



# **Reading Borough Council**

## **Workforce Profile**

**2020 – 2021**

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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' groups<sup>1</sup> to be part of its team and highly values people's individual skills and talents. The information included in this report is 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 (2020/21), unless otherwise indicated. Where relevant and helpful, comparisons with data for previous years has been included to show trends over time.

## 2 Vacancies, applicants, leavers and maternity leave

### 2.1 Vacancies and applicants

The average number of vacancies advertised per month has increased in the last two years. The number of applicants has increased significantly over the last 3.

Vacancies and applicants	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Average number of vacancies advertised per month	14	25	21
Number of applicants	2339	5433	7564

The number of job applicants who have chosen not to state their ethnic origin has increased over the last three years to 6.4% in 2020/21. The proportion of applicants from minority ethnic backgrounds has increased to 32.6% in 2020/21 compared to 30.9% in 2019/20. The number of White British applicants has reduced slightly in 2020/21 compared to the last two years.

Ethnic origin	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	53.4%	53.5%	50.9%
White Other	8.7%	10.3%	10.1%
Mixed/multiple	4.0%	4.5%	4.0%
Asian/Asian British	18.0%	15.5%	18.4%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	12.4%	9.6%	9.2%

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

Other ethnic group	0.7%	1.3%	1.0%
No value (Prefer not to say)	2.7%	5.2%	6.4%

The younger ages of applicants reflect that people in these age group are more likely to be looking for work and that older people tend to be more settled in their working life. The increase in younger applicants is also reflected in the staff that have recently joined the Council.

Age range	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
16 to 29	30.8%	35.0%	36.5%
30 to 44	41.3%	37.5%	35.6%
45 to 59	22.6%	19.6%	18.4%
60 to 64	4.1%	2.6%	1.9%
65 to 74	0.5%	0.6%	0.4%
75 and over	0.0%	0.0%	0.03%
No value (Prefer not to say)	0.7%	4.7%	7.1%

The Council still attracts more applications from women than men, although the proportion of men applying has slightly increased compared to 2018/19.

Gender	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Women	62.3%	52.5%	55.2%
Men	37.2%	46.1%	43.1%
No value (Prefer not to say)	0.51	1.4%	1.6%

A lower percentage of applicants' state that they have a disability (0.8%) than the existing workforce (3.9%). Applications from employees with a disability are positively encouraged through the Disability Confident scheme, which guarantees an interview for applicants who declare a disability if they meet the minimum criteria for the job they are applying for. The percentage of applicants who prefer not to say or have not declared if they have a disability has increased significantly in the last 12 months.

Do you consider yourself to be disabled?	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Yes	4.8%	3.9%	0.8%
No	91.2%	84.9%	18.4%
No value (Prefer not to say)	4.0%	11.2%	80.9%

## 2.2 New Starters

Some demographic characteristics of new starters vary from the existing workforce:

- 2.9% of the starters during 2020/21 reported themselves as being disabled compared to 3.8% amongst the workforce.
- 17.6% of new starters were from non-White British ethnicities compared to the percentage of non-White British ethnicities in the general workforce (14.6%).
- A much lower percentage of starters are aged 45 and over (37.7% compared to 54.5% amongst the workforce).

- 54.9% of starters are women which is lower than the proportion of women in the existing workforce (58.7 %).

## 2.3 Leavers

Labour turnover has decreased in 2020/21 compared to the previous two years. This is highly likely to be due to the Coronavirus pandemic and is a trend that has been seen by many employers nationally.

Rate	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Labour turnover rate (all reasons)	14.9%	16.7%	11.0%
Labour turnover rate (voluntary resignation)	8.5%	10.7%	8.4%

Further information on the reasons for staff leaving employment is shown below. Voluntary resignation is the main reason, followed by retirements and the expiry of fixed term contracts.

Reason for leaving	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Death in Service	2	2	4
Dismissal	12	3	5
Dismissal – Ill Health	5	2	3
Efficiency of Service	1	0	0
End of Fixed Term Contract	16	16	19
End of Temporary Contract	1	0	0
Mutual Agreement	8	6	9
Redundancy	33	13	6
Resignation	197	146	108
Retirement	22	20	26
Retirement – Ill Health	1	3	3
Retirement- Redundancy	2	4	0
Early Retirement	0	1	2
Settlement Agreement	0	1	1
TUPE Transfer	891	1	0
Unsuccessful Probation	0	8	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>1193</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>189</b>

The significantly higher number of leavers in 2018/19 is largely 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:

- More leavers (16.9%) in 2020/21 were from non-White British ethnicities than the proportion in the existing workforce (14.6%)
- A higher percentage of leavers in 2020/21 are aged 55 and over (39.7%) compared to 26.0% amongst the workforce

- A slightly lower proportion (57.1%) of leavers in 2020/21 were women compared to 58.7% of the workforce who are women.

## 2.4 Maternity leave

All the women who went on maternity leave during 2020/21 returned to work at the Council.

## 3 Demographic characteristics of the workforce

### 3.1 Disability

To ensure that our employment opportunities are accessible to people with a disability, we fully commit to be a 'Disability Confident Employer<sup>2</sup>'. We actively promote employment opportunities to applicants with a disability, 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 advice and access to free, confidential counselling.

In 2020/21, 3.8% of the workforce declared a disability. This is in line with previous years. The actual proportion of staff who meet the legal definition of disability within the Equality Act 2010 is likely to be far higher than the number who have declared a disability (i.e. a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on a person's ability to do normal daily activities).

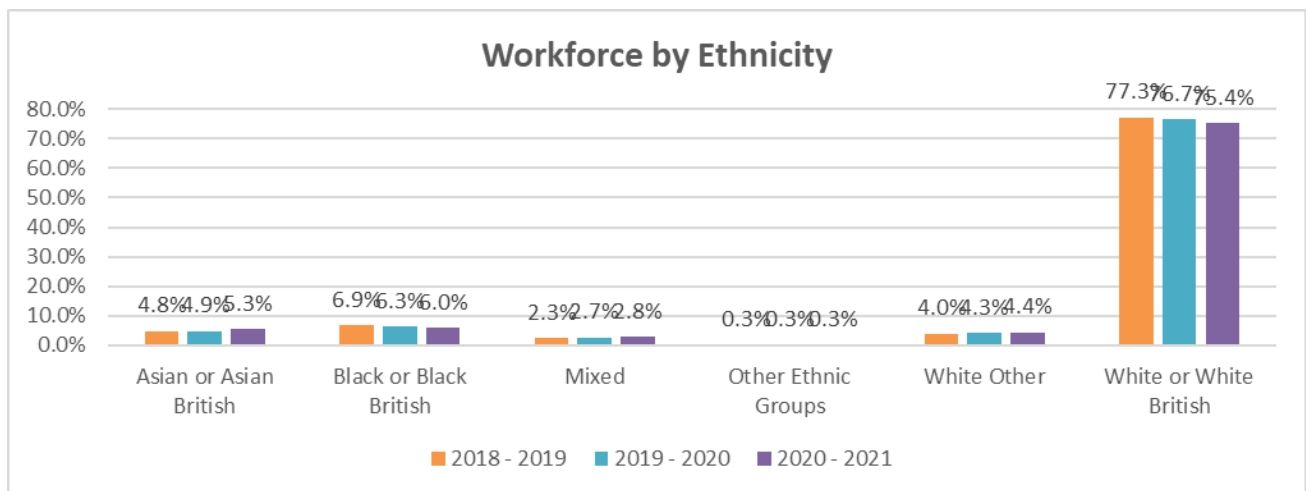
Disability	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
No	87.6%	86.9%	80.8%
Yes	3.8%	3.7%	3.8%

### 3.2 Ethnicity

In 2020/21, 79.8% of the Council's workforce describe their ethnicity as White English/Welsh/Scottish /Northern Irish/British or White Other. This percentage has remained largely the same over the last three years. The percentage of the workforce in minority ethnic groups has remained relatively stable in the last two years and stands at 14.6% in 2020/21. The proportion of staff who identify as Black/Black British has shown a decrease from 6.9% in 2018/19 to 6.0% in 2020/21. The proportion of staff who 'prefer not to say' or have not declared their ethnicity has increased to 5.7%. This is also reflected in increasing numbers of job applicants who prefer not to say or have not declared their ethnicity (see 2.1).

