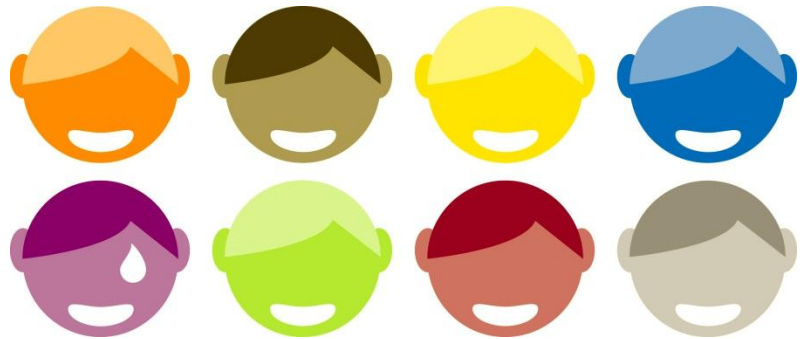


# THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL



**February  
2017**

## **Working Towards a Fairer Highland: Mainstreaming Equality Report 2015-2017**

This is the Mainstreaming Equality Report on behalf of the Highland Council, Highland Education Authority and Highland Licensing Board as required by specific equality duties in Scotland. It demonstrates the continuing commitments by these bodies to advance equality and shows how we build equality into our work through activities and case studies.

# The Highland Council

## WORKING TOWARDS A FAIRER HIGHLAND: MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY REPORT 2015-2017

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## 1. Introduction

*“An equal society recognises people’s different needs, situations and goals, and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and be”*

*The Equalities Review, 2007i.*

Despite over 30 year of equality legislation, certain groups of people still face significant levels of inequality, discrimination and harassment. In 2016, the *Is Scotland Fairer*<sup>ii</sup> report shows areas of improvement in outcomes for some equality groups but also highlights areas of continuing concern:

- Overall, educational attainment has increased, but some groups fared worse including disabled pupils, pupils from deprived communities and Gypsy/Travellers.
- Women were more likely to hold a degree than men, but less likely to be in work, or to hold a senior position in work.
- Ethnic minorities and disabled people were most likely to be living in relative poverty.
- In terms of how safe people felt living in Scotland, disabled people and women were more likely to feel unsafe being alone after dark.
- Stigma and negative attitudes persist towards people with mental health problems and Gypsy/Travellers. Hate crimes related to race were the most commonly identified crimes recorded by the police.
- Unemployment particularly affected young people (20%), disabled people (12%), and ethnic minorities (13%) compared to the Scottish average (7%).

Public bodies have an important role to provide equality of opportunity; fair access to our services, education provision and employment; and to challenge discriminatory behaviour and harassment.

Meeting the equality duties placed on public sector bodies will help us to:

- Take effective action on equality issues
- Make the right decision, first time round
- Develop better policies and practices, based on evidence
- Be more transparent, accessible and accountable
- Improve outcomes for all

This is our third mainstreaming equality report since specific equality duties were introduced in Scotland in 2013. It incorporates the duties placed on the Council, Education Authority and Licensing Board. As in previous reports, it demonstrates our progress towards building equality into the everyday work of the three bodies and includes a range of new case studies from across our services.

## Legal Context

Protection from unlawful discrimination is provided under the Equality Act 2010. We are all covered by at least one of the following protected characteristics defined in the Act:

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

### **The Public Sector Equality Duty**

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 introduced a positive Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) on public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not. *This requires the Council to: remove or minimise disadvantage; take steps to meet the needs of individuals; encourage participation of under-represented groups*
- Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not. *This requires the Council to take steps to tackle prejudice and promote understanding*

Meeting different needs involves taking steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities. The Act states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others. The three parts of the duty cover eight of the protected characteristics. It applies to marriage and civil partnership in relation to non-discrimination only.

