



**WATFORD  
BOROUGH  
COUNCIL**

# Equality Impact Analysis

<b>Title of policy, function or service</b>	OD Strategy
<b>Lead officer</b>	Terry Baldwin
<b>Person completing the EIA</b>	Terry Baldwin
<b>Type of policy, function or service:</b>	Existing (reviewed) <input type="checkbox"/>  ✓ New/Proposed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Version &amp; Date</b>	1.0 25 June 2020

## **1. Background**

The Organisational Development (OD) Strategy sets out the Council's ambition for staff for 2020 - 2024 and is designed to support them to be very best they can. It forms part of the council's key suite of strategic planning documents that also includes its primary strategy document, the Council Plan 2020-24, and associated Delivery Plan 2020-22. To achieve this, staff will be equipped with the skills, knowledge, confidence and support they need to excel and grow.

The strategy outlines our plans to attract, and retain, the very best talent for Watford. To be renowned, not only for the outstanding local services we provide for our residents, businesses and community, but as the Council that is *the* local authority employer of choice.

Our ambitious plans and constant drive to do more mean we create interesting, challenging and diverse roles, which offer a real chance for all staff to develop and make their mark.

## **2. Focus of the Equality Impact Analysis**

This EIA, therefore, considers the potential equality related impacts, both positive and negative of the OD strategy on the staff in the groups or with the characteristics protected in the Equalities Act 2010.

These are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender Reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race
6. Religion or belief
7. Sex (gender)
8. Sexual Orientation
9. Marriage and Civil Partnership.

## **3. Engagement and consultation**

Our OD Strategy has been informed by consultation and engagement with staff.

This includes our Staff Survey 2020 (conducted in January 2020) and our Coronavirus Recovery Survey (conducted in May 2020). We also tested our approach and emerging strategy with our Staff Ambassadors Group, Organisational Leadership Team and Strategic Leadership Team, all of whom influenced our final strategy and the OD Delivery Plan that underpins the strategy.

Whilst our staff survey results are positive overall, they identified areas where we could do better for our staff and helped shape our OD themes and actions. In particular, staff wanted to see:

- Greater recognition for their efforts and contribution and celebration of achievements
- Better opportunities to progress and build skills, experience and careers

- A continued focus on flexible working, a good work life balance and mental and physical health
- Ensure the right organisational culture that is consistently experienced by our staff

A full report on the Staff Survey 2020 was considered as part of this EIA and is available for review if required.

As we move forward, engagement and consultation with staff will continue. We will work with our Staff Ambassadors Group, Unions, leaders and managers, and individuals to help test the strategy and the delivery plan over the next four years.

#### **4. What we know about our staff**

##### **OUR PEOPLE**

Understanding our staff is key to our OD being focused on what matters to staff and what will support them develop or grow. We serve a diverse community, with residents of many backgrounds, ages and interests. Our ambition is to encourage and support a similar diversity across our workforce and teams, recognising the importance of attracting new talent into a career in local government, alongside nurturing our own people and supporting career progression.

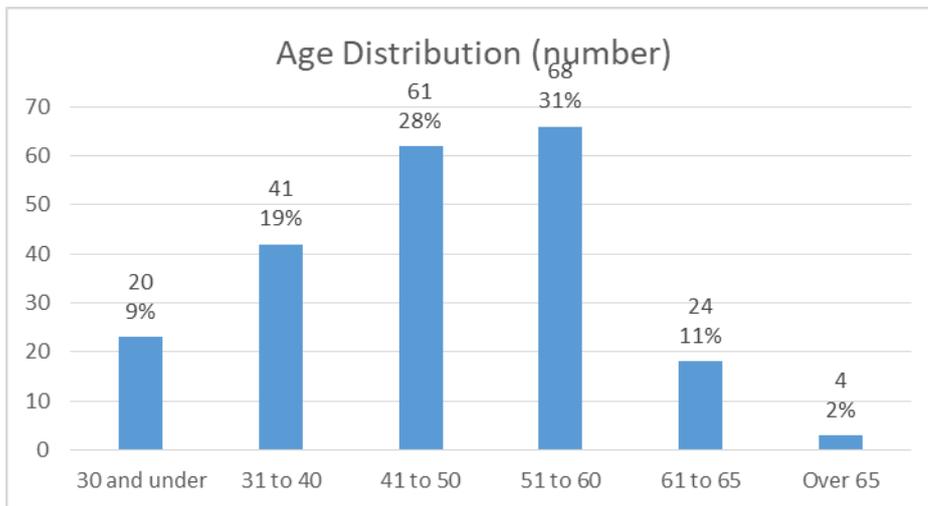
We are committed to championing equality of opportunity for all our staff – we want to recruit and retain the very best for Watford and know that embedding equalities in a way that is meaningful and delivers real results is critical to our success.