<sup>2</sup> 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](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign) for more information

Ethnicity	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	77.3%	76.7%	75.4%
White Other	4.0%	4.3%	4.4%
Black/Black British	6.9%	6.3%	6.0%
Asian/Asian British	4.8%	4.9%	5.3%
Mixed ethnic background	2.3%	2.7%	2.8%
Other ethnic groups	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Prefer not to say	4.4%	4.9%	5.7%



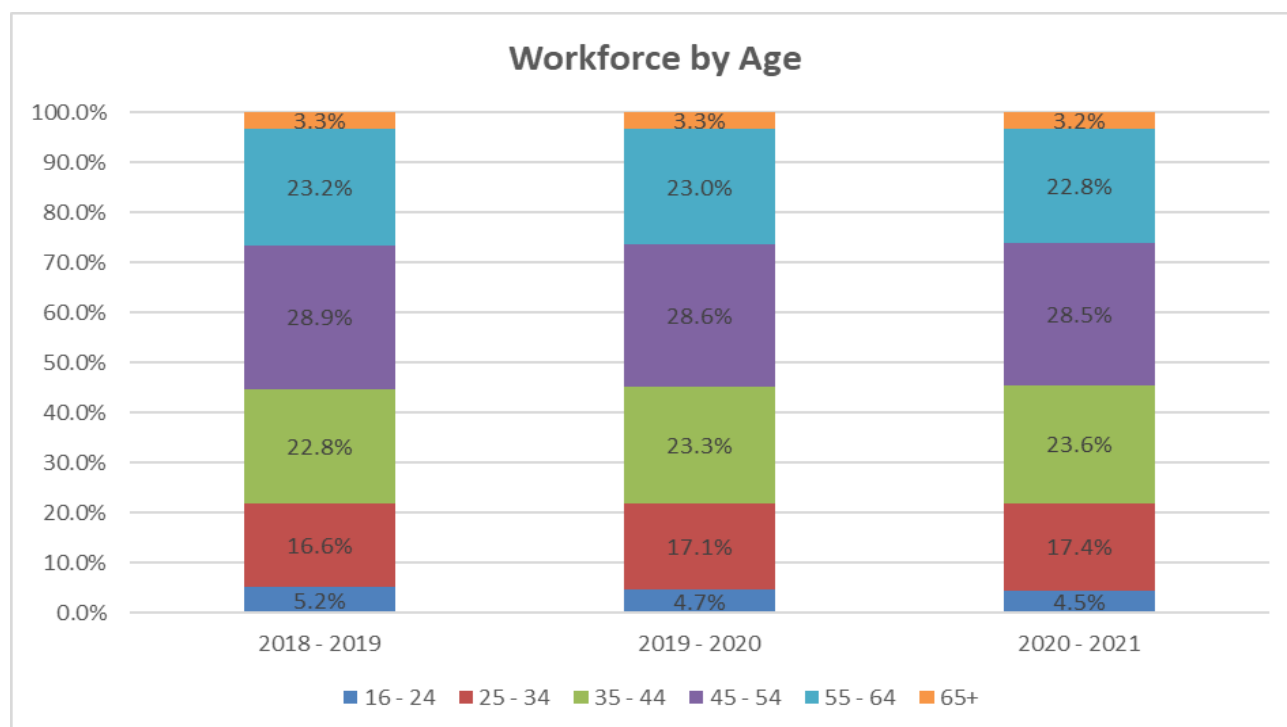
### 3.3 Age profile

The workforce age profile has remained relatively stable over the last three years. A low percentage of the workforce is aged 16 to 24 (4.5%) compared to the percentage of staff aged 55 to 64 in employment (22.8%).

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 26.0% which is slightly higher than the number of staff aged 35 to 44 (23.6%). 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	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
16-24	5.2%	4.7%	4.5%
25-34	16.6%	17.1%	17.4%
35-44	22.8%	23.3%	23.6%
45-54	28.9%	28.6%	28.5%
55-64	23.2%	23.0%	22.8%
65+	3.3%	3.3%	3.2%



### 3.4 Gender

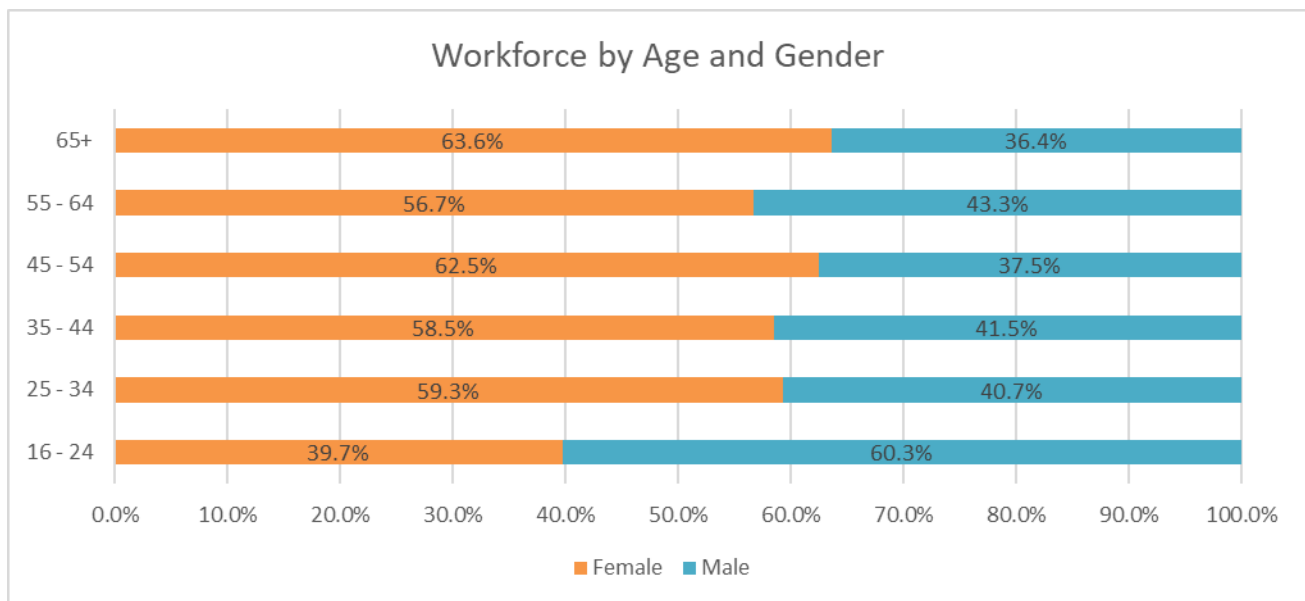
The Council employs more women. 58.7% of employees are women and 41.3% are men. The proportion of men has increased slightly in the past three years as shown in the table below.

The gender split by age in 2020/21 shows a predominantly larger percentage of women in all age groups but is particularly high in the 45 to 54 range (62.5%) and the 65 and over range (63.6%).

Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Women	59.5%	59.1%	58.7%
Men	40.5%	40.9%	41.3%



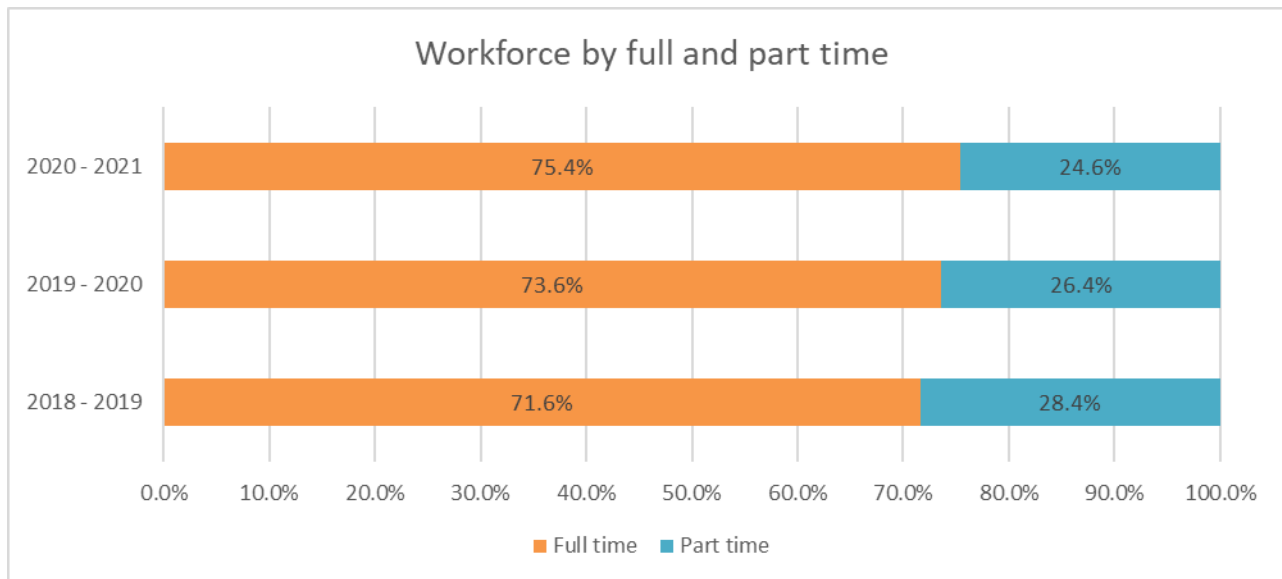
Age Group	Women	Men
16 to 24	39.7%	60.3%
25 to 34	59.3%	40.7%
35 to 44	58.5%	41.5%
45 to 54	62.5%	37.5%
55 to 64	56.7%	43.3%
65+	63.6%	36.4%



### 3.5 Full-time and part-time

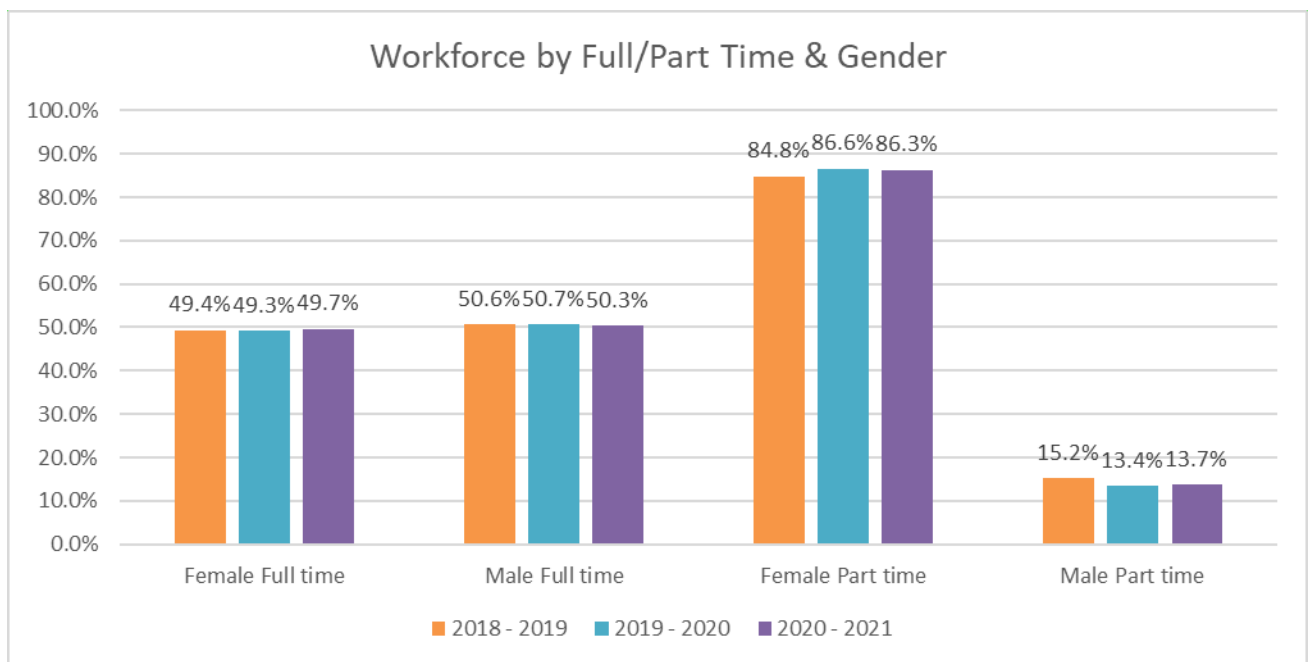
About three quarters of employees work full-time, and a quarter work part-time. There has been a steady increase of staff in full-time work compared to part-time. Both full-time and part-time staff are afforded the benefit of a wide range of flexible working options, such as working compressed hours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

Contract type	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Full time	71.6%	73.6%	75.4%
Part time	28.4%	26.4%	24.6%



### 3.6 Full-time and part-time by gender

A much greater percentage of women work part-time than men (86.3% compared to 13.7%). The percentage of men and women working full or part-time has remained relatively stable over time

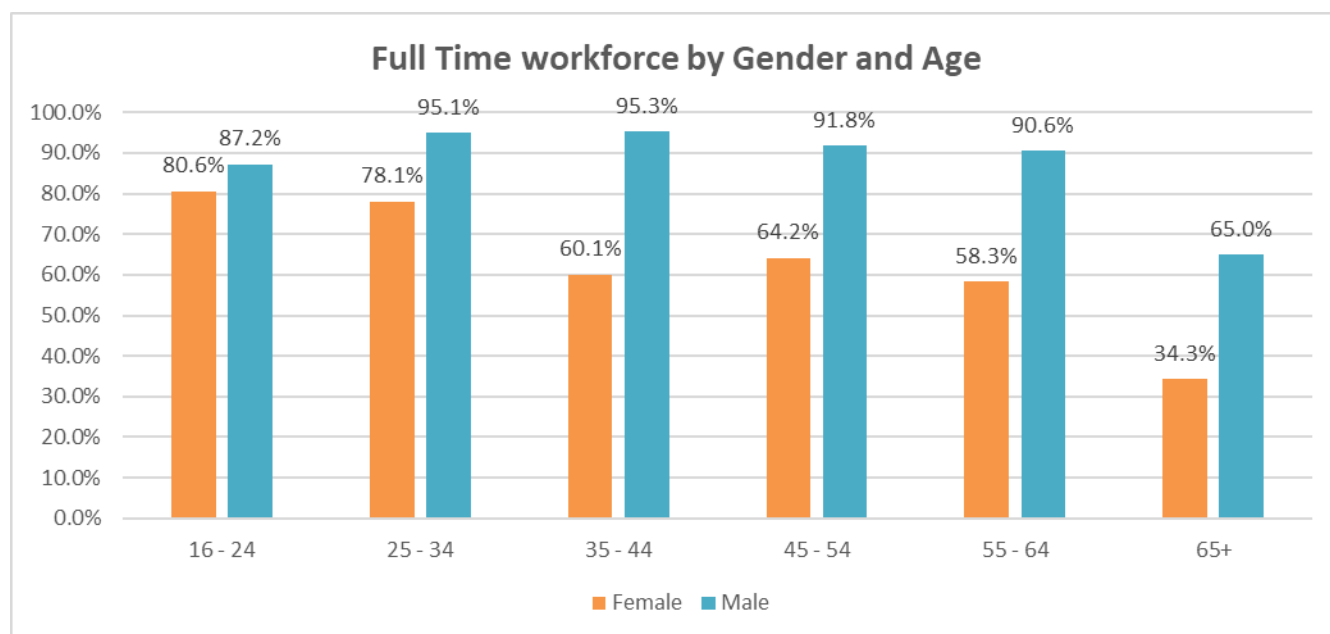


Gender	Contract type	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Women	Full time	49.4%	49.3%	49.7%
Men	Full time	50.6%	50.7%	50.3%
Women	Part time	84.8%	86.6%	86.3%
Men	Part time	15.2%	13.4%	13.7%

