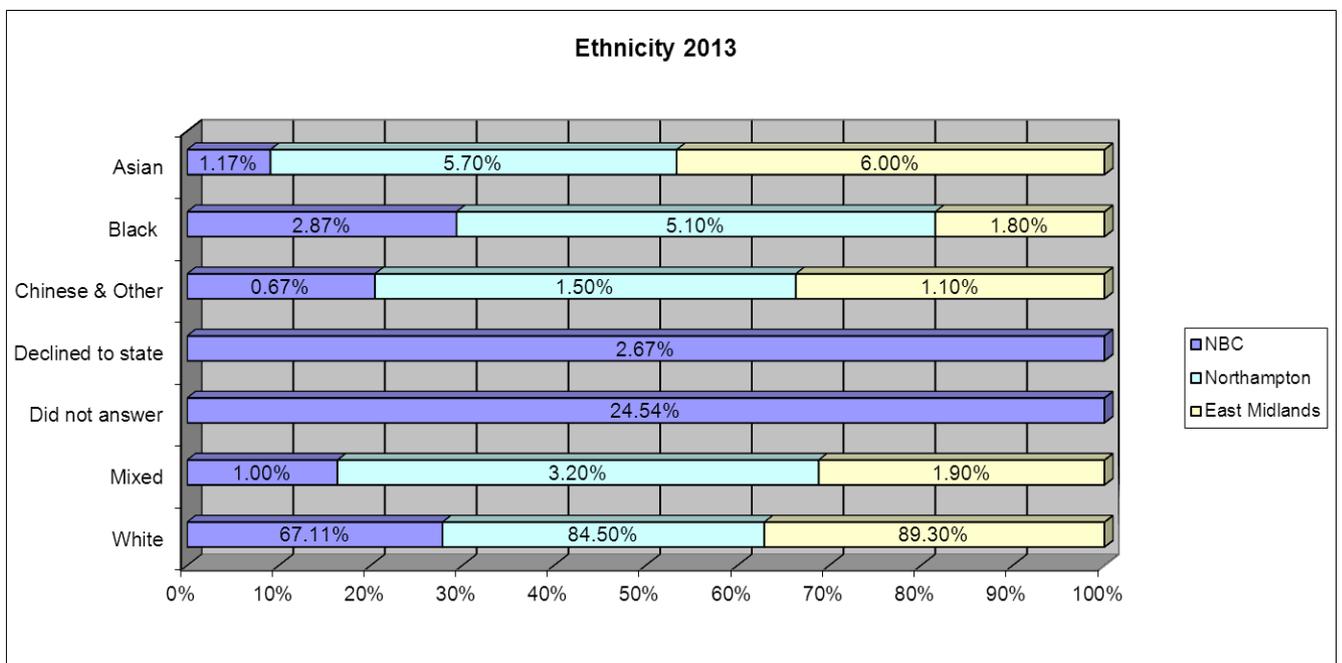


Figure 4 - Comparison of ethnicity in NBC against Northampton and East Midlands

10. Sexual Orientation

In 2012, 1.5% of adults in the UK identified themselves as Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual (LGB)². In NBC, 1.17% of the workforce declared they were LGB, significantly close to the ONS figure, but much lower than the Stonewall national estimate of between 5% and 7%.

Plans are in place to utilise resources and work closely with the Stonewall Charity to identify ways of encouraging this group to openly participate. NBC took part in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index 2014 and were ranked 232 out of 369 authorities with a score of 100 out of a potential 200. A follow-up meeting took place between NBC and Stonewall to establish what actions need to be undertaken to improve the experience of our LGB employees. It is hoped that this work will influence an improved score in coming years.

11. Disability

The Office of National Statistics information analysed show that the percentage of the population aged 16-64 of Northampton, between October 2012 and September 2013 who were disabled was 19.1%.³ Only 2.50% of our workforce declared that they have a disability. This is below average when compared to Northampton as whole and more work needs to be done with this protected group. Also consideration needs to be given to the fact that 22.37% of the workforce declined to state or did not answer this question at all.

Nevertheless Northampton Borough Council has been recognised by Job Centre Plus with the “Positive About Disabled People” symbol for commitment regarding the recruitment, employment, retention, training and career development of disabled employees.

12. Gender reassignment

There is no local data about the number of Transgendered people living in Northampton to use as a comparison. From a workforce perspective, our HR electronic system has been amended to include a “transgender” category.

13. Sex

The male/female split of the workforce in 2011/2012 was 43% male and 57% female. In the current period the split has moved towards a more even split of 47% male and 53% female.

14. Diversity monitoring of training

NBC gained the IIP accreditation in 2010, and the accreditation has been maintained in 2013 demonstrating commitment to investing in our people.

² Source: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/integrated-household-survey/integrated-household-survey/january-to-december-2012/stb-integrated-household-survey-january-to-december-2012.html>

³ Source: Nomis Labour Market Profile Northampton 2012 estimate

Data is held on employees attending training courses throughout the year, but this does not include diversity data and therefore cannot be monitored for equality purposes. Future developments of the HR system may enable training data to be held in the main HR electronic system and this data would then form part of the analysis for this report.

15. Equal Pay

A Pay and Grading Review was completed in 2010/2011. An equality impact assessment was carried out to determine the impact of the new pay structure on the following diversity strands:

- Sexual orientation – the results did not yield any statistically significant information
- Disability – the results did not yield any statistically significant information
- Ethnicity – the results did not yield any statistically significant information
- Gender – the results have shown that at almost every grade, the pay movement for men and women is towards 0 (equal) after assimilation into the new grading structure. At almost every grade, the pay movement is towards 0 (equal) through either a loss or gain in average pay across the grade. The expectation is that incremental gain would eliminate any further major disparity. The exception is Grade 10 where the gap widens marginally.

16. Pay Policy Statement

Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires English and Welsh local authorities to produce a pay policy statement for 2012/13 and for each financial year after that. This has been produced for the year 2013/2014 and is published on the Council's website.

