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General Purposes Committee

Monday 10 March 2025 at 9.30 am

Conference Hall - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, HA9 0FJ

Please note this will be held as a physical meeting which all Committee members will be required to attend in person.

The meeting will be open for the press and public to attend or alternatively can be followed via the live webcast. The link to follow proceedings via the live webcast is available HERE

Membership:

Members Councillors	**Substitute Members:** Councillors:
M.Butt (Chair) M.Patel (Vice-Chair) Benea Donnelly-Jackson Lorber Nerva Rubin Krupa Sheth	Afzal, Akram, Crabb Farah, Grahl, Tatler & 1 vacancy Councillors: Clinton and Matin

For further information contact: Rebecca Reid, Governance Officer
Tel: 020 8937 2469, Email: rebecca.reid@brent.gov.uk

For electronic copies of minutes and agendas please visit:
Council meetings and decision making | Brent Council

Notes for Members - Declarations of Interest:

If a Member is aware they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest* in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent and must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If a Member is aware they have a Personal Interest** in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent.

If the Personal Interest is also significant enough to affect your judgement of a public interest and either it affects a financial position or relates to a regulatory matter then after disclosing the interest to the meeting the Member must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item, except that they may first make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to the matter, provided that the public are allowed to attend the meeting for those purposes.

***Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:**

(a) **Employment, etc. -** Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit gain.

(b) **Sponsorship -** Any payment or other financial benefit in respect of expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of election; including from a trade union.

(c) **Contracts -** Any current contract for goods, services or works, between the Councillors or their partner (or a body in which one has a beneficial interest) and the council.

(d) **Land -** Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.

(e) **Licences-** Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.

(f) **Corporate tenancies -** Any tenancy between the council and a body in which the Councillor or their partner have a beneficial interest.

(g) **Securities -** Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

****Personal Interests:**

The business relates to or affects:

(a) Anybody of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management, and:

- To which you are appointed by the council;
- which exercises functions of a public nature;
- which is directed is to charitable purposes;
- whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy (including a political party of trade union).

(b) The interests a of a person from whom you have received gifts or hospitality of at least £50 as a member in the municipal year;

or

A decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial position of:

- You yourself;
- a member of your family or your friend or any person with whom you have a close association or any person or body who is the subject of a registrable personal interest.

Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Item Page

1 Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members

2 Declarations of interests

Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, the nature and existence of any relevant disclosable pecuniary or personal interests in the items on this agenda and to specify the item(s) to which they relate.

3 Deputations (if any)

To hear any deputations received from members of the public in accordance with Standing Order 67.

4 Minutes of the previous meeting 1 - 8

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 15 January 2025 as a correct record.

5 Matters arising (if any)

To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

6 Brent's Workforce Equalities Report 2023-24 and Gender Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap Report March 2025 9 - 66

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of annual workforce equalities data.

This report also provides an overview of the pay gap data relating to gender, ethnicity and disability before the Council's pending publishing of this data by 30 March 2025.

7 Appointments to Sub-Committees / Outside Bodies 67 - 68

To consider any appointments needing to be made in relation to those Sub Committees appointed by the General Purposes Committee.

Members are asked to note the list of proposed appointments has been

attached for approval, following their presentation to Full Council on 27 February 2025 for reference.

8 Exclusion of Press and Public

No items have been identified in advance of the meeting that will require the exclusion of the press or public.

9 Any other urgent business

Notice of items to be raised under this heading must be given in writing to the Deputy Director Democratic Services or their representative before the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 60.

Date of the next meeting: Monday 19 May 2025

Please remember to ***SWITCH OFF*** your mobile phone during the meeting.

- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public. Alternatively, it will be possible to follow proceedings via the live webcast **HERE**

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Wednesday 15 January 2025 at 9.30 am

PRESENT: Councillor M Butt (Chair), Councillor M Patel (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Donnelly-Jackson, Grahl, Nerva, Rubin and Krupa Sheth.

Also present: Councillors Maurice

1. **Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members**

Members were advised that Councillor Grahl was attending the meeting in place of Councillor Tatler with a vacancy also currently existing for the Liberal Democrats member on the Committee.

No other apologies or notification of alternative membership had been received.

2. **Declarations of interests**

There were no declarations of interests made during the meeting.

3. **Deputations (if any)**

There were no deputations received.

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 15 July 2024 be approved as a correct record.

5. **Matters arising (if any)**

There were no matters arising.

6. **Presentation of a petition - Invest not Divest**

6.1 Presentation of a Petition – Invest not Divest

Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Chair) welcomed Karen Flaum to the meeting, who had been invited to speak in support of a petition containing 179 signatures calling on the Council to reject a petition presented to the Council on the 19 September 2024 by the Brent and Harrow Palestine Solidarity Campaign regarding divestment and requesting that the Council instead maintain its current investment policy.

In thanking the Chair for the opportunity to address the Committee, Karen Flaum began by advising that the petitioners were calling on the Council to reject the

petition presented by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) on the grounds that the determination of foreign policy was the responsibility of the UK government. The petitioner questioned whether a local council possessed the necessary tools and systems to make accurate judgements on complex foreign conflicts, particularly in relation to the Middle East, with the Council's focus instead needing to be on determining local policies on good governance, in accordance with the powers conferred upon it by UK legislation.

In further support of the petition, Karen Flaum referenced decisions made by Hackney Council's Pension Committee in July 2024 who had rejected the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement and Islington Council's Pension Committee who had advised against divestment targeting Israel. Both Committee's had found such actions to be divisive, unlawful, and expensive and likely to involve the risk of significant financial detriment and a costly process of consultation with Fund Members, who were likely to have strong opinions on both sides. The petition presented to the September 2024 Council meeting was also felt be contrary to the fiduciary duty to ensure that Pension Fund was properly managed and free from political views and influences. Reference was made to Section 17 of the Local Government Act 1988 and the Public Contract Regulations 2015 which stated that a decision not based on financial, or investment reasons could result in the council facing a judicial review challenge, posing financial and reputational risks to the Pension Fund and Council.

The petitioners also highlighted that failure to have due regard to the propensity of boycotts and divestments that were seen to promote hostility and persecution of the Jewish Faith would be contrary to the Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. On this basis, Karen Flaum advised that the petitioners had felt the petition presented to the Council meeting in September 2024 to be misleading, divisive and antisemitic including false allegations against Israel. As an example, it was pointed out that the International Court of Justice in January 2024 had not ruled there was plausible evidence that Israel was causing genocide. The court had ruled that Palestinians had a plausible right to be protected from genocide on the same basis as all citizens. It had not decided that there was plausible cause with the petition presented by the Brent & Harrow PSC, it was also pointed out, having omitted reference to the genocide and the abduction of hostages carried out by Hamas on 7 October 2023 which had led to the current conflict.

Karen Flaum also took the opportunity to highlight the rise in antisemitism across the UK since 7 October 2023, which it was felt the same PSC petition being presented to Council's across the UK had reinforced, creating discord and division with many Jewish schools (as an example) including those in Brent, now requiring additional security and an attack during the PSC's week of action on a JFS school bus which left pupils traumatised.

As a result, Karen Flaum advised that the petitioners were calling on the Council:

- To ensure that Brent Council's Pension Fund Sub-Committee invested in any company worldwide to obtain the best possible return on those investments for the benefit of Brent Council's Fund Members.

- To act in the best interest of the safety of all Brent's pupils, both inside and outside of their schools.

- To act in accordance with its equity, diversity, and inclusion strategy for 2024-2028.

- To honour the words of the Mayor (Councillor Tariq Dar) expressed at the 19 September 2024 Council meeting in seeking to ensure that Brent remained a harmonious, inclusive borough where people of all faiths, no faith, and all ethnic backgrounds could live in peace and cooperation, as obligated by the Equality Act 2010.

In concluding the presentation, Karen Flaum therefore urged councillors and officers to prioritise local issues over global ones, emphasising that the Council's focus should remain on addressing key issues impacting residents of the borough, such as housing and highways and on the interests of members of the Brent Pension Fund.

Having thanked Karen Flaum for presenting the petition, Councillor Muhammed Butt then invited Councillor Milli Patel, as Vice Chair and Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, to provide a brief response.

In responding, Councillor Milli Patel began by highlighting that Brent Council took its responsibility to invest the pension fund ethically with the utmost seriousness. In terms of the actions being sought within the petition, the opportunity was taken to outline the way in which the Council was already seeking to deliver an ethically responsible Pension Fund investment strategy. Whilst working hard to deliver this approach, it was pointed out this also needed to be balanced against a fiduciary duty to ensure the fund performed well, providing long term stable returns for the scheme members who relied on it . This would also need to take account of heightened market volatility in the global economy as well as the aim to seek out stable and ethical investments. Councillor Mili Patel acknowledged the urgent need for a fair and equitable transition away from fossil fuels, as well as the moral imperative of moving away from investments in arms companies or businesses profiting from human suffering. With an overall value of £1.25 billion, it was noted that the pension fund was responsible for 7,367 active pensioners, 8,454 deferred pensions, and approximately 6,545 current contributors. It was emphasised that regardless of individual political views, it was imperative to ensure that investments safeguarded the security of the fund.

Councillor Mili Patel also referred the petitioners to her previous statement on the matter, which outlined the Council's approach to investments and commitment to conducting a full audit of allocations in line with the UN's Principles for Responsible Investment. This audit was in progress, and a more comprehensive update would be provided once budget discussions had concluded in Spring 2025. At the same time, the opportunity was also taken to remind the petitioners of the restrictions on procurement under Section 17 of the Local Government Act 1988 which meant the Council could not exclude potential contractors because of trading connections they may have with particular countries or terrorists. In acknowledging that this matter was a developing and sensitive issue, Councillor Mili Patel ended by affirming the Council's willingness to continue engaging with residents, community groups, and staff to ensure careful stewardship of investments.

In response to concerns regarding the safety of pupils travelling to and from schools in Brent, Councillor Grahl (as Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools) provided reassurance that the violent attack on a JFS school bus had been investigated by the Safer Transport Team. The Community Safety Team had requested that the police contact Jewish schools in Brent to ascertain any specific safety concerns, with the Council having maintained a close relationship with all schools in Brent, including the four Jewish schools. Members were pleased to note that there had been no reports of any further incidents involving those schools.

In thanking Karen Flaum for presenting the petition Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Chair) advised that the concerns raised had been noted with an assurance provided that Council would continue to focus on the need to ensure that any decisions taken in relation to Pension Fund investments remained lawful and in the best interest of the Pension Fund and its members.

7. **Council Tax Base 2025**

Councillor Mili Patel, Vice Chair and Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources, introduced the report from the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources setting out the Council Tax base for 2025-26 in order to enable the Council to fulfil its statutory role under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended).

Members noted that calculation of the Tax Base was based on a formula involving two elements:

a. the number of taxable properties shown as “Band D equivalents”; and

b. the expected collection rate for the year.

In considering the report the following issues were raised by the Committee:

- Assurance was sought that the calculation for the number of taxable properties had included an accurate forecast for the number of new housing developments across the borough. In response, Michael Almond (Senior Finance Analyst) stated that the planning team had been consulted to gather data on houses being built and their expected completion dates. Currently, officers were working on the basis of Local Plan targets with a further update due to be provided as part of the review of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) scheduled later in the year.

- Details were also sought regarding the impact of council tax debt on calculations and the overall financial position of the Council. In response, Rav Jassar (Deputy Director of Finance) highlighted the importance of the collection rate and adjustments made over previous years to take into account economic factors (including the impact of the pandemic) that had affected actual collection in-year and the longer term effect on collection for the remaining debt outstanding. Given the longer than anticipated recover in collections rates following the pandemic, further adjustments had been made for 2025-26, which would need to be reflected in the budget proposals being presented to Cabinet and Full Council in February 2025.

Members recognised and supported the prudent nature of the assumptions being made and as a result, it was **RESOLVED**:

(1) That the Band D equivalent number of properties be calculated, as detailed within the report, in accordance with the Government regulations.

(2) That the collection rate for Council Tax for 2025-25 be set at 97.0%.

(3) That subject to (1) and (2) above, a Council Tax Base for 2025-26 of 108,617 Band D equivalent properties (after collection rate allowance deduction) be approved.

(4) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources to approve the revised tax base as detailed in section 7.3 of the report in the circumstances specified in section 7.3 of the report.

8. **Employer Pension Discretions Policy**

Councillor Mili Patel, Vice Chair and Deputy Leader and Cabinet member for Finance & Resources, introduced a report from the Corporate Director Law & Governance which presented an updated Employer Pension Discretions Policy.

In presenting the report the Committee was advised that the Policy had been updated in order to facilitate better decision-making and improved employee relations with employers required (in accordance with the Local Government Pensions Scheme Regulations 2013) to keep their discretions policy under periodic review. Members were advised that the refreshed Employer Pension Discretions Policy outlined 20 selected discretions (as opposed to only the four required under regulations) designed to create a framework that would assist the Council in managing its relationship with employees and controlling its budget. Additional details on how the Council proposed to exercise its employer discretion had been provided in Appendix 1 to the report.

Following the presentation of the report, Musrat Zaman (Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development) emphasised that, under the Employer Pension Discretions Policy, there were only specific circumstances under which employers could exercise its discretion, which included flexible retirement and redundancy. This approach assisted in managing staff expectations and clarified the conditions under which they could appeal decisions.

Having thanked Councillor Mili Patel and Musrat Zaman for introducing the report, the Chair then moved on to invite questions and comments from the Committee, with the following comments and issues discussed:

- In response to clarification being sought regarding the consultation and engagement with Trade Unions on the updated Policy, Musrat Zaman advised that whilst not yet having been formally consulted a meeting had been scheduled to take place in the near future to discuss the proposed update of the policy. Whilst noting the Policy contained no significant change in approach, members were keen to emphasise the importance in ensuring the Trade Unions were consulted, moving forward, at as early a stage as possible.

- Members also sought clarification about the potential impact of the Employer Pension Discretions Policy on employees' expectations regarding redundancy and voluntary redundancy. In response, John Smith (Pensions Manager) clarified that the discretions had no impact on the existing redundancy scheme. The Policy provided an overview of the types of discretion and how the Council intended to exercise these discretions with each case continuing to be assessed on its own merits to manage expectations and protect budgets.

- Further details were sought in relation to the Employer Pension Discretions Policy concerning applications for the early payment of pension benefits on compassionate grounds due to reasons including chronic illness or disability, with members keen to ensure that the requirement to submit supporting evidence avoided imposing additional strain on employees seeking to exercise this discretion. Members questioned whether reasonable adjustments in regard to the application process could be incorporated into the Policy. In response, John Smith (Pensions Manager) emphasised that applications on compassionate grounds were primarily intended for employees with caring responsibilities. However, if an employee was applying on their own behalf, they would do so under the Ill Health Retirement Regulation, which was supported through Occupational Health and did not fall within the scope of the Employer Pension Discretions Policy.

  In order to provide further clarification and address the concerns highlighted Kim Wright (Chief Executive) recommended that reference be added to Section 6 of the policy to clarify that reasonable adjustments would be taken into account as part of the process in submitting applications on compassionate grounds requiring the submission of additional supporting information. In concluding consideration of the matter, the Musrat Zaman confirmed that the Employer Pension Discretions Policy adhered to legal and statutory obligations, while also considering the financial management of the pension and other relevant factors.

- In response to further details sought regarding the aggregation of pension benefits under the Employer Pension Discretions Policy John Smith (Pensions Manager advised that several regulations governed this matter, including those enacted in 2008 and more recently in 2013. It was clarified that, prior to 2014, employees wishing to transfer their LGPS benefits to a new employer were required to make a positive election to do so. However, post-2014, the aggregation of pension benefits became automatic unless the employee opted out of the transfer. It was additionally noted that separate aggregations existed for concurrent employment, although the underlying principles generally remained the same.

In thanking officers for the responses and clarification provided, it was **RESOLVED** to note the pension discretions contained within the policy and approve (subject to incorporation of the additional comment made in relation to applications on compassionate grounds) their adoption in line with Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) regulations.

9. **Appointments to Sub-Committees**

No membership changes were identified for consideration at the meeting.

10. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

There were no items that required the exclusion of the press or public from the meeting.

11. **Any other urgent business**

No items of urgent business were raised at the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.58 am

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair

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	General Purposes Committee 10 March 2025
	Report from the Corporate Director, Law and Governance
	Lead Member – Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Mili Patel)

Brent's Workforce Equalities Report 2023/24 and Gender Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap Report March 2025

Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Not Applicable
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	Two Appendix 1: Annual Workforce Equalities Report 2023/24 Appendix 2: Gender Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap Report March 2025
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Musrat Zaman, Director of HR and OD 020 8937 4081 Musrat.zaman@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 To provide an overview of annual workforce equalities data and present the report which was publicised by end of January 2025.

