



COUNCIL FUNCTIONS COMMITTEE

Thursday, 28th July, 2011

7.30 pm

Town Hall, Watford

Publication date: 20 July 2011

CONTACT

If you require further information or you would like a copy of this agenda in another format, e.g. large print, please contact Jodie Kloss in Legal and Property Services on 01923 278376 or by email to legalanddemocratic@watford.gov.uk (Minicom available on 01923 278499).

Welcome to this meeting. We hope you find these notes useful.

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COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Councillor K Hastrick (Chair)

Councillors S Counter, E Hines-Randall, A Lovejoy, H Lynch, N Shah and D Walford

AGENDA

PART A - OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/ COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY)**

3. **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 2)

To approve for signature the minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2011.

4. **ANNUAL STATEMENT OF WORKFORCE MONITORING AND RECRUITMENT
ACTIVITY: FINANCIAL YEAR 2010/11** (Pages 3 - 20)

Report of the Head of Human Resources

5. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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Agenda Item 3

COUNCIL FUNCTIONS COMMITTEE

28 February 2011

Present: Councillor K Hastrick (Chair)
Councillor A Wylie (Vice Chair)
Mayor D Thornhill
Councillors J Connal, S Counter, A Lovejoy, H Lynch and
D Walford

Also present: Councillor N Bell

Officers: Head of Revenues and Benefits
Democratic Services Officer (RW)

CF10-10/11 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

There was a change of membership for this meeting: Mayor D Thornhill replaced Councillor I Sharpe.

Apologies for absence were received after the meeting from Councillor Hines-Randall.

CF11-10/11 **DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of interest.

CF12-10/11 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th November 2010 were submitted and signed.

CF13-10/11 **COUNCIL TAX 2011/12**

The Committee received a report of the Head of Strategic Finance consolidating the decisions of the Council and the two precepting authorities to give the overall Council Tax for the residents of Watford for the coming Financial Year.

RESOLVED –

that the total Council Tax for Watford Borough Council, including the precepts for Hertfordshire County Council and the Hertfordshire Police Authority, be agreed as set out in the table below:

	<i>(Ratios)</i>	<i>WBC's Share</i>	<i>HCC's Share</i>	<i>Herts Police Share</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
		£	£	£	£
A	(6/9)	166.56	745.89	98.55	1,011.00
B	(7/9)	194.32	870.20	114.97	1,179.49
C	(8/9)	222.08	994.52	131.40	1,348.00
D	(1)	249.84	1118.83	147.82	1,516.49
E	(11/9)	305.36	1367.46	180.67	1,853.49
F	(13/9)	360.88	1616.09	213.52	2,190.49
G	(15/9)	416.40	1864.72	246.37	2,527.49
H	(2)	499.68	2237.66	295.64	3,032.98

Chair
Council Functions Committee

The meeting started at 7.30 pm
and ended at 7.35 pm

7/3/11

Agenda Item 4

Report to: Council Functions Committee
Date of Meeting: 28 July 2011
Report of: Head of Human Resources
Title: ANNUAL STATEMENT OF WORKFORCE MONITORING
AND RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY: FINANCIAL YEAR
2010/2011

1. SUMMARY

Watford Borough Council is committed to the delivery of equality and diversity across the full spectrum of its services and in its role as an employer. This commitment is articulated in its Single Equality Scheme 2010 and associated action plan, which identifies key actions the Council will take to deliver a workforce that both reflects the community it serves and to ensure equality of opportunity for its workforce. We believe our commitment goes beyond our statutory obligations and reinforces our corporate priority to ensure equality and diversity are at the heart of everything we do.

The statement attached at appendix 1 details the profile of Watford BC's workforce from 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011. Throughout this period the Council has monitored its workforce in line with its statutory responsibilities as well as to deliver its aim of promoting equality within the organisation. The monitoring includes:

- Ethnicity – in line with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Disability
- Gender

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the report is noted.