### **The Specific Equality Duties**

Additionally, the Scottish Government introduced a set of specific equality duties in May 2012 to support the better performance of the PSED by listed public bodies which include Local Authorities, Local Education Authorities and Licensing Boards. The duties include requirements to:

- Publish a report on mainstreaming the equality duty every two years
- Publish equality outcomes and report on progress every two years
- Assess and review policies and practices
- Gather and use employee information
- Publish gender pay gap information
- Publish and equal pay statement
- Consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement

## **What is Mainstreaming equality?**

The Council, Education Authority and Licensing Board must report on how equality is mainstreamed into their work at intervals of not more than two years. This provides an opportunity for each body to show how their activities contribute towards a Fairer Highland.

Mainstreaming simply means integrating equality into the day-to-day work of the Council - taking equality into account in everything we do as an employer, and when planning or providing services.

Gathering and considering relevant equality data is central to mainstreaming equality. This could mean monitoring service users and service activity with respect to the protected characteristics, or analysis of other outcomes such as the educational attainment of different groups. The Council must also take steps to gather annual information on its workforce and on the recruitment, development and retention of employees with respect to relevant protected characteristics. The mainstreaming report must include (if not published previously) an annual breakdown of the information gathered, details of the progress made in gathering, and how this information is used to better perform the general equality duty.

Mainstreaming the equality duty is an organisational responsibility, requiring leadership and awareness to both promote equality and challenge inappropriate behaviour and practices.

Training and awareness raising of equality across the Council, Education Authority and Licensing Board will help ensure that equality is considered routinely and that staff recognise the relevance of equality duties to their own role.

Our previous two mainstreaming reports can be found on the Council website:

Mainstreaming Equality 2013

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/15883/item8cpe613pdf>

Mainstreaming Equality 2013-2015

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/3539/mainstreaming\\_equality\\_report\\_2013\\_2015](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/3539/mainstreaming_equality_report_2013_2015)

## Highland Equality Profile:

The Census continues to be a main source of information on changing demographics. The key points of information from the Scotland Census 2011 and the Scottish Household Survey in relation to protected characteristics in Highland are as follows:

- 51% of the population is female and 49% is male, compared to 52% and 48% respectively for Scotland
- Highland has an older population than Scotland; 32% of Highland's population is under 30 compared with 36% across Scotland
- 46.1% of people in Highland are married or in a civil partnership (0.12% in civil partnerships). 24% are single compared to 28% of Scotland's population.
- The majority of people living in Scotland and Highland are White. In Highland, a larger percentage describes themselves as White-Other British (15% in Highland compared to 8% in Scotland). Highland has a higher than average Polish population (1.48% compared to 1.16%)
- The minority ethnic population of Highland is 1.4%, up from 0.8%, compared to 4% for Scotland overall.
- According to the Scottish Household Survey, 21% of people in Highland have a long-standing limited illness (LTLI), health problem or disability compared to 18% in Scotland. LTLI increases with age, with 59% of men and 66% of women over the age of 75 having a LTLI compared to 8% of men and 7% of women under 30
- The most common response to the question of faith in the 2011 Census was 'No religion' in Highland and Scotland. The second most popular faith was Church of Scotland, and the percentage is higher in Highland (36.9%) than in Scotland (32.4%)

## Mainstreaming equality in Highland

The following sections describe activities that support and mainstream equality across the Council, Education Authority and Licensing Board and includes a range of examples and case studies. Many of these activities will also support our set of equality outcomes, in particular where they lead to a great understanding of the barriers faced by equality groups and help us to take steps to meet the needs of individuals.

## Commitments: Leadership, Performance and Governance

Highland aims to be an area where:

- People are, and feel, free to live their lives without harassment and discrimination, and can take part in community life
- People benefit from public services in a fairer way and are able to have their say about them
- Highland Council staff feel there is an organisational culture where everyone is treated with dignity and respect

Equality and fairness are embedded in the current programme work of the Highland Council, Highland First. Working Towards a Fairer Highland is one of four key themes and the commitments include:

- **Treating People Fairly, with Dignity and Respect** - the Council will continue to work towards achieving its equality outcomes and will promote equality of opportunity in all its work.
- **Positive Mental Health and Stigma** to support work across all partners to reduce stigma around mental health and promote good mental health and wellbeing
- **Reducing the Attainment Gap** particularly those pupils experiencing poverty and deprivation.
- **Additional Support Needs** to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people with Additional Support Needs at all stages.
- **Looked After Children** – to consider the views and improve the outcomes of our young people who have experienced care.