1.2 To provide an overview of the pay gap data relating to gender, ethnicity and disability before the Council's pending publishing of this data by 30 March 2025.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Note the findings from Brent's Workforce Equalities Report April 2023 - March 2024.

2.2 Note the findings from the Gender Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap Report - March 2025.

2.3 Note and comment on the proposed action plans contained in these documents.

3.0 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

3.1 The annual workforce equalities report and the pay gap report are published as part of our duty under the Equality Act 2010 to demonstrate our compliance with the duty and to provide more transparency.

3.2 Collating and analysing this data allows us to support work in line with our public sector equality duty and informs our wider equality, diversity and inclusion strategic action planning and the delivery of our People Strategy.

4.0 Background

4.1 Brent publishes its equality data by 31st January every year using data as at 31st March the previous year.

4.2 This year for the first time we have reported on recruitment in the highest grades (PO5-8 and HAY) by disability and gender, in addition to ethnicity.

4.3 The most up to date Brent Workforce Equalities Report 2023/24 can be seen at Appendix 1.

4.4 Since 2017, under The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017, by law the Council must publish its gender pay gap.

4.5 Brent's pay gap information is due to be published in March 2025 and can be seen at Appendix 2.

4.6 Despite there being no legal requirement to do so, this year will be the seventh year that we also publish the ethnicity pay gap and the sixth year that we publish the disability pay gap.

4.7 This year like last, following government guidance from April 2023, our ethnicity pay gap is split into sub-categories of data for Black, Asian, Mixed/ Other employees and employees for whom ethnicity is unknown.

5.0 Detail

5.1 The main headlines from the workforce equalities data analysis are:

- The Council's workforce has an older age profile compared with the local population: over half the workforce are aged 41-60 (54%), while this age group comprises just 38% of the working age population. The average age of the workforce is 46 (same as last year), slightly younger than the average for London boroughs (47).

- 8% of Brent employees have a disability, same as last year, compared with 17% of the working age population. Brent has a higher proportion of disabled employees compared with the London borough average of 7%.

- Disabled employees are fairly well represented across different pay grades (7-8%). 6% of the top 5% of earners in the council are disabled, down from 7% last year and the same as the London Councils' average of 6%. This year 6% of disabled employees were promoted (9% last year).

- For the recruitment of disabled people at HAY grades, a larger proportion of disabled candidates were offered a position (14%) when compared to the proportion who had applied (12%). At PO5-8 grades, 8% of applicants were disabled and 3% were offered a position.

- Almost three quarters (71%) of employees are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups – the highest rate across all London Boroughs, higher than the percentage in the Brent population (64%) and up 2% points since last year.

- There is a lower proportion of White Other (11%), Asian (27%) and Mixed and Other ethnicity (8%) employees in the workforce overall when compared to their representation in the Brent population (22%, 33% and 14% respectively).

- BAME employees make up over two thirds (70%) of those promoted over the year, up from 69% last year, but more closely reflecting the proportion in the overall workforce (71%). They remain less well represented at the HAY grades (42%); however, this is up from 41% last year.

- Of the top 5% of earners, 42% are BAME, up from 39% last year.

- For recruitment at HAY grades, 70% of candidates who applied were from BAME groups - up from last year at 61%, compared to 63% (up from 48% last year) who were offered. The proportion of BAME candidates who applied at grades PO5-8 was 73% compared to 68% who were offered, same as last year.

- White Other groups and Asian groups were the only groups in recruitment at HAY levels to have a smaller proportion of candidates who are offered a position (none and 10% respectively), when compared to the proportion who applied (7% and 26% respectively). At PO5-8 levels, this was true for Asian and Mixed and Other ethnicities.

- Almost two-thirds of the workforce are women, well above the proportion of women in the population (64% vs. 51%), and the same as last year.

- Women remain less well represented at the highest pay grades, comprising 53% of employees on HAY grades, up from 52% last year. They are better represented among those promoted: 65% of those promoted over the year were women (67% last year).

- Of the top 5% of earners, 53% are women, up from 52% last year.

- For recruitment at HAY grades, 59% of applicants were female and 63% who were offered a position were female. At PO5-8 grades, 45% of applicants were female and 56% of those offered were female.

- 50% of employees are Christian (same as last year), a little higher than the proportion in the population (42%). Muslim residents are less well represented when compared to the workforce, comprising 12% of employees (up from 11% last year) and 21% of the working age population. Hindu employees make up 15% of the workforce (same as last year), slightly lower than their representation in the population (16%).

- 4% of employees are LGB, the same as last year and 1% identify as transgender, also the same as last year.

- 13% of employees have caring responsibilities (same as last year) and 40% have parenting responsibilities (same as last year).

- Disabled (11%) and female (69%) leavers were largely in proportion to their representations in the workforce (8% and 64% respectively). The proportion of leavers who were from BAME groups (58%) was lower than the proportion of BAME employees in the workforce (71%).

- 94% of leavers left the Council voluntarily.

5.2 Brent's pay gap information for period ending March 2024, 2023 and 2022 is as follows:

Pay Gap(%)	Average	2024	2023	2022
Gender	Mean	4.5	6.0	6.2
	Median	4.4	8.8	6.8
BAME	Mean	14.1	12.9	13.5
	Median	13.2	13.9	14.7
Black	Mean	14.4	13.1	Not
	Median	13.2	13.9	published
Asian	Mean	13.9	13.1	Not
	Median	14.1	13.9	published
Mixed/	Mean	13.3	10.7	Not
Other	Median	11.1	9.7	published
Ethnicity	Mean	20.1	21.8	Not
Unknown	Median	23.4	25.1	published
Disability	Mean	2.3	1.8	1.1
(%)	Median	4.4	2.5	0

5.3 The proportion of females, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) employees and disabled employees in each pay quartile in the period ending 2024, is as follows. Each box shows the percentage of employees in that group against the other group in that pay gap. So, for example, the table shows that 58% of employees in the upper quartile are female – this means that 42% will be male:

Quartile	Females	BAME	Black	Asian	Mixed/ Other	Ethnicity Unknown	Disabled
Upper Quartile (UQ)	58%	58%	41%	35%	14%	28%	7%
Upper Middle Quartile (UMQ)	68%	77%	63%	56%	26%	43%	9%
Lower Middle Quartile (LMQ)	68%	78%	65%	58%	25%	54%	7%
Lower Quartile (LQ)	57%	77%	60%	59%	33%	86%	10%

5.4 The pay quartiles are determined by ranking all employees by their hourly rate of pay and dividing the total equally by 4.

5.5 Since 2023, there has been an increase in the number of females within the upper quartile and the upper middle quartile and a decrease in females in the lower two quartiles, which could explain the decrease in the mean and median gender pay gap.

5.6 In addition, the top 5% of earners who are female has increased steadily since 2021. The number of female employees in HAY grades has also risen over the last 3 years.

5.7 Also since 2023, there has been an increase in the proportion of BAME employees in the lower middle pay quartile and in the lowest pay grades (scale 2-6), which may be the reason for an increased mean pay gap. However, the median ethnicity pay gap has decreased, which is most likely due to the increase in the proportion of BAME employees in the upper pay quartiles.

5.8 Overall, the (median) pay gap for BAME employees has reduced over the last 3 years, and the percentage of top 5% of earners who are BAME has also risen.

5.9 The pay gap is similar for Black groups, in that the mean pay gap has increased. This may be due to the distribution of lower paid employees from Black groups within the lowest pay quartile, or due to the distribution of employees from White groups in the upper quartile at the higher end, which would affect the mean pay gap. However, again, the median pay gap for Black groups has decreased and this is likely due to the increase in the proportion of Black employees in all quartiles except the lowest, where it is highest in the middle two quartiles.

5.10 The mean and median pay gap for Asian employees has widened this year. Although there has been an increase in the proportion of Asian employees in the upper two quartiles, within this, we know there has been a decrease in the

proportion of Asian employees at HAY grades, which is likely to have resulted in a larger pay gap for Asian employees.

5.11 The mean and median pay gap for Mixed/ Other ethnicity employees has increased since last year, though the proportion of Mixed/ Other ethnicity groups has also increased in all quartiles. The increase in the pay gap is likely due to the lowest pay quartile having the largest proportion increase in Mixed/ Other ethnicity employees.

5.12 The distribution of employees for whom the ethnicity is unknown across the pay quartiles shows that a greater proportion of employees in the lowest pay quartile chose not to disclose their ethnicity, than in any other quartile. This shows that work needs to be done to increase knowledge and engagement for data disclosure in all groups, and particularly for employees in the lowest pay quartile.

5.13 Since last year there is an increased proportion of disabled employees in the lowest pay quartile. This, together with the slight decrease in the proportion of top (5%) earners from 7% to 6% may be a factor in the increase of the mean and median disability pay gap.

5.14 The mean and median disability pay gap has widened over the last 3 years. The proportion of leavers who are disabled (11%) has reduced since last year when it was 16%.

5.15 The proportion of female, BAME and disabled employees as a percentage of the workforce in the Council, is as follows:

Females	BAME	Black	Asian	Mixed/ Other	Ethnicity Unknown	Disabled
64%	71%	36%	27%	8%	24%	8%

5.16 A number of priority actions have been identified for the Council to undertake to reduce the pay gaps and have been included in the pay gap report.

5.17 The published workforce equalities report can be found at Appendix 1 and the pay gap report to be published can be found at Appendix 2.

6.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

6.1 None.

7.0 Financial Considerations

7.1 All existing and proposed initiatives will be implemented within existing budgets

8.0 Legal Considerations

8.1 The council has a statutory obligation to publish equality data for its workforce on its website annually. Brent does this by 31st January each year. The council also has a statutory obligation to publish details of its gender pay gap on its website and to upload details of the pay gap to a government website by 30 March each year.

9.0 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

9.1 There are currently no equality implications for the publishing of the reports. Any equality implications of the initiatives in the reports will be assessed on an on-going basis using data available.

10.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

10.1 There are no climate change or environmental considerations contained in this report.

11.0 Human Resources Considerations

11.1 The Human Resources considerations are contained within this report and within the actions in the appendices.

12.0 Communication Considerations

12.1 The Annual Workforce Equalities Report has been published on the Open Data website and the Pay Gap Report will be placed on the Open Data website by 30 March 2025. The gender pay gap information will also be published on the relevant government website.

Report sign off:

Debra Norman
Corporate Director, Law and Governance

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Brent Workforce Equalities Report

April 2023 - March 2024

January 2025

Brent

BUILDING A BETTER BRENT

Contents

Introduction

This is Brent Council's annual workforce equalities report for the period April 2023 to March 2024.

Equity and diversity remain integral to Brent's vision to move Brent forward and ensure no one is left behind. We strive to continue to be a fully accessible, inclusive and cohesive organisation, to encourage the broad spectrum of skills, experiences and perspectives represented in our communities and our workforce. We know and value the strength that comes with difference and the positive contribution that this brings to our community. The council aims to recruit, retain and reward a diverse, highly skilled, motivated and inclusive workforce that leads the way in tackling inequalities in Brent.

This report provides an overview of the diversity profile of the council's workforce, broken down by the equality characteristics of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and gender identity and how this compares with the population of Brent and/ or other London boroughs. It also includes information on caring and parenting responsibilities and the Council's leavers.

The data in this report helps inform the council's workforce planning and decision-making processes. The report also informs the development of workforce initiatives to further improve the representation of minority groups within the Council, remove potential barriers to progression and ensure more inclusive processes.

Please contact Human Resources at staffdevelopment@brent.gov.uk if you have any questions or require further information.

About the data

- **Data sources**: Workforce data is sourced from the Council's HR system for the period April 2023 to March 2024. Benchmarking data has been drawn from a range of sources including: the Human Capital Metrics Survey 2023-24, the Office for National Statistics, the Greater London Authority and the Government Equalities Office.

- **Who the report includes:** This report relates to staff employed by Brent, excluding schools. It excludes agency workers and contracted out services which are monitored elsewhere. The total number of staff employed as at 31st March 2024 was 2,553.

- **Equality data:** Employees can choose whether or not to provide information on their equality characteristics, except for certain information which is essential for payroll processing and pension scheme administration purposes (eg age and gender). The data that follows is based on the number of employees who have chosen to provide equalities information and therefore does not include information for those who prefer not to say, or for whom data is missing. Appendix 1 provides information about the percentage of staff who provided equality information.

- **Percentages, counts and rounding:** Most figures are expressed as percentages and base counts (the number of employees that a chart is based on) are also provided for reference. For the most part, percentages have been rounded to the nearest percentage point – this means that figures presented on charts may not always sum exactly to 100% or to other totals presented.

- **Confidentiality:** Information has not been published where it may lead to the identification of an individual.

Definitions of terms used in report

Term	Definition/question
BAME	Employees from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic group backgrounds
LGB	Employees with a lesbian, gay, bisexual or 'other' sexual orientation
Transgender	Transgender/non-binary employees and those whose gender identity was not the same as that assigned at birth
Disability	Employees who consider themselves to have a disability / long term impairment
Caring responsibilities	Employees with caring responsibilities for dependents, except parents
Parenting responsibilities	Employees with dependent children who are aged 18 or under
Promotions	Employees who have moved up one or more pay grades in the last 12 months

Key figures

Headlines by equality group		
Total employees	**2,553**	The workforce comprised 2,553 employees in March 2024, up 2% on 2023.
Average age	**46**	Average age of the workforce is 46. 54% of the workforce are aged 41-60 whilst this group comprises 38% of Brent's working age population.
Disability	**8%**	8% of staff have a disability compared with 17% of working age population. The London Borough average is 7%. Disabled staff comprise 6% of those promoted and 7% of staff in the HAY grades.
BAME	**71%**	The proportion of BAME staff is the highest of any London Borough and higher than in the working age population (64%). BAME staff make up 70% of those promoted and 42% of staff at HAY grades.
Female	**64%**	Women comprised 65% of those promoted and 53% of all staff on HAY grades.The proportion of women in the population comprises 51%.
Religion	**Various**	Half of staff are Christian, 15% are Hindu, 12% are Muslim, 7% are other religions and 15% have no religion.
Caring responsibilities	**Various**	13% of staff have caring responsibilities and 40% have parenting responsibilities.
Gender identity	**1%**	1% of the workforce identify as transgender.
Sexual Orientation	**4%**	The percentage of staff identified as LGB remains at 4%.

Brent

Note: London Borough averages relate to the median score across council workforces.

Workforce profile: trends

Brent workforce by equality group, 2019-2024								
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Trend	Comment
Total employees	2,138	2,365	2,371	2,449	2,507	2,553		The workforce comprised 2,553 employees in March 2024, up 2% on 2023.
Average age	44	44	45	45	46	46		The average age of the workforce is 46 - same as last year.
Disability	9%	9%	8%	9%	8%	8%		8% of staff have a disability - in line with previous years.
BAME	65%	67%	66%	67%	69%	71%		71% of staff are from BAME groups - up slightly from previous years.
Female	64%	64%	63%	63%	64%	64%		Almost two thirds of staff are female - similar to last year
LGB	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%		The percentage of staff identified as LGB remains at 4%.
Gender Identity	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%		The percentage of staff who do not have the same gender identity as that assigned at birth remains at 1%.

Source: Brent Council workforce data, 2020-2024 (as at 31 March each year). Note: The above LGB figure relates to sexual orientation. More details on gender identity (transgender), can be seen on page 27.

Workforce profile: how Brent compares

Workforce profile: Brent vs. London councils workforce, March 2024			
	Brent	London councils average (median)	Brent ranking (out of 28 areas)*
Average age	**46**	**47**	4th youngest in London
Disability	**8%**	**7%**	11th highest in London
BAME	**71%**	**50%**	1st - highest in London
Female	**64%**	**59%**	9th highest in London

(*) London ranking provides Brent's position out of 28 council areas in London (where benchmarking data were available)

Sources: Human Capital Metrics Survey 2023/24.

Brent's Key Achievements from 2023/24

- We have renewed Brent's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy which is a 4-year commitment, including actions to move Brent inclusively forward together and ensure no one is left behind. The development of a new 3 year People Strategy will focus on 'establishing an inclusive workforce' which will include a review of policies and practices across the employee lifecycle to ensure they are inclusive for all, so that we can work towards having a workforce reflective of the local population at all levels. It will also look at diverse recruitment advertising and ensuring our recruitment guidance for candidates is inclusive.

- We have developed our own Corporate Anti-Racism Action Plan, which highlights 7 themes where change has been prioritised as a basis for our journey towards being an anti-racist organisation. This will be embedded further in 2025 through an action plan which includes for example, reviewing recruitment processes, mandatory anti-racism training and the use of more inclusive language.