Contact Officer: Terry Baldwin, Head of Human Resources

For further information on this report please contact: Terry Baldwin

telephone extension: 8133

e-mail: terry.baldwin@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by:

Tricia Taylor, Corporate Director

3.0 DETAILED PROPOSAL

3.1 Introduction

The report relates to the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011 and the statistics are taken from the existing personnel and training records. The Council is in the process of implementing a new integrated human resources and payroll information system (Northgate) to enable more comprehensive reporting and analysis to be undertaken in the future. Any data gaps identified in this process will be addressed by the new system over the year.

The Council is committed to ensuring it achieves its equalities objectives. Equality issues are overseen in the Council by the Corporate Equalities Working Group and through the monitoring of statutory performance indicators on equalities. Information on the Council's performance on equalities can be found on the Council's website at www.watford.gov.uk.

The Council's Leadership Team now takes regular reports on progress against equalities targets and this will include up to date monitoring information.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

The Head of Strategic Finance comments that there are no financial implications arising directly out of this report.

4.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

The Head of Legal & Democratic Services comments that the Council is under a statutory duty to promote equality

4.3 Staffing

The report will update the Council's statistics for the year 2010/2011.

4.4 Accommodation

There are no implications.

4.5 Equalities

The report documents the Council's performance against Performance Indicators for Equalities and will be considered at a future meeting of the Corporate Equalities Working group and the One Watford Equalities Panel.

4.6 Community Safety

There are no implications in this report.

4.7 Sustainability

There are no implications in this report.

4.8 Potential Risks

Failure to monitor and report against statutory equalities requirements will bring reputational risk to the Council.

Appendices

Annual Statement of Workforce Monitoring

Background papers: None

File reference: None

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ANNUAL STATEMENT OF WORKFORCE MONITORING AND RECRUITMENT ACTIVITY: FINANCIAL YEAR 2010/11

INTRODUCTION

Watford Borough Council is committed to the delivery of equality and diversity across the full spectrum of its services and in its role as an employer. This commitment is articulated in its Single Equality Scheme 2010 and associated action plan, which identifies key actions the Council will take to deliver a workforce that both reflects the community it serves and to ensure equality of opportunity for its workforce. We believe our commitment goes beyond our statutory obligations and reinforces our corporate priority to ensure equality and diversity are at the heart of everything we do.

This statement details the profile of Watford BC's workforce from 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011. Throughout this period the Council has monitored its workforce in line with its statutory responsibilities as well as to deliver its aim of promoting equality within the organisation.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK UPDATE - EQUALITY ACT 2010

The statutory duties are now governed by the Equality Act 2010, which came into force in October 2010. The Act replaces previous legislation (such as the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995). The government is still to publish the final guidance on the range of duties that will apply, under the Act, to public sector organisations such as local authorities but there are definite indications that there will be a requirement for public sector organisations with over 150 employees to report at least annually on how policies and practices are affecting staff with different 'protected characteristics'.

These protected characteristics are defined within the Act as:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnerships.

The monitoring information currently collected by the Council (and, therefore, covered in this report) met the requirements of previous legislation and good practice and covered:

- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Gender
- Disability
- Age

It is likely that once government published final guidance on what constitutes good practice for organisations, such as Watford BC, in terms of monitoring equality information, the Council will want to review its current approach and consider if there is additional information that would give a fuller picture of the impact of its policies and practices on staff.

MONITORING DATA 2010/11

The statistics are taken from the existing Human Resources records via our integrated human resources and payroll information system (Northgate). This enables more comprehensive reporting and analysis to be undertaken. However, it does rely on individuals wishing to disclose personal information so that reporting can be undertaken. Any data gaps identified in this process are where employees have chosen not to disclose personal information and this requires further monitoring to ensure records are as up to date as accurate as possible.

CORPORATE MONITORING

The Council is committed to ensuring it achieves its equalities objectives. Equality issues are overseen in the Council by the Corporate Equalities Working Group, led by the Executive Director – Services, and through the monitoring of performance indicators on equalities. Information on the Council's performance on equalities can be found on the Council's website at www.watford.gov.uk.

