



Reading Borough Council

Equality Audit

2019 - 2020

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1 Overview

Reading Borough Council strives to be an inclusive and fair employer. The analysis of our workforce profile in relation to equalities is central to making sure that this happens. This report provides an overview of the range of people in the council and serves as an evidence base to inform the council's equalities objectives, which form part of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010). The information contained in this document is also reported to the council's Personnel Committee.

The council actively encourages individuals from all protected characteristics' groups¹ to be part of its team and highly values people's individual skills and talents. The information included in this report is also used to understand whether the council's workforce reflects the demographic of the wider community and, if not, how inroads can be made to achieve this over time. Understanding the profile of employees also means that appropriate support and solutions can be delivered.

This report will be updated on an annual basis and the information provided is based on the last complete financial year (2019/20), unless otherwise indicated.

2 Vacancies, applicants, leavers and maternity leave

2.1 Vacancies and applicants

The average number of vacancies advertised per month from April 2019 to March 2020 has increased significantly compared to levels in previous years.

Vacancies and applicants	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Average number of vacancies advertised per month	8.3	14	25
Number of applicants	812	2339	5433

The ethnic diversity amongst applicants has decreased slightly; in part this may be due to an increased number who have chosen not to state their ethnic origin. The number of White British applicants has remained consistent over the last two years.

Ethnic origin	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	61.2%	53.4%	53.5%
White Other	7.8%	8.7%	10.3%
Mixed/multiple	3.2%	4.0%	4.5%
Asian/Asian British	14.5%	18.0%	15.5%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	10.5%	12.4%	9.6%
Other ethnic group	0.6%	0.7%	1.3%
No value (Prefer not to say)	2.2%	2.7%	5.2%

¹ Equality Act 2010 – The 'protected characteristics' include: race, age, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership.

The younger age structure of applicants reflects that this age group is more likely to be looking for work and that older people tend to be more settled in their working life. This increase in younger applicants is also reflected in the staff that have recently joined the council.

Age range	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
16 to 29	34.6%	30.8%	35.0%
30 to 44	34.1%	41.3%	37.5%
45 to 59	25.6%	22.6%	19.6%
60 to 64	4.8%	4.1%	2.6%
65 to 74	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%
75 and over	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
No value (Prefer not to say)	0.2%	0.7%	4.7%

The Council still attracts more applications from women than men, however these numbers are now more closely aligned than in 2018/19 with almost equal proportions of applications from men and women in 2019/20.

Gender	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Female	62.6%	62.3%	52.5%
Male	37.3%	37.2%	46.1%
No value (Prefer not to say)	0.1%	0.51	1.4%

A slightly larger percentage of applicants state that they have a disability (3.9%) than the existing workforce (3.7%). This could be due to new applicants being asked to say if they would like to be considered through the Disability Confident accessibility scheme, which guarantees an interview if they meet the minimum criteria for the job they are applying for. The percentage of applicants who declare that they have a disability has reduced in 2019/20 but this may be due to the large increase in the percentage who prefer not to say.

Do you consider yourself to be disabled?	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Yes	4.8%	4.8%	3.9%
No	90.8%	91.2%	84.9%
No value (Prefer not to say)	4.4%	4.0%	11.2%

2.2 Starters

Some demographic characteristics of starters vary from the existing workforce:

- 4.3% of the starters during 2019/20 reported themselves as being disabled, compared to 3.7% amongst the workforce.
- 14.5% of the starters were from non-White British ethnicities, compared to the percentage of non-White British ethnicities in the general workforce (14.2%).
- A much lower percentage of starters are aged 45 and over (31.6% compared to 54.9% amongst the workforce).
- 58.2% of starters are female compared to those in the workforce (59.1 %).

2.3 Leavers

Labour turnover over the last three years has remained reasonably stable, except in 2018/19 when it decreased.

Rate	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Labour turnover rate (all reasons)	16.3%	14.9%	16.7%
Labour turnover rate (voluntary resignation)	10.7%	8.5%	10.7%

Further information on the reasons for staff leaving employment at the council are shown below. Voluntary resignation is the main reason, followed by the expiration of temporary contracts and retirement.

Reason for leaving	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Death in Service	2	2	2
Dismissal	18	12	3
Dismissal – Ill Health	0	5	2
Efficiency of Service	1	1	0
End of Fixed Term Contract	21	16	16
End of Temporary Contract	0	1	0
Mutual Agreement	5	8	6
Redundancy	39	33	13
Resignation	227	197	146
Retirement	23	22	20
Retirement – Ill Health	4	1	3
Retirement- Redundancy	1	2	4
Early Retirement	0	0	1
Settlement Agreement	0	0	1
TUPE Transfer	7	891	1
Unsuccessful Probation	0	0	8
Total	348	1193	226

The significantly higher number of leavers in 2018/19 is due to the TUPE transfer of 876 staff from Children's Services to Brighter Futures for Children (the wholly council-owned children's company) on 1 December 2018.

Some demographic characteristics of leavers vary from the existing workforce:

- 4.8% of leavers during 2018/19 reported themselves as being disabled, compared to 3.8% amongst the workforce. (3.2% of leavers declared as disabled were in Children's Services)
- 3.5% of leavers during 2019/20 reported themselves as being disabled, compared to 3.7% amongst the workforce as a whole

- More leavers (24.4%) in 2018/19 were from non-White British ethnicities than the proportion in the existing workforce (14.3%). (18.9% of BAME leavers were from Children's Services)
- More leavers (17.7%) in 2019/20 were from non-White British ethnicities than the proportion in the existing workforce (14.2%).
- A lower percentage of leavers in 2018/19 are aged 55 and over (20.4%), compared to 23.2% amongst the workforce.
- A higher percentage of leavers in 2019/20 are aged 55 and over (31%), compared to 26.3% amongst the workforce.
- A larger proportion (81.6%) of leavers in 2018/19 were female, compared to 59.5% of the workforce. (64.1% of female leavers were in Children's Services).
- A larger proportion (60.2%) of leavers in 2019/20 were female, compared to 59.1% of the workforce.

2.4 Maternity leave

The vast majority of staff members that go on maternity leave do return to work at the council, with 100% of those that went on maternity leave during 2019/20 returning.

3 Demographic characteristics of the workforce

3.1 Disability

To ensure that our employment opportunities are accessible to disabled people, we fully commit to being a 'Disability Confident Employer²'. We actively promote employment opportunities to disabled applicants, providing information in Plain English and offering accessible formats where necessary to facilitate the recruitment process. As part of our standard practice for staff, we offer specialist support such as Occupational Health and counselling.

3.7% of the workforce consider themselves to have a disability. This is in line with previous years. Staff at the council can choose whether or not to classify themselves as disabled so annual fluctuations are not considered to be significant in isolation.

Disability	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
No	86.7%	87.6%	86.9%
Yes	4.0%	3.8%	3.7%

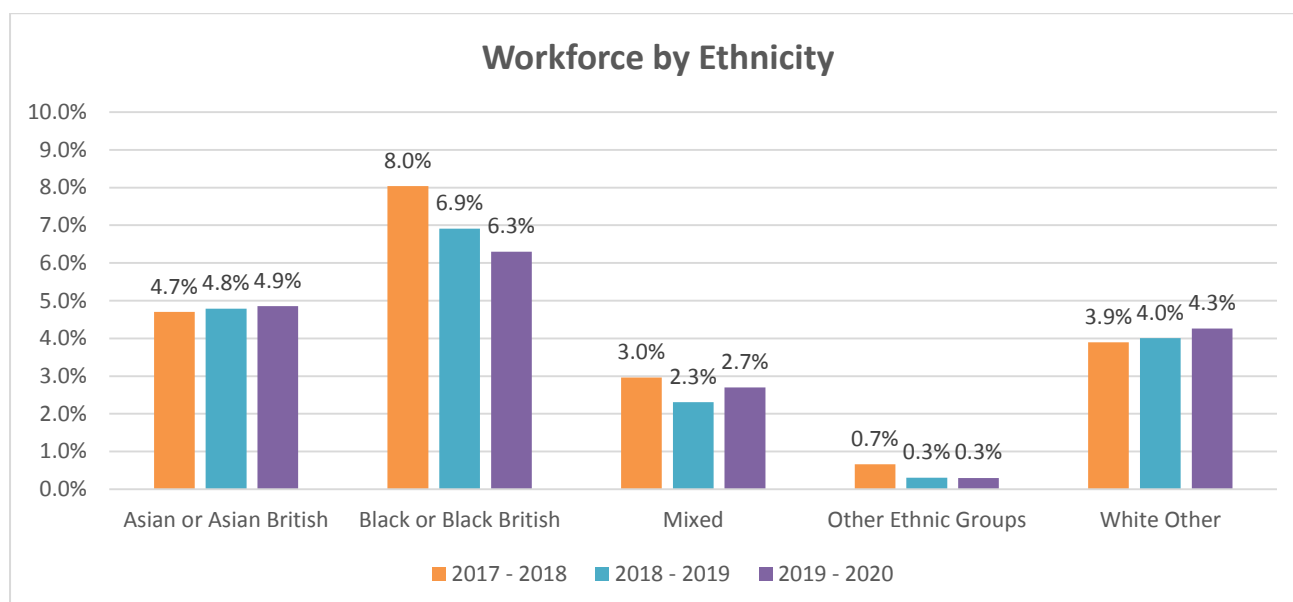
3.2 Ethnicity

76.7% of the council's workforce describe their ethnicity as White English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British. This percentage has remained roughly the same over the years. The percentage of the workforce who identify as being from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic

² As a Disability Confident employer, we have made specific commitments regarding the employment of disabled people. As part of this, a disabled person is guaranteed an interview if they meet the essential criteria for the job vacancy. See www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign for more information

(BAME) backgrounds has remained relatively stable in the last two years and stands at 14.2% in 2019/20. The proportion of staff who identify as Black/Black British has shown a decrease from 8% in 2017/18 to 6.3% in 2019/20. This is due in part to the high number of BAME staff who transferred from RBC to Brighter Futures for Children in December 2018.

Ethnicity	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	75.1%	77.3%	76.7%
White Other	3.9%	4.0%	4.3%
Black/Black British	8.0%	6.9%	6.3%
Asian/Asian British	4.7%	4.8%	4.9%
Mixed	3.0%	2.3%	2.7%
Other ethnic group(s)	0.7%	0.3%	0.3%
Prefer not to say	4.6%	4.4%	4.9%



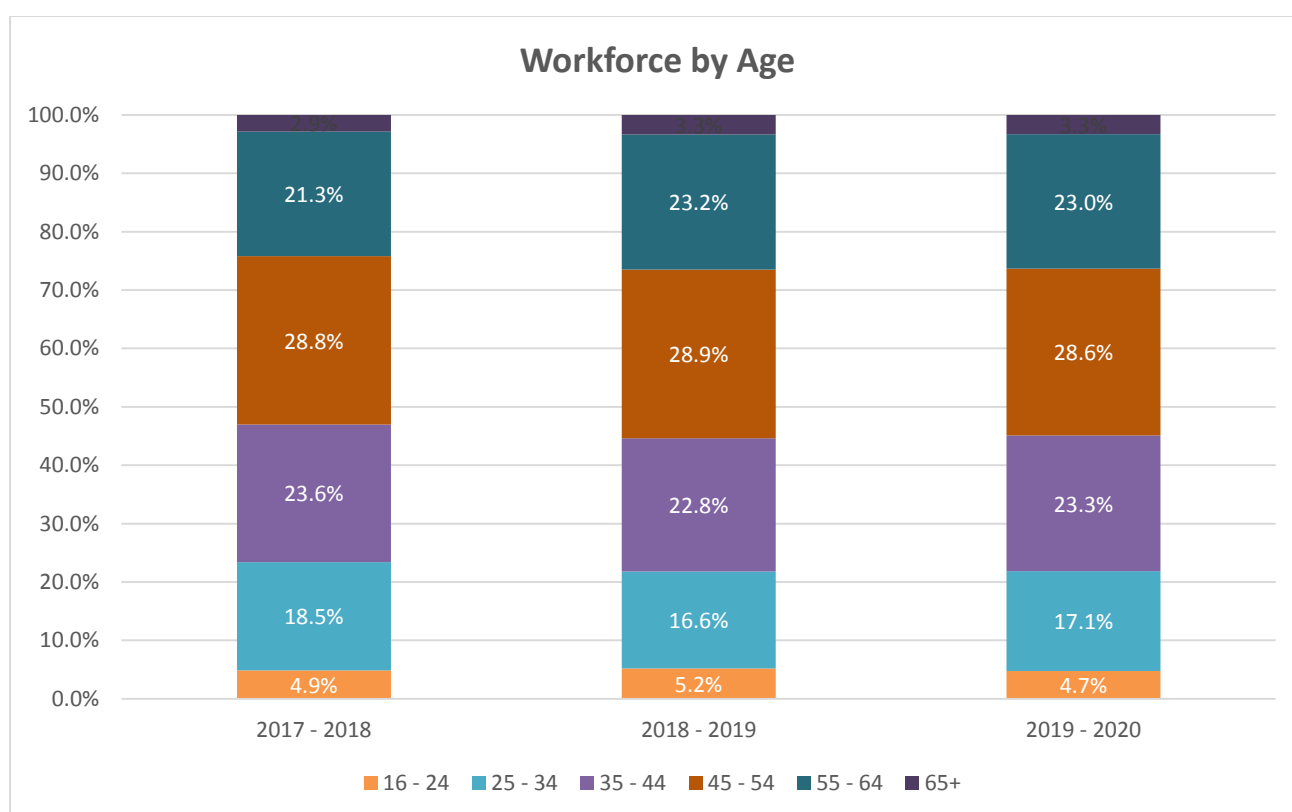
3.3 Age profile

A low percentage of the workforce is aged 16 to 24 (4.7%) compared to the percentage of staff aged 55 to 64 in employment (23%).

The council is pro-actively working with local schools and colleges to promote employment opportunities. This aims to encourage young people to take up work at the council.

The percentage of the council's workforce aged 55 and over is 23.6% which is slightly higher than the number of staff aged 35 to 44 (23.3%). As more of the workforce moves into the 55 and over age range there is an increased importance on ensuring that in addition to retention initiatives to retain older workers, a robust succession planning mechanism is embedded to deliver business continuity, top talent, and leaders and managers of the future.

Age	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
16-24	4.9%	5.2%	4.7%
25-34	18.5%	16.6%	17.1%
35-44	23.6%	22.8%	23.3%
45-54	28.8%	28.9%	28.6%
55-64	21.3%	23.2%	23.0%
65+	2.9%	3.3%	3.3%



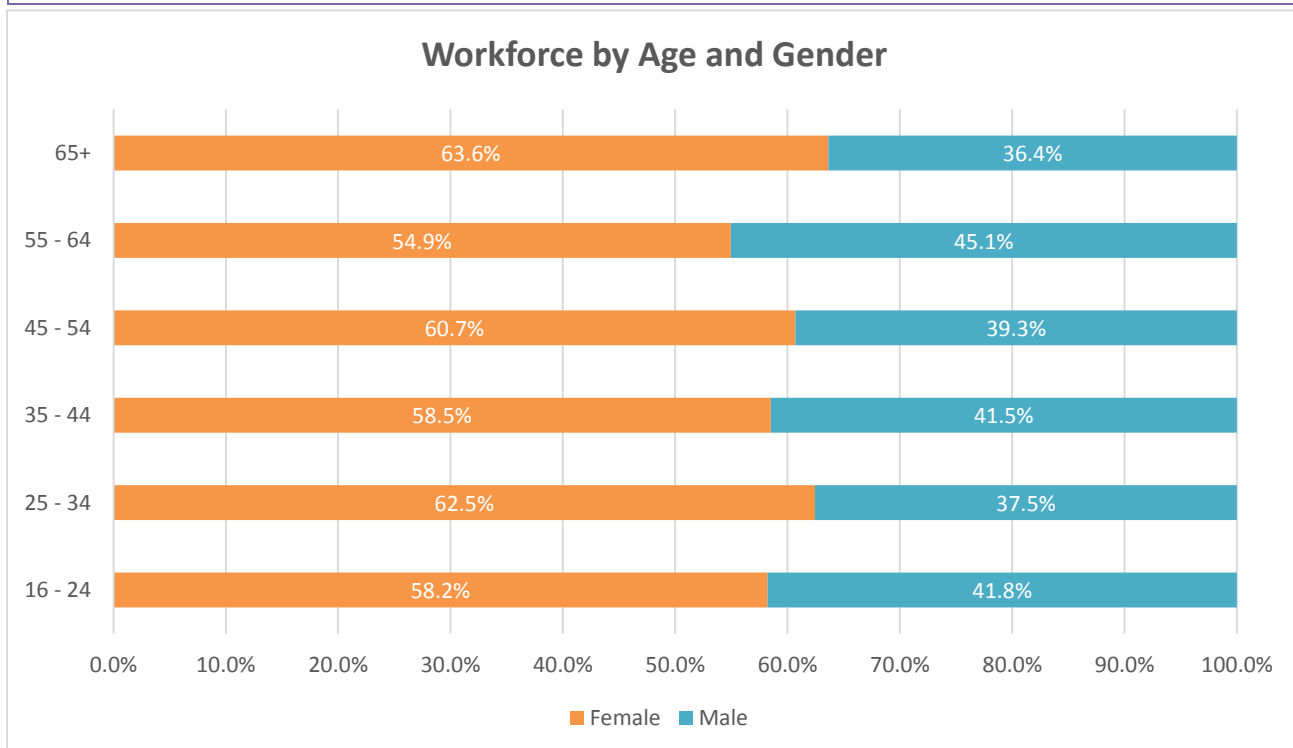
3.4 Gender

The Council employs more female staff, with 59.1% females and 40.9% males, although this has reduced in the past three years, as shown in the table below.