The statement must articulate an authority's own policies towards a range of issues relating to the pay of its workforce, particularly its senior staff (or 'chief officers') and its lowest paid employees; it predominantly includes a policy on:-

- (a) The level and elements of remuneration for each Chief Officer;
- (b) The remuneration of the lowest paid employees;
- (c) The relationship between remuneration of Chief Officers and other officers and
- (d) Other specific aspects of Chief Officer remuneration, fees and charges and other discretionary payments.

The statement is intended to include issues in relation to fairness and transparency and will be built upon in future years in order to be as meaningful as possible.

17. Recruitment

Responsibility for recruitment is devolved to managers who are required to undertake equalities training. All permanent vacancies are advertised internally and externally in parallel. Adverts can be accessed through the internet and through specialist sources such as professional magazines and newspapers, where appropriate. Adverts direct people who may have difficulty applying on-line for jobs to alternative ways of accessing our vacancies and this opens up opportunities for the harder to reach communities. The electronic recruitment system used at NBC meets level 2 of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). Level 2 sets out parameters that web developers should satisfy otherwise some groups will find it difficult to access the Web content. Conformance to this level is described as *AA* or *Double-A*.

The methods adopted to address diversity issues at NBC in resourcing strategies are comparable with best practice identified in the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development's Annual Report 2013 on Resourcing and Talent Management. This includes monitoring recruitment to obtain data, training interviewers on diversity issues, operating policies that go beyond the basic legislative requirements, advertising vacancies to under-represented groups and making attempts to employ long-term unemployed by working closely with the local job centres.

Recruitment statistics for the period 1 June 2013 to 31 December 2013 are shown in the following graphs:

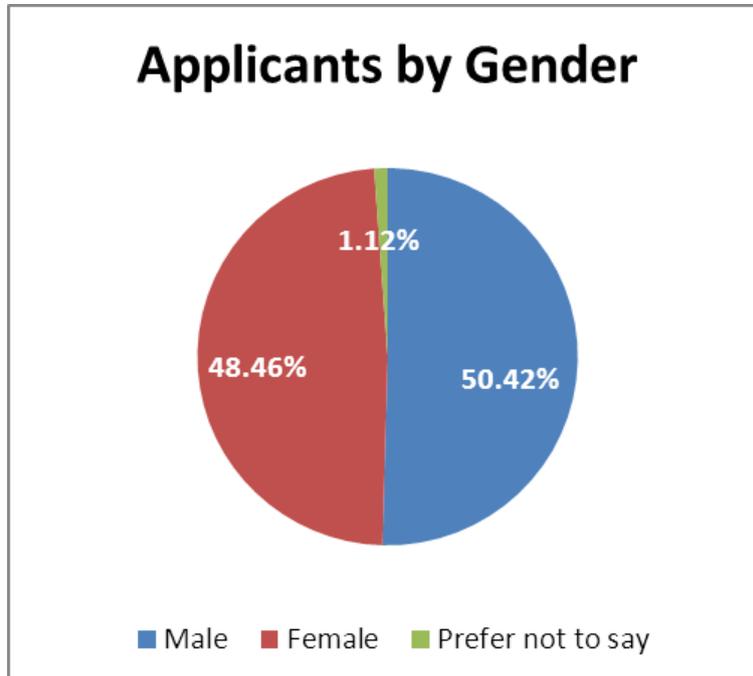


Figure 5 - Applicants by Gender

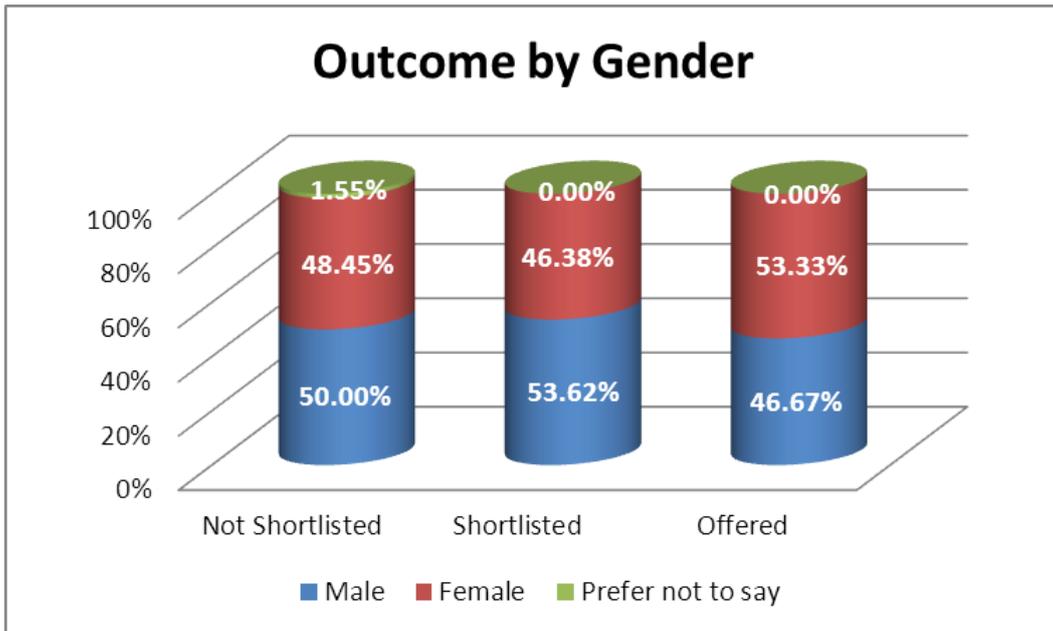


Figure 6 - Outcome by Gender

The gender split across the outcomes is comparable to the split of applicants. The roles advertised, during the period, were predominantly full-time roles and of varying levels within the Council. An analysis of the data does not show any significant issues that need to be addressed.