Link to Highland First:

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/4611/programme\\_of\\_the\\_highland\\_council](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/4611/programme_of_the_highland_council)

The Highland Council's approach to equality during 2012 – 2017 was set out in "A Fairer Highland" plan agreed by Council in April 2012. This will be revised during 2017.

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/3531/equality\\_plan\\_2012-2017-a\\_fairer\\_highland](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/3531/equality_plan_2012-2017-a_fairer_highland)

Performance on equality topics is regularly reported to committee and a summary of performance is included within the Council's annual corporate performance report. The 2016 corporate performance report included information on:

- Meeting the PSED reporting requirements
- Gender Pay Gap
- Women in Management
- Responses to Citizen's Panel where there are difference by protected characteristic
- AA rating of the Council website
- Hate crime
- Attitude to prejudice

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/16717/corporate\\_performance\\_report\\_2015-2016](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/16717/corporate_performance_report_2015-2016)

Governance of equality issues is primarily through the Council's Communities and Partnership's committee. The committee's remit with regard to equality is to:

- implement the Council's Equalities duties, to understand the needs of people who have characteristics protected in law to make sure Council services are more responsive to their need, and also to
- ensure the Council adopts approaches to reduce inequality and poverty through the services it provides and in working with others

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20003/committee\\_information/481/communities\\_and\\_partnerships\\_committee](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20003/committee_information/481/communities_and_partnerships_committee)

During 2015-17 the committee received reports on:

- Equalities and public performance survey: Equalities analysis of the public survey results and feedback from the Citizens' Panel on equality issues
- Update on the partnership Violence Against Women Strategy, and minute of the strategy group are circulated to the committee
- The Cultural Contribution of Gypsy/Travellers in Highland
- Equality issues raised in the Employee Survey
- Partnership report on tackling hate crime and hate incidents in Highland
- Dementia Friendly Highland action plan
- Update on the Public Sector Equality Duty requirements

Relevant matters are also brought to other committees, for example:

- Staffing matters and the Council's response to welfare reform are presented to the Resources Committee  
[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20003/committee\\_information/478/resources\\_committee\\_rs](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20003/committee_information/478/resources_committee_rs).
- The Education, Children and Adult Services committee reports range from Education and ASN, to Early Years collaborative work; support for young carers, and support for young people into employment, including looked after children  
[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20003/committee\\_information/476/education\\_children\\_and\\_adult\\_services\\_committee\\_eca](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20003/committee_information/476/education_children_and_adult_services_committee_eca).
- The Council's employability service reports to the Development and Infrastructure committee  
[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20003/committee\\_information/477/planning\\_development\\_and\\_infrastructure\\_committee](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20003/committee_information/477/planning_development_and_infrastructure_committee)

An Officer's working group, chaired by the Head of Policy, supports corporate and service-led equalities work and includes representatives from each of the Council services. group has a responsibility for sharing information, championing equalities, and monitoring progress in each service. The Council's Care and Learning Service has an equality and diversity group which has had an initial focus on improvements in Education.

At Community Planning Partnership level, a local partnership approach to hate crime and hate incidents is reported to the Safer Highland group.

**Going forward:**

- *Following local government elections in May 2015, the Council's programme of work will be reviewed, the Fairer Highland Plan will also be reviewed, and actions to support revised equality outcomes will be finalised.*



## **Building equality into our work**

### **Equality Impact Assessments**

Services are required to use an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) process to ensure that any policies, practices and procedures or funding decisions give due regard to the three elements of the general equality duty. We aim to continue to improve our EQIA process, to build on the lessons learnt and involve a more targeted approach to equalities impact assessment.

Our EQIA process consists of the following steps:

- Screening for relevance – a short form that helps colleagues to ascertain whether or not a full EQIA is required.
- EQIA report – a concise template that takes colleagues through the full assessment process.