- The development of a new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Board, comprising of key stakeholders such as the Chief Executive, departmental representatives and staff network Chairs has provided a more focussed look at key issues affecting the workforce, whilst ensuring through scrutiny by all stakeholders that actions are fit for purpose, relevant and timely. One such action is the development of a EDI data monitoring dashboard which provides a quarterly 'snapshot' of key data within the Council and relevant to the community, to all members and departments. This will aid the development of more targeted action planning.

- New intelligence gained from the Staff Survey has allowed for relevant actions to be identified and for deeper dives to take place on what data is saying in the Council overall against actions which have already taken place or are being planned. Some such actions have resulted in the formulation of project groups to ensure further inclusivity in the Council, such as the review of accessibility of IT for staff requiring reasonable adjustments, the relaunch of staff networks and the introduction of Equity Champions.

- We have successfully renewed our Disability Confident Leader status, using the framework to highlight where further improvement can be made in supporting our disabled workforce and in the support provided to Brent's businesses. Our internal review has also led to identification of the need for further resource in this area.

- More employees are sharing their equality details, with at least an increase by 2 percentage points in nearly all groups reported, as shown in Appendix 1.

Priority Actions for 2025/26

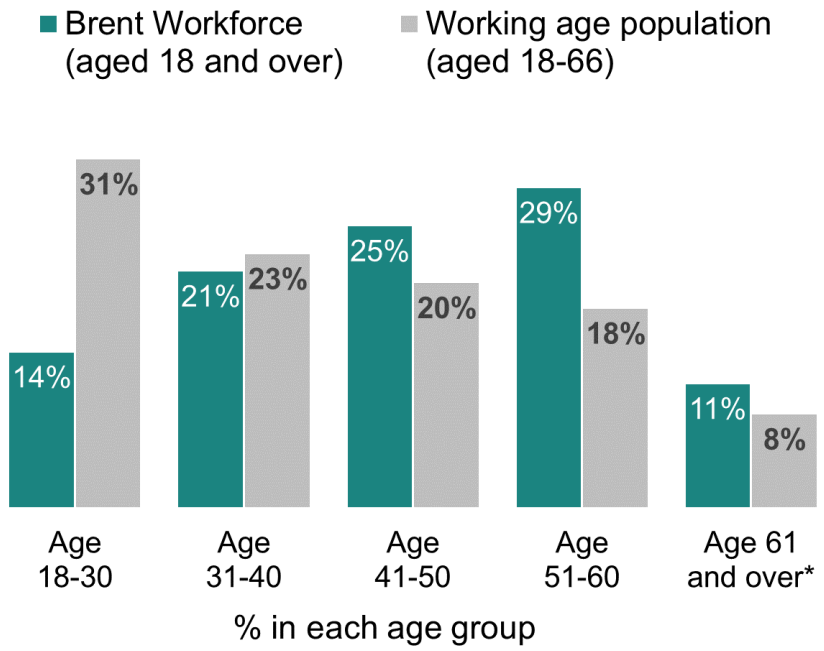
- Development of a People Strategy, with a focus on creating an inclusive workforce.
- Focussed actions as identified in the EDI Strategy action plan and the Corporate Anti-Racism Action Plan.
- A more data driven approach to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) across the Council, for example, sharing more data and accountability at a departmental level so that actions are relevant and transparent to all.
- Ensuring recruitment is accessible for all groups whilst ensuring that we attract candidates from a diverse talent pool and increasing transparency in data collection at recruitment stage, especially for disabled and neurodiverse candidates.
- Using intelligence gained from the Council's Change Programme and staff sessions on values to embed a culture of inclusion, shared values and inclusive language.
- Work with our new Equity Champions and staff networks to support staff, raise awareness of issues and work towards the Council's objectives and corporate goals.
- Continue to raise awareness and communicate the benefits of sharing equality information, with view to increasing disclosure across all groups. Refreshing the knowledge around how data is used on a quarterly basis.
- To embed EDI related learning and development offer to include increased mandatory training for employees and managers.

Age profile: Brent workforce

- The council has an older workforce when compared with the Brent working age population. Over half the workforce are aged 41-60 (54%), while this age group comprises just 38% of the working age population. Conversely, those aged 18-30 make up 14% of employees compared with 31% of the working age population.

- Relative to other London Boroughs, the Brent workforce is slightly younger: the average age of a Brent employee is 46, compared with 47 across London Boroughs.

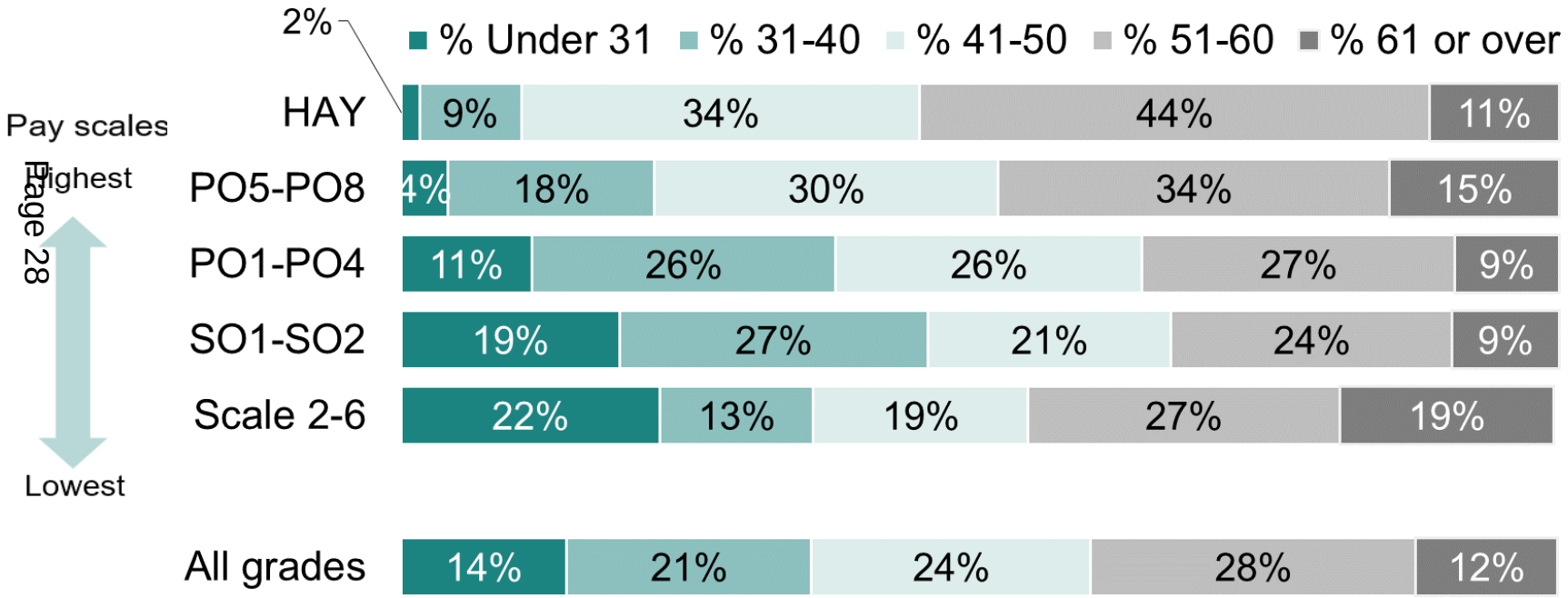
Age profile: Brent workforce compared with working age population



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Mid-Year population estimates, 2023.
Notes: (*) The Brent workforce figure for 61 and over includes a small number of employees aged over 66.

Age and grade

Employees at higher paid grades (HAY) have an older age profile compared with other employees: over half are aged over 50 (55% vs. 40% of staff in all grades).



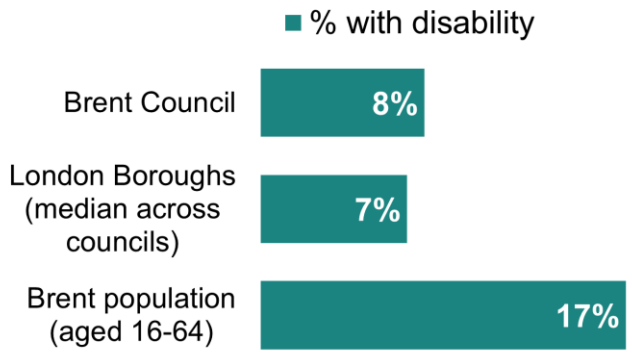
Source: Brent workforce data - based on 2,553 employees (100% employees).

Disability and age

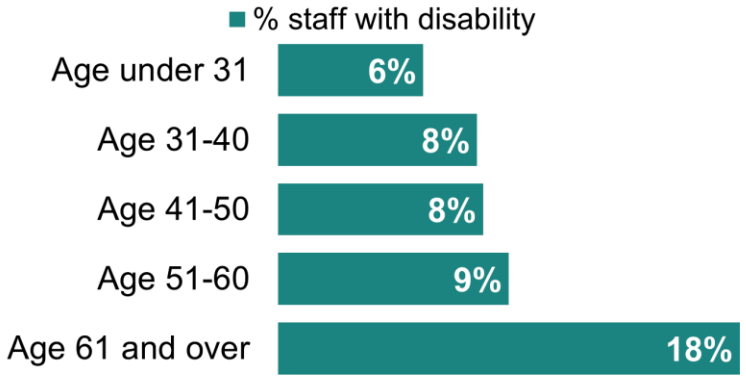
- Around 8% of Brent employees have a disability. This compares with 7% across London – Brent has the 11th highest percentage across London Boroughs. However, disabled people are less well represented in the workforce when compared to their representation in the working age population in Brent (8% vs. 17%).

- The percentage of employees who have a disability increases with age: the proportion of those aged over 60 with a disability was 18% compared with the proportion of employees in the groups aged 40 and under which was 8% (age 31-40) and 6% (age under 31).

Percentage who have a disability
Measures compared



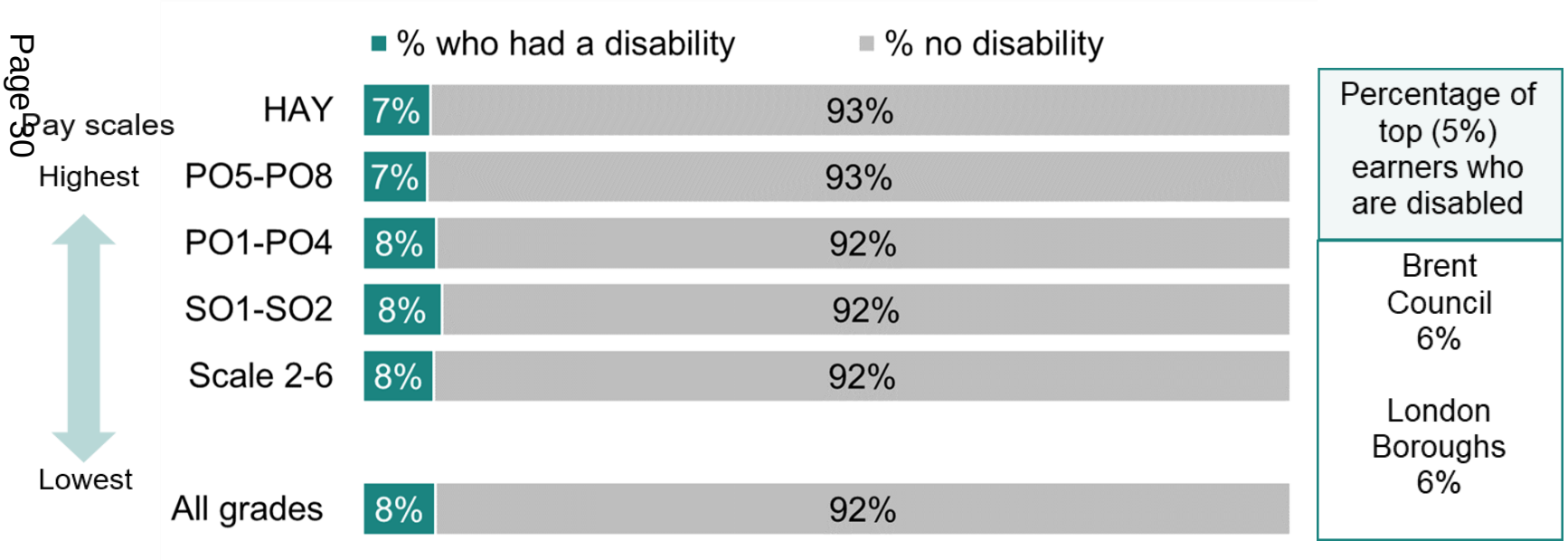
Disability and age
Brent workforce, March 2023



Sources: Workforce data based on 1,832 employees who provided disability information (72% employees); Comparator data from ONS, 2019-21 Annual Population Survey (3 year average) and Human Capital Metrics Survey 2023/24.

Disability and grade

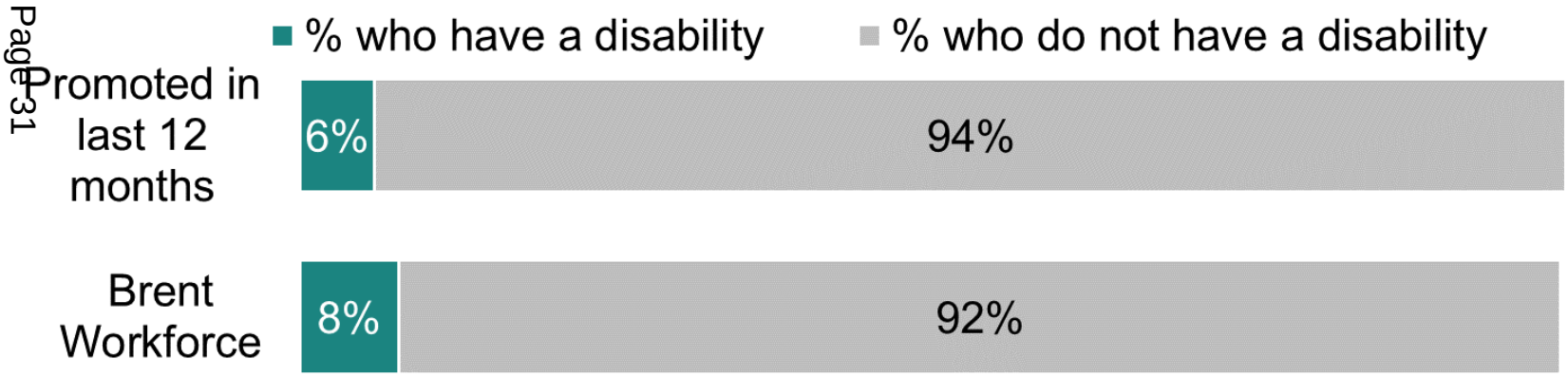
- The percentage of employees who have a disability is slightly higher among PO1-4 grades and lower, when compared to PO5-PO8 and HAY grades (8% and 7%).
- Around 6% of the top (5%) of earners in the Council have a disability – same as the average for London boroughs (6%).



Source: Workforce data based on 1,832 employees who provided disability information (72% employees); Top 5% earners data from Human Capital Metrics Survey 2023/24 (London average is median across boroughs).