The gender split by age in 2019/20 shows a predominantly larger percentage of female employees in all age groups but is particularly high in the 45 to 54 range (60.7%) and the 65 and over range (63.6%).

Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Female	65.4%	59.5%	59.1%
Male	34.6%	40.5%	40.9%

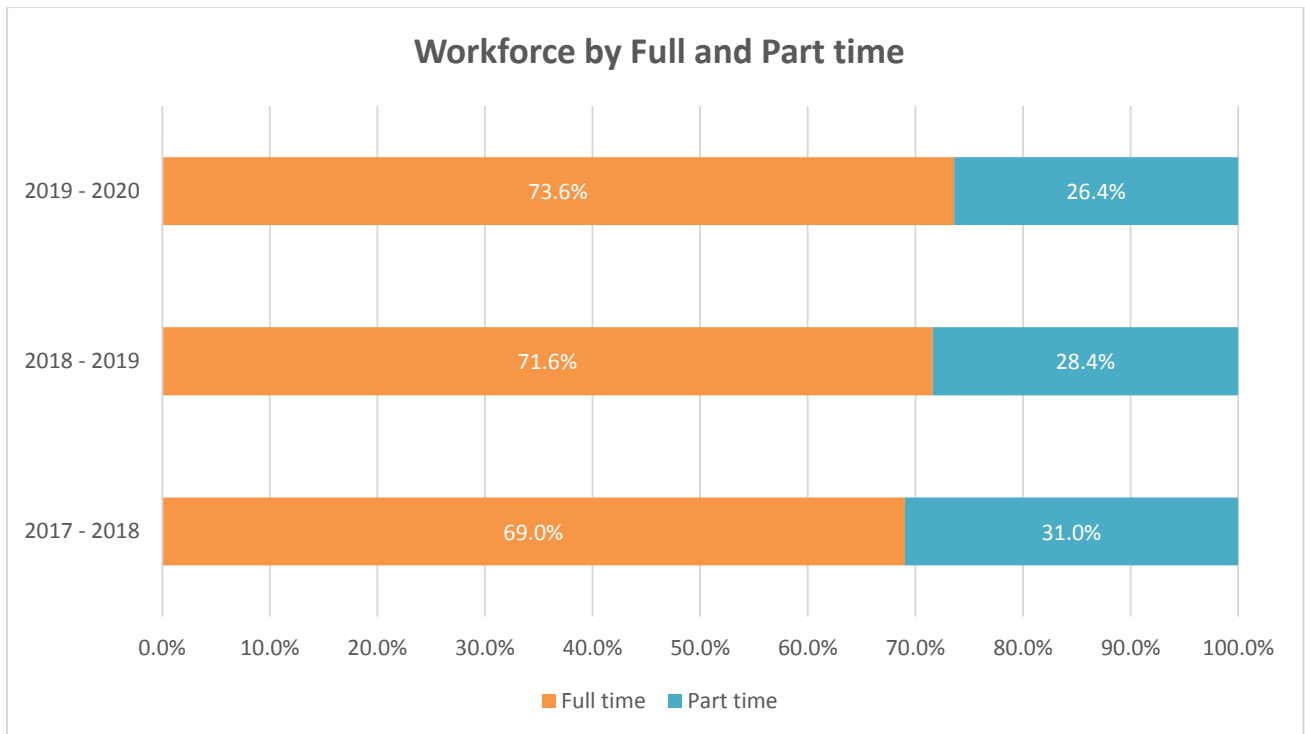
Age Group	Female	Male
16 to 24	58.3%	41.8%
25 to 34	62.5%	37.5%
35 to 44	58.5%	41.5%
45 to 54	60.7%	39.3%
55 to 64	54.9%	45.1%
65+	63.6%	36.4%



3.5 Full-time and part-time

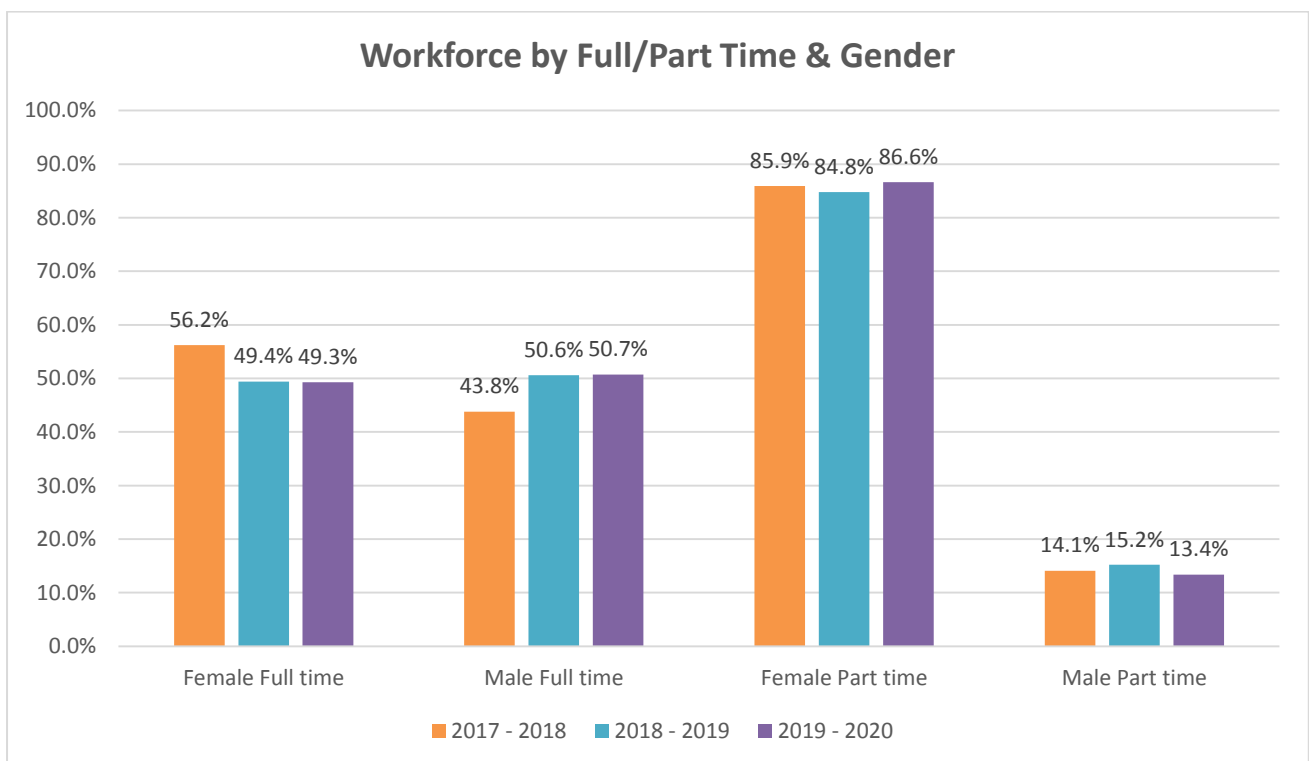
About three quarters of employees within the council work full-time, whilst 26.4% work part-time. There has been a steady increase of staff in full-time work compared to part-time. Both full-time and part-time staff are afforded the benefit of a wide range of flexible working options, such as working compressed hours or working remotely, which benefit both the individual and the organisation.