Specific guidance has been developed and updated for staff carrying out assessments and both online and face-to-face training is available, completed EQIA reports are published on the Council's website.

Committee reports include a section asking for information on potential for equality impact of policies and decisions. We continue to have a focus on the equality impact of budget savings proposals, and this has now become integrated with assessing rural impacts and poverty impacts. It is proposed to expand this integrated approach in the future.

### **Case Study: Customer Services Review**

During 2014-15 a Customer Service Review Board was established to consider customer service provision in each of the 23 communities with a Service Point not designated a Community Hub. The Board was to consider a future service delivery model for each such community on the basis of a business case which took into account the impact on service users and the Council's commitment to remote and rural communities. An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the proposals and updated throughout the process. The process included a range of engagement opportunities for the public and communities, including on-line, focus groups and telephone interviews and input was encouraged from equality groups including local Access Panels. The final business case for the proposals included a summary of the equality impact assessment for each of the affected Service Points.

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/68491/final\\_business\\_case\\_v04](http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/68491/final_business_case_v04)

### **Case study: Re-tendering transport services**

At a time of reducing budgets, the Council agreed a target to reduce the budget spent on the provision of transport. The Transport Programme considers the needs of communities across Highland in preparation for re-tendering the current services offered. Likely equality impacts were identified and the importance of understanding the needs and views of communities to

ensure that the services provided in the future best meet the needs of communities within the budget available. Equality and accessibility issues were given due regard throughout the tendering process, including consultation with communities and involving groups such as Access Panels and potential providers and seeking tender options from suppliers for the provision of accessible services where these do not currently exist.

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory\\_record/619288/transport\\_programme\\_highland\\_full\\_report/category/456/transport](https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/619288/transport_programme_highland_full_report/category/456/transport)

### **Going forward:**

- *Further work will be undertaken to roll-out integrated community impact assessments to cover rurality and socio-economic inequality along with equality assessments.*

### **Procurement and grant funding**

The Council's Contract Standing Orders ensure our procurement activity is carried out in a manner that is open, fair, and accountable, and will ensure that the Council secures best value in its approach to procurement. The Contract Standing Orders provide a commitment to equality of opportunity through procurement and give specific advice on carrying out equality assessments as part of the tendering process:

*The Council shall comply in its contracting activities with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, The general duty of compliance applies to public functions which are carried out through procurement as well as those carried out directly by a public authority. Where a contractor is carrying out a public function on behalf of the Council, the legal liability for equality duties in relation to that function remains with the Council which contracts out the function.*

*Prior to commencement therefore, all contracts with a value requiring tendering via OJEU for the provision of works and/or services shall be subject as a minimum to initial screening for an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), and the full production of an EQIA if the initial screening shows that to be appropriate.*

### **Case study: Purchasing for better outcomes**

Following discussions amongst equality and diversity leads, Highlands and Islands Enterprise arranged and hosted a procurements event for Community Planning Partners in Highland. 'Purchasing for Better Outcomes' was held in April 2016 and public sector bodies from across Highland attended. The Equality and Human Rights Commission presented to an audience of both equality and procurement leads. The event provided an opportunity to consider different approaches and share practice around equality and procurement.

## The Highland Council

The Council provides a range of grant and discretionary funding through various schemes and operated through a single application form to improve monitoring of applications and awards. Grant applications and guidance make reference to needs of the general equality duty and the Council's commitment to *implement the Fairer Highland Plan including the general and specific public sector duties of the Equality Act (2010), ensuring that people are treated fairly and with respect*. Applicants are asked to describe how their project will help the Council meet the equality duties and ask how they will remove barriers to the activity they are planning to provide.