Disability and promotion

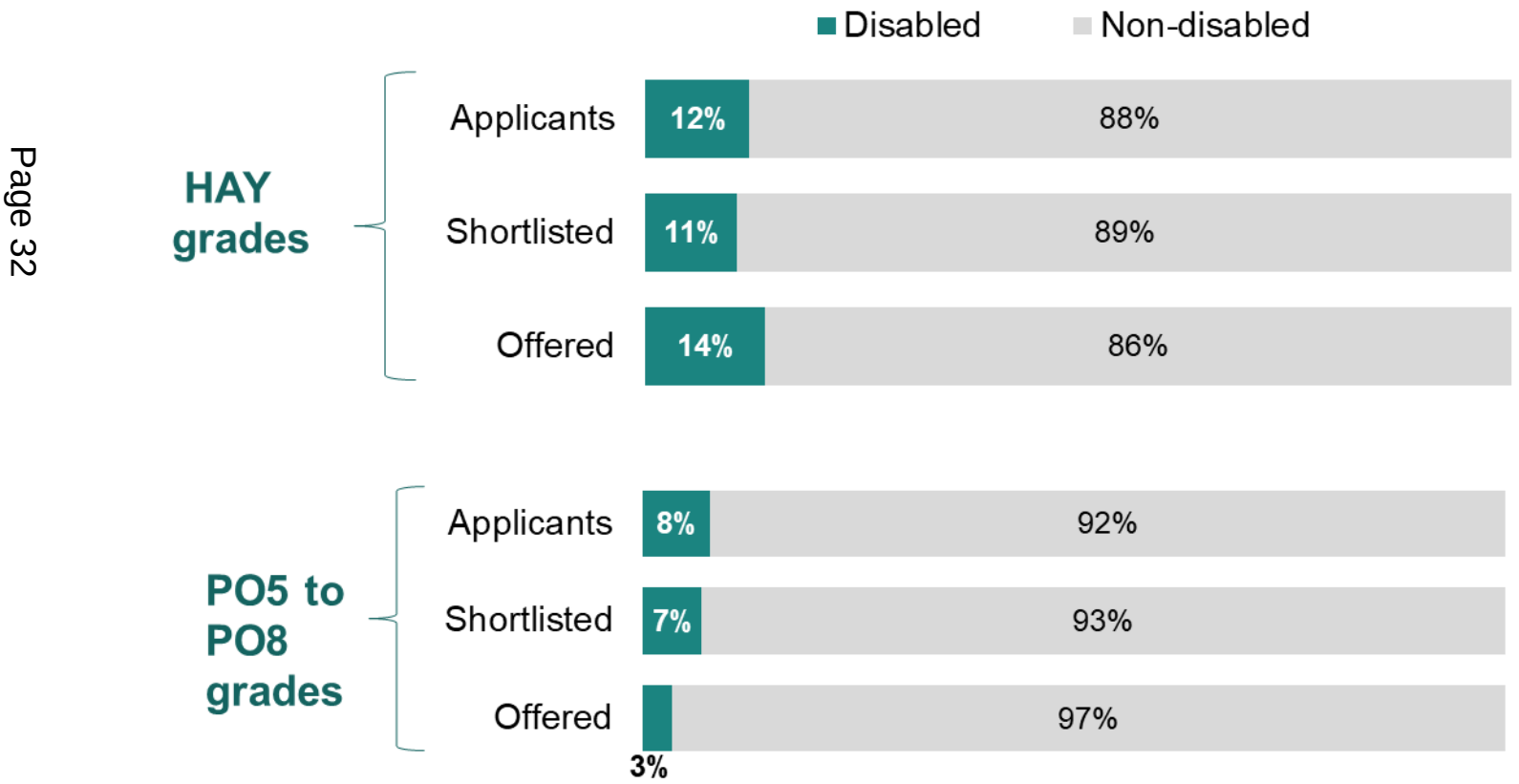
- Disabled employees made up 6% of those promoted over the year, slightly lower than their representation in the workforce (8%).



Source: Workforce data based on 1,832 employees who provided disability data and 283 employees' promotions over the year.

Disability and recruitment: senior grades

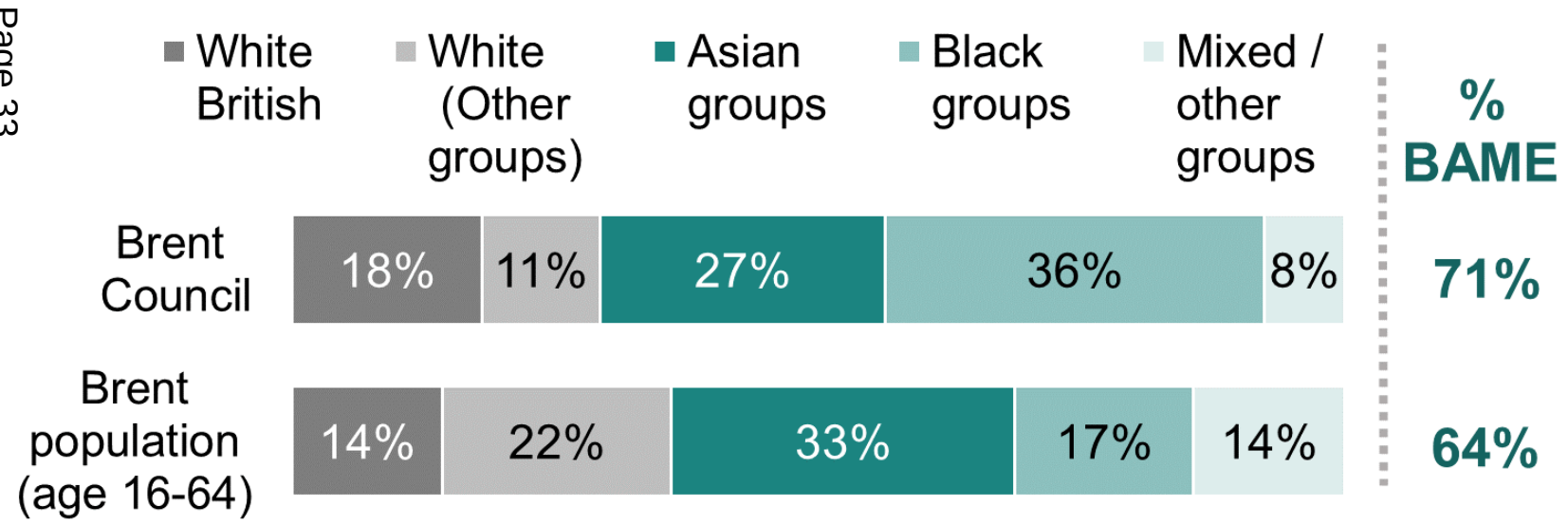
- At HAY grades, 12% of candidates who applied were disabled compared to 14% who were offered.
- The proportion of disabled candidates who applied at grades PO5-8 was 8% compared to 3% who were offered.



Source: Recruitment data, 1 April 2023 - 31 Mar 24. Based on: HAY: 198 applicants; PO5-8: 680 applicants

Ethnicity profile: workforce and population

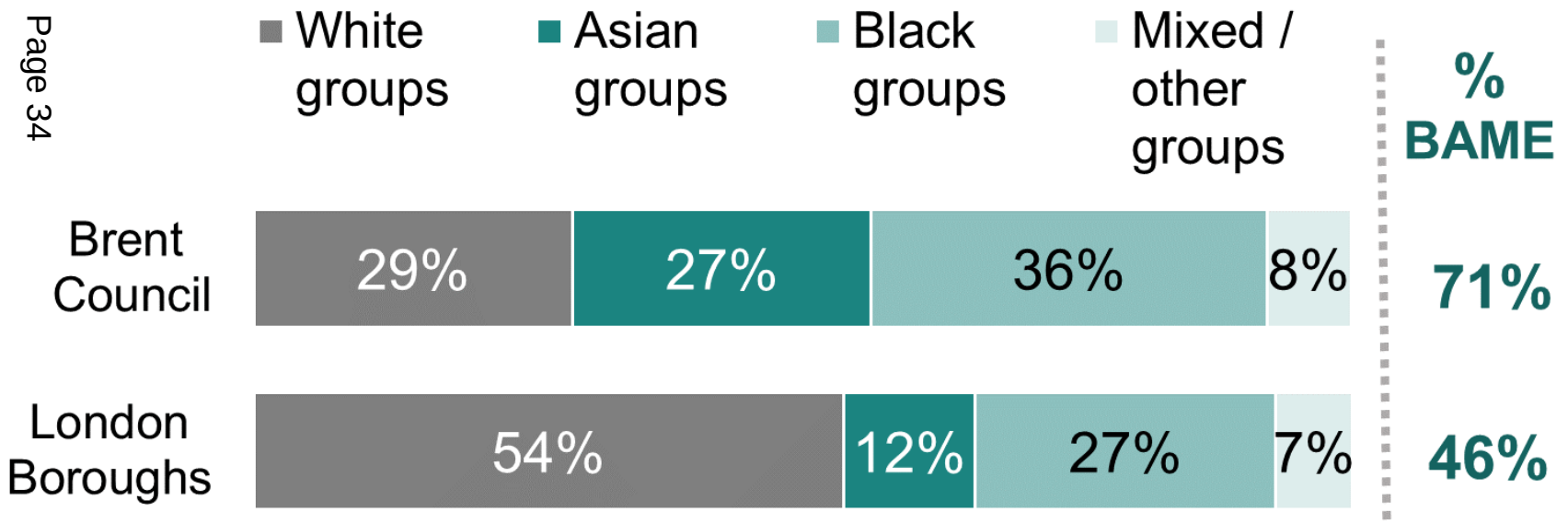
- Almost three quarters (71%) of employees are from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) background compared with 64% of the Brent working age population.
- There is a higher proportion of Black employees and White British employees in the workforce relative to their representation in the population, while those from Asian, White (Other groups) and Mixed & Other ethnic groups are less well represented.



Source: Workforce data based on 1,938 employees who provided ethnicity information (76% employees); Comparator data from: Office for National Statistics, 2021 Census (Custom dataset builder).

Ethnicity profile: workforce and London

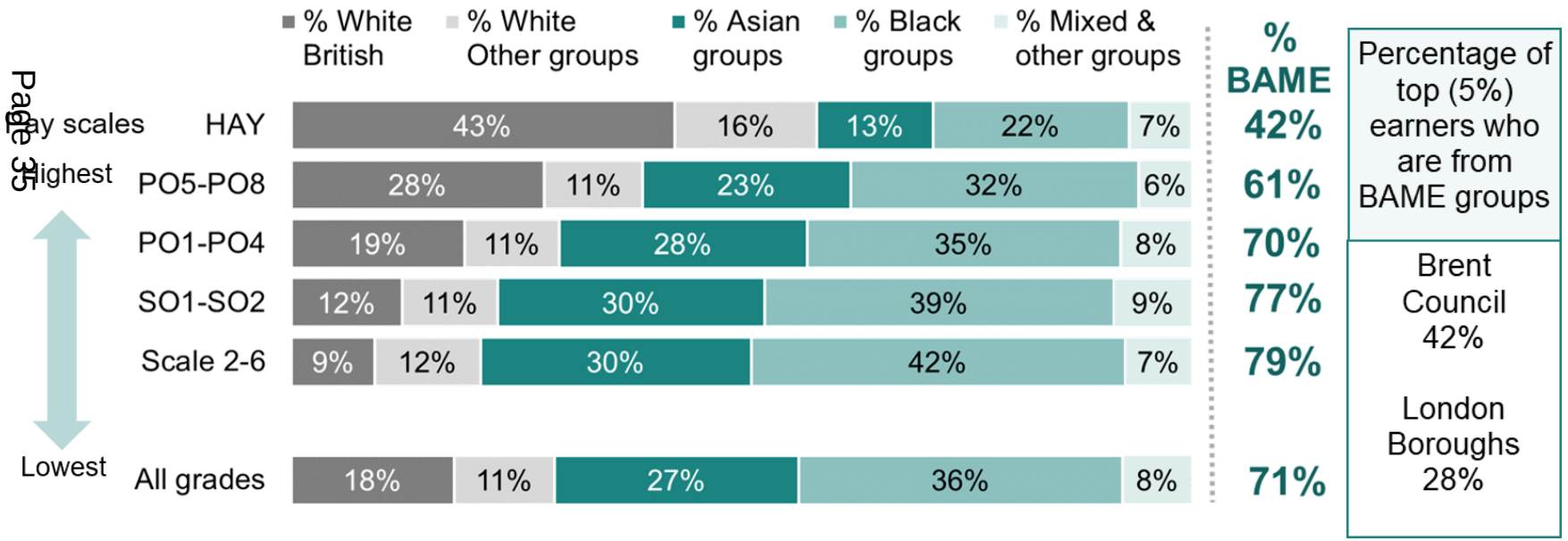
Brent has a far more diverse workforce compared with other London Boroughs: almost three quarters (71%) of Brent employees are from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) groups compared with 46% across London. Brent Council has the highest percentage of BAME employees of any London Borough.



Source: Workforce data based on 1,938 employees who provided ethnicity information (76% employees); Comparator data from Human Capital Metrics Survey 2023/24.

Ethnicity and grade

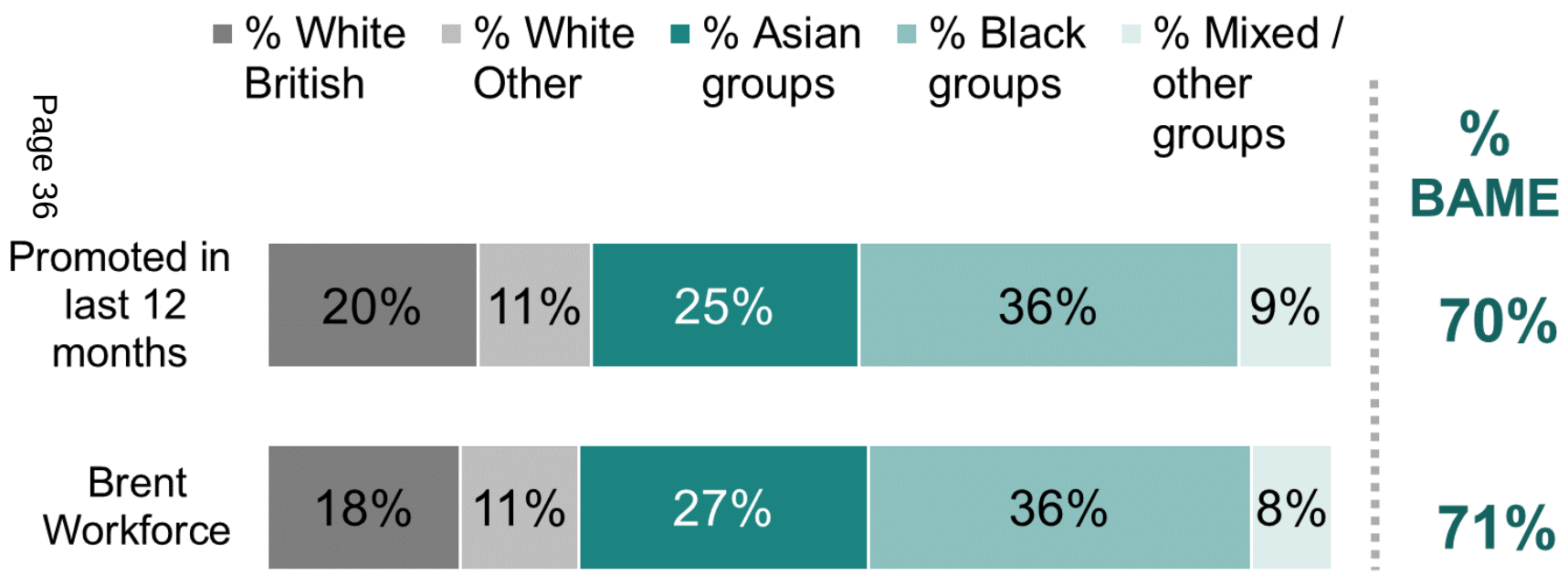
- BAME employees are less well represented at higher grades (42% and 61%) compared with 79% of those in the lowest grade group.
- Brent has a higher percentage of top earners (5%) from BAME groups compared with the London average - 42% vs. 28%.



Source: Workforce data based on 1,938 employees who provided ethnicity information (76% employees); Comparator data from Human Capital Metrics Survey 2023/24.