1. Legal General Duties – Corporate targets

As well as consolidating all previous equalities legislation, the Equality Act introduced a new general equality duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. This means the Council must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- foster good relations between different groups

Due regard involves

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where there are different needs of other people

This new general equality duty replaces all previous duties specified under previous equality legislation and applies to the Council as an employer as well as a provider and enabler of services.

Corporate Targets for Workforce Representation

The deletion of best value performance indicators in 2008 has meant that local authorities are no longer statutorily required to collect and report against an agreed set of performance measures.

However, Watford BC chose to retain the indicators relating to equalities and diversity monitoring as part of its commitment to equality within the workforce.

These are outlined below with their 'local performance indicator' reference. It should be noted that in many cases the appointment or loss of just one member of staff can impact significantly on results because of the relatively small number of staff involved. For 2010/11 the sample was increased from the top 5% to the top 10% of staff in Watford Borough Council in order for an evaluation of the next tier of staff to be carried out. This has had an impact on the results which are given below.

- **HR2:** Percentage of top 10% of earners who are women

The target for 2010/11 was 50%

Results for 2010/11 is 40.91% (18 out of a total of 44)

- **HR3:** Percentage of the top 10% earners from Black, Asian and other minority ethnic communities (BME):-

The target for 2010/11 was 13.6%

Result for 2010/11 is 6.82% (3 out of a total of 44)

- **HR4:** Percentage of top paid 10% staff who have a disability.

The target for 2010/11 was 5%

Result for 2010/11 is 0% (0 out of a total of 44)

- **HR5:** Percentage of employees in the authority declaring that they meet the DDA definition.

The target for 2010/11 was 5%

Result for 2010/11 is 1.17%

- **HR7:** Council employees from the BME community.

The target for 2010/11 was 13.6%

Result for 2010/11 is 16.89% (76 out of 450)

This indicator is calculated by taking the current number of BME employees as a percentage of the economically active minority ethnic population – 13.56%. The latter figure is taken from the last census as it is the most accurate figure available, albeit relatively out of date now. This is in line with the definition applied to the indicator when it was a best value performance indicator.

2. Watford Population Statistics

2.1 Overview

Total population	2001 ¹	2009 ²
	79,726	83,800

The government released projected population growth figures in 2006 showing projected population growth to 2031³. These projected Watford would reach a population of 81,000 by 2011. The current mid year estimates show our population has already grown beyond the expected rate. The projection for 2020 is 84,900 and for 2031 89,300 but it is likely that this will be exceeded, based on current figures and rate of growth.

2.2 Ethnicity

Current government estimates on the ethnic make-up of Watford support the findings of the 2001 census data. The majority of the population in Watford are white British. However, we have a long history of welcoming new communities – most recently those from Central and Eastern Europe - and our significant black and ethnic minority community makes a real and welcome contribution to the quality of life and overall diversity of the town. Watford has a significantly more diverse community than the rest of Hertfordshire and the Eastern region overall.

As yet, data collection has not captured the increase in the number of residents from Eastern Europe although we know from national insurance registrations in the borough that there has been an increase in registrations from people of Polish nationality over the last 5 years. In terms of National Insurance data, we know that up to June 2009, there were 800 new registrations from non-UK nationals. These were predominantly Pakistani, Indian, Polish and Portuguese.

In addition, county data shows there are 121 Polish speaking and 115 Portuguese speaking pupils in Watford. In the May 2008 school census 65% of Watford school aged children were White, which is around 18% lower than the population as a whole and indicates the borough's growing diversity.

Overall, Watford's population currently stands at 75% White British, with 25% of the population classified as another ethnic group. Of these the largest are White Other, Pakistani (we know from research that Watford has one of the highest percentages of Pakistani communities in England at around 4.65% - 20th for any local authority and 4th for a district), and Indian. Looking forward, when we compare the changes in the ethnic background from 2001, the

¹ Last Census figure

² 2009 mid – year estimate

³ 2006-based Subnational Population Projections

current government estimates indicate increasing number of residents who classify themselves as Mixed Race or dual heritage.