### Going forward:

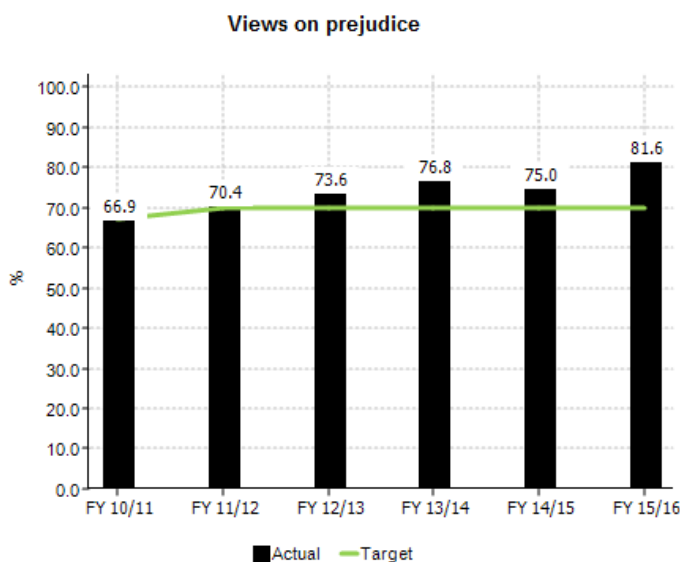
- A new shared Procurement service with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils has been agreed and is underway. This will provide opportunities to review how equality is embedded in Procurement.

## Data Gathering and evidence

Evidence used by the Council, Education Authority and Licensing Board to set equality outcomes reflects national and local evidence. In addition to data gathered from sources such as the Census, Scottish Household Survey, and research studies by EHRC and others, we gather data on protected characteristics from our Citizen's Panel and employee monitoring and surveys, including the Stonewall Workforce Index Survey. The Scottish Government Equality Evidence Finder is an additional useful resource of data and sources.

We also use information from the experiences of those covered by the protected characteristics at local level to help our understanding of the impact of the barriers individual face. This is variously gathered through focus groups, surveys and informal meetings with local groups. Other examples of gathering information from our Services include information on prejudice-based bullying in schools, and equality analysis of the schools Lifestyle survey; information shared among partners on hate incidents and hate crimes, and annual reporting of housing applications and allocations by ethnicity and age.

### Case study 4: Demonstrating trends in public attitudes to prejudice and discrimination



Capturing trends in changing attitudes to prejudice and diversity in Highland helps us improve our understanding of different experiences and views of different groups within the community. The Council's annual survey of performance and attitudes asks the local Citizen's Panel for feedback on attitudes to equality and diversity. This generally appears to show improving tolerance and acceptance of diversity in our community since 2010/11. In 2016, 81.6% of respondents agree that Highland should

do everything it can to get rid of all types of prejudice compared to 75% in 2014/15. An improving trend can be demonstrated from 66.9% agreeing when the question was first asked in 2010/11.

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/17004/council\\_report\\_on\\_citizens\\_panel\\_feedback\\_2016](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/17004/council_report_on_citizens_panel_feedback_2016)

## **Community engagement, consultation and involvement**

The Council, Education Authority, and Licensing Board uses a wide range of methods to engage with communities in Highland, from surveys, a Citizen's Panel, formal and informal consultation, elected member consultancies, Licensing Forum, Community Councils, District Partnerships and now the new Community Partnerships, pupil and parent engagement in schools, and our day-to-day contact with customers. Social media and other forms of digital data gathering are being increasingly used and explored, providing practical alternatives given the geography of Highland.

New developments also impact on the ways we engage with communities. Current work includes new a new vision and arrangements for Community Planning under the Community Empowerment Act 2015 including the development of a Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and Locality Plans, both of which need to reflect improving outcomes and tackling inequalities, and to involve communities in their development.

In Highland there are no umbrella networks to provide a single, representative voice for any of the specific equality strands. However, the Council maintains contact with a wide range of local groups with an interest in equality and diversity, holding a database of over 100 local and national organisations. The information is shared with partner agencies and provides a valuable network of contacts to ask for views on equality related issues. While some groups are less active, we have seen new projects develop such as Inclusion Scotland's Project to increase Disabled Peoples Participation in Local Democracy in Highland and LEAP Sport Scotland's project working with LGBT+ people in Highland.

There is continual engagement with the groups on the equality contacts database with email alerts sent out regularly from the Council's Equality Officer containing updates on local events, consultations and funding opportunities.