Ethnicity and promotion

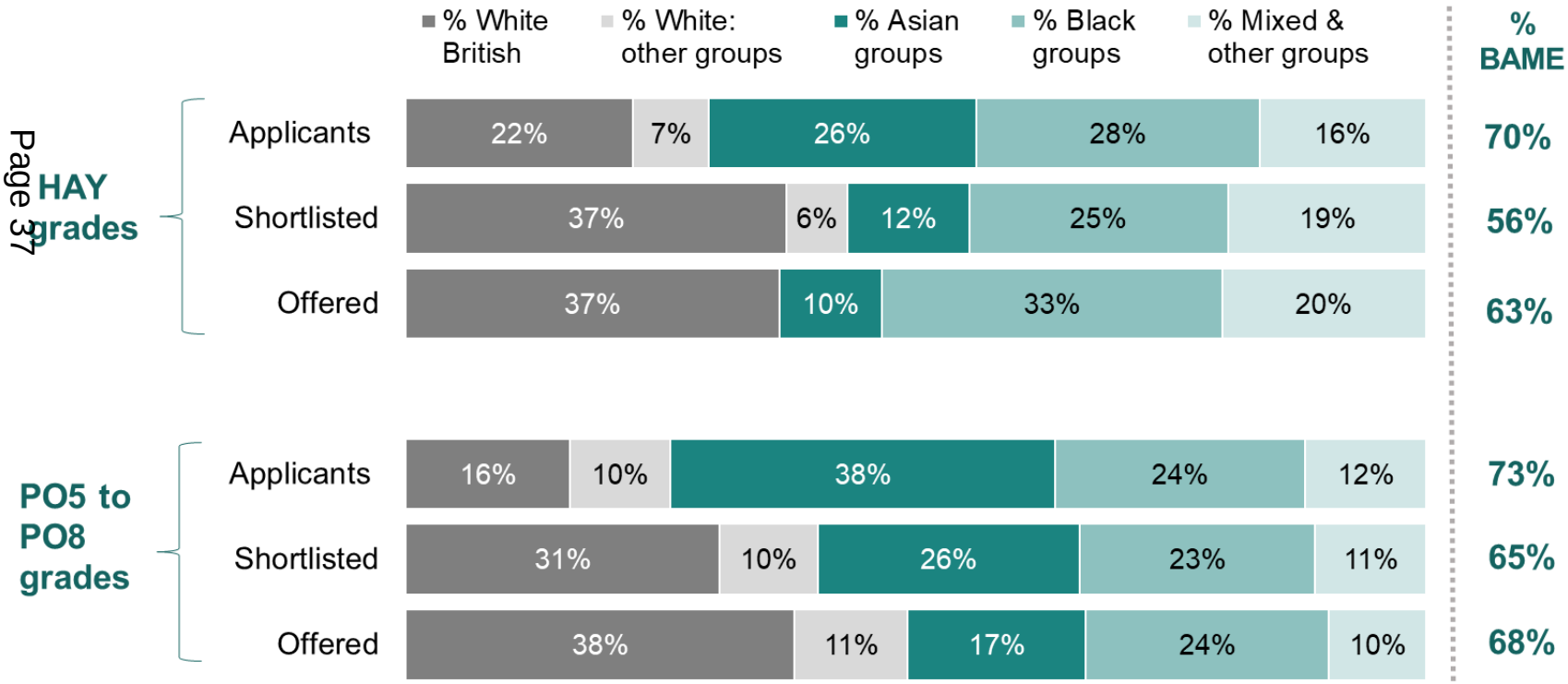
BAME employees make up 71% of staff which is similar to the proportion of those promoted over the year (70%).



Source: Workforce data based on 1,938 employees who provided ethnicity information (76% staff) and 227 employees' promotions over the year

Ethnicity and recruitment: senior grades

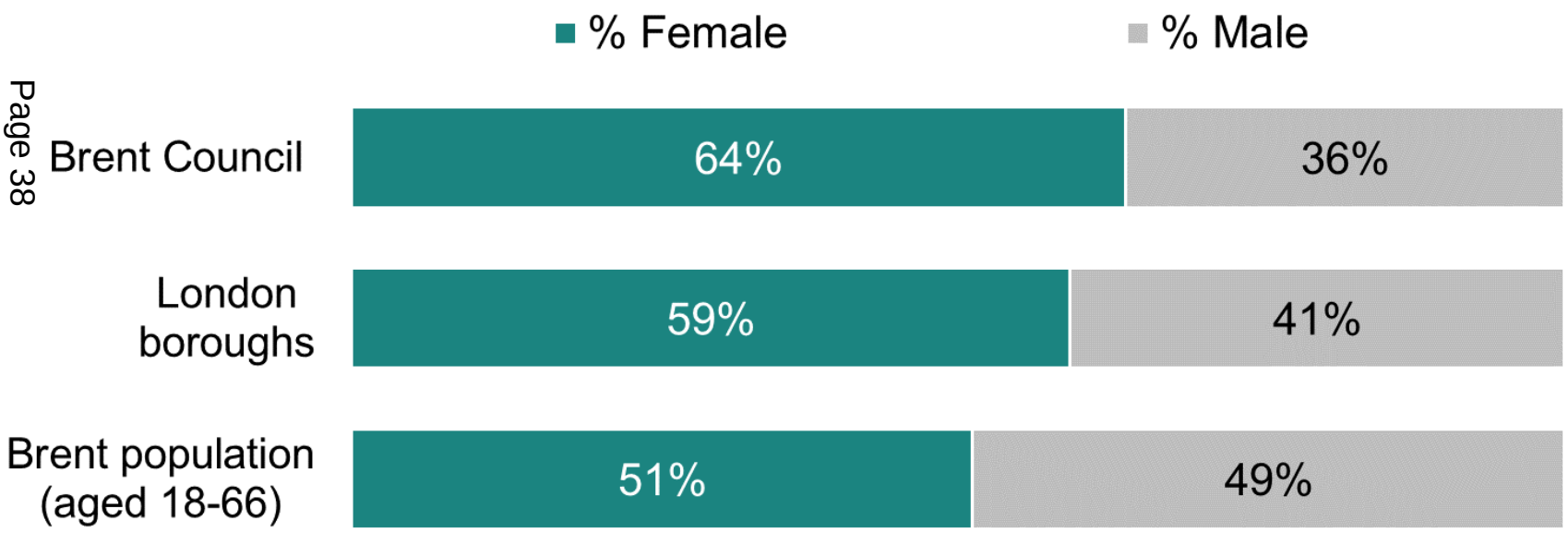
- At HAY grades, 70% of candidates who applied were from BAME groups compared to 63% who were offered.
- The proportion of BAME candidates who applied at grades PO5-8 was 73% compared to 68% who were offered.



Source: Recruitment data, 1 April 2023 - 31 Mar 24. Based on: HAY: 202 applicants; PO5-8: 683 applicants

Gender profile: workforce and London

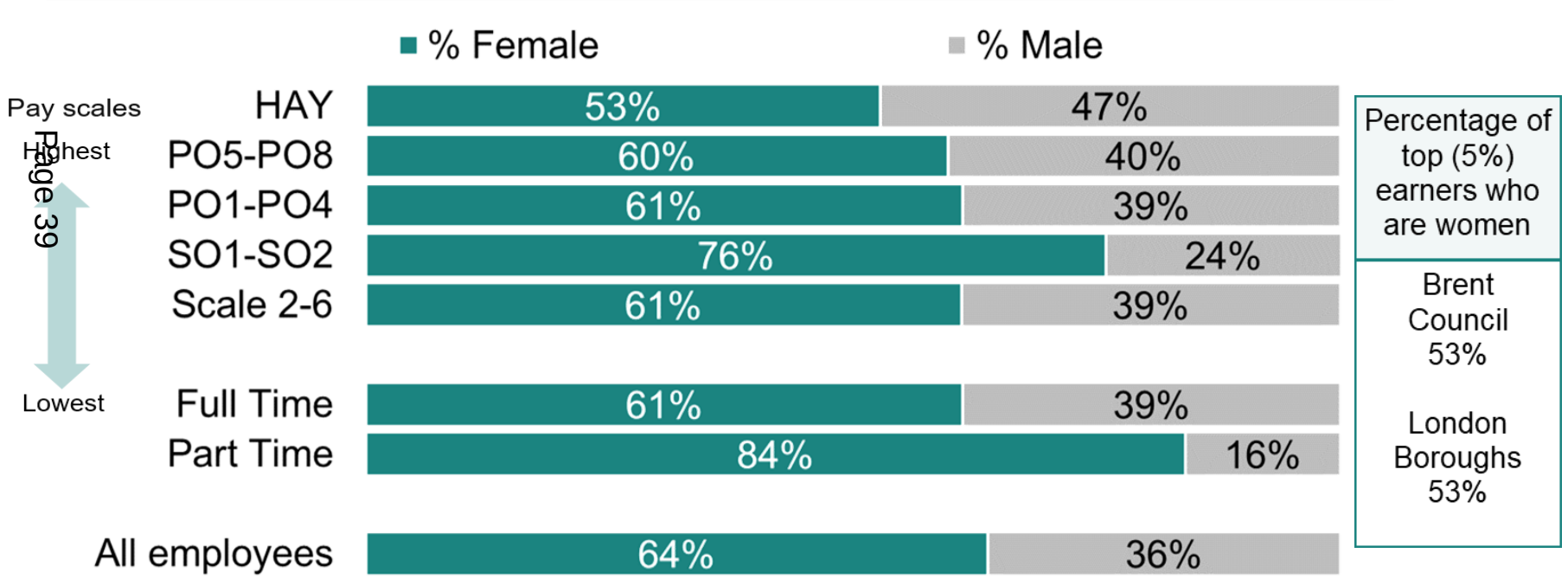
- Almost two thirds (64%) of the workforce are women which is slightly higher than the average for London Boroughs (59%). The proportion of women in the workforce remains well above the proportion of women in the Brent working age population (51%).



Sources: Workforce data based on 2,553 employees; comparator data from the Human Capital Metrics Survey 2023/224 and Office for National Statistics (2021 Census).

Gender, grade and work pattern

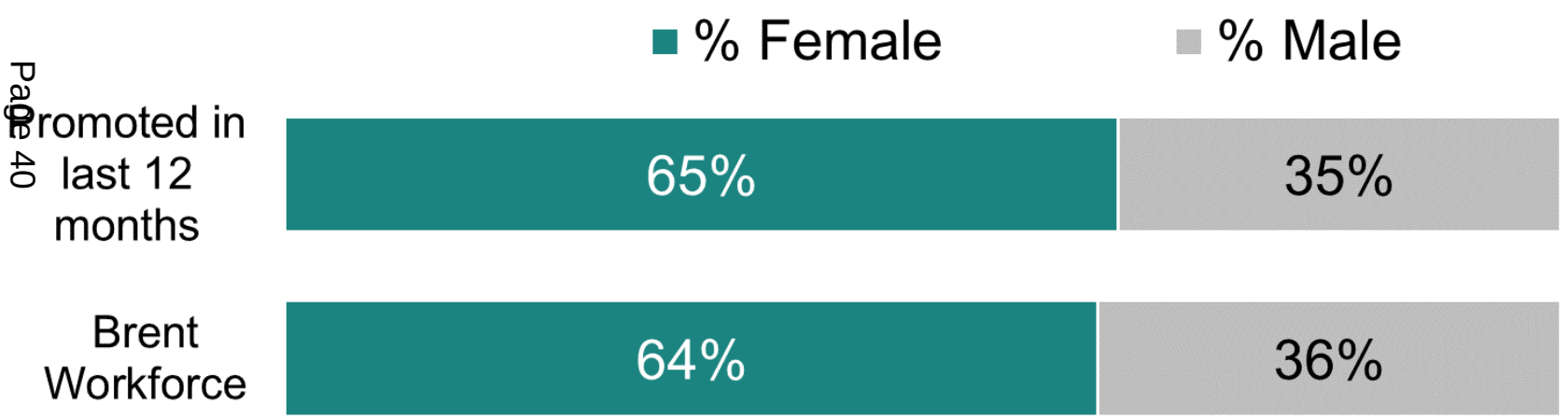
- Women remain less well represented at the highest pay grade level, comprising 53% at that grade. The same proportion (53%) of the top 5% of earners in the workforce are women – also same as the proportion across London (53%). The majority of part-time employees are women (84%).



Sources: Workforce data based on 2,553 employees; comparator data from the Human Capital Metrics Survey 2023/24.

Gender and promotion

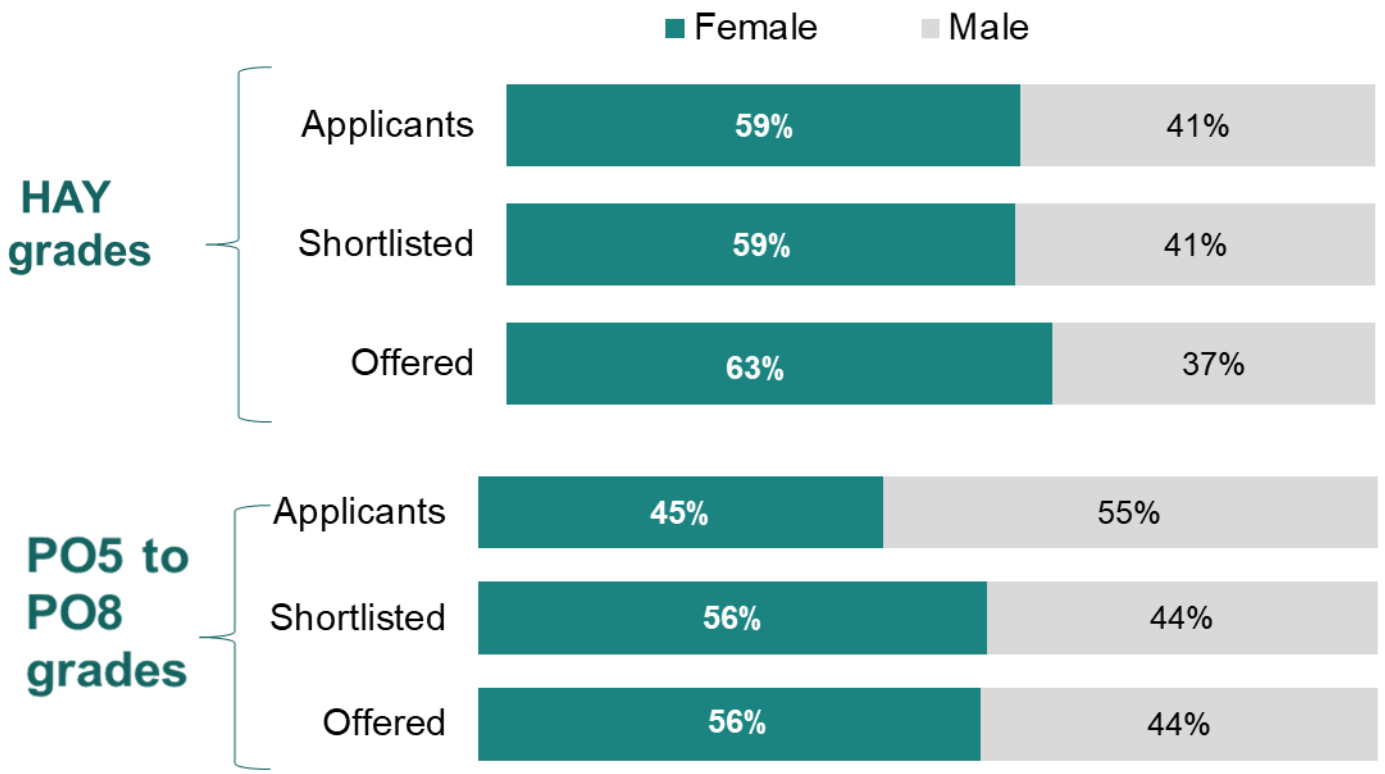
- The gender profile of employees promoted is broadly similar to the gender profile of the council workforce: women make up 64% of the workforce and 65% of those promoted.



Source: Workforce data based on 2,553 employees and 283 employees' promotions over the year.

Gender and recruitment: senior grades

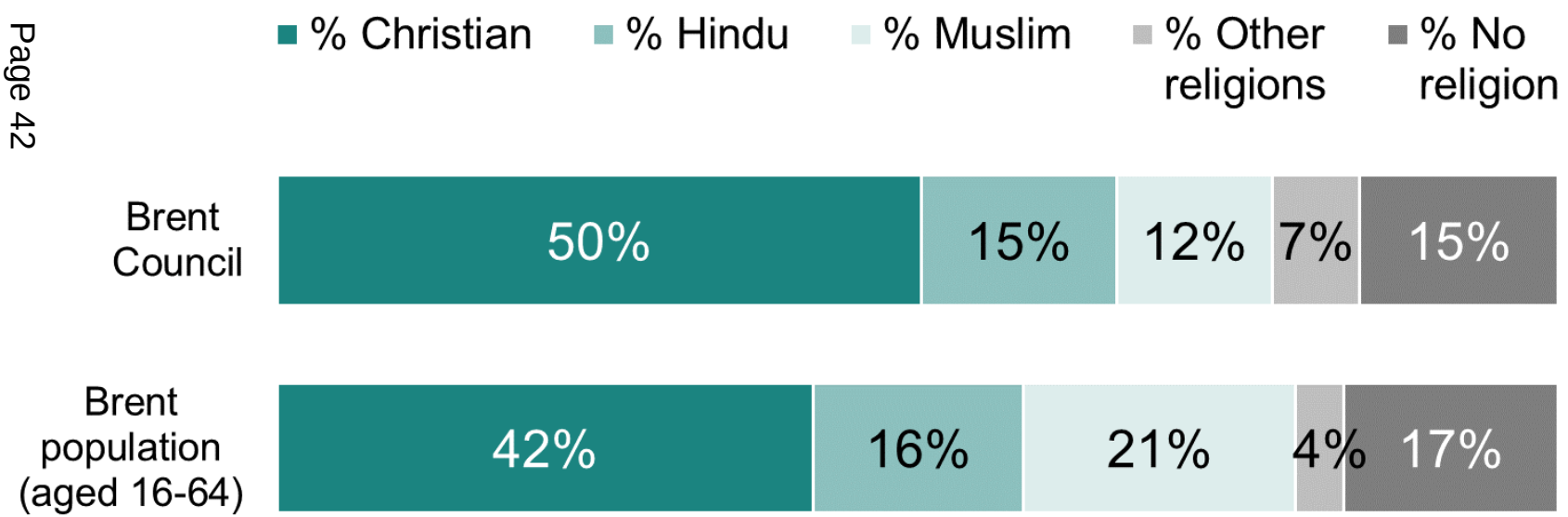
- At HAY grades, 59% of candidates who applied were female compared to 63% who were offered.
- The proportion of female candidates who applied at grades PO5-8 was 45% compared to 56% who were offered.