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

A high percentage of women aged 16 to 24 (80.6%) and 25 to 34 (78.1%) work full-time. This then falls for those aged 35 to 44 (60.1%) and then rises again for women aged 45 to 54 (64.2%). Fewer than half of women aged 65 and over work full-time (34.3%), which is potentially due to flexible working and/or retirement and pension options.

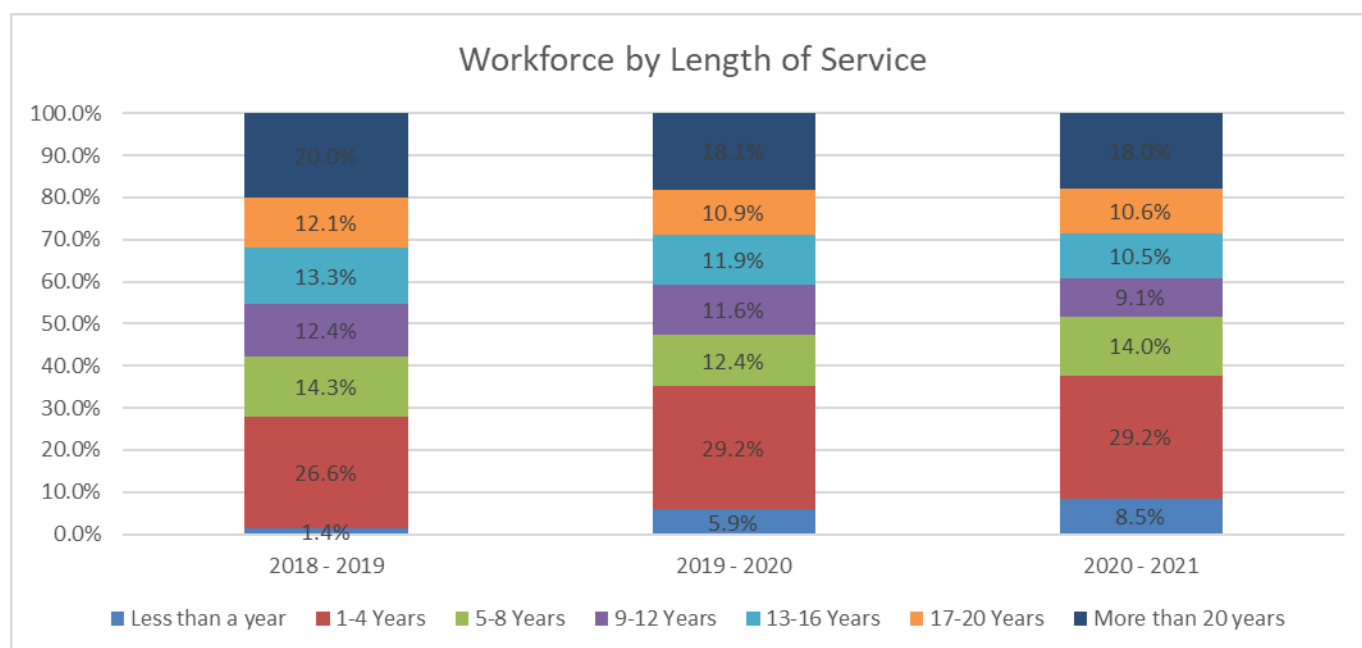
More than 90% of men between the ages of 25 to 64 work full-time, and in the 16 – 24 age group 87.2% work full time, while in the 65+ category 65.0% work full time. Again this is likely to be due to flexible retirement/working arrangements which enable employees to have a gradual route into retirement if they wish.



### 3.8 Length of service

The length of service band with the greatest proportion of staff is for those with service of between one to four years (29.2%). Almost a third of staff (28.6%) have worked at the Council for at least 17 years.

Length of service	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Less than a year	1.4%	5.9%	8.5%
1 to 4 years	26.6%	29.2%	29.2%
5 to 8 years	14.3%	12.4%	14.0%
9 to 12 years	12.4%	11.6%	9.1%
13 to 16 years	13.3%	11.9%	10.5%
17 to 20 years	12.1%	10.9%	10.6%
More than 20 years	20.0%	18.1%	18.0%



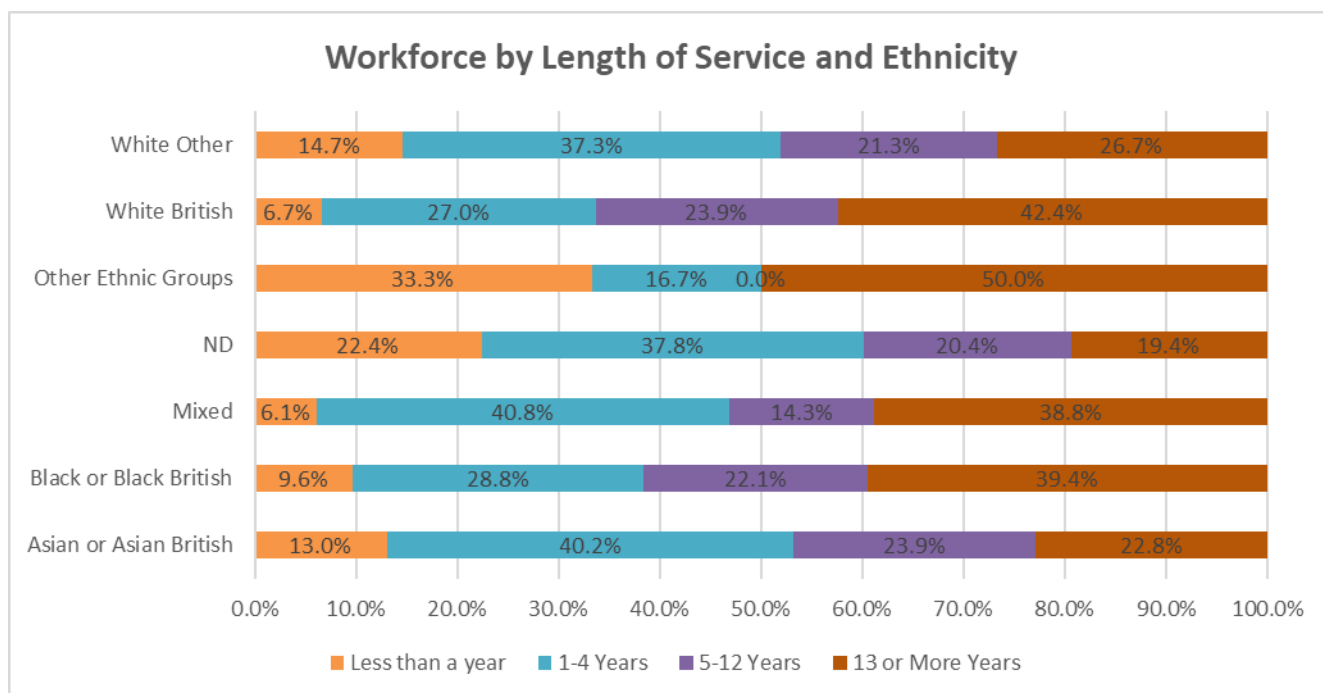
### 3.9 Length of service by disability

Due to the low numbers of employees who declare a disability, it is difficult to note any 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