Contract type	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Full time	69.0%	71.6%	73.6%
Part time	31.0%	28.4%	26.4%



3.6 Full-time and part-time by gender

A much greater percentage of females work part-time than males (86.6% compared to 13.4%). The percentage of males and females working full or part-time has remained relatively stable over time

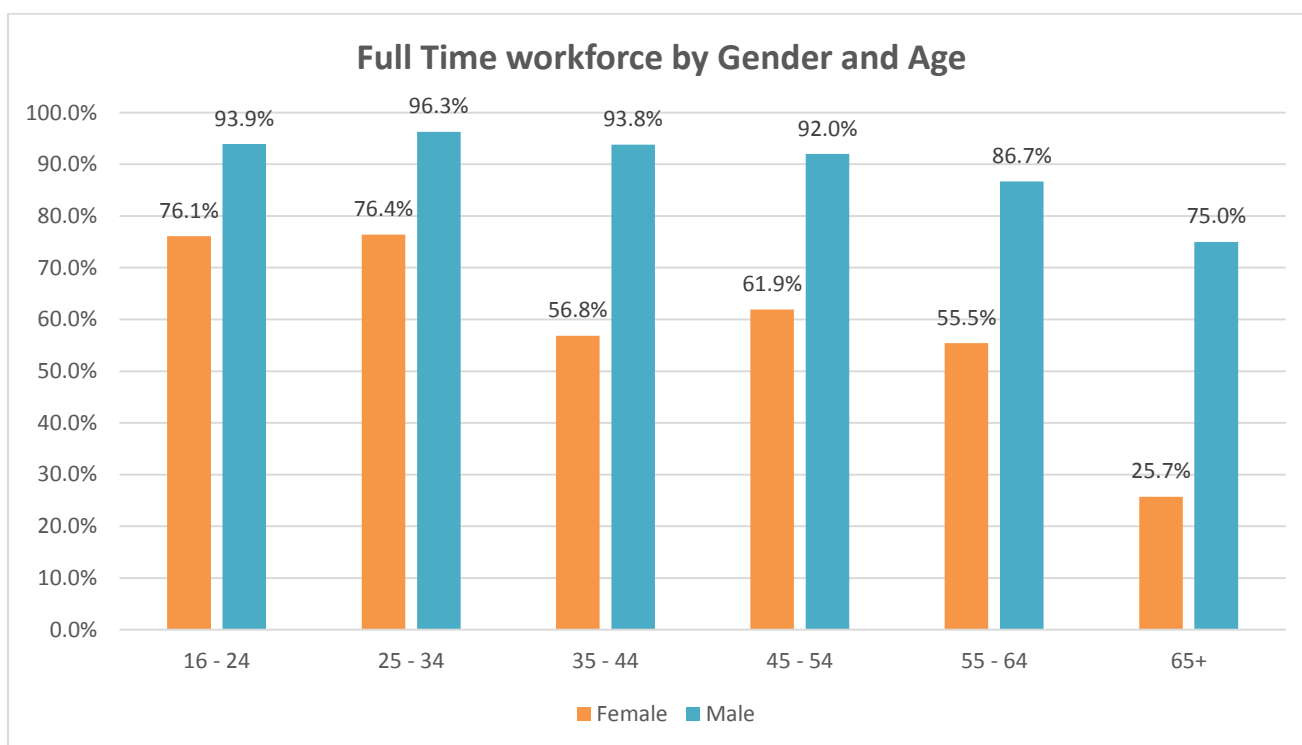


Gender	Contract type	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Female	Full time	56.2%	49.4%	49.3%
Male	Full time	43.8%	50.6%	50.7%
Female	Part time	85.4%	84.8%	86.6%
Male	Part time	14.1%	15.2%	13.4%

3.7 Full-time and part-time by gender and age

A high percentage of females aged 16 to 24 (76.1%) and 25 to 34 (76.4%) work full-time. This then falls for those aged 35 to 44 (56.8%) and then rises again for females aged 45 to 54 (61.9%). Fewer than half of females aged 65 and over work full-time (25.7%), which is potentially due to flexible working and/or retirement and pension options.

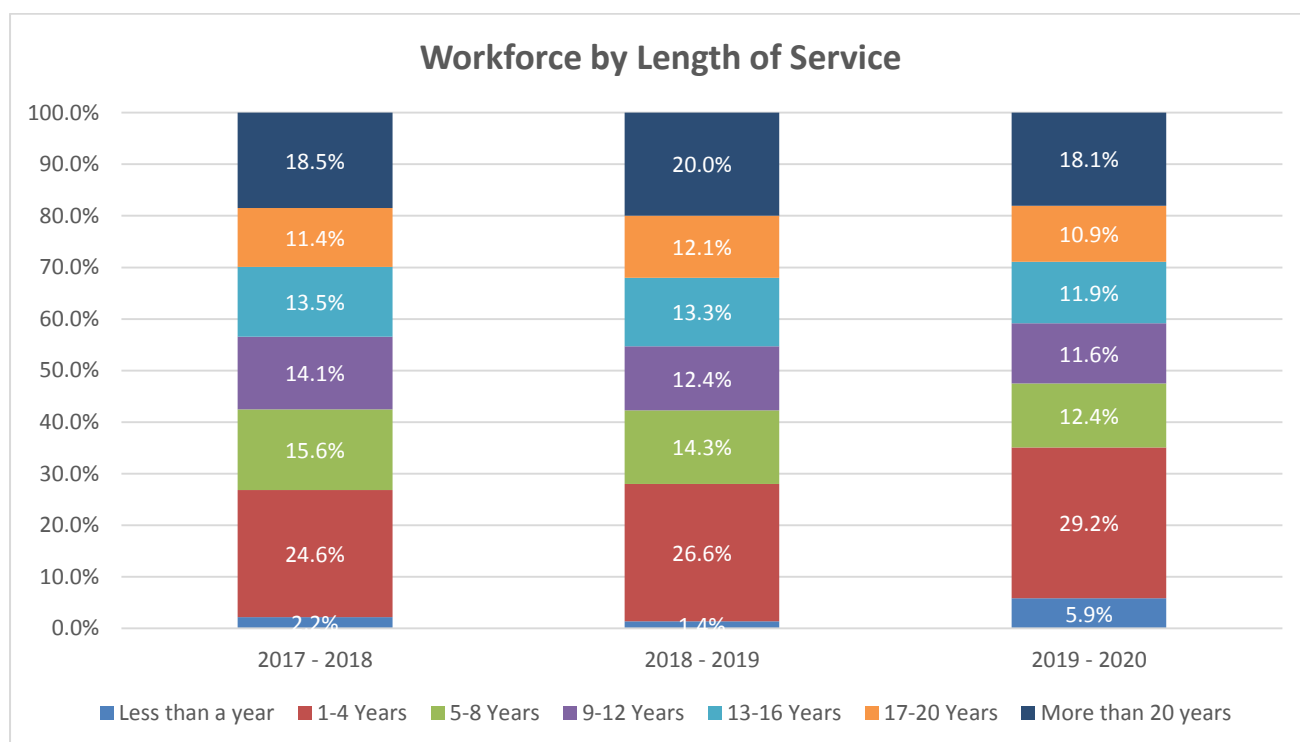
More than 94% of males work full-time up to the age of 54 and in the 55 to 64 over age group, the majority work full-time (86.7%), while in the 65+ category 75% work full time. Again this is likely to be due to flexible retirement/working arrangements which enable employees to have a gradual route into retirement if they wish.



3.8 Length of service

Almost a third of employees (29%) have worked at the council for at least 17 years. 2019/20 shows an increase in the proportion of staff that have worked at the council for less than a year or one to four years and a decline in the proportion with 17 to 20 years' service compared to previous years.

Length of service	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Less than a year	2.2%	1.4%	5.9%
1 to 4 years	24.6%	26.6%	29.2%
5 to 8 years	15.6%	14.3%	12.4%
9 to 12 years	14.1%	12.4%	11.6%
13 to 16 years	13.5%	13.3%	11.9%
17 to 20 years	11.4%	12.1%	10.9%
More than 20 years	18.5%	20.0%	18.1%