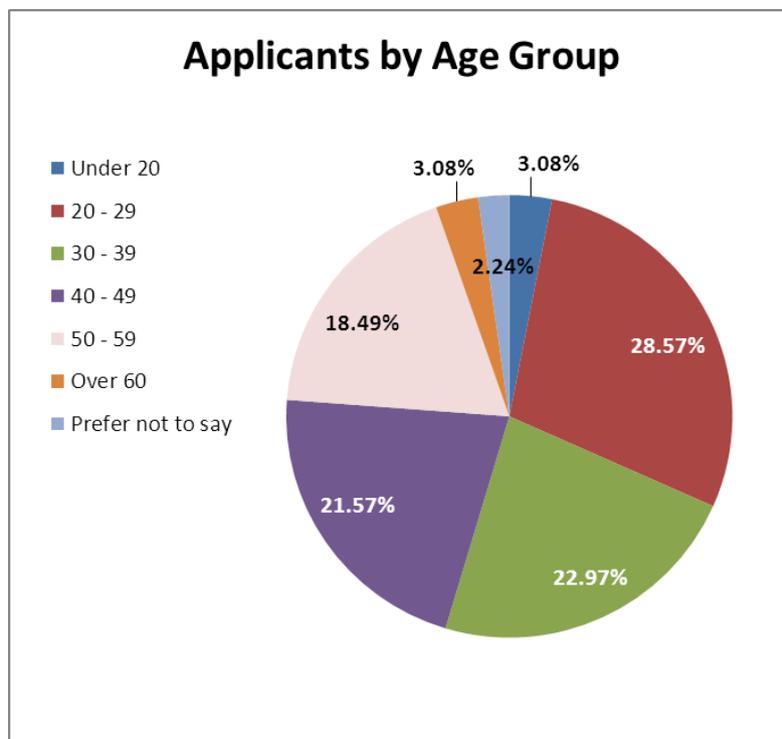


Figure 7 – Applicants by Age Group

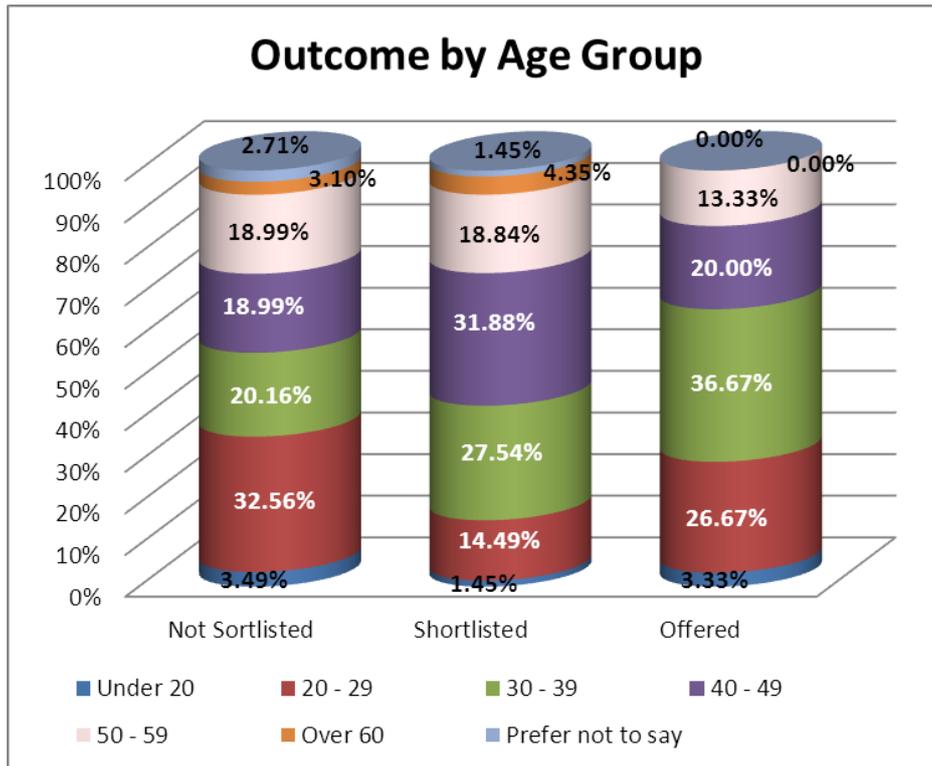


Figure 8 - Outcome by Age Profile

The age profile of successful candidates identifies that more 30-39 year olds are successful at applying for jobs at NBC, but no significant age related equality issues were identified.