Source: Recruitment data, 1 April 2023 - 31 Mar 24. Based on: HAY: 208 applicants; PO5-8: 721 applicants

Religion – workforce and population

- Half the workforce (of those who provided this information) are Christian – a little higher than the proportion in the Brent population. The proportion of Muslim employees is 12%, lower than the proportion of Muslim residents in the working age population (21%). Hindu employees make up 15% of the workforce, slightly lower than their representation in the population (16%).



Source: Workforce data based on 1,663 employees who provided faith information (65% employees); Comparator data from Office for National Statistics, 2021 Census data (figures exclude those who did not state their religion on the Census).

Sexual orientation and gender identity

- **Sexual orientation**
  4.2% of Brent employees identified as LGB or 'Other'. This was very close to the 2021 Census estimate of 4.0% for the Brent population (aged 16-64).

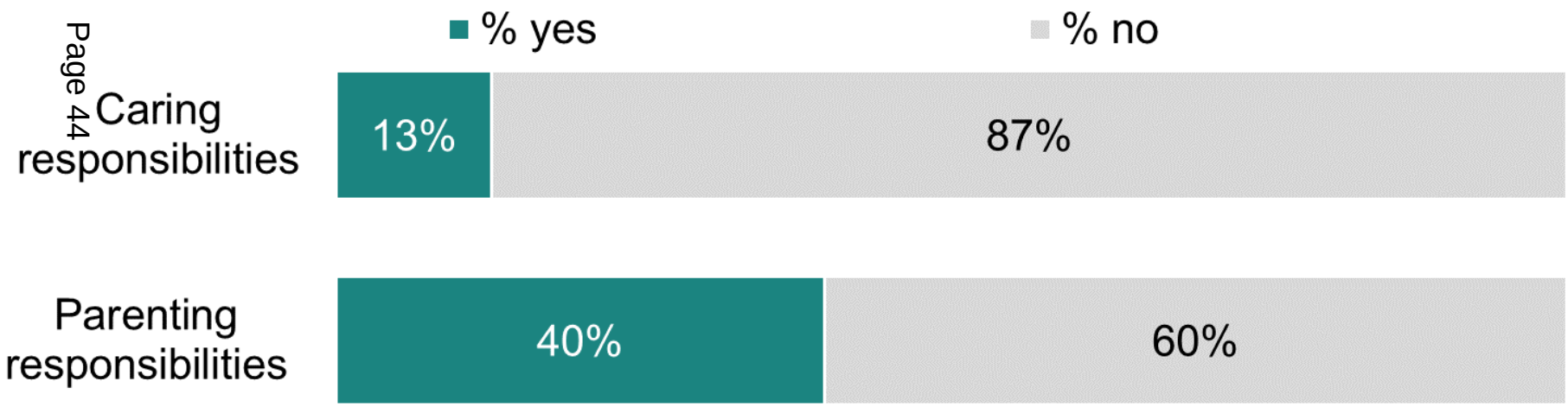
- **Gender identity**
  0.6% of employees identified as transgender. This was lower than the comparable figure for the working age population from the 2021 Census (1.6%). However, a recent review by the Office for National Statistics suggests that census data may have overcounted the trans population in Brent, so this comparison needs to be interpreted with some caution. More information about this issue can be found in the ONS quality review of census gender identity data.

- **Further information**
  More information about sexual orientation and gender identity statistics in Brent can be found in the 2021 Census report on Brent's LGBTQ+ population.

Sources: Workforce data based on 1,750 employees' data on sexual orientation (69% of employees), and 1,872 (73% of employees) on gender identity; Office for National Statistics, 2021 Census (Table A006, B021, SOGI data). Note: Census figures quoted here relate to the population aged 16-64 and are based only on those who answered the census questions on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Caring and parenting responsibilities

- 13% of staff had caring responsibilities and 40% staff had parenting responsibilities.



Notes: Based on 1,785 employees with caring responsibilities and 1,727 with parenting responsibilities, 70% and 68% of employees respectively.

Leavers' profile

- Female (69%) and disabled (11%) leavers were largely in proportion to their representations in the workforce (64% and 8% respectively). A lower proportion of BAME employees (58%) left the Council than their representation in the workforce (71%).
- 278 staff left the Council in the reporting period. 94% of whom left the Council voluntarily.

Leavers by gender	Percentage total
Female	69%
Male	31%
Total	100%
Number of leavers	278

Leavers by disability	Percentage total
Yes	11%
No	89%
Total	100%
Leavers who have shared disability status	194
Leavers with unknown disability status	84

Leavers by ethnicity	Percentage total
White British	30%
White Other	11%
Asian groups	26%
Black groups	29%
Mixed /other groups	4%
Total	100%
BAME	58%
Leavers who have shared ethnicity status	195
Leavers with unknown ethnicity status	83

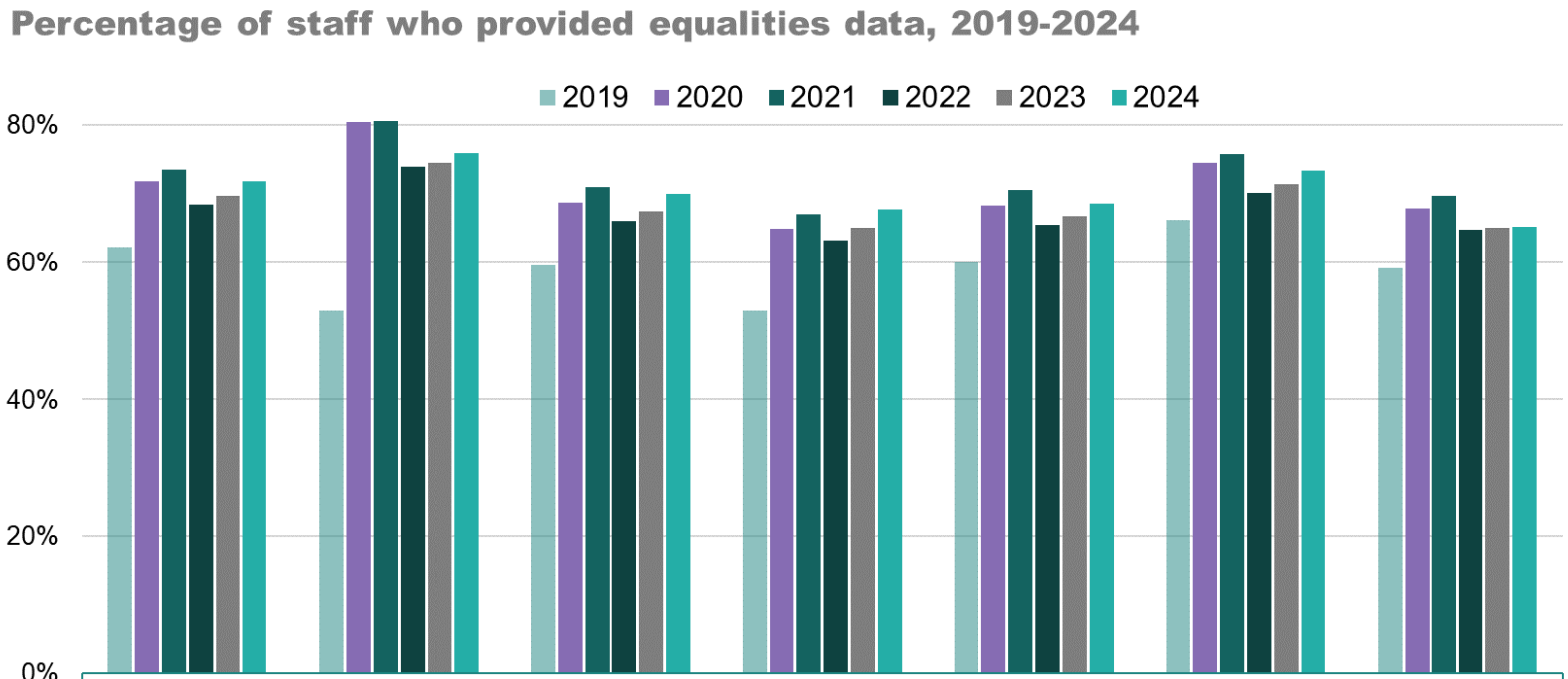
Leavers by reason	Percentage total
Voluntary termination of contract	94%
Involuntary termination of contract	6%
Total	100%
Number of leavers	278

Page 245

Notes: The percentages in the tables above only relate to leavers' data where equalities data are known.

Appendix 1: Data quality

The chart below shows the percentage of Brent staff who provided equalities data across the different equality strands from 2019 to 2024.



	Disability	Ethnicity	Caring responsibilities	Parenting responsibilities	Sexual orientation	Gender re-assignment	Religion
2019	62%	53%	60%	53%	60%	66%	59%
2020	72%	80%	69%	65%	68%	74%	68%
2021	73%	81%	71%	67%	70%	76%	70%
2022	68%	74%	66%	63%	65%	70%	65%
2023	70%	74%	67%	65%	67%	71%	65%
2024	72%	76%	70%	68%	69%	73%	65%

Brent Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap Report

March 2025

Introduction

Gender Pay Gap Reporting

Gender pay reporting legislation requires employers with 250 or more employees to publish statutory calculations every year showing how large the pay gap is between their male and female employees.

The gender pay gap shows the **difference between the average (mean and median) earnings of men and women.** This is expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.

Employers also have to report on the **proportion of males and females in each quartile pay band**. This calculation requires an employer to show the proportions of male and female full-pay equivalent employees in four quartile pay bands, which is done by dividing the salary of the workforce into four equal parts.

Ethnicity Pay Gap

In the interests of transparency and to ensure that we identify and address any barriers to entry and progression within the council, we are continuing to publish ethnicity pay data. The issue of equality continues to be a priority within the Council and the ethnicity pay gap will provide a focus and backdrop for all the actions which the Council is already taking to reduce the pay gap, and those to come.

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) employees comprise 71% of the workforce. The ethnicity pay gap shows the **difference between the average (mean and median) earnings of the Council's employees in each ethnicity group (Black, Asian and Mixed/ Other and 'unknown' ethnicity), and White employees (White British and White other)**. Similar to gender pay reporting, this report shows the proportions of full-pay relevant employees in each ethnic group and for those whose ethnicity is unknown, in four quartile pay bands.

Disability Pay Gap

Whilst there is no current legal requirement to do so, we are publishing the disability pay gap. This is with the intention of furthering our commitment to the agenda for disability equality and bringing all planned and future initiatives into the forefront.

Under the Equality Act 2010 a person is classed as being disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long- term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

Employees who are disabled comprise 8% of the workforce. The disability pay gap shows the **difference between the average (mean and median) earnings of the Council's disabled employees and non-disabled employees**. As with gender and ethnicity reporting, the proportion of disabled and non-disabled full-pay relevant employees in each quartile pay band will also be shown.

Data Notes

This report looks at gender, ethnicity and disability pay differences for all Brent Council employees (2,553) on the GLPC and HAY job schemes (and the small number of employees on other schemes).

This report is based on data taken from the HR database on 31 March 2024. The percentages of information on each characteristic are based on the number of employees who have provided information and therefore where people have chosen not to provide this information or where information is missing for them, they have been excluded from the calculation. This report should be read in conjunction with the annual Workforce Equalities Report in order to obtain a broader picture of workforce statistics and gain a clearer picture of why any pay differences may exist.

I can confirm that the data reported by the London Borough of Brent is accurate and has been calculated according to the requirements and methodology set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 and using the standard reports provided by our HR Management Information System.

Corporate Director, Law and Governance

Brent's Pay Policy

Brent's Pay Policy is designed to ensure that all employees are treated fairly and consistently on all pay related matters. Brent is committed to paying a minimum of the London Living Wage to all our directly employed staff, excluding some of our apprentices who are in training.

Every post in Brent is subject to job evaluation when it is created or there is a significant change in the post responsibilities. This involves assessing the post against common criteria to establish its relative value and ensure a consistent and equitable pay structure across the council.

In addition to this, Brent has a commitment to comply with the Equality Act 2010, under which men and women are entitled to equal pay for doing equal work, where pay refers to all aspects of a contractual pay and benefits package and is not restricted to basic pay.

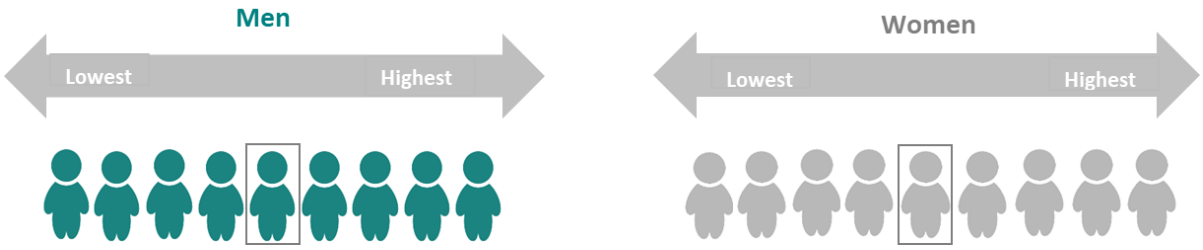
Employees receive an annual pay increment for each year of service until they reach the top of the pay scale for their grade. This means that there will be pay differences within pay grades that can be accounted for by length of service. The Council does not operate a bonus scheme.

Brent's commitment to equal pay practices

The council is committed to equality and fairness for all our employees, including in relation to equal pay practices. An annual gender/ethnicity/disability pay analysis goes some way to establishing whether Brent Council is upholding its commitment to equality and its legal obligations.

Please contact the Human Resources on staffdevelopment@brent.gov.uk if you have any questions or require further information.

Mean and Median Pay Gap



Methodology

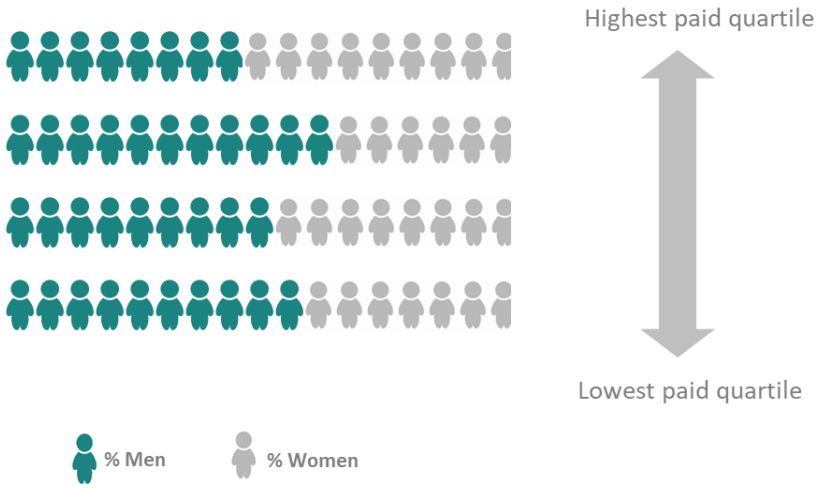
The Pay Gap is the difference between women's pay and men's pay as a percentage of men's pay, (or BAME employees' pay and White employees' pay as a percentage of White employees' pay, or disabled employees' pay and non-disabled employees' pay as a percentage of non-disabled employees' pay etc). A positive % means men, (or for example, White employees or non-disabled employees) have higher pay. These calculations make use of two types of averages:

The mean average is arrived at by adding up all of the hourly rates of pay and dividing the result by the number of people in the list. This places the same value on every hourly rate they use, giving a good overall indication of the pay gap, but very large or small pay rates or bonuses can 'dominate' and distort the answer.