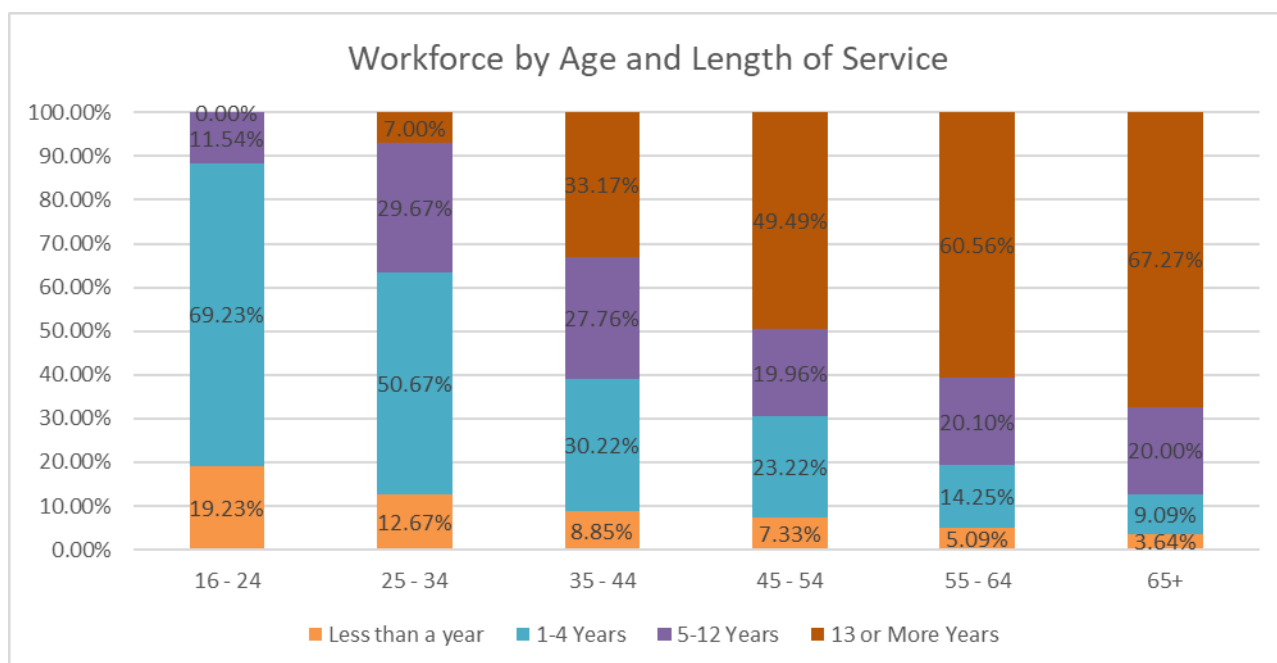
The only trends of note for length of service by ethnicity is that staff who identify as White tend to have longer service then staff in most other minority ethnic groups.

Ethnicity	Less than a year	1 to 4 years	5 to 12 years	13 +
White British	6.7%	27.0%	23.9%	42.4%
White Other	14.7%	37.3%	21.3%	26.7%
Black/Black British	9.6%	28.8%	22.1%	39.4%
Asian/Asian British	13.0%	40.2%	23.9%	22.8%
Mixed	6.1%	40.8%	14.3%	38.8%
Other ethnic group(s)	33.3%	16.7%	0.0%	50.0%
Prefer not to say	22.4%	37.8%	20.4%	19.4%



### 3.11 Length of service by age profile

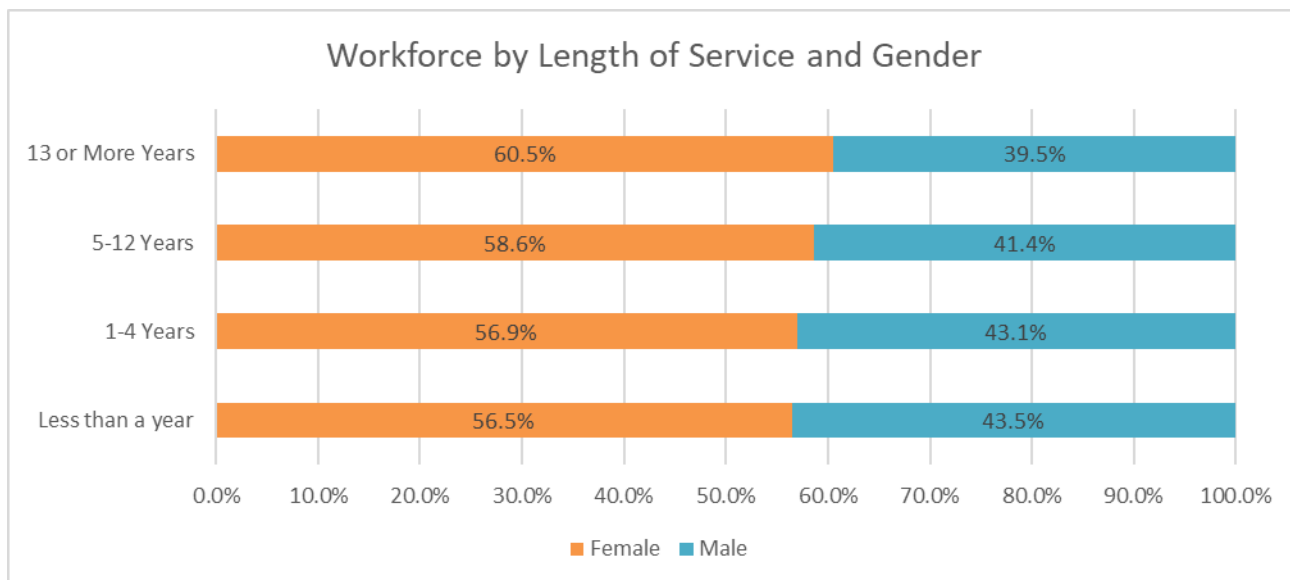
There is, unsurprisingly, a correlation between age and length of service. The proportion of staff with longer service tends to increase as age increases.



### 3.12 Length of service by gender

The percentage of staff by gender is similar across the different service lengths, and largely reflects the overall proportion of men and women employed.

Ethnicity	Less than a year	1 to 4 years	5 to 12 years	13 +
Women	56.5%	56.9%	58.6%	60.5%
Men	43.5%	43.1%	41.4%	39.5%