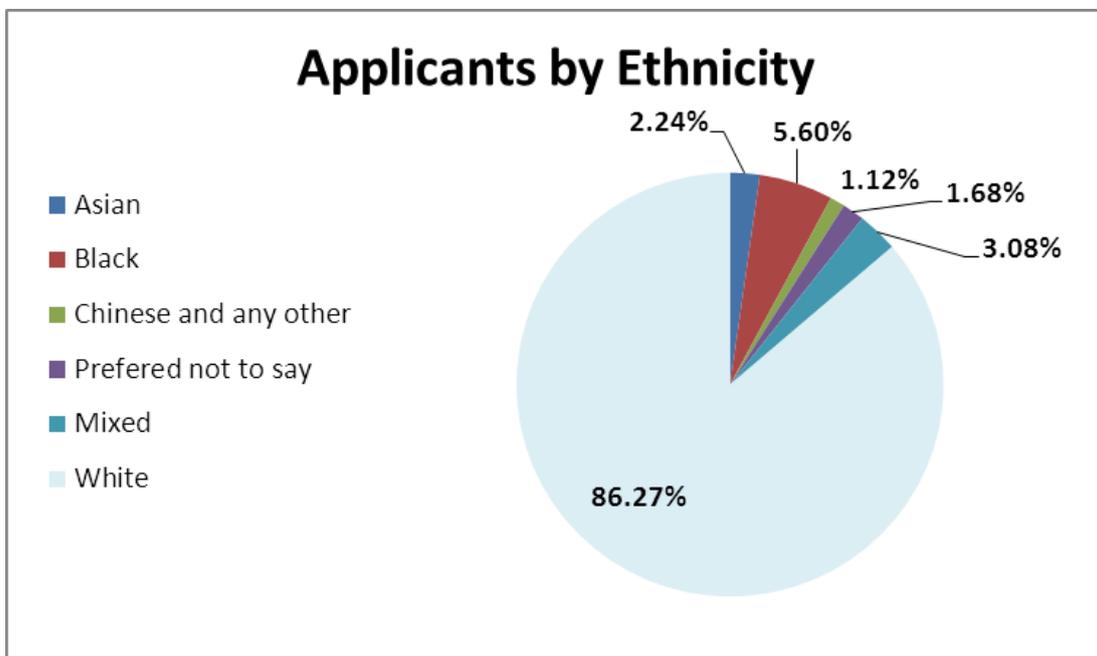


Figure 9 – Applicants by Ethnicity

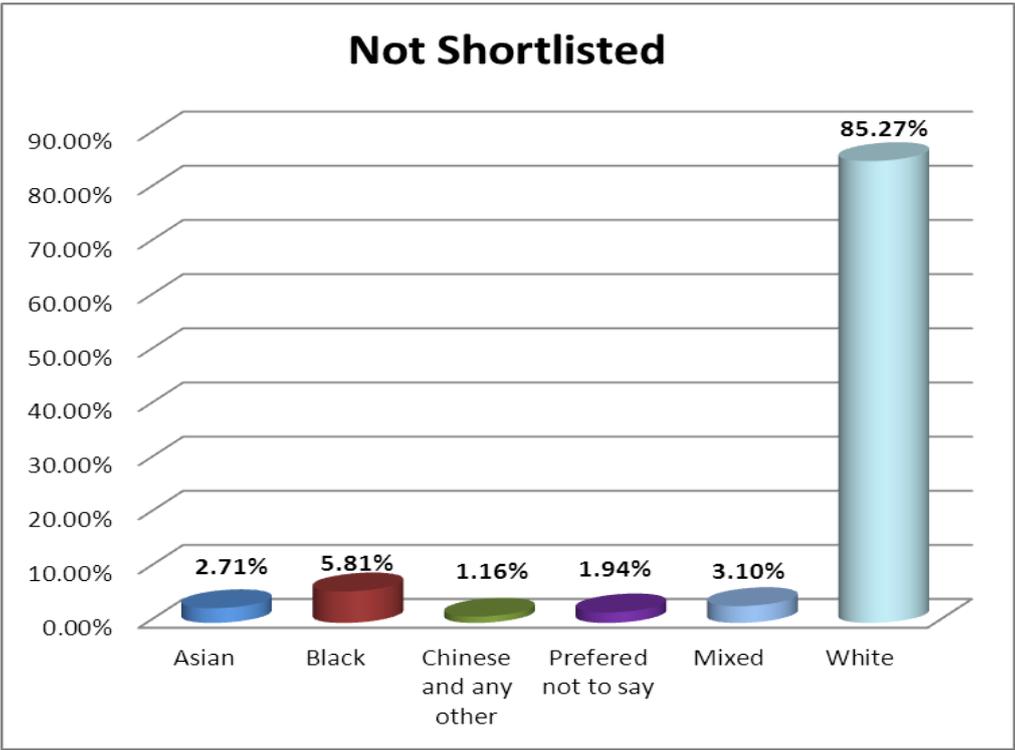


Figure 10 – Not Shortlisted by Ethnicity

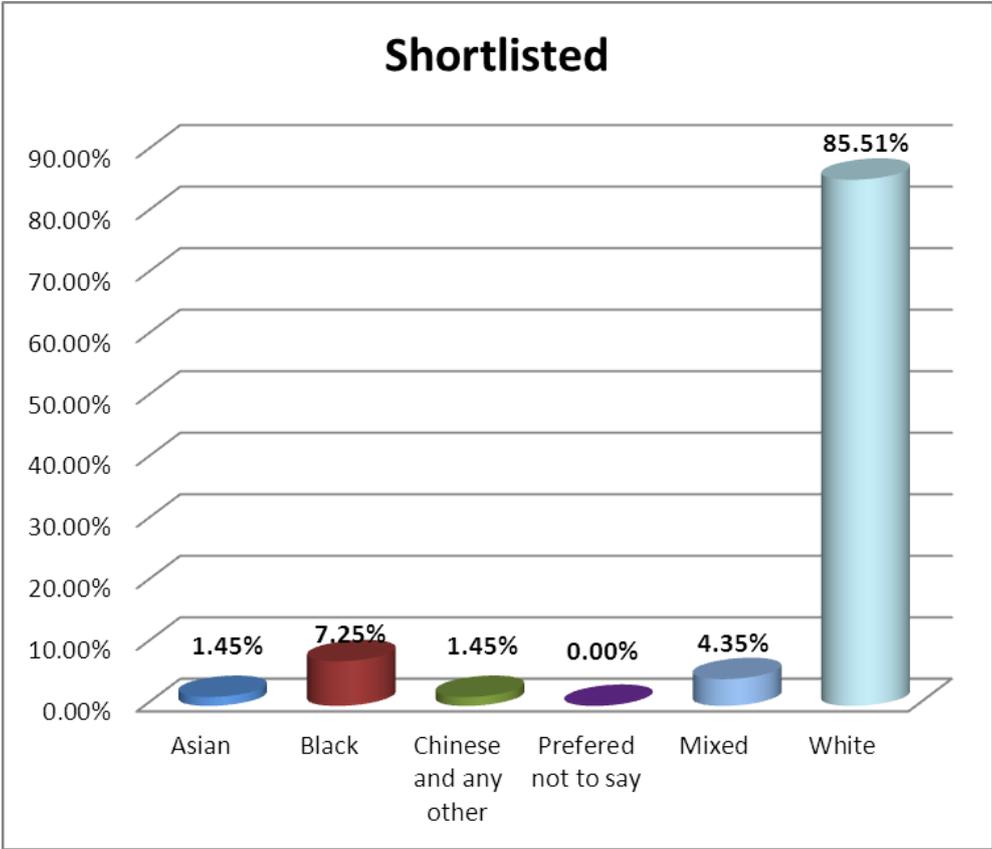


Figure 11 - Shortlisted by Ethnicity

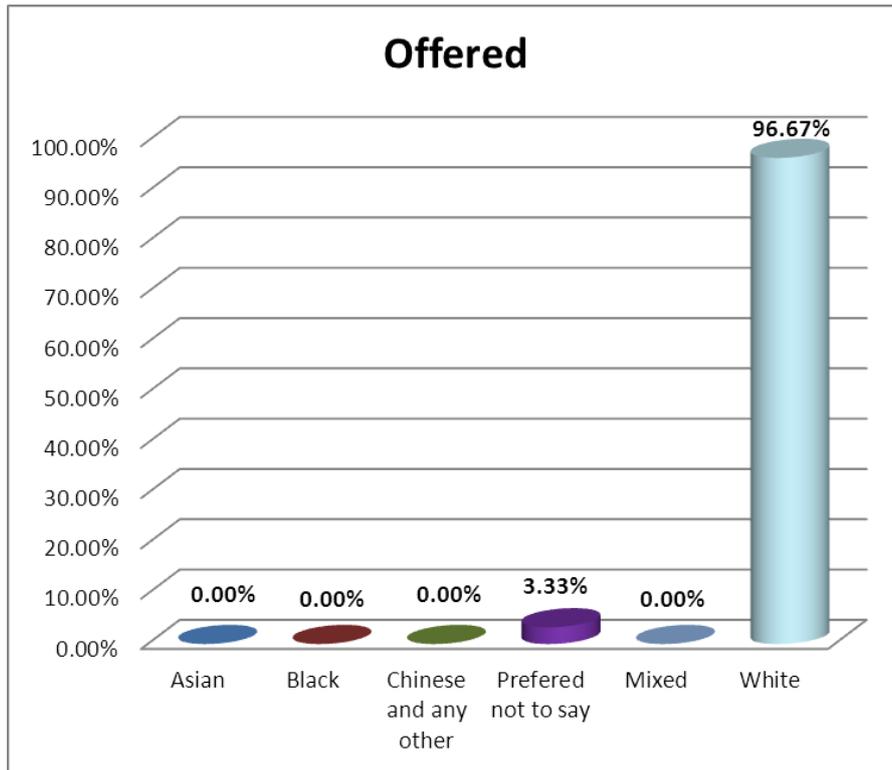


Figure 12 - Offered by Ethnicity

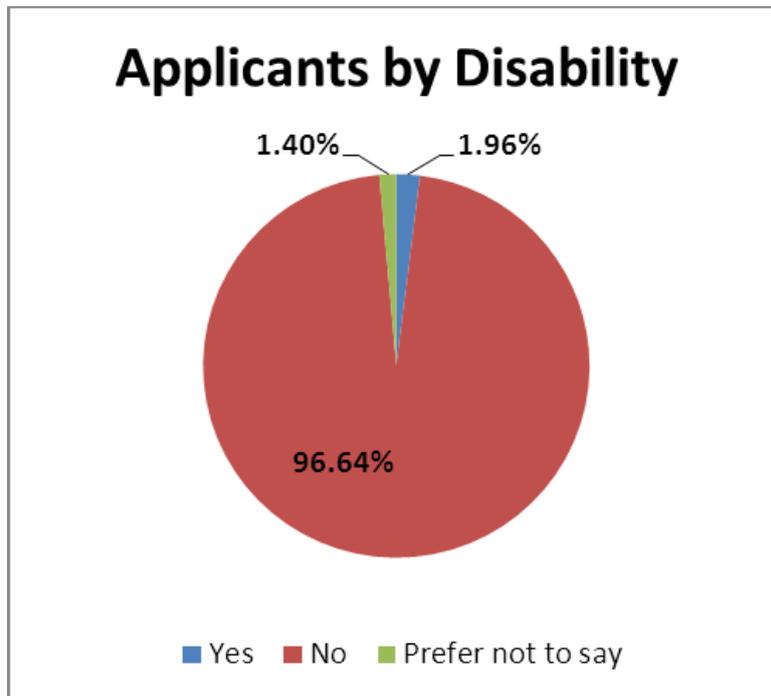