The median is arrived at by splitting the top 50% of the population from the bottom 50%. It shows the midpoint in all employees' hourly rates of pay so half of employees will earn a rate above the midpoint and half will earn a rate below the midpoint. This gives a better indication of the 'typical' situation in the middle of an organisation, not distorted by very large or small pay rates.

$$\text{Mean gender pay gap} = \frac{\text{Mean pay men} - \text{Mean pay women}}{\text{Mean pay men}} \times 100$$

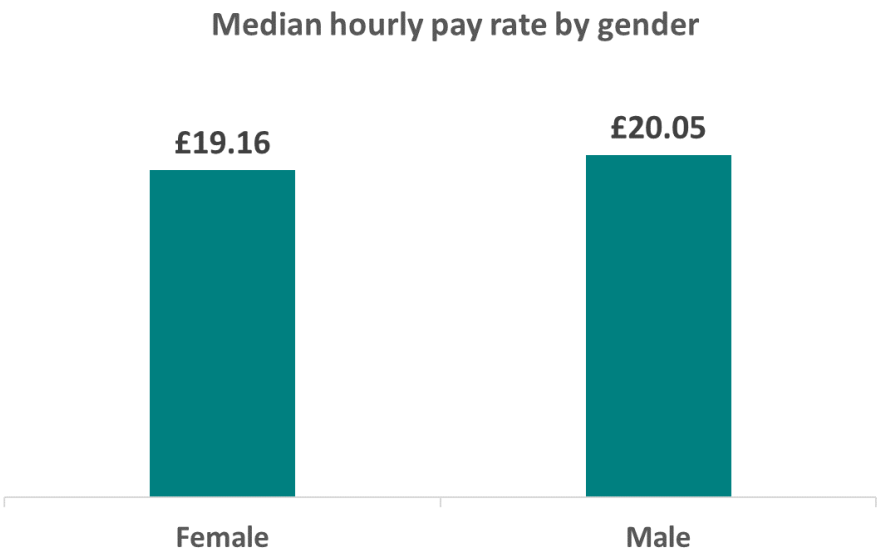
Quartiles



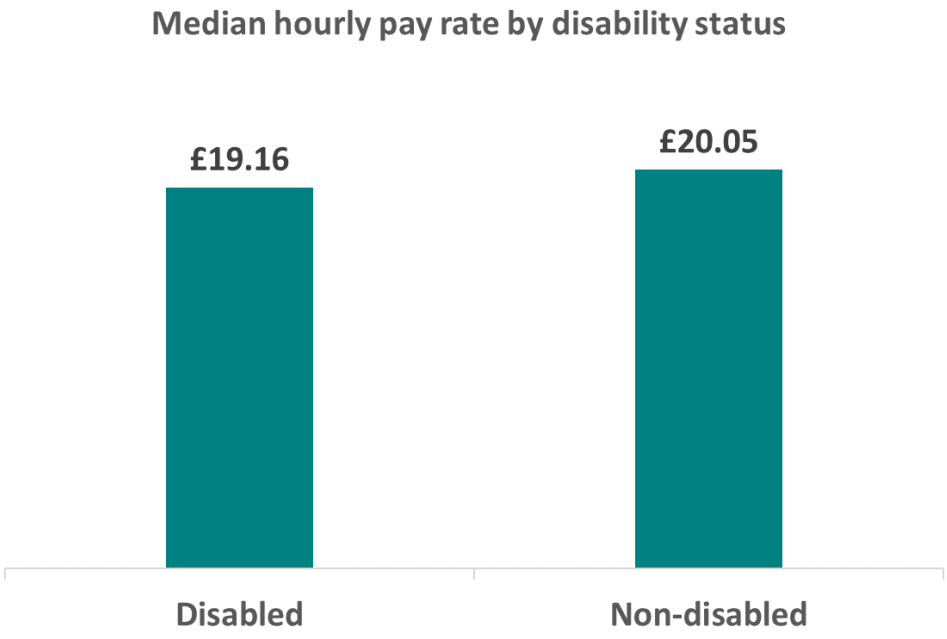
This shows the proportions of male and female (or BAME and White employees, or indeed disabled and non-disabled employees etc) in four quartile pay bands. Each employee's salary is ordered from lowest to highest, then divided into four equal groups, and the proportion of men and women, the proportion of BAME and White, or the proportion of disabled and non-disabled employees at each pay band is reported.

Quartiles are useful to show the distribution of workers, which can help give more context to the mean and median pay gap figures by showing the proportions of employees within the three characteristic groups at different pay levels. For example, if more low-paid workers are women and more high-paid workers are men, this may be the reason for a bigger gender pay gap.

Comparing Hourly Pay



Female employees comprise 64% of the workforce. Since last year, the median hourly pay has decreased for male and female employees. However, female employees are paid 89 pence less on average (using median measure) than male employees.



Disabled employees comprise 8% of the workforce. This year, disabled employees are paid 89 pence less on average (using median measure), than non-disabled employees.

Comparing Hourly Pay

In the Council, of those employees who choose to disclose their ethnicity, White employees comprise 29% of the workforce, Asian employees comprise 27%, Black employees comprise 36% and Mixed/ Other employees comprise 8% of the workforce.

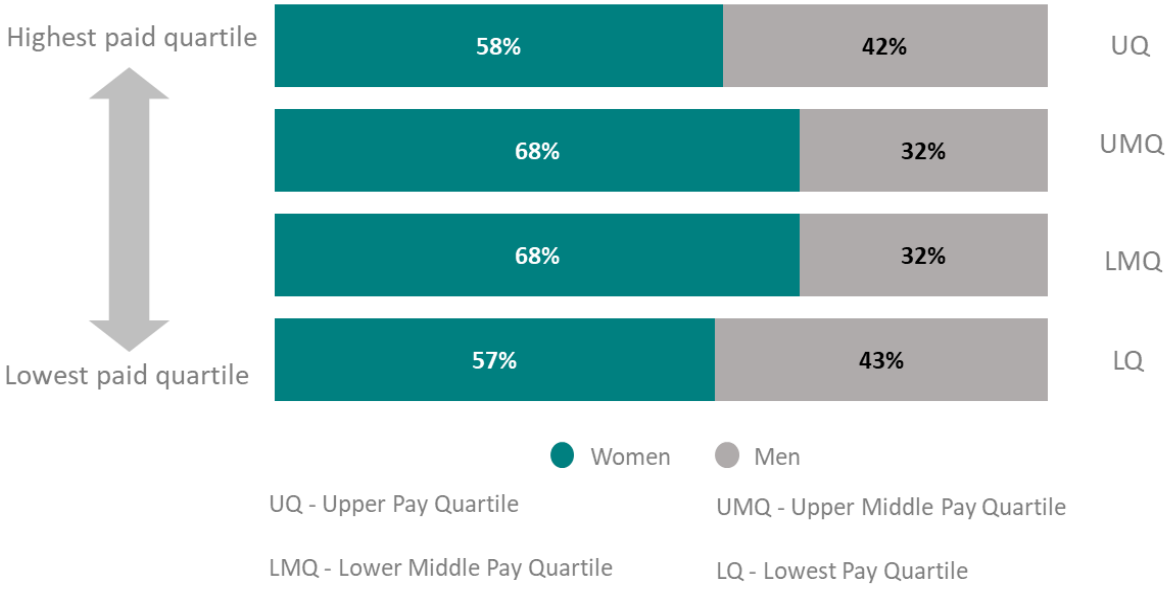
After White employees, Mixed/ Other employees have the highest average hourly pay rate. This year compared to last, Asian employees have a slightly lower median hourly pay rate when compared to Black employees.

Since last year, all ethnic groupings have a lower median hourly pay rate. This means that overall, there are more lower paid employees (using the median measure) in every ethnic grouping. However, when compared to White groups, there is a pay gap for every ethnic grouping.

Gender

Mean gender pay gap = 4.5%

Median gender pay gap = 4.4%



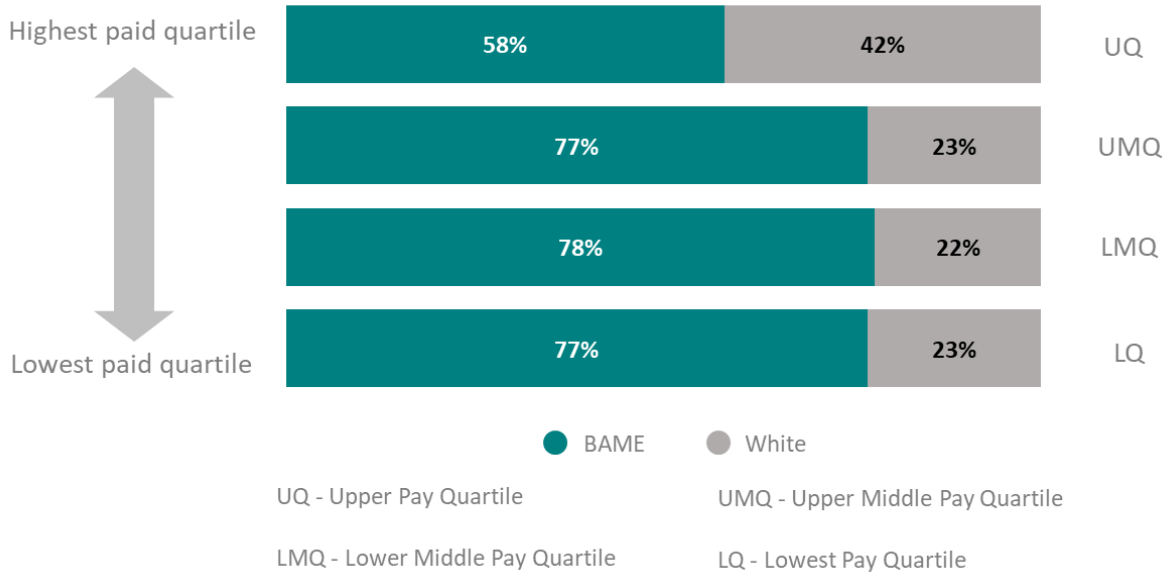
The distribution of male and female employees across the quartiles indicates that there is a largely balanced distribution of women between the upper and lower quartiles. However, it is the distribution of women within these quartiles which will be causing a mean and median gender pay gap.

Overall, the proportion of males and females in the workforce, is tipped in favour of women. Since last year when the mean and median gender pay gap was 6% and 8.8% respectively, the mean gender pay gap has decreased to 4.5% and the median gender pay gap has halved to 4.4%. This may be due to an increase in the proportion of women in the upper quartiles; the upper quartile (UQ) has increased from 55% to 58%, and the upper middle quartile from 62% to 68%. This was accompanied by a decrease in the lower pay quartiles (LQ - 57%, from 64% last year and LMQ - 68% from 74% last year), which has resulted in the gap decreasing this year.

Ethnicity - Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups

Mean ethnicity pay gap = 14.1%

Median ethnicity pay gap = 13.2%



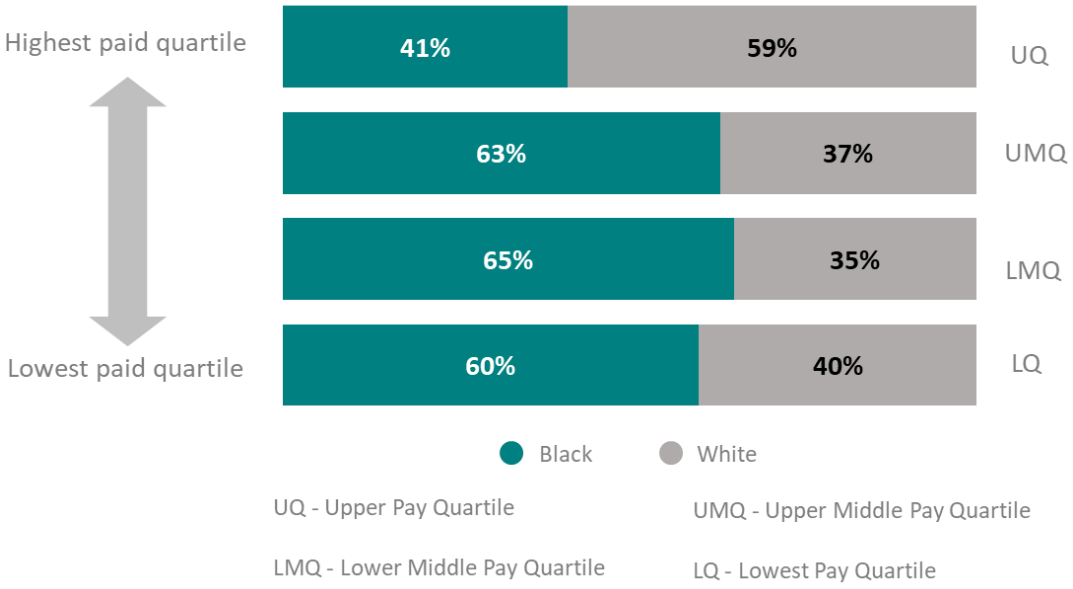
The distribution of BAME and White employees across the quartiles indicates that the lower paid quartiles of the workforce comprise of a higher proportion of BAME employees, which is likely to be a major factor in the mean and median pay gap.

This year, the mean ethnicity pay gap has increased from 12.9% to 14.1%. This could be explained for example, by the increase in the ratio of BAME employees in the lower middle pay quartile. We also know that whilst there has also been an increase in BAME employees in the upper pay quartiles (UQ and UMQ), there has been an increase in BAME employees in the lowest pay grades (Scale 2-6 up by 5 percentage points), which fall within the lowest pay quartile. Conversely, there has been a slight decrease in the median pay gap since last year from 13.9% to 13.2%. It is likely that this is due to the increase in the proportion of BAME employees in the upper pay quartiles where the headcount most increased, when compared to the lower quartiles.

Ethnicity - Black groups

Mean ethnicity pay gap = 14.4%

Median ethnicity pay gap = 13.2%



The distribution of Black and White employees across the quartiles indicates that the upper quartile of the workforce comprises of a higher proportion of White employees (59%), which is likely to be a major factor in the mean and median pay gap.

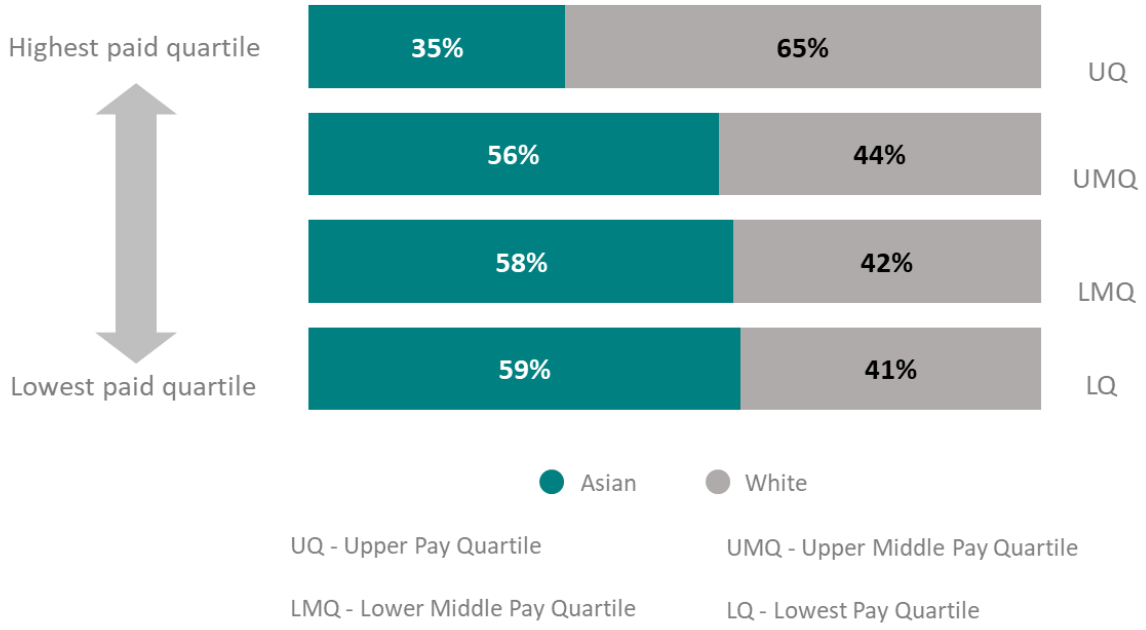
In our workforce overall, 37% are Black employees. Since last year, there has been an increase in the ratio of employees from Black groups in every pay quartile except the lowest quartile where there has been a decrease. The increase in the mean pay gap to 14.4% could be due to the distribution of Black employees at the lower grades within the lowest pay quartile, or of White employees at the higher pay grades within the upper quartile.

Since last year, the median pay gap for Black employees has decreased slightly from 13.9% to 13.2%. This may be because when comparing the distribution of Black employees in all quartiles, the middle two pay quartiles comprise of the largest ratios of Black employees, when compared to last year where the largest ratios of employees from Black groups were in the lower two pay quartiles.