**The following set of statistics are taken from the Watford Borough Council workforce monitoring report 2020.**

##### **OUR AGE PROFILE**

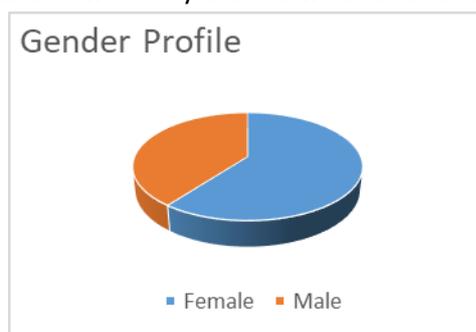
Like many part of the public sector and local government, we have an age profile skewed towards 41 to 60 years old (59%), with just under 30% age 40 or under.

We recognise there is a tremendous amount of knowledge and experience within our older age profile, which makes succession planning and 'growing our own' so essential to our future success



### OUR GENDER PROFILE

Currently, we have a higher number of women (59%) than men (41%) working for us, with the proportion of men and women relatively evenly distributed across all grades and role profiles. We have recently added non-binary to our gender profile or an option for people to tell us about their sex in a way that they prefer and reflects who they are and we intend to report on the results in our



next workforce report for 2020/21.

### OUR ETHNIC PROFILE

As a diverse town we strive for our workforce to reflect the communities we serve. Whilst our staff come from varied backgrounds and ethnicities, we would welcome an even greater representation of our community within our workforce. The table bellows shows the ethnicity split of our workforce as included within the workforce statistics for 2019/20. In our recent staff survey, just over three quarters (78%) staff classified themselves as white – English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British. The next highest categories were Asian or Asian British – Indian (6%) and Black Caribbean (3%).

Ethnic Origin Description	% of Employees 2019/20	% of Employees 2018/19	% of local population (Census 2011)
Asian British: Bangladeshi	0.46%	0.45%	0.40%
Asian British: Indian	6.42%	5.91%	5.50%
Asian British: Other	0.92%	0.91%	4.40%
Asian British: Pakistani	0.46%	0.45%	6.70%
Black British: African	1.83%	1.82%	3.50%
Black British: Caribbean	0.46%	0.45%	1.70%
Black British: Other	1.38%	1.36%	0.60%
Mixed: White & Black Caribbean	0.92%	0.91%	3.40%
Other Ethnic Group	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
White: British	40.37%	42.27%	61.90%
White: Irish	2.75%	2.27%	2.30%
White: Other	3.67%	3.18%	7.70%
Prefer not to say / not stated	40.37%	40.00%	0.00%

### **OUR DISABILITY PROFILE**

Having a disability should not be a barrier to working at Watford nor should anyone feel any concern about raising their specific needs so they can succeed and excel in their role. We will strive to be a 'disability confident' employer within the next 6 months and are fully committed to living up to this standard

The information held within our HR system can only reflect the details submitted by staff and unfortunately 164 people (75%) choose not to state if they have a disability or not. In our recent staff survey 2020 just 8% (12 people) stated they had a disability that limited them a little. As we shape our future culture and values with you as part of this OD plan, we want to make sure that part of who we are is as a place where people with disabilities recognise Watford as a supportive place to work and progress their careers.

### **OUR SEXUAL ORIENTATION PROFILE**

Watford is a safe place for our staff, where we want people to be at their best and, where if they choose to, share their home life and personal experiences. We foster an open and caring culture and, whilst we know people may want to keep their sexual orientation as a private matter, we celebrate sexual diversity and pride. However, over 59% of staff have not stated their sexual orientation on the HR system and we would like to reduce that number if possible. We will work with you to explain why these details are important, that they will not impact negatively on your working experience with Watford and encourage more of you to be confident to disclose these details.