Figure 13 - Applicants by Disability

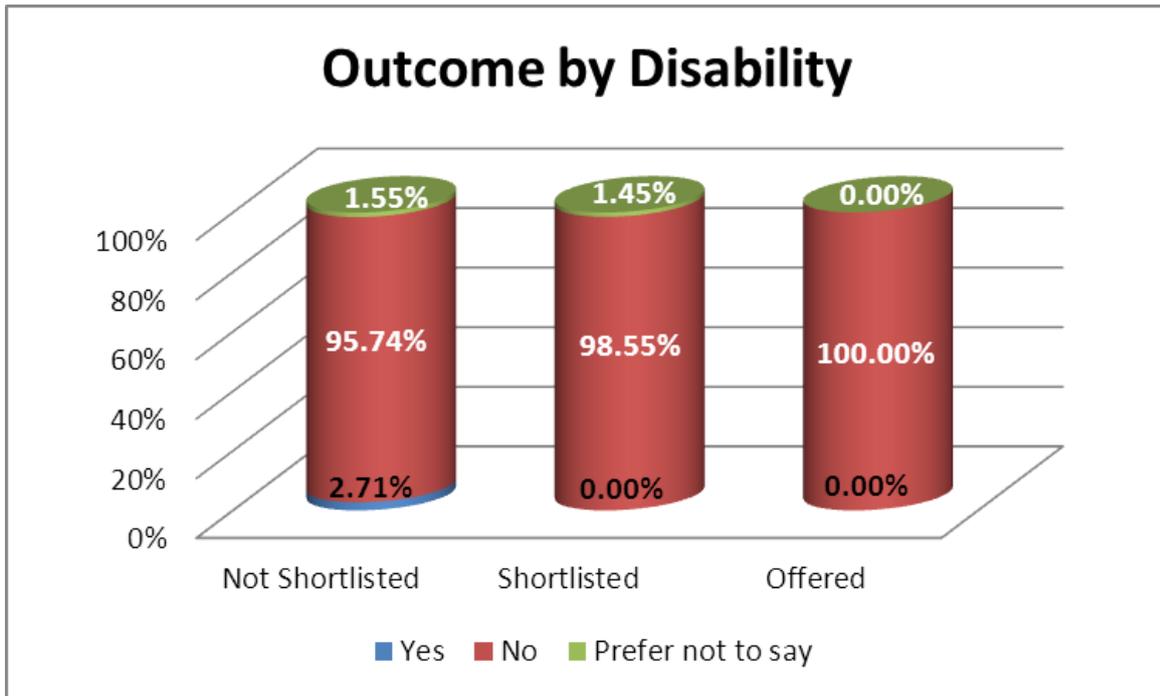


Figure 14 - Outcome by Disability

The proportion of disabled applicants who were attracted to apply for roles at NBC was small and is reflected in the successful candidate figures. However, as the numbers are so small in comparison to the total workforce, we cannot draw any significant conclusions from this.