Ethnic Background Population estimates by ethnic group - mid 2007	Number	Percentage
White	65,900	
White British	60,000	75.28%
White Irish	2,000	2.50%
White Other	3,900	4.89%
Mixed	2,100	
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	600	0.75%
Mixed: White and Black African	300	0.38%
Mixed: White and Asian	700	0.88%
Mixed: Other Mixed	500	0.63%
Asian or Asian British	7,500	
Asian or Asian British: Indian	2,500	3.14%
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	3,700	4.64%
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	300	0.38%
Asian or Asian British: Other Asian	1,000	1.25%
Black or Black British	3,000	
Black or Black British: Caribbean	1,300	1.63%
Black or Black British: African	1,500	1.88%
Black or Black British: Other Black	200	0.25%
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group	1,500	
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group: Chinese	700	0.87%
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group: Chinese: Other Ethnic Group	800	1.00%

2.3 Gender

The 2009 mid-year statistics show the following breakdown of Watford's population by gender. There are no statistics currently available about the transgender population.

Our male / female split is similar to the national picture, although slightly higher percentage of males than nationally.

Population Breakdown	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Female	41,900	50%
Male	41,900	50%

2.4 Disability

At the last census 14.2% of Watford's population classified themselves as having a disability or limiting long-term illness (described as any long-term illness, health problem or disability that limits daily activities or work). In the 2008 Place Survey, nearly four out of five or 79.1% of residents described their health as good or very good, which means that around 20% described their health as fair, bad or very bad. In the 2001 census, 73% of Watford residents described their health as good whilst 27% described it as fair or not good – 6.85% chose not good.

Disability	Number	Percentage
Disability or life-long limiting illness	11,332	14.2%
Incapacity benefit	2,285	2.82%
Disability living allowance claimants	2,875	3.55%
Attendance allowance	1,985	2.45%

2.5 Age

According to the 2009 mid-year statistics, 12.8% of our population is over the age of 65, which is lower than the proportion of over 65s in England as a whole (16.1%). Currently, our population is relatively young and is heavily skewed towards the 0-14 and 25-44 age groups. 0-14 year olds account for 18.6% of the population, compared with 16.7% of Hertfordshire's population and 17.7% of England's population. An even larger disparity is the proportion of 25-44 year olds in Watford compared with Hertfordshire and England, accounting for 33.7%, 23.7% and 28.6% respectively.

Watford age profile		
Age	Number (in thousands)	Percentage
0	1.3	1.6%
0-4	4.8	5.72%
5-9	4.7	5.61%
10-14	4.8	5.73%
15-19	4.9	5.85%
20-24	5.2	6.20%
25-29	7.0	8.35%
30-34	7.2	8.59%
35-39	7.1	8.47%
40-44	6.9	8.23%
45-49	6.2	7.34%

50-54	4.9	5.85%
55-59	4.1	4.89%
60-64	3.9	4.65%
65-69	2.9	3.46%
70-74	2.5	2.98%
75-79	2.2	2.63%
80-84	1.6	1.91%
85-89	1.1	1.31%
90+	0.4	0.48%

At present, Watford has a higher than average working age population and lower than average numbers of people of retirement age and over. However, like many areas of the country, population projections for the next 10 and 20 years show that the over 65s population in the district will increase. With the new legislation on the retirement age coming into force during 2011, this will have implications for employers.

3. Recruitment, Selection and Equal Opportunities

Fair recruitment practices are essential in achieving equality of opportunity in employment. The Council is committed to fair recruitment practices. To this end the following measures are in place:

- A positive statement about the Council's commitment to equal opportunities appears in all job adverts.
- Selection is made on merit on the basis of meeting the essential requirements of the job using interviews, relevant exercises and assessment centres.
- Applications are made using a standard application form unless an agency is used.
- Agencies are required to comply with the Council's Equalities and Diversity Policy.
- All vacancies are advertised in relevant publications to the role in the local press and on the Council's website.
- New employees are advised of their responsibilities under the Council's Code of Conduct, Discipline and Harassment Policy at induction.
- There is a corporate complaints procedure for applicants who consider that they have not been dealt with fairly.
- The Council has been re-accredited with the two ticks symbol on employing those with disabilities.