## **5. How will the council ensure equality is promoted through the OD Strategy**

Under the Equality Act 2010, three areas need to be considered when analysing the equality impact of the OD strategy:

1. **eliminate** discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
2. **advance** equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
3. **foster** good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not

Through the feedback from engagement and consultation and our staff profile, we have developed the following four themes for our OD Strategy, which will help take our council to the next level. These themes will be delivered through a series of focused actions as outlined in the OD Delivery Plan and all staff and leaders will have a significant part to play, and contribution to make, towards their successful delivery.

- **Theme 1: Workforce Health and Wellbeing**
- **Theme 2: A Values and Behaviours Driven Organisation**
- **Theme 3: An Agile Organisation**
- **Theme 4: Performance and Staff Development**

The council will monitor the profile of staff throughout the life of the Strategy and Delivery Plan to assess the impact on our workforce, particularly those with protected characteristics.

### **A. Positive impacts**

- Development and career opportunities will be provided for all staff.. This will be checked through monitoring to ensure opportunities are being accessed equally and that there are no unintentional barriers that might be preventing staff across all protected characteristics making the most of their career at Watford
- Employment opportunities available through apprenticeships and the introduction of our 'academy' approach through the Customer Service Centre. This could be aimed at school or college leavers from all communities who are looking to build a career or at people who have had career breaks, looking to return to work.
- We are committed to attaining the 'Disability Confident' accreditation within six months of

the strategy being approved.

We are committed to supporting staff health and wellbeing, including across both physical and mental health. This is reflected in Theme 1.

## **B. Negative impacts**

The strategy applies equally to all staff and, therefore, if rolled out as set out should have no negative impacts on staff with protected characteristics. To ensure this is the case, we will monitor our workforce and their access to the opportunities identified in the strategy. There will also be regular engagement with staff through our various forums, including the Staff Ambassadors Forum,

### **Recommendation 1:**

**Ensure robust workforce monitoring and against the OD Strategy and Delivery Plan.**

### **Recommendation 2**

**Consider establishing an Equalities Working Group to act as a critical friend / challenge to the council's overall approach to ensuring equalities and diversity are championed**

### **Recommendation 3**

**Ensure the council's commitment to workforce equalities are reflected in its renewed council objectives and policy**

## **6. Overall conclusion**

Overall the refreshed OD Strategy has positive impacts for Watford staff. It will provide new development opportunities for all staff within Watford Borough Council and offer career opportunities for new staff to join, especially via the academy approach in the Customer Service Centre. These can be assured by robust mentoring, challenge through internal forums (possibly an equalities working group) and ensuring the council's equality objectives reflect its commitment to promoting equalities for its staff.

## Summary of potential positive impacts and ways in which they can be ensured

Positive Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to ensure the positive impact
<p>Development opportunities for all staff</p> <p>Apprenticeships</p> <p>Academy</p>	<p>All characteristics</p> <p>All categories in accordance with government guidelines on apprenticeships</p> <p>Young people; those looking to return to work following a career break; anyone seeking a career within local government</p>	<p>Publicise development opportunities; ensure they are open to all and are not limited to specific days or times, therefore excluding part time workers. Adopt a flexible approach to development with eLearning and virtual 'classrooms' allowing people to choose when they undertake the development activity, to suit their personal situation.</p> <p>Work with local colleges to ensure they are aware of the opportunities available and advertise the apprenticeships to all sections of the community.</p> <p>Vacancies to be advertised on the council's website and made known to the local community through social media and other advertising methods. Fair selection processes followed and the best candidates selected from the pool of applicants.</p>

**Summary of potential negative impacts and ways in which they can be removed or mitigated**

<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>Protected characteristics</b>	<b>Ways to mitigate the negative impact</b>
Potential that the positive impacts on staff are not realised	All	Robust monitoring to ensure that those with protected characteristics are accessing opportunities within the council Encourage forums that include staff to consider and feedback on equalities related issues Consider an Equalities Working Group Ensure workforce related commitment is included in the council's refreshed equalities objectives

**This EIA has been approved by:**

**Kathryn Robson**

**Date 1 July 2020**