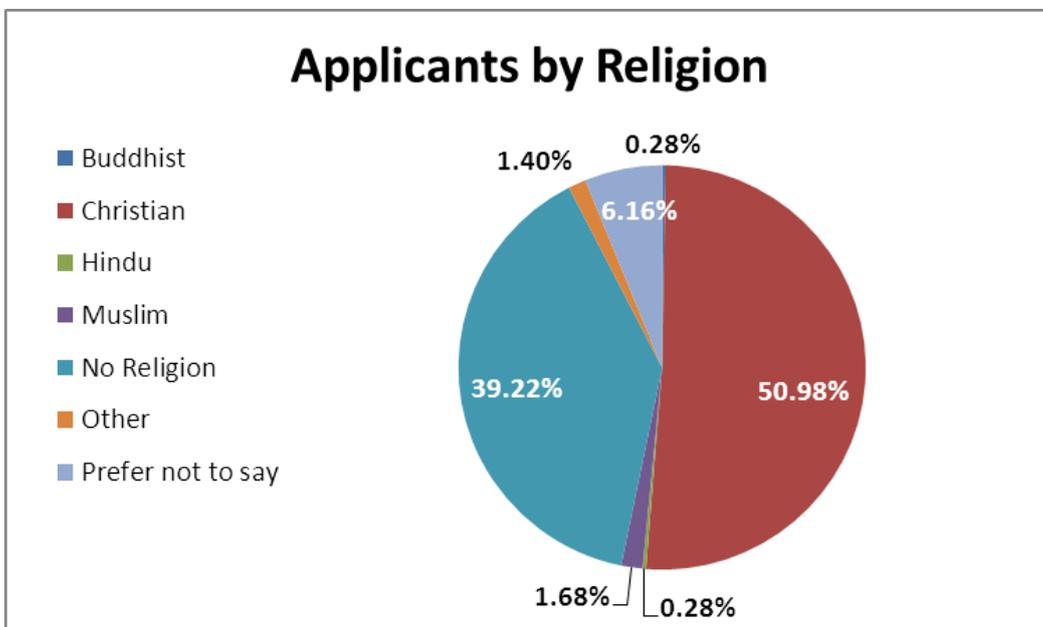


Figure 15 - Applicants by Religion and Beliefs

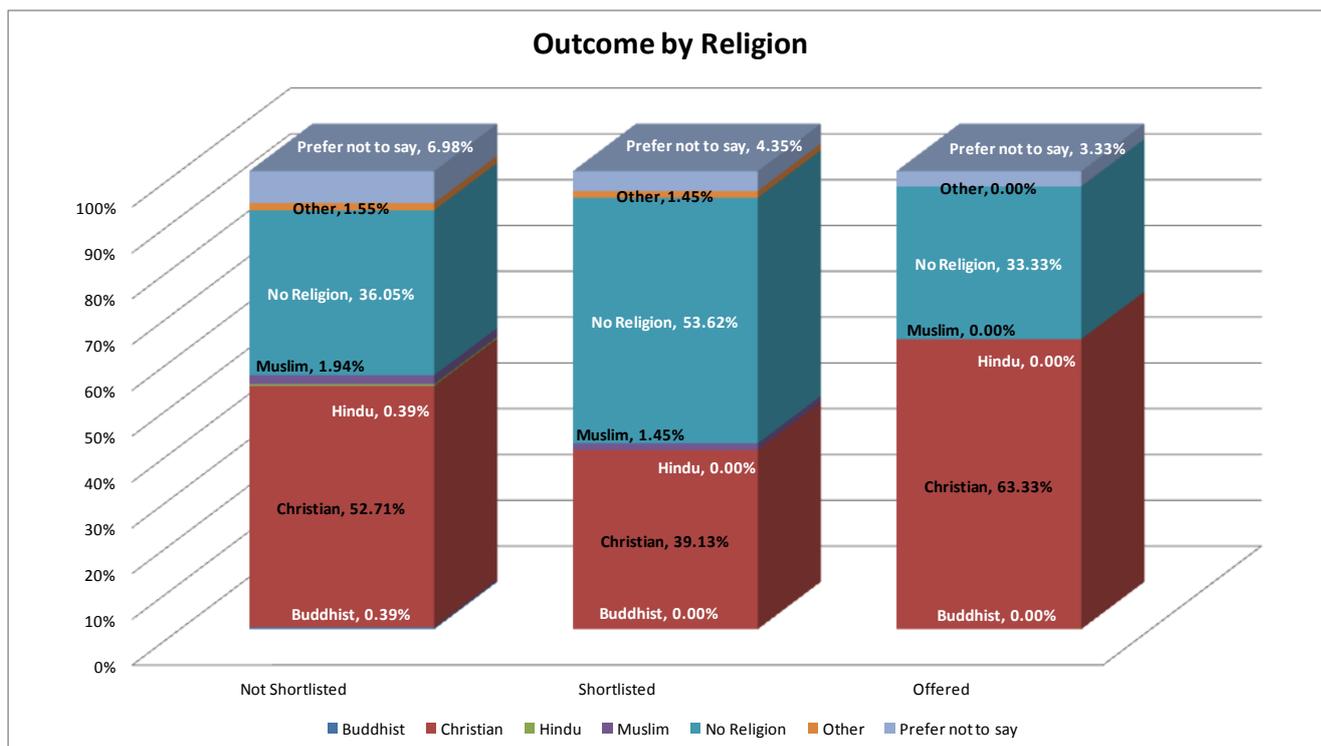


Figure 16 - Outcome by Religion and Belief

18. Employee Opinion Survey 2013

This year's employee opinion survey was an improvement from the previous year in terms of response rate at 59% compared to 52% previously. It is anticipated that due to the high level of response that the results are a fair representation of employees views. Detailed analysis of the results will be released in Spring 2014.

19. Policies/procedures

All policies/procedures are consulted upon at an early stage and are monitored to establish how they are affecting staff with different protected characteristics and to eliminate discrimination.

19.1 Sickness absence management

Work is continuing to reduce the days lost due to sickness across the Council. Levels of sickness absence are reported monthly to the NBC Management Board at service area level; this allows sickness hot spots to be closely monitored.

Only one employee was dismissed from the Council for reasons of ill health during the reporting period.

19.2 Pregnancy and Maternity

Sixteen women who were due to return from maternity leave during the period 2012/2013 returned to work, giving a 100% return rate.

19.3 Disciplinary

Only one employee was dismissed from the Council for reasons of gross misconduct during the reporting period.

19.4 Grievance

There were five grievances raised under the Council's Grievance Procedure during the reporting period. The subject the claims related to are detailed below:

- 2 x Communication / Process
- 1 x Absence / Special Leave policy
- 1 x Changes to Terms and Conditions
- 1 x Line Management (Lack of Support)

There were no grievances relating to claims of Bullying / Harassment or Discrimination.

20. Values and behaviours

The NBC values and behaviours were further imbedded via the appraisal process. This represents a culture shift for the organisation, focussing more on customers, both internally and externally, and how employees do their job as well as achieving results. Inherent in this is consideration for the impact of employees' own actions or behaviours on people from different cultures and backgrounds and adjusting accordingly, also to challenge stereotypes, not make assumptions about others and challenge inappropriate behaviour of others.