In addition:

- The Council will encourage women, members of BME groups and people with disabilities to apply for jobs in areas of employment where they are under-represented.
- The Council is committed to setting and achieving equalities targets and reviewing them on an annual basis. The Council remains a large employer in the borough with 459 fte employees giving us influence over employment prospects in the community.
- The Council will continue to strive to improve equality of opportunity by setting a good example in the town.

3.1 Analysis by Ethnicity

Ethnic distribution of the workforce as at 31st March, 2010 was:

Ethnic Origin Description	No. of post holders 2009/10	% 2009/10	No. of postholders 2010/11	% 2010/11
Blank/Do Not Wish to Disclose	51	11.12	34	7.56
African	8	1.74	8	1.78
Caribbean	9	1.96	9	2.00
Black British	0	0	1	0.22
White British	298	64.93	302	67.11
Irish	7	1.52	9	2.00
Chinese	0	0	0	0
Bangladeshi	2	0.43	2	0.44
Indian	27	5.89	26	5.78
Pakistani	8	1.74	7	1.56
Asian other	6	1.30	9	1.76
Other ethnic group	3	0.65	6	1.33
White other	40	8.72	38	8.44
Grand Total	459	100.00	450	100.00

The total number of employees from a BME background for 2009/10 was 13.72% against a community population of 13.56%. For 2010/11 this changed to 16.89% (76 people out of a total of 450). A result of this level would have placed Watford as top quartile performance nationally when best value performance indicators were collected.

During the financial year 2010/11 Watford moved forward with the four shared services with Three Rivers District Council and these services were ICT, Revenue and Benefits, Finance and Human Resources. In September 2011 plans for Service Prioritisation were started and as a result all vacant posts were frozen to allow for any potentially redundant employees to be offered alternative employment if possible. As new vacant posts became available

consideration was given to whether any employees facing redundancy could be offered the role. Where it was considered they could not, then roles were advertised externally.

During the period from 1st April, 2010 to 31st March 2011 a total of 49 roles were advertised with 34 vacancies being filled. The response rates generally to advertisements were very good and there were a total of 915 applications for the 49 vacant roles. Of these 244 (26.23%) were from BME population. The table below provides the spread of applications across all vacancies:

Ethnic Origin Description	Number of applications received	% of total applications
British	565	61.75
Indian	46	5.03
Pakistani	33	3.60
African	46	5.03
Irish	26	2.84
Caribbean	28	3.06
Not disclosed	27	2.95
Other – Asian	60	6.56
Other – Black	7	0.77
Other – mixed	9	0.98
Other – white	20	2.19
Other – any other ethnic group	44	4.80
Chinese	4	0.44
Total	915	100.00

The above table indicates a lower level of applicants not disclosing or stating 'other' on the ethnic monitoring data on their application forms and further steps can still be undertaken to improve in this area.

Of the 49 vacancies advertised, appointments were made to 34, with 15 being unable to be filled. Applicants from BME groups were successful in obtaining 17.65% of posts filled (6 out of 34). Ethnicity data was declared for all successful applicants, helping us compile accurate monitoring data.

The Council uses a grading structure which in its simplest terms grades jobs as follows:-

- Band 5 and below most front line jobs within the Council
- Band 6 to 8 Senior Officer typically supervisors and technical specialists
- Band 9 to 11 Principal Officer, typically professionals and managers
- Heads of Service
- Executive Directors

BME employees are represented in this grading structure as follows:

- Band 5 and below 12.95% (25 out of 193)

- Band 6 to 8 21.46% (44 out of 205)
- Band 9 to 11 9.76% (4 out of 41)
- Head of Service 12.50% (1 out of 8)
- Executive Director 33.33% (1 out of 3)

In view of the fact that the ethnic minority population within the community population is 13.56%, BME staff are reasonably represented at Head of Service and Director level, although the largest group of BME employees rests in the middle band of 6 – 8, representing senior officers. However it should also be noted that small fluctuations have a disproportionate effect on the percentages.