### **Case study: Commission on Highland Democracy**

Following on from a national report on Strengthening Local Democracy, a Commission on Highland Democracy was established in 2016 to take forward conversations locally about the kind of democracy we want to have in the Highlands. This aims to include gathering a wide range of views from people.

It is recognised as important the Commission gathers as wide a range of views as possible, especially from some groups that may feel more excluded from local democratic practices. Consideration is to be given to ensure that techniques for gathering evidence are suitable for all and also the support that certain groups may need in order to participate.

### **Case study: Consultation on Self-Directed Support**

The Highland Council is responsible for administering Self-Directed Support for children and young people in Highland. Self-Directed Support is available for children and young people who have been assessed as requiring care or support often due to a disability and may include: direct payment; working with a care provider to manage the child or young person's budget, arranging care or support for the child or young person, a combination of the previous options.

On behalf of the Council's Children's Services, Highland Children's Forum consulted children, young people and their families who are eligible for Self-Directed Support on the continuing use of direct payments for services in the Highlands using a variety of different and inclusive methods and targeting urban, rural areas in Highland.

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/68788/item\\_29\\_outcome\\_of\\_the\\_consultation\\_on\\_self\\_directed\\_support](http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/68788/item_29_outcome_of_the_consultation_on_self_directed_support)

### **Case study: Engagement with Care Experienced Young People**

Highland Council has employed a number of young people who are Care Experienced, through an initiative called 'The Family Firm'. These young people have been employed to support the Council in developing policies and practices to better support children who are Looked After at Home and Looked After and Accommodated by the local authority. A board has been established (C.H.A.M.P.S.), which includes various representatives from the wider Community Planning Partnership who are working with the Family Firm and other Care Experienced Young People on various topics eg Mental Health, Transitions, Housing etc. This work is ongoing and reports quarterly at Board Meetings.

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/68001/item\\_9\\_champions\\_board](http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/68001/item_9_champions_board)

## **Service Delivery**

Highland Council delivers a wide range of services and functions across the geographically largest local authority in Britain, much of which is largely rural. The population of Highland has been rising steadily in recent decades and we have an ageing population. There is a small minority ethnic population (1.4%) compared to Scotland as a whole (4%).

Many of the ways that we deliver services are changing, either as a result of legal requirement, adopting new approaches and new technology, or due to financial pressures. The Council is

undergoing a redesign of services and is committed to adapt to changing needs with less funding. As part of this process, there are promises to

- help people to help each other, with new ways of supporting community groups and bodies, and
- take special care of people and places that need the most help to thrive.

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20003/committee\\_information/696/redesign\\_of\\_the\\_highland\\_council\\_board](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20003/committee_information/696/redesign_of_the_highland_council_board).

We continue to increase the understanding of staff and elected members around equality, diversity and human rights and aim to develop inclusive approaches across the work of the Council, Education Authority and Licensing Board. Activities are carried out across the three bodies to make our services and employment opportunities inclusive and accessible. Often where changes are made to reduce barriers, these result from the views of local equality groups. The following section includes some examples of how we do this.

## **Improving access to information and services:**

### **Inclusive communication**

- All corporate communications include a statement to inform customers that they can request documents in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, or other languages. Documents are not translated into other languages as a matter of course, but each request is considered.
- Information on the Council's website can be translated into other languages electronically using the Browsealoud link to [Listen to or translate this site](#). This Accessibility feature also users to transcribe text to speech, increase text size, and convert text into an MP3 file.
- Staff are encourage to use either face-to-face or telephone interpretation to help customers access services and information where appropriate. This service has been an important element of the Council's programme of work to resettle vulnerable Syrian families in Highland. ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) provision has also supported the work with Syrian families and is delivered through the Council's arm's length Culture and Leisure provider, High Life Highland. During 2015-16:
  - Face to face language interpretation was provided for 644 appointments
  - Telephone language interpretation was provided for 162 appointments
- Highland Council continues to manage a communication support service on behalf of the Council and NHS Highland to support people who are D/deaf or hard of hearing. Support is primarily provided for BSL/English interpretation although note-taking, lip reading, and dead/blind support is also available. During 2015-16:
  - BSL/English interpretation was provided for 340 appointmentsThe Council also promotes the ContactScotland service which allows BSL users throughout Scotland through a video relay service (VRS) with all of Scotland's public authorities and voluntary organisations <http://contactscotland-bsl.org/>. During 2016, the Council updated BSL video clips on its website to describe its services

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/751/equality\\_diversity\\_and\\_citizenship/315/british sign language videos about our services](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/751/equality_diversity_and_citizenship/315/british_sign_language_videos_about_our_services).