### 3.13 Pay grade

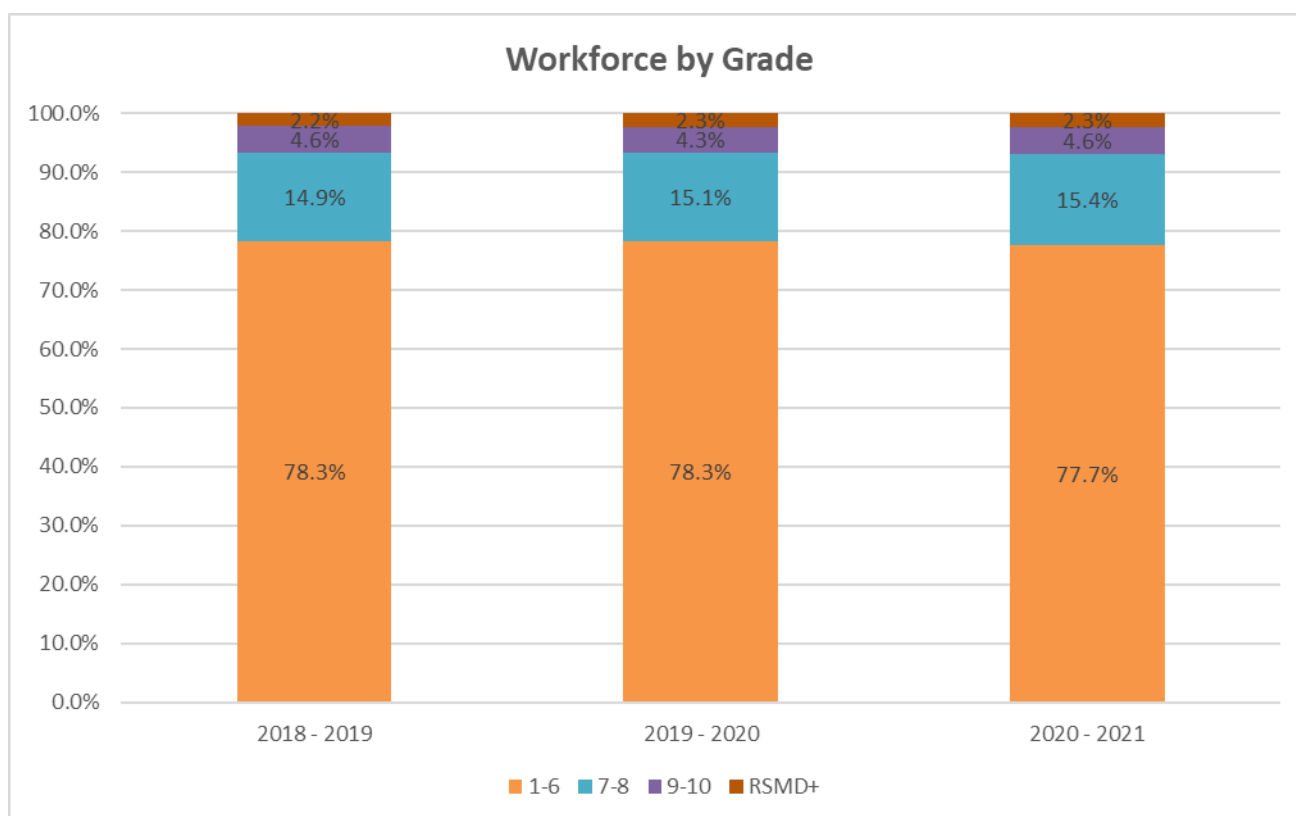
This section features information broken down by salary grades.

#### 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, Deputy and Assistant Directors, Executive Directors, the Deputy Chief Executive and the Chief Executive,

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

Grade	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Grades 1 to 6	78.3%	78.3%	77.7%
Grades 7 to 8	14.9%	15.1%	15.4%
Grades 9 to 10	4.6%	4.3%	4.6%
Grades RSMD and Above	2.2%	2.3%	2.3%



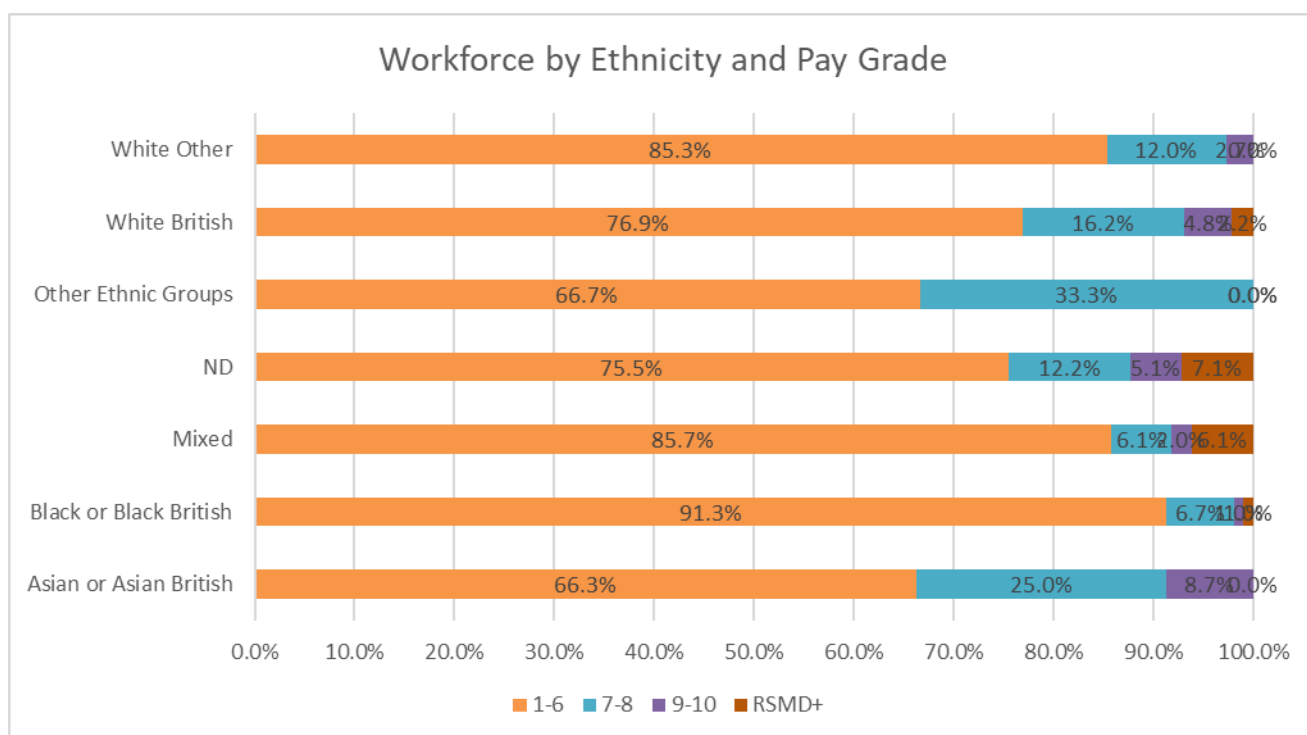
### 3.14 Grade by disability

Due to the small number of staff that have declared 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 candidates with a disability and to promote development for existing members of staff with a disability.

### 3.15 Grade by ethnicity

There is a higher proportion of staff within the lower pay grades 1-6 for almost all minority ethnic groups, compared to White British staff. The only exception is for Asian or Asian British staff where there is a lower proportion in Grades 1-6 compared to White British staff. For the highest pay grades (RSMD and above) there are no Asian or Asian British staff or staff from Other Ethnic Groups. 7.1% of staff at RSMD or above prefer not to say or have not declared their ethnicity.

Ethnicity	Grade 1- 6	Grade 7-8	Grade 9-10	RSMD and Above
White British	76.9%	16.2%	4.8%	2.2%
White Other	85.3%	12.0%	2.7%	0.0%
Black/Black British	91.3%	6.7%	1.0%	1.0%
Asian/Asian British	66.3%	25.0%	8.7%	0.0%
Mixed	85.7%	6.1%	2.0%	6.1%
Other ethnic group(s)	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%