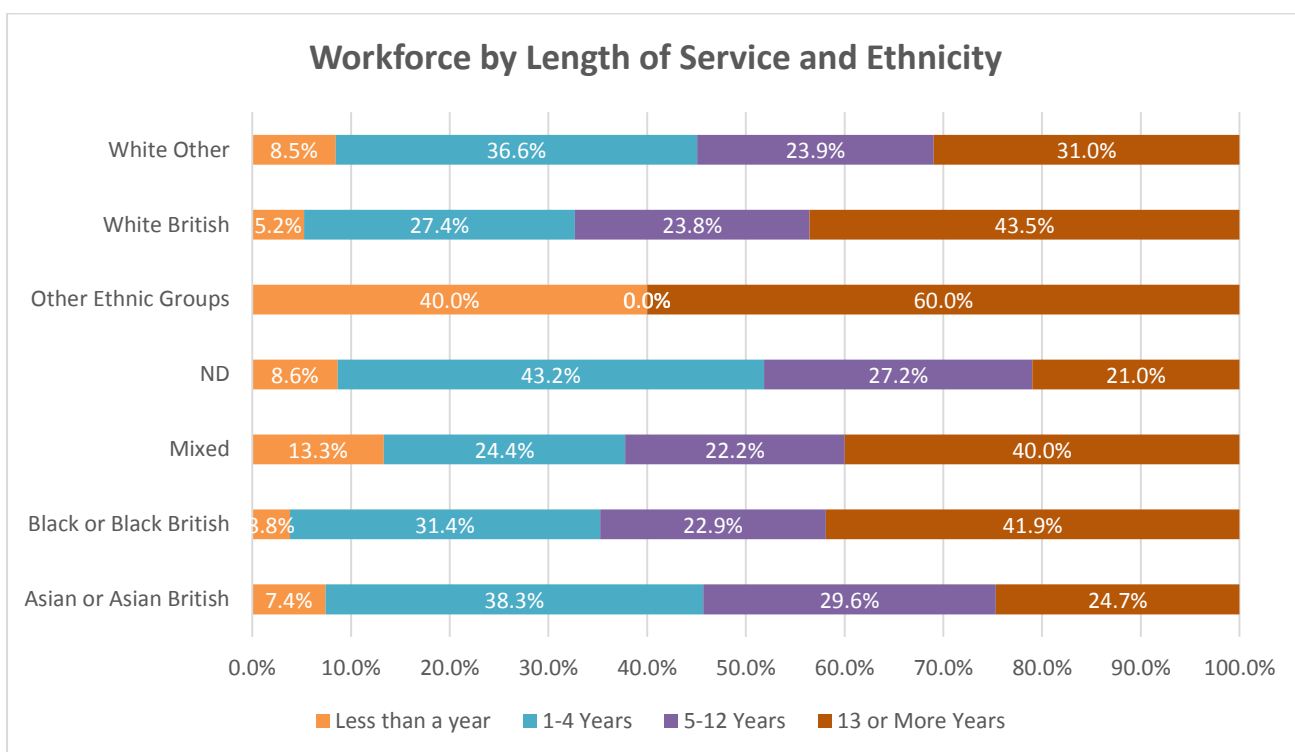
3.9 Length of service by disability

Due to the low numbers recorded for employees with a disability it is difficult to note any particular trends pertinent to their length of service. The data is potentially disclosive and so is not shown here.

3.10 Length of service by ethnicity

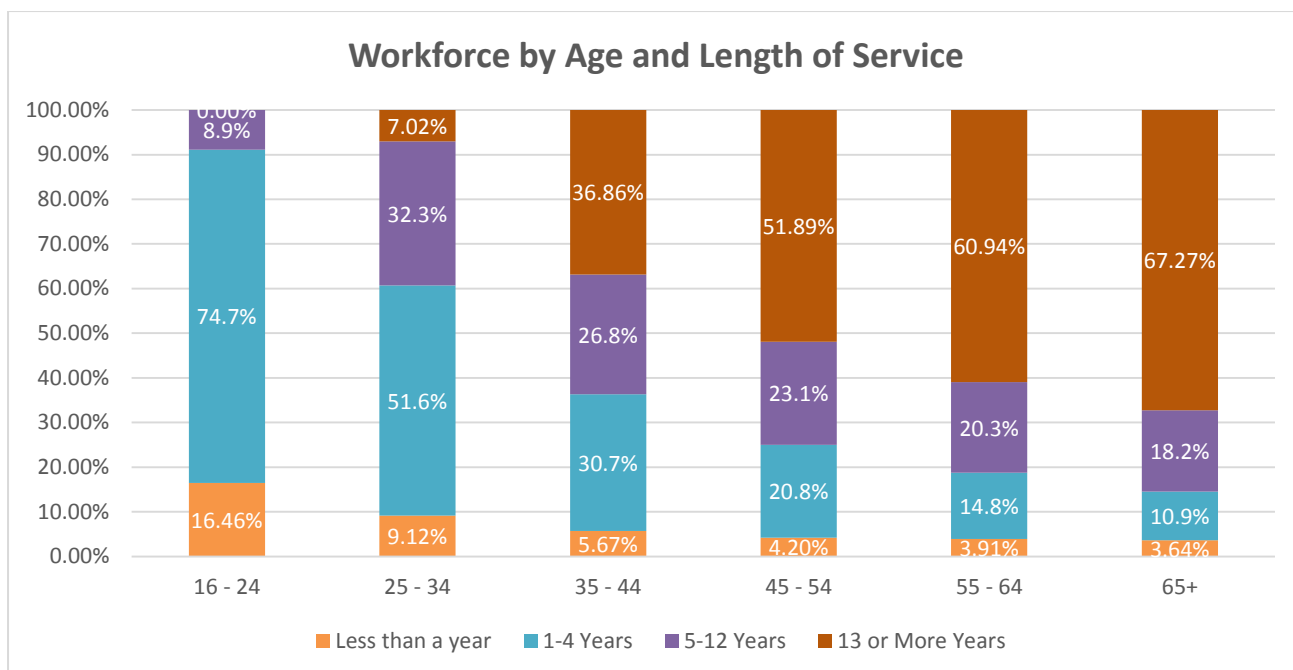
33.3% of White British members of staff have worked for Reading Borough Council for up to four years, compared to 39.4% of non-White British employees. 42.9% of White British members of staff have worked at the council for 13 or more years, compared to 36.0% of non-White British staff.

Ethnicity	Less than a year	1 to 4 years	5 to 12 years	13 +
White British	5.2%	27.4%	23.8%	43.5%
White Other	8.5%	36.6%	23.9%	31.0%
Black/Black British	3.8%	31.4%	22.9%	41.9%
Asian/Asian British	7.4%	38.3%	29.6%	24.7%
Mixed	13.3%	24.4%	22.2%	40.0%
Other ethnic group(s)	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	60.0%
Prefer not to say	8.6%	43.2%	27.2%	21.0%



3.11 Length of service by age profile

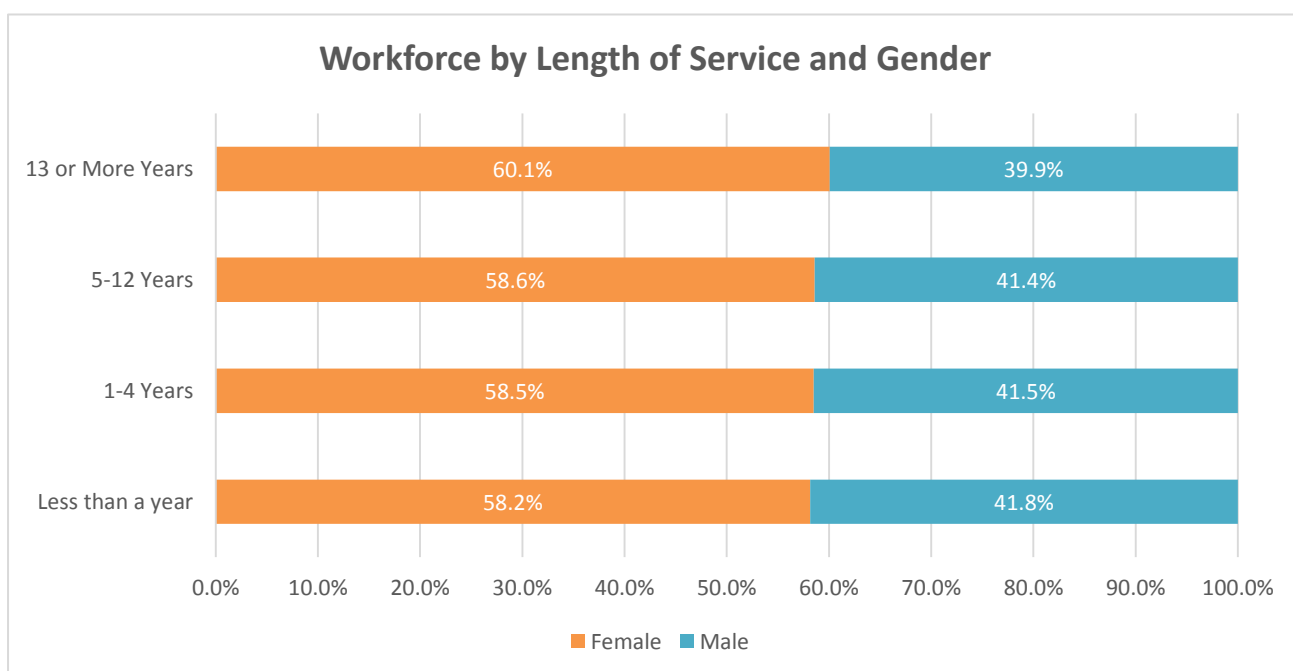
There are more people in the 35 and over category that have served for longer periods and more people aged 34 and below that have served less than a year. The majority of those aged under 35 have worked at the authority 1 to 4 years. The percentage of staff that have worked at the organisation for fewer than four years declines with age. This is because the correlation between age and length of service tends to be positive, as older employees tend to have naturally been in the organisation longer, or vice versa.