3.2 Analysis by Gender

The Council's gender profile based on actual employees, as opposed to full time equivalents illustrates that 47.33% of the Council's workforce were female and 52.67% male at 31st March 2011. However as in many organisations, some job types are dominated by men and some by women. The jobs dominated by predominantly male occupancy are Refuse Drivers and Collectors, Sweeper Drivers and Sweepers, Gardeners and Grounds persons, Multi-trade Operatives, and Security Officers. The jobs mainly dominated by women include: Benefits Assessors, Receptionists, Community Play workers, Administrative Assistants.

During the period April 2010 to 31 March 2011, of the total applications received for jobs 28.74% were from women (263 out of 915). Of the 34 jobs appointed to 61.76% of the new joiners were male (21 successful applicants for 34 roles) and 38.24% were female (13 successful applicants for 34 roles).

The Council uses the NJC Job Evaluation Scheme to ensure equality of pay between genders. An Equal Pay Audit was undertaken in 2007 to monitor the Council's robustness on equal pay for work of equal value and an action plan is in place to minimise risks and ensure we retain a sound position on this issue.

An analysis of women's position in the grading structure illustrates the success of women at Watford Borough Council:

There are a total of 450 roles within Watford Borough Council and women are represented within the banding structure as follows:-

% posts at each level held by women

Band	Total number of female employees	% of total employees
5 and below	84	43.52
6 to 8	105	51.22
9 to 11	17	
Heads of Service	5	62.50
Corporate Directors	2	66.66
Total	213	47.33

This analysis represents a good spread of female employees across all bands within the Council. It is difficult to relate these figures back to 2008/09 following the restructure within Watford BC and the introduction of new pay and grading bands. Future analysis will be possible using the bands identified here. It should be noted however, that it is extremely uncommon in local authorities to have women occupying over 60% of Heads of Service and all Director positions.

Women, therefore, fare better than men at Heads of Service level and above. However, women are disproportionately employed in more part-time or job-share roles due primarily to child-care responsibilities or sometimes life-style choice.

3.3 Analysis by Disability

The Council complies with the Employment Service "Two Ticks" standard which means that we guarantee an interview for all applicants with disabilities who meet the requirements of the role in their applications.

Although the Equality Act 2010 replaces previous equalities legislation, the Disability Equality Duty in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) continues to apply.

In the Act, a person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions)
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition are also protected by the Act.

Progressive conditions considered to be a disability

There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with some visual impairments are automatically deemed to be disabled.

Of the 915 applicants for Council jobs in the financial year 2010/11, 20 declared a disability which met the Disability Discrimination Act definition (which applied until October 2011). One of the new joiners appointed to the 34 jobs declared themselves as disabled and 33 posts were filled by those who did not declare a disability. This may be due to privacy issues or perhaps a fear that being disabled might put them at a disadvantage. The Council has been advertising in one of the main magazines for Disabled people that it welcomes applications from disabled applicants but we clearly need to do more as part of the review of our recruitment policy to attract disabled applicants.

During 2010/11 the Council switched from its previous system, CHRIS, to a new system from Northgate Arinso, Resource Link. Unfortunately, at the time of the transfer of information the field where employees declare a disability was incorrectly transferred and as a result, there is insufficient data to be able to make any meaningful determination of the number of employees who declare a disability. This year a questionnaire was sent to staff to ask them to update their personal details as part of our audit of the new system and link this to the introduction of the 6 strands of the Equalities Act. Employees were encouraged encourage to complete all areas and that will include details about any disability they may have, although it is not mandatory to disclose any information if employees choose not to do so. Many employees provided updated information, however, there were a substantial number of employees who did not complete this section. Further work will be undertaken to find better ways of recording the information.

The Council has a good record in adapting to the needs of employees with disabilities under the requirements of the DDA and is often able to make adjustments to try to enable employees to remain in work with the organisation where this is feasible.

The Council's recruitment policy and processes will be reviewed as part of a larger harmonisation project and as part of that review we will look at ways to try to encourage more disabled applicants to apply for jobs with the Council. Recruitment and selection training has been carried out for managers within Watford and will form part of an on going management skills programme to ensure managers are kept up to date with developments in Equalities. In addition, we will review the content of the course to ensure it reflects the latest developments in this area.