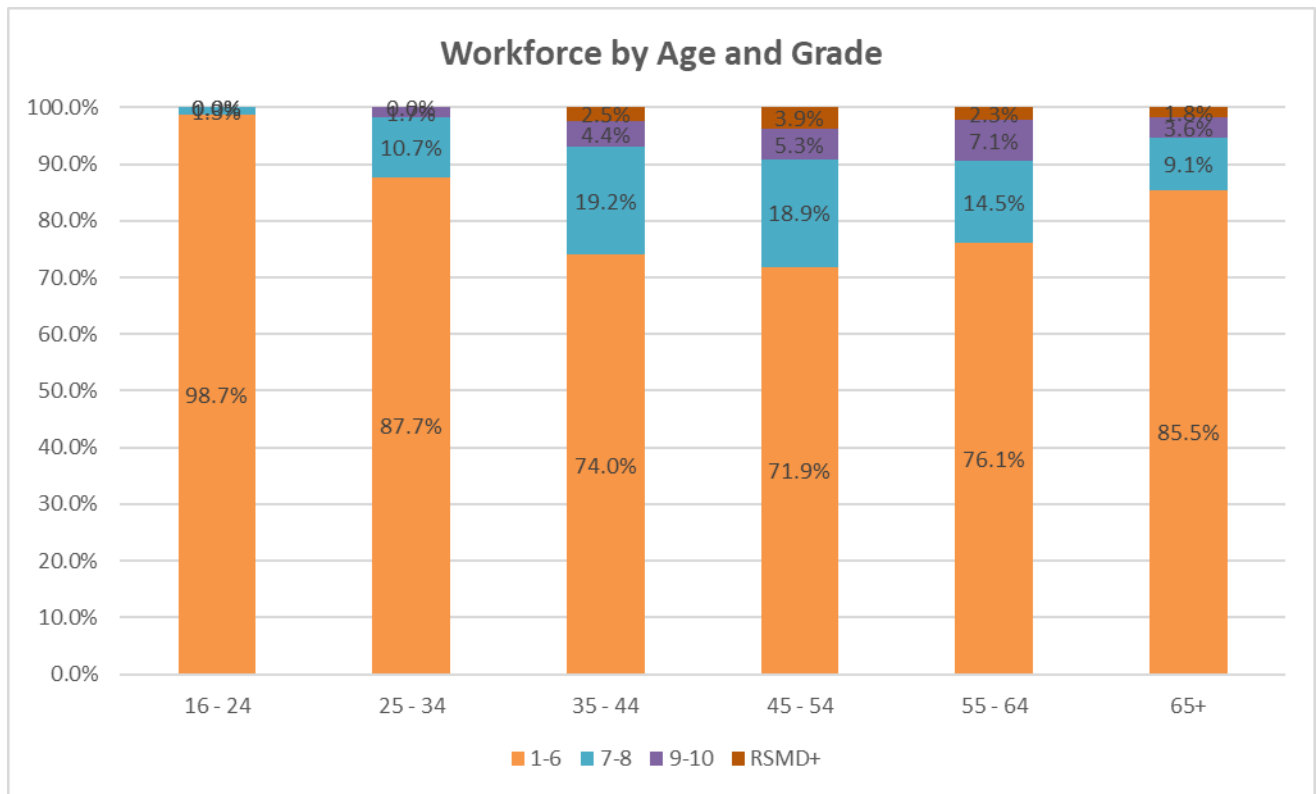


### 3.16 Grade by age profile

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 younger 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	98.7%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%
25 to 34	87.7%	10.7%	1.7%	0.0%
35 to 44	74.0%	19.2%	4.4%	2.5%
45 to 54	71.9%	18.9%	5.3%	3.9%
55 to 64	76.1%	14.5%	7.1%	2.3%
65+	85.5%	9.1%	3.6%	1.8%

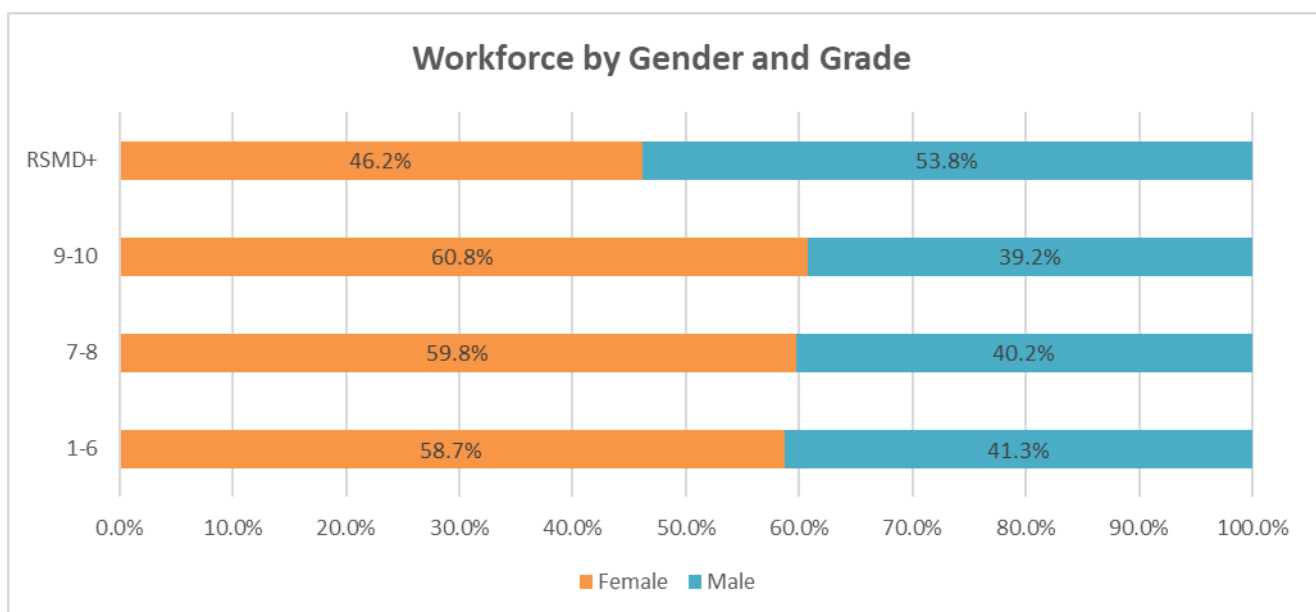




### 3.17 Grade by gender

There is a higher proportion of women in all grade categories except for the highest grades.

Gender	Grade 1-6	Grade 7- 8	Grade 9-10	RSMD and Above
Women	58.7%	59.8%	60.8%	46.2%
Men	41.3%	40.2%	39.2%	53.8%



## **4 Staff engagement and procedures**

### **4.1 Quantitative and qualitative research with employees**

An engagement survey for staff was carried out in April 2021 and the results were considered by some of the protected characteristics covered in this report. Overall, 58% of the workforce completed the survey. For age, disability and ethnicity, approximately 15 – 20% of staff declined to answer or chose the ‘prefer not to say’ option for the demographic questions, despite assurances about the confidentiality of the data and an explanation of how it would be used. This meant that it was not possible to carry out any meaningful analysis of the results by these characteristics. The next engagement survey will be carried out in April 2022.

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

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are carried out on 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 has a strong and positive relationship with Trade Unions and places great value on their contribution towards making the Council a great place to work. This includes helping to build trust with the workforce, ensuring workplaces are safe, promoting equality, improving working conditions and staff retention as just a few examples. The Council meets formally with Trade Unions on a regular basis through the Local Joint Forum which includes elected members, Joint Trade Union Committee, Directorate Joint Forums and Schools Joint Forum. In addition, regular informal meetings take place which provide a valuable forum for working in partnership on a range of issues.

Some directorates have a forum where ideas, issues, and suggestions for making the Council a better place to work are discussed openly and in a spirit of free exchange of views. Trade Union 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 Unions 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 People with a Disability
- Whistle-Blowing Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy

### 4.5.1 HR Casework

In April 2021, a new Case Management module was implemented within the Council's HR system, iTrent. This enables more accurate recording of HR casework against the protected characteristics recorded for everyone within iTrent. Prior to this, cases were recorded manually and not in a central system, meaning that data was sometimes inaccurate or incomplete. This report therefore includes casework raised within the new Case Management module between 1 April 2021 and 30 September 2021.