3.12 Length of service by gender

The percentage of staff by gender is similar across the different service lengths, although a lower percentage of those that have served for 13 or more years are male.

Ethnicity	Less than a year	1 to 4 years	5 to 12 years	13 +
Female	58.2%	58.5%	58.6%	60.1%
Male	41.8%	41.5%	41.4%	39.9%



3.13 Pay grade

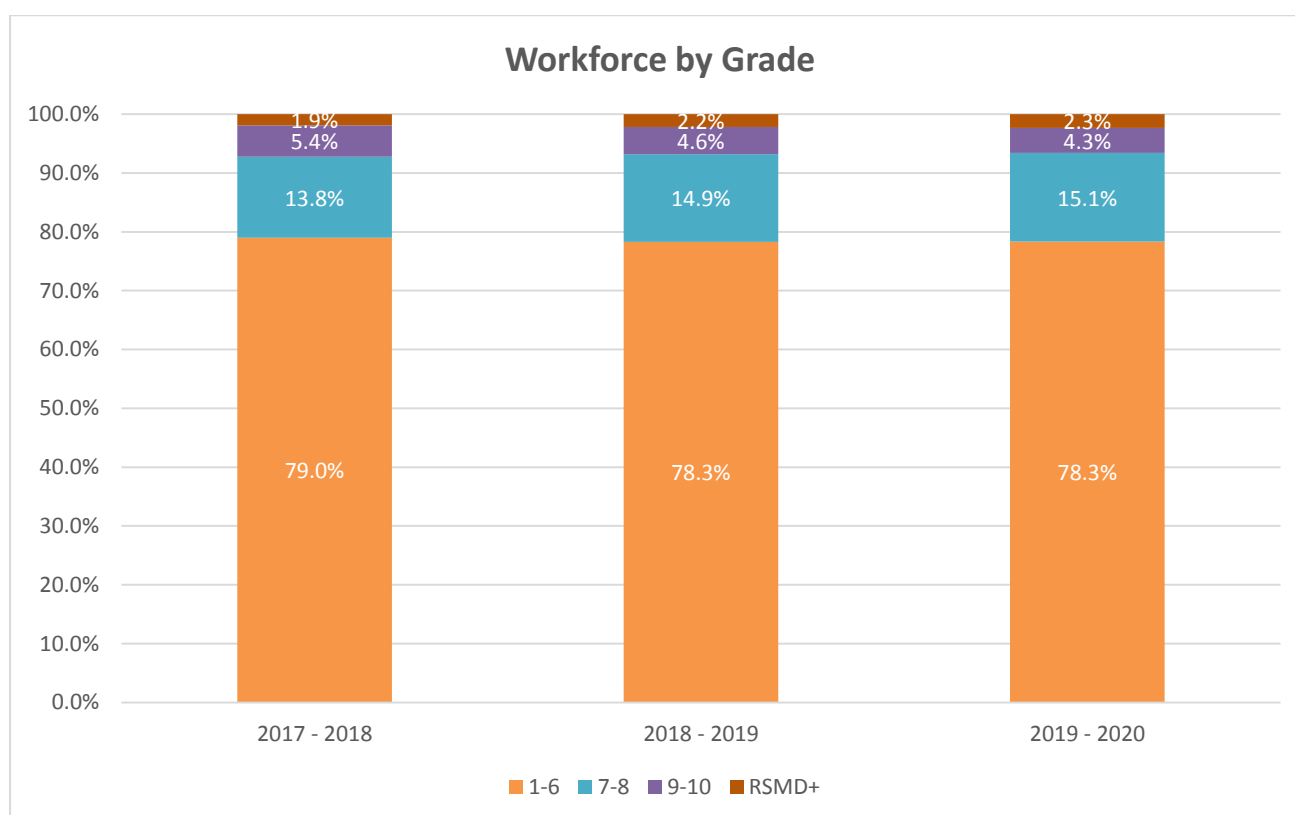
This section features information broken down by salary grades.

Grade explanation

- **RG1 to RG6** cover a wide range of administrative, technical, clerical and manual roles. For the purpose of this report these grades also include apprentices, for whom there are separate pay arrangements.
- **RG7 to RG8** cover a range of professional and first line manager / supervisory roles.
- **RG9 to RG10** cover a range of senior professional and middle manager roles.
- **RSMD and above** cover senior managers, Coroners, Assistant and Deputy Directors, Executive Directors and the Chief Executive,

The percentage of staff within each pay grade has remained relatively stable over time as shown below.

Grade	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Grades 1 to 6	79.0%	78.3%	78.3%
Grades 7 to 8	13.8%	14.9%	15.1%
Grades 9 to 10	5.4%	4.6%	4.3%
Grades RSMD and Above	1.9%	2.2%	2.3%



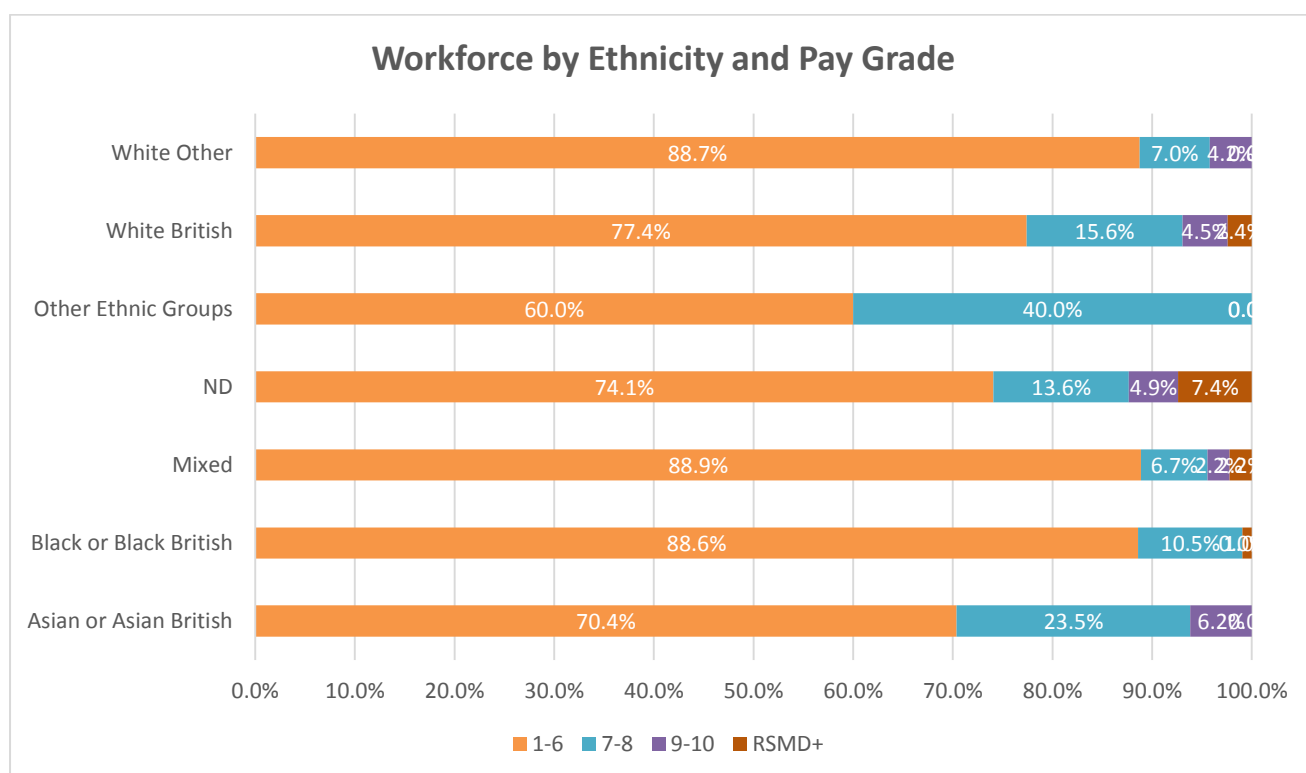
3.14 Grade by disability

Due to the small number of staff that identify themselves as having a disability in each grade group, the data is potentially disclosive and so is not presented here. The council continues its commitment to be a Disability Confident Employer to encourage applications from disabled candidates and promote development for existing disabled members of staff.