3.4 Analysis by Age

The government introduced age discrimination legislation in October 2006 which made it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of age. Employees can now elect to work beyond the previous local government retirement age of 65 for both men and women. This development is welcomed, particularly in areas of skills shortage.

The median age of Council employees in 2009/2010 was 46.97 years. 320 or 69.71% of staff were aged 40 or over and 193 or 42.04% 42% were over 50.

The figures for 2010/11 show the median age of Council employees in was 44.81 years. 318 or 70.67 % of staff were aged 40 or over and 174 or 38.67% were over 50. This is higher than demographic trends in the wider community and also illustrates the need for effective succession planning. For employees aged 20 to 29.9 years Watford Borough Council employs 27 people or 6.00% compared with the Watford local population of 22.05%

In the period April 2006 to March 2011 there were a total of 56 redundancies. 13 were from the age group 50 – 55 representing 23.2% of the total and 16 from the age group 60 – 65 representing 28.57% of total. There were 3 redundancies in the 20 – 25 age group 5.36% of total. In the year 2010/2011 there were 6 redundancies. 5 of these (83.33%) were in the age group 60 – 65.

3.5 Analysis by Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation

Further monitoring information was introduced during 2010/11, in line with the Equalities Act requirements. Of the 915 applicants for roles with Watford, 887 declared they were heterosexual/straight and 27 applicants preferred not to say. Information regarding religious beliefs was also recorded, however, the sample size is very small as this was introduced towards the end of the financial year. The split is as follows:

Religion	Number of applicants	% of total (915)
Hindu	8	0.87
Baha'i		
Buddhist	2	0.22
Christian	78	8.53
Jain		
Jewish		
Muslim	13	1.42
Sikh		
No religion	32	3.49
Other	6	0.65
Prefer not to say	5	0.55
Not asked on old app form	771	84.27

4. Training

The Council has a strong commitment to developing its staff within the resources available. The training budget for 2010/11 was £157,000 and 1192.5 days of training were provided to staff (this equates to the number of people attending specific courses). For example 10 people attending a half day training course equates to 5 days of training being delivered for staff.

Qualification support was provided to 44 staff. Of the 44 staff, 29.55% were women, 13.64% were BME and none identified themselves as disabled.

However 81.8 % of the staff who were supported on qualification courses did not declare their status on disability.

5. Policy Reviews

In 2010/11 we have undertaken a number of policy reviews and associated Equality Impact Assessments. However, the programme of reviews was put on hold while Service Prioritisation was undertaken, resulting in no policy reviews for the period October 2010 to March 2011. The programme of policy reviews will start again in 2011/12. The policies reviewed are:

- Recruitment
- Grievance
- Honorarium Payments
- Overtime Calculation of Bank Holidays for Part Time workers.

6. The Way Forward

Although the Council performs strongly as an employer in employing staff in terms of gender and from the BME population, the statistics reflect the need to attract more disabled staff and employees from the population base below the current median age of 44.81 years since our workforce profile suggests an imbalance in favour of older employees.

We clearly need to do more to encourage applicants and staff to complete their monitoring forms fully when applying for roles or when data cleansing forms are circulated. The need to attract more disabled staff will be reviewed in more detail and the reasons for non appointment to vacant roles considered. Ways to encourage staff to disclose any disability will be discussed with Unison and any resulting action plans put in place. This will include ways to give reassurance to staff that there will be no detrimental effect of disclosing such information. Similarly although we are top quartile nationally in our performance in reflecting our community closely in our workforce we need to continue to make efforts to ensure this remains the case and to improve upon our performance. In relation to women we need to raise the awareness of staff, managers and applicants that jobs which may be non-traditional to particular genders are also open equally to staff from both sexes to avoid any tendency to occupational segregation in some job roles.

We will continue to update and follow our Equalities Action Plans in all the areas of equalities and monitor their effectiveness. We will ensure we comply in full with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 when the final version is published. This is likely to include extending equality monitoring to some of the additional protected characteristics where meaningful and when it will support improvement to impact the Council has as an employer.

We welcome all suggestions on improving our performance on equalities.