HR Casework – Use of Formal Procedures – 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021 - Analysis by Employee Protected Characteristics

Case Type	All Cases	Women		Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Employees		Employees with a Disability	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Capability – Ill Health	31	21	67.7%	4	22.6%	1	3.2%
Capability – Performance	6	5	83.3%	1	16.7%	1	16.7%
Disciplinary	18	5	27.8%	8	44.4%	0	0.0%
Grievance	5	2	40.0%	2	40.0%	0	0.0%
Whistle-blowing	2	2	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	62	35	56.5%	15	24.2%	2	3.2%

The Council 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.

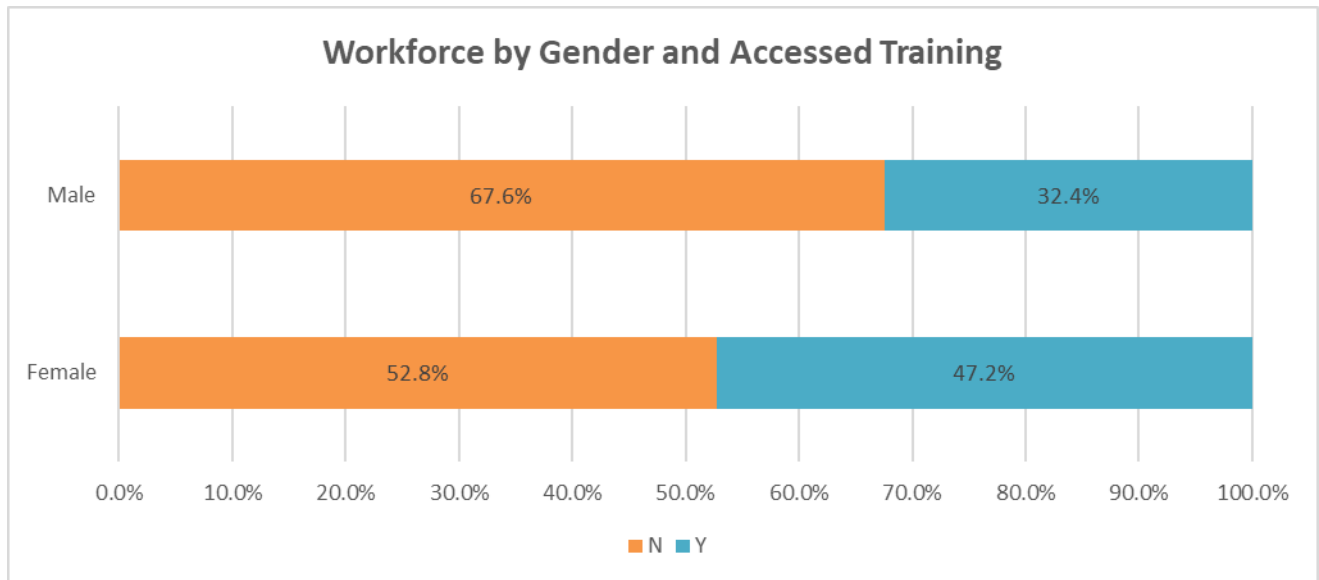
### 4.6 Learning and development opportunities

The Council recognises that our staff are our greatest asset and is committed to training and personal development. Our staff are central to achieving our vision to help Reading realise its potential and to ensure that everyone who lives and works here can share the benefits of its success. The [Team Reading People Strategy](#) sets out how we aim to achieve this and create an organisation that provides excellent services to Reading.

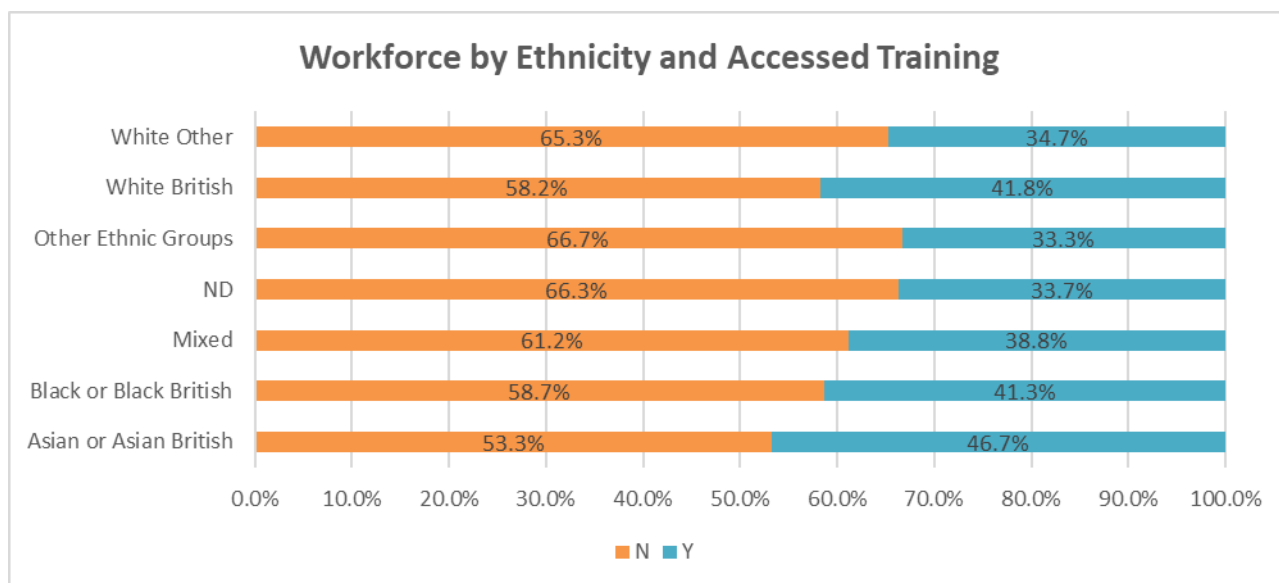
The Council has a range of learning and development opportunities available including classroom courses, e-learning, on-the-job training and coaching and mentoring. The Council also has an integrated programme of leadership and management development. In 2020/21, most training was delivered virtually due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

In 2020/21, 79.7% of the total workforce accessed our corporate training. 47.2% of women accessed training and the number of staff from most minority ethnic groups who accessed training is largely comparable to the proportion of white employees. About one third of staff who accessed training preferred not to declare their ethnicity.

Gender	Number who accessed Training	Number who did not access Training
Women	47.2%	52.8%
Men	67.6%	32.4%



Ethnicity	Number who accessed Training	Number who did not access Training
White British	41.8%	58.2%
White Other	34.7%	65.3%
Black/Black British	41.3%	58.7%
Asian/Asian British	46.7%	53.3%
Mixed	38.8 %	61.2%
Other ethnic group(s)	33.3%	66.7%
Prefer not to say	33.7%	66.3%



Development opportunities can be identified in a variety of ways including by the individual through regular 1 to 1 meetings and the annual review 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, in addition to the leadership development programme for managers at all levels.

#### 4.7 Gender pay gap information

The Council has published its gender pay gap figures since 2017. The Council's mean gender pay gap for 2021 is 2.06% and the median gender pay gap is 4.91%. The figures have remained broadly comparable to 2020, when they were 4.71% and 2.53%. The key difference is that the mean is the lower figure this year whereas the median was the lower figure in 2020. They also compare favourably with the national average gender pay gap figure for full and part time employees which is 15.4% for 2021 (up from 14.9% in 2020).

The gender pay gap report for 2021 is available on the Council's website on the [equality, diversity and inclusion policies](#) page.

#### 4.8 Ethnicity pay gap information

The Council started voluntarily publishing its ethnicity pay gap figures in 2020. Using the snapshot date of 31 March 2021, the Council's mean ethnicity pay gap is 4.26% and the median ethnicity pay gap is 5.69%. In 2020, the mean pay gap was 6.88% and the median pay gap was 0.28%.

The ethnicity pay gap report for 2021 is available on the Council's website on the [equality, diversity and inclusion policies](#) page