3.15 Grade by ethnicity

There is a lower percentage of White British staff in RG1 to RG6 than the percentage of staff from non-White British ethnic groups.

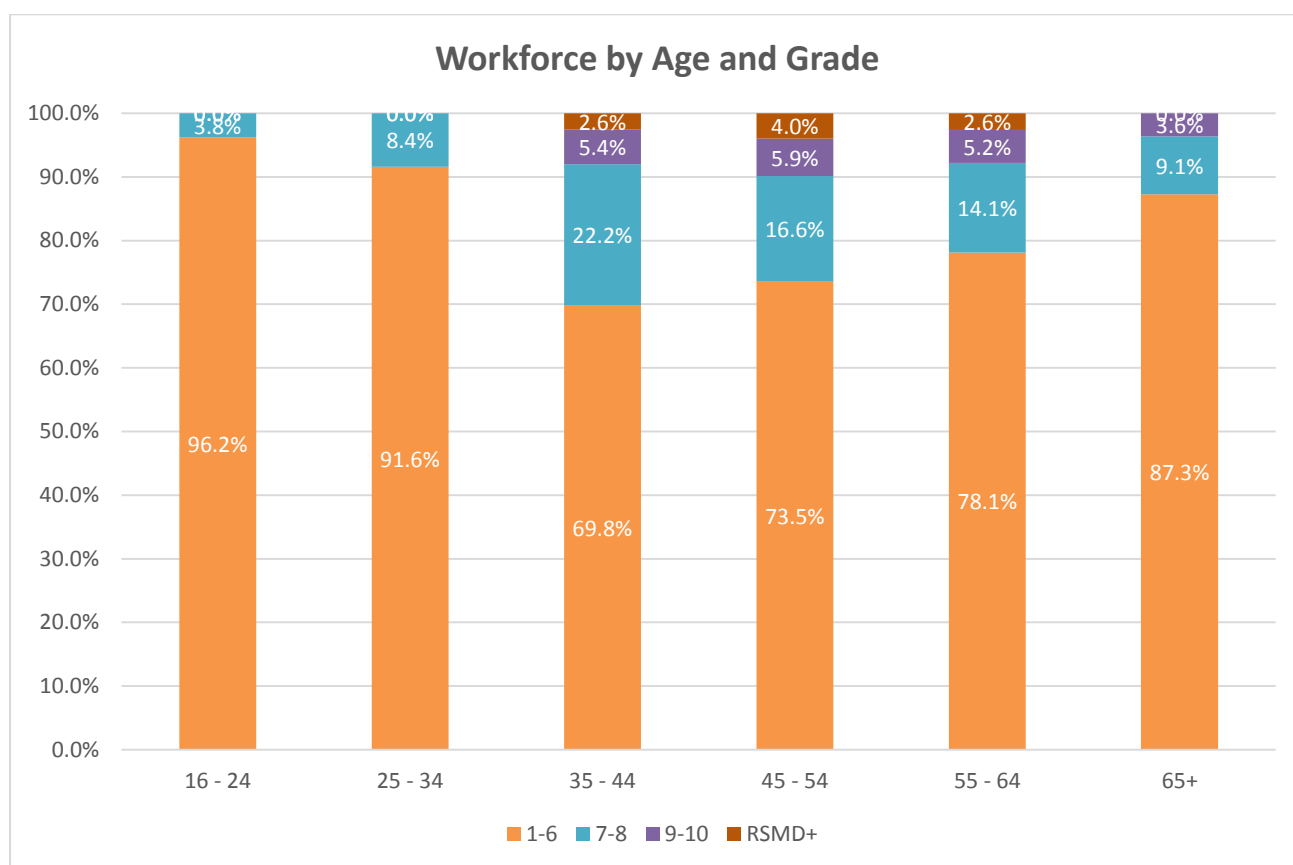
Ethnicity	Grade 1- 6	Grade 7-8	Grade 9-10	RSMD and Above
White British	77.4%	15.6%	4.5%	2.4%
White Other	88.7%	7.0%	4.2%	0.0%
Black/Black British	88.6%	10.5%	0.0%	1.0%
Asian/Asian British	70.4%	23.5%	6.3%	0.0%
Mixed	88.9%	6.7%	2.2%	2.2%
Other ethnic group(s)	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%



3.16 Grade by age profile

The pay grades of staff aged under 35 are lower than the older age groups, up to age 64. This is expected as in most cases staff are in the earlier stages of their careers. A larger percentage of those aged 45 to 54 are in the highest pay grades than any other age group.

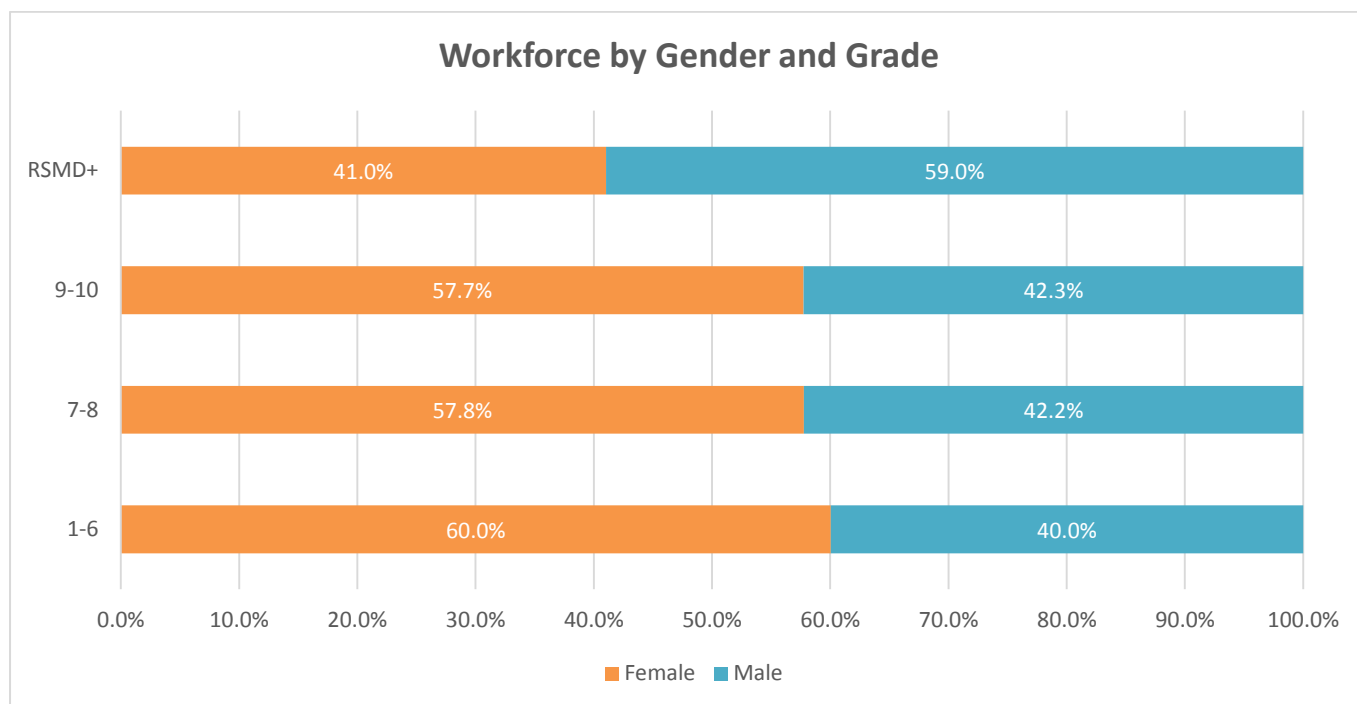
Age	Grades 1-6	Grades 7-8	Grades 9-10	RSMD and Above
16 to 24	96.2%	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%
25 to 34	91.6%	8.4%	0.0%	0.0%
35 to 44	69.8%	22.2%	5.4%	2.6%
45 to 54	73.5%	16.6%	5.9%	4.0%
55 to 64	78.1%	14.1%	5.2%	2.6%
65+	87.3%	9.1%	3.6%	0.0%



3.17 Grade by gender

There is a higher proportion of female workers in all categories except for Grade 9-10.

Gender	Grade 1-6	Grade 7- 8	Grade 9-10	RSMD and Above
Female	60.0%	57.8%	57.7%	41.0%
Male	40.0%	42.2%	42.3%	59.0%



4 Staff engagement and procedures

4.1 Quantitative and qualitative research with employees

An engagement survey for staff was carried out in April 2019 and the results were considered by protected characteristic groups. The next engagement survey was due to be carried out in April 2020 but was delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic. A decision has not yet been made about when the next survey will take place.