Ethnicity – Asian groups

Mean ethnicity pay gap = 13.9%

Median ethnicity pay gap = 14.1%



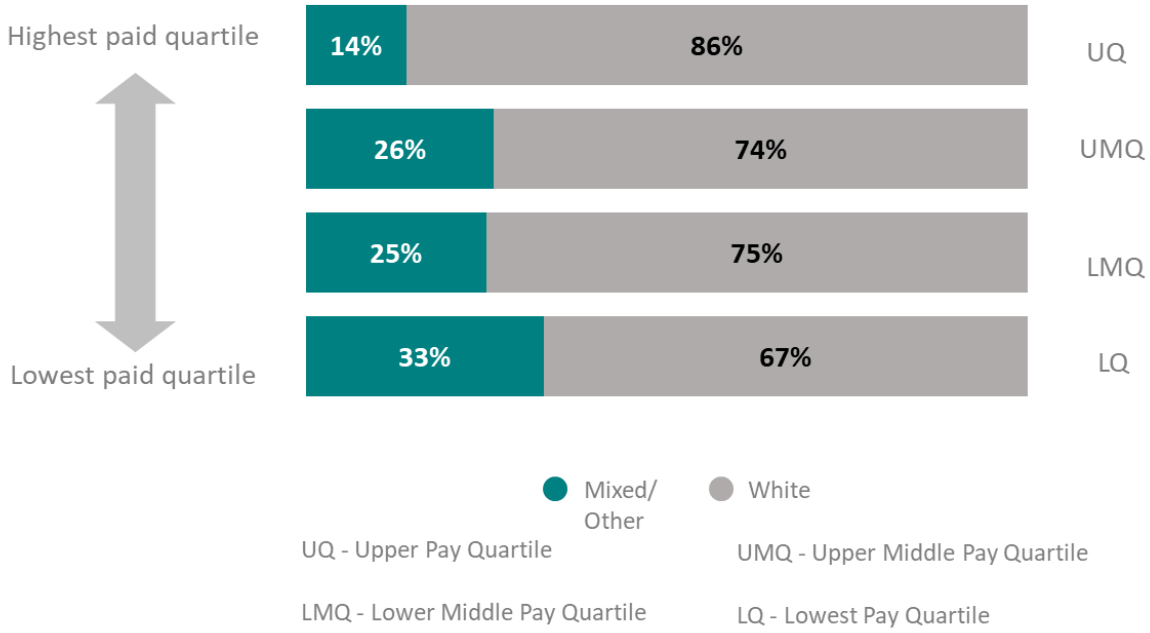
The distribution of Asian and White employees across the pay quartiles indicates that the lowest 3 quartiles (UMQ: 56%, LMQ: 58%, LQ: 59%) comprise of a similar and higher proportion of Asian employees when compared to the upper quartile (35%), which is likely to be a major factor in the mean and median pay gap.

Within the Council overall, 27% of all employees are from Asian groups. Since last year, there has been a considerable increase in the proportion of employees from Asian groups in the upper middle quartile from 45% to 56% and a slight increase in Asian groups in the lowest quartile. There has also been an increase in Asian groups in the upper quartile from 31% to 35%. However, within this, there has been a decrease in the proportion of Asian employees in HAY groups Council-wide from 15% to 13%. It is likely that this is the reason for the increase in the mean (from 13.1% to 13.9%) and median (from 13.9% to 14.1%) pay gap.

Ethnicity – Mixed/ Other groups

Mean ethnicity pay gap = 13.3%

Median ethnicity pay gap = 11.1%



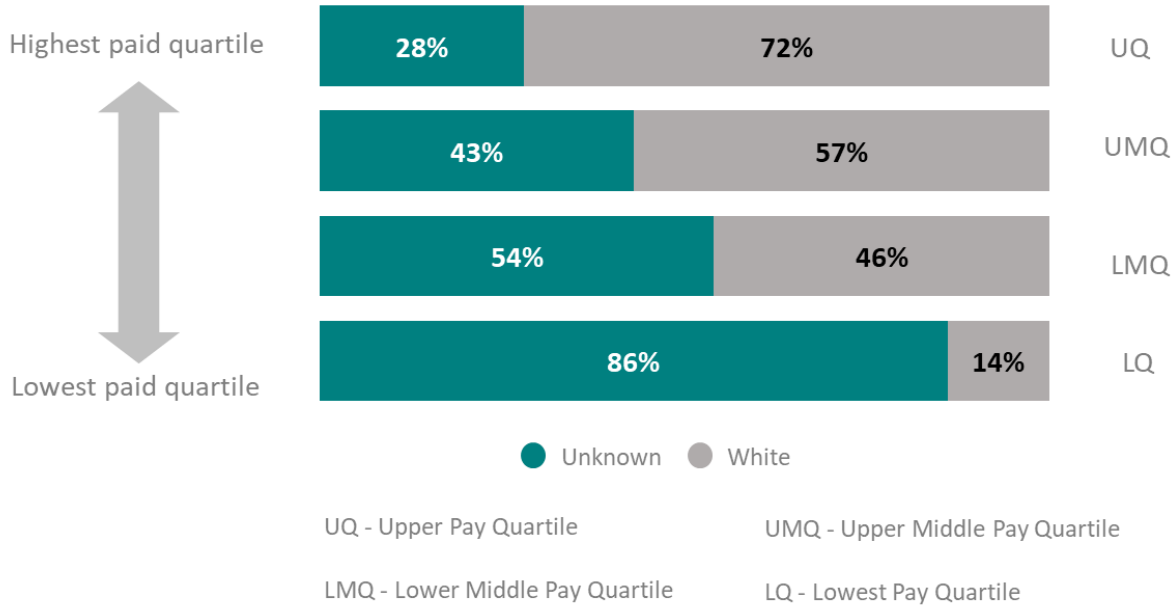
The distribution of Mixed/ Other ethnic groups and White employees across the quartiles indicates that the lower paid quartiles of the workforce comprise of a higher proportion of Mixed/ Other ethnic group employees, which is likely to be a major factor in the mean and median pay gap.

Within the Council overall, 8% of all employees are from Mixed and Other ethnicities. Since last year when the mean pay gap was 10.7% and the median was 9.7%, there has been an increase in the proportion of employees from Mixed/ Other ethnic groups in every pay quartile. The lowest pay quartile showed the greatest increase (from 23% to 33%), whilst the proportion of Mixed/ Other groups in the upper quartile remained considerably lower (14%) than the other quartiles, which is likely to be a major factor in the increase in the mean and median pay gap.

Ethnicity – Unknown groups

Mean ethnicity pay gap = 20.1%

Median ethnicity pay gap = 23.4%



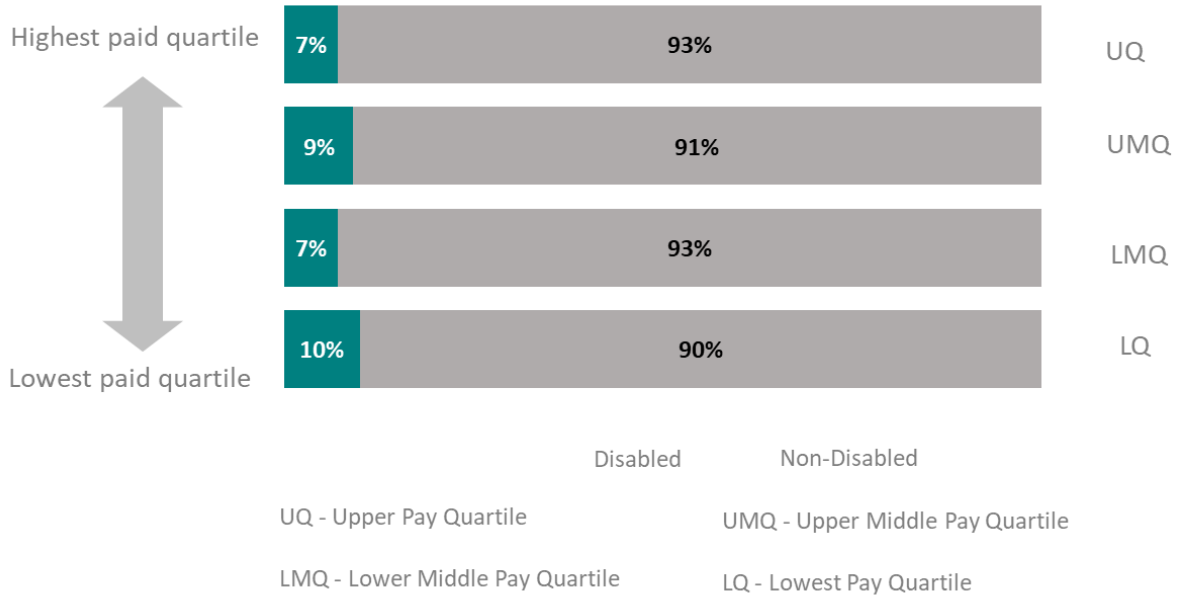
The distribution of unknown groups and White employees across the pay quartiles indicates that the lower paid quartiles are comprised of a higher proportion of employees who chose not to disclose their ethnicity when comparted to the other quartiles. This is likely to be a major factor in the mean and median pay gap.

In the Council overall, 24% of employees chose not to disclose their ethnicity. Of these, 20% selected “prefer not to say”, whilst 80% did not make a selection or had this data missing at the time of writing this report. This year, whilst the mean and median pay gap for Mixed/ Other ethnicities has reduced, there has been an increase in the ratio of employees whose ethnicity information is unknown when compared to White employees, in every quartile except the upper quartile. The high ratio of employees whose ethnicity is unknown in the lowest quartile (77%) indicates that any concerns need to be addressed and engagement needs to be increased with the lower grades of the workforce.

Disability

Mean disability pay gap = 2.3%

Median disability pay gap = 4.4%



Since last year, when we reported a mean pay gap of 1.8% and median pay gap of 2.5%, the mean and median pay gap has changed to a pay gap of 2.3% and 4.4% respectively. There is a higher proportion of disabled employees in the lower quartiles when compared to the upper quartiles, which is the likely reason for the pay gap.

The increase in the mean and median pay gap could be explained by an increase in the proportion of disabled employees in the lowest pay quartile from 7% to 10%, which is the quartile showing the highest proportion of disabled employees, whilst there has been no change to the proportion of disabled employees in the upper quartile since last year.

In the Council overall, 28% of employees chose not to disclose their disability. Of these, 7% selected “prefer not to say”, whilst 93% did not make a selection or had this data missing at the time of writing this report.

Review of priority actions from 2023/24 onwards – Gender/ Ethnicity/ Disability

- **The Council's EDI strategy**
  The Council's EDI strategy is now in place and includes activities that address barriers to employment in the Council and reviews processes that for example, work towards a workforce more reflective of the community.

- **Further analytical work carried out**
  Further monitoring of new starter salaries above the base spinal point showed that of all new Council starters in the last 3 months of the reporting year, male candidates were more likely to start at a higher spinal point (above the base of the grade – 21%) than female candidates (12%). This will form the basis of further analysis. Other more recent data analyses and deep dives by ethnicity and disability have been shared with key stakeholders to aid the development of targeted actions. Such actions will address key data findings and the pay gap for individual ethnicity groups and have also addressed other analyses gathered through the staff survey which have led for example, to improvements in the recruitment process for neurodiverse staff.

- **Monitoring of internal promotions and external appointments**
  Monitoring has continued and a review of the internal progressions showed that more women (65%) and individuals from BAME groups (70%) were promoted than men and individuals from white groups respectively, whilst 6% of all those that were promoted were disabled. In addition, the proportion within those groups who were promoted largely reflected their proportion in the overall workforce.

  Of the data available showing external recruitment, 62% of HAY grade positions offered were to candidates from BAME groups, 31% were to disabled candidates and 85% were to female candidates.

- **Monitoring of new joiners' starting salary for grades PO5 and above**
  We've continued to review pay for new joiners to the Council at grades PO5-8 and above. Women new joiners made up 73% of those who were recruited to a salary of PO5 (£49,890 - £52,929 - within the highest quartile) and above this year. This has increased from 66% last year. BAME employees made up 60% of the employees who were recruited to grades PO5 and above – down from last year's 75%, and of all the new starters who were recruited to a salary of PO5 and above, 17% were disabled, this increased from last year's 7%.

- **Benchmarking with London Councils**
  Based on information submitted for 2023 by other London Councils, Brent Council had the 9th highest median ethnicity pay gap of all 27 London Councils who had submitted this data and 12th highest disability pay gap data of the 25 Councils who had submitted this data. There are many varying reasons affecting pay gaps, for example, the demographics of an area and the services which are outsourced. However further liaison with other local authorities will ensure we are kept informed of best practice.

- **Encouraging staff to share data**
  Communication campaigns at key points in the year have resulted in an increase in disclosure of at least 2 percentage points for most protected characteristics for year ending March 2024. These campaigns will continue through 2025.

- **Gather and analyse recruitment data**
  The recruitment data this year highlighted a considerable drop in the proportion of Asian candidates who were offered a position at HAY grades, when compared to the proportion who applied. This data will be used to carry out further deep dives into recruitment outcomes. Further ongoing recruitment data analysis by disability and gender has allowed us to gain an insight into any potential barriers faced by other groups. This will also be used to review recruitment practices further.

- **Disability Confident Scheme – level 3 attainment**
  The Council's level 3 accreditation of the Disability Confident Scheme was successfully renewed. This has led to the identification of further areas of development towards our disability agenda.

- **Anti-racism Action Plan**
  Brent Council's bespoke Anti-Racism Action Plan is now published and renews our commitment through this lens to themes such as Employee Lifecyle and Training and Development.

- **Review the EDI related learning and development**
  Following feedback gained through our staff survey, our networks and in working towards our actions plans (eg. Anti-racism Action Plan) we have a Learning and Development plan now in place which focuses on inclusion. More recently, this started new mandatory EDI learning for all employees.

Priority Actions for 2024/25 and beyond –Gender/ Ethnicity/ Disability

There are many possible factors affecting the pay gaps, for example, how much of the Council's services are outsourced, the local demographics and the ethnicity/ gender makeup of the Council, to name a few. The following actions are high level actions which are in place to understand and address the many possible reasons for the pay gaps. With the further, more detailed actions taking place under these, it is hoped change will take place in the longer term.

- Take forward the Council's EDI strategy and Anti-Racism Action Plan to address the pay gaps and promote further inclusivity. This will involve, for example, a review into diverse recruitment pools and advertising.

- The creation of a new People Strategy to drive the delivery of actions from the EDI Strategy and to include a targeted piece of work on creating an inclusive culture.

- Further data analysis to understand the pay gaps and areas for further improvement. For example, reviewing recruitment data and looking into reasons for male new joiners starting on salaries above the base of the grade when compared to female new joiners.

- Continued quarterly and ongoing monitoring of new joiners' starting salaries for the higher grades (grades PO5 and above) by gender, disability and ethnicity, to identify any further trends.

- Closer work with the directorates of the Council to identify data-driven, bespoke actions plans which address areas which do not support the Council's objective of having a workforce representative, at all levels, of the population.

- Foster a greater sense of belonging amongst staff by relaunching the staff networks and the Equity Champions, with support from senior sponsors, as a safe space to share information and discuss issues.

- Further benchmarking will be undertaken to compare our performance with other London Councils.

- Continue campaigns to encourage staff to share their ethnicity and other personal data (where it is unknown) to ensure improved quality of data, so that more reflective analyses can be undertaken.

- Embed the EDI related learning and development plan and address any barriers to progression for staff using key training such as reasonable adjustments for managers, unconscious bias and anti-racism.

- Use the Anti-racism Action Plan as a framework for continued work and improvement.

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APPOINTMENTS TO SUB COMMITTEES & OUTSIDE BODIES

General Purposes Committee is asked to confirm the following membership change in relation to its Sub-Committees:

SENIOR STAFF APPOINTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE

(1) Councillor Benea to replace Councillor Tatler as a substitute member of the Senior Staff Appointments Sub Committee

Subject to confirmation of the above change the amended membership of the Senior Staff Appointments Committee will be as follows:

M BUTT (C)	**LABOUR**
M.PATEL (VC)	**LABOUR**
KANSAGRA	**CONSERVATIVE**
KRUPA SHETH	**LABOUR**
GRAHL	**LABOUR**

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS:

LABOUR: BENEA, DONNELLY-JACKSON, FARAH, KNIGHT, NERVA, RUBIN
CONSERVATIVE: MAURICE, MISTRY

SENIOR STAFF APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE

(1) Councillor Benea to replace Councillor Tatler as a substitute member of the Senior Staff Appeals Sub Committee

Subject to confirmation of the above change the amended membership of the Senior Staff Appointments Committee will be as follows:

M BUTT (C)	**LABOUR**
M.PATEL (VC)	**LABOUR**
KANSAGRA	**CONSERVATIVE**
KRUPA SHETH	**LABOUR**
GRAHL	**LABOUR**

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS:

LABOUR: BENEA, DONNELLY-JACKSON, FARAH, KNIGHT, NERVA, RUBIN
CONSERVATIVE: MAURICE, MISTRY

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