21. Workforce planning

The HR service assists NBC service areas to understand what influences employment decisions in their areas in the future and how this may change the skills set and qualifications needed in their workforce. With the current economic climate and local government having to make significant cuts to achieve savings, a review of the workforce is part of the annual service planning process.

22. Turnover

Turnover is the percentage of employees who leave employment with an organisation in a given period, for the purpose of this report a six month period. It is a crude measure used by the Private and Public sectors and can pin point problem areas.

The turnover rate is calculated by using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of leavers over the year}}{\text{Average total number employed over the year}} \times 100$$

For NBC during the reporting period the turnover rate is 10.93%, which is slightly higher than the national average turnover figure for public sector of 9.4% as reported by the CIPD for 2013.

Figure 17 below shows turnover by Directorate, the percentages shown in green are below the national average, those in orange are within 1% tolerance of the national average, and those shown in red are above the national average.

The highest turnover is 40% in the Chief Executive, but this is due to the low headcount in the department. Other Directorates with high turnover are predominantly due to low headcount. Other reasons for high turnover are the nature of the jobs, for example, it is widely recognised that call-centre operations historically have high turnover due to the nature of the jobs.

The analysis of the turnover figures for NBC does not show any statistically significant concerns.

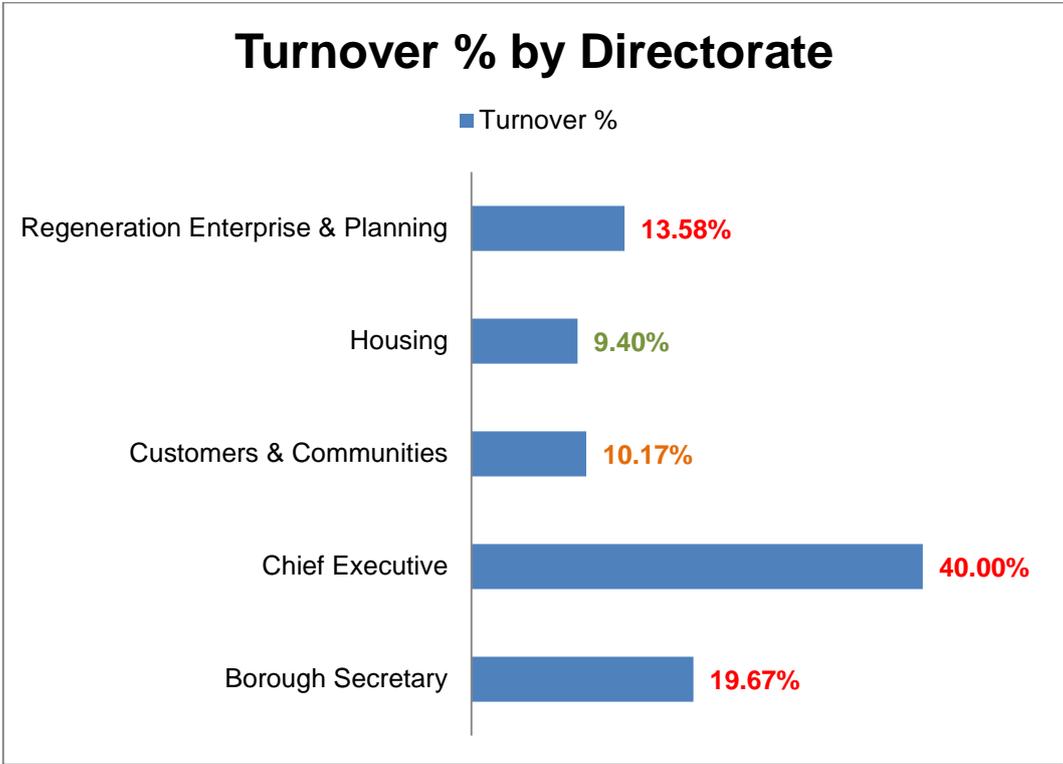


Figure 17 – Turnover by Directorate

As in previous years, the majority of turnover is due to employees leaving voluntarily. For this reporting period 50 employees left voluntarily out of the total of 69 leavers. The voluntary reasons and numbers are below, figure 18 shows the breakdown of leavers between voluntary and non-voluntary for the Directorates:

37 voluntary resignations 2 retirees
 11 voluntary redundancies

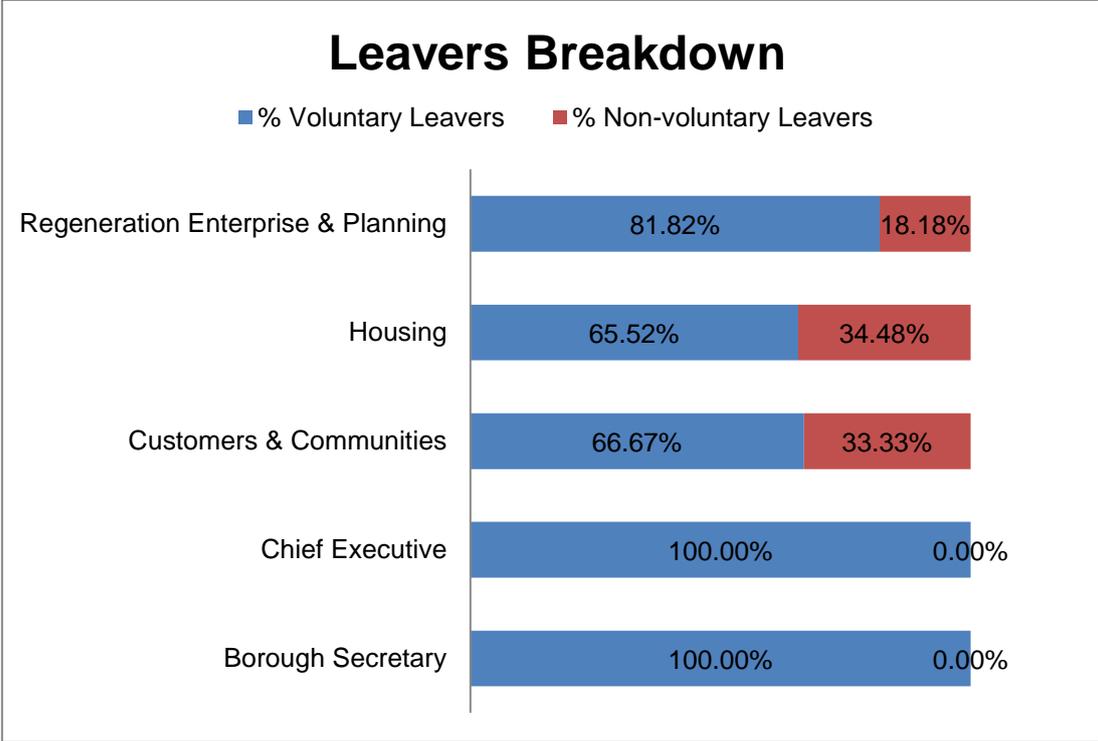


Figure 18 – Leavers Breakdown by Directorate

23. Looking forward

In the labour market, unemployment remained high through 2011/12. Figures from the Office for National Statistics show that the unemployment rate was 8.2 per cent of the economically active population for January-March 2012, down 0.2 on the quarter. There were 2.63 million unemployed people, down 45,000 on the quarter. Public sector budget cuts will put a stronger focus on developing talent in-house and retaining rather than recruiting talent to reduce reliance on agencies and external consultants. The availability of vacancies is also going to further reduce due to the abolition of the Default Retirement Age. The Government’s initiative to boost youth employment and provide extra support for apprenticeships will help to alleviate some issues, but how far this will go to meet our future skill requirements remains to be seen. This is why workforce planning is so important and corporately, this is needed to identify the skills set for the future, where these are going to be available from and how these can be attracted to work for NBC.

24. A modern and diverse workforce

In terms of achieving a better outcome for our people, NBC now have in place processes that deliver better equality outcomes for the whole workforce. This is evidenced by the development of the electronic recruitment portal, which enables easier access to vacancies across the whole county. The portals is accessed via the internet and in the One Stop Shop PCs are available to allow the general public free access to all vacancy information across the County.

Diversity monitoring has improved and the HR service is able to analyse and identify where there may be potential for discrimination, or detriment to protected groups.

The overall employee satisfaction levels across all staff groups is expected to remains high in this year's employee opinion survey results.

25. Future actions to improve equality monitoring

As a result of the workforce analysis for 2013, NBC can clearly see where improvements are required and where there is the need to deliver better outcomes for our people. Below are some of the planned improvements:

- a. We will further develop the HR system to enable self-service collection of diversity data estimated by 2014/15.
- b. We will continue to validate any selection tests used in the recruitment process to ensure they are reliable and culture-free.
- c. We will continue to monitor and review the eRecruitment process to ensure we eradicate the potential for discrimination in recruitment.
- d. We will analyse the results of this year's Employee Opinion Survey and action plan any improvements needed in workplace inclusion by the end of 2014.
- e. We will continue to build upon the Pay Policy Statement in order that it is as meaningful and transparent as possible.
- f. We will review the Dignity at Work framework to ensure it is fit for purpose by monitoring instances of bullying and harassment; the review will include an equality analysis.
- g. Use the findings from the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index benchmarking to inform equality actions across all areas.