4.2 Due regard to the aims of the duty in decision-making

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are carried out on all employment-related policies and procedures and general employment issues are discussed with Trade Unions.

4.3 Staff complaints

There were no staff complaints recorded as instances of discrimination during the period which this report covers.

4.4 Engagement with trade unions and staff

The council recognises Trades Union and works in partnership with them to proactively support the process of collective bargaining.

Each directorate has is a forum where ideas, issues, and suggestions for making the council an even better place to work are discussed openly and in a spirit of free exchange of views. Unison representatives are also invited to attend these forums. They are not a substitute for Trade Unions and management continue to consult and negotiate with recognised Trade Unison on matters that directly affect local working at the council.

4.5 Policies and programmes to address equality concerns

The council has a range of policies to address equalities issues. Some examples of these include:

- Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy
- Recruitment and Retention of Disabled People
- Whistle-Blowing Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy

4.5.1 HR Casework

Completed HR Casework – Use of Formal Procedures – April 2019 to March 2020 - Analysis by Employee Protected Characteristics

Case Type	All Cases	Gender		BAME		Disability	
		Female	%	Number	%	Number	%
Capability – Ill Health	26	21	80.8%	4	15.4%	0	0.0%
Capability – Performance	2	2	100.0%	1	50.0%	1	50.0%
Disciplinary	30	14	46.7%	4	13.3%	0	0.0%
Grievance	8	5	62.5%	1	12.5%	0	0.0%
Total	66	42	63.6%	10	15.2%	1	1.5%

Completed HR Casework – Use of Formal Procedures – April 2019 to March 2020 – Employee
Protected Characteristics Not Recorded

Case Type	All Cases	Gender		BAME		Disability	
		Not Recorded	%	Not Recorded	%	Not Recorded	%
Disciplinary	30	0	0.00%	6	20.00%	9	30.00%
Grievance	8	0	0.00%	2	25.00%	3	37.50%
Ill Health Capability	26	1	3.85%	5	19.23%	13	50.00%
Poor Performance Capability	2	0	0.00%	1	50.00%	1	50.00%
Total	66	1	1.52%	14	21.21%	26	39.39%

The council also has a Flexible Working Policy that welcomes formal requests from employees who meet the necessary criteria. We recognise the importance of a work-life balance for all staff and will consider flexible working requests on an informal basis, accommodating these where they meet business needs.

4.6 Learning and development opportunities

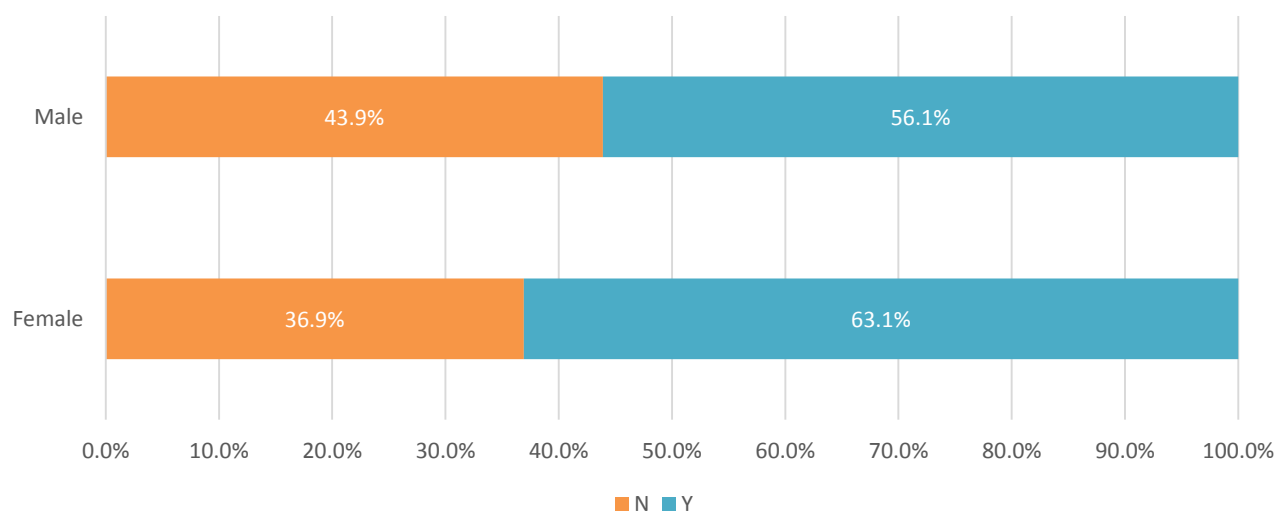
Staff are our main asset and the council is committed to training and personal development. Every member of staff has a crucial role to play in enabling the council to make a difference: to make the borough an even better place to be and to help meet the challenges faced within local communities. To that effect, the council has a People Strategy in place with the aim to have the right people, in the right job, with the right skills.

To deliver on this, the council has a range of learning and development opportunities available including classroom courses, e-learning and a professional qualification support scheme as well as on-the-job training, and mentoring. The council also has an integrated programme of leadership and management development.

In 2019/20, 60.2% of the total workforce accessed our corporate training, 63.1% of females accessed training and 61.9% of Black/ Black British staff accessed training compared to 59.7% of White British Staff

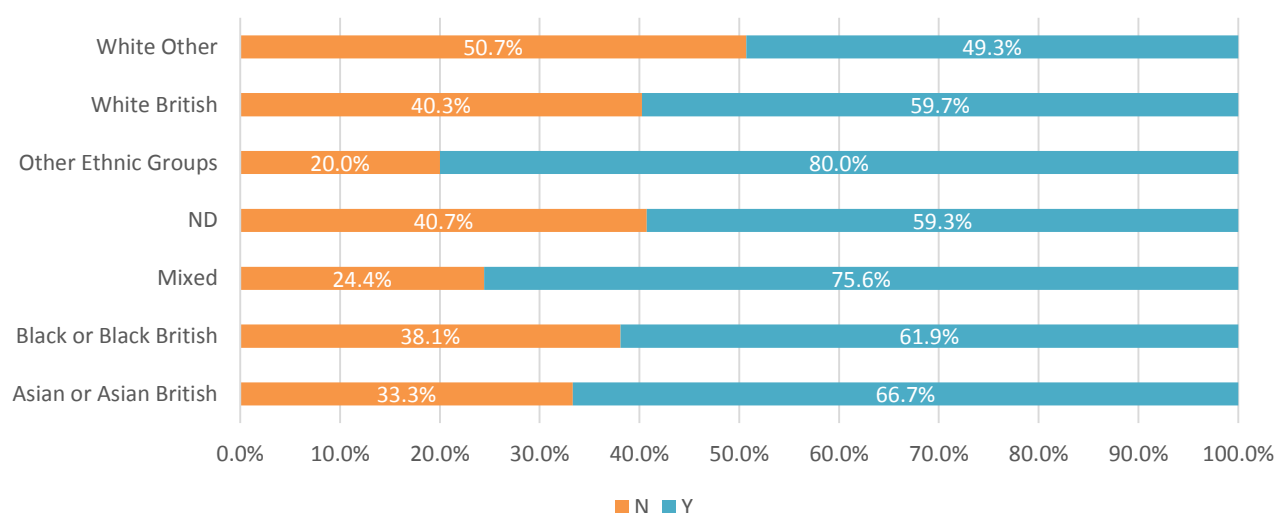
Gender	Number who accessed Training	Number who did not access Training
Female	63.1%	36.9%
Male	56.1%	43.9%

Workforce by Gender and Accessed Training



Ethnicity	Number who accessed Training	Number who did not access Training
White British	59.7%	40.3%
White Other	49.3%	50.7%
Black/Black British	61.9%	38.1%
Asian/Asian British	66.7%	33.3%
Mixed	75.6%	24.4%
Other ethnic group(s)	80.0%	20.0%
Prefer not to say	59.3%	40.7%

Workforce by Ethnicity and Accessed Training



Development opportunities can be identified in a variety of ways including by the individual through regular 1 to 1 meetings and the performance appraisal process. Training courses

delivered on an ongoing basis include: health and safety, first aid, stress resilience, equality and diversity, recruitment and selection, project management, Microsoft Office applications, data protection, lone working and managing aggressive behaviour.

4.7 Gender pay gap information

The council has been required to publish and report specific figures about its gender pay gap since 2017. Using the required snapshot date of 31 March 2019 for public sector organisations, the council was pleased to report a mean gender pay gap of 4.99%. This showed the council was performing positively against the national average of 17.3% (in favour of men).

The council will be publishing its 2020 gender pay gap report on its website, and on the government reporting website, by 30 March 2021.