### Case study: Communication Aid

In partnership with Lochaber Disability Access Panel and Sense Scotland, Highland Council produced a desktop communication aid in 2014 which has embossed symbols which are customer facing to identify communication support needs while the reverse side contains helpful communication tips for staff. This was circulated widely to front-line council offices; it has also been circulated to local Advice Agencies. During 2016, a partnership of local organisations involved in support to people with sensory impairments suggested taking the idea a stage further to develop the icons to be used electronically by local agencies to identify communication support needs. This work is underway and the working group has been put forward for a Sensory Scotland award.



### Accessing services, delivery issues and reviewing services:

- The Highland Council has worked with the digital participation charity CitizensOnline and other local partners to support digital inclusion.  
[http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/8919/big lottery and highland council funding to support digital inclusion in the highlands – 18k](http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/8919/big_lottery_and_highland_council_funding_to_support_digital_inclusion_in_the_highlands_18k)
- In partnership with HITRANS, the regional transport partnership for the Highlands and Islands, the Council has promoted The Thistle Card to support disabled people to get help when using public transport, particularly buses  
[http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9941/making journeys easier for those in most need](http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9941/making_journeys_easier_for_those_in_most_need)
- We provide grants for community transport activities and grant awards were agreed by Committee on 4 February 2016 for the next 3 financial years. Community Transport provides an important service for many older and disabled people in Highland, This round of grants included an award to the Scottish Highland Islands and Moray Chinese Association.
- In 2015/16 we developed a “one stop” delivery model, using the Handyperson Service to deliver Repairs, Adaptations, and Telecare install and maintenance (on behalf of NHS Highland) to speed up the process, minimising duplication and ensuring that clients get the benefit of a suite of services from a single Handyperson visit.

- The Highland LEADER programme incorporated a cross-cutting theme of Advancing Equality in its new programme. In order to facilitate this aim, equality and diversity training has been delivered across local area partnerships and an equality reference group established.
- The Council's Finance Service leads on benefits maximisation has supported projects to help mitigate the impact of welfare reform, including:
  - Mental ill health project which provides tailored welfare advice clinics for people with mental ill health and has been delivered by CABx.
  - The [Midwifery project](#) has supported pregnant mums with money and welfare advice. The service has been offered to all pregnant women and also delivered by CABx midwifery project delivered by CABx between June 2015 and March 2017.
  - The service has also worked in partnership with housing associations and supported "Count Your Cash Days" which aim to improve the financial literacy of participants.
- Inverness City Committee has supported the DisabledGo project to promote venues in the Inverness and surrounding area that are accessible to disabled people <http://www.disabledgo.com/organisations/the-highland-council/main-2>
- Cross-service reports on matters related to Gypsy/Travellers in Highland are made to the Communities and Partnerships Committee. In 2015, local travellers and museum staff gave a presentation on a project to promote Gypsy/Traveller culture and tackle stigma. Accommodation specific matters are reported by the Housing Service to the Community Services Committee, for example the Housing Strategy includes assessments of the current and future requirement for specialist housing provision, mainly in relation to people with health and community care needs but also including sites for Gypsy/ Travellers' [http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/13404/housing\\_need\\_and\\_demand\\_assessment\\_2015.pdf](http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/13404/housing_need_and_demand_assessment_2015.pdf)

### Case study: Highland Council Website award for digital accessibility

Highland Council's website [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk) has been awarded a gold standard certificate of accreditation from the Digital Accessibility Centre (DAC). This is the highest level of accreditation possible and The Highland Council is the only council in the UK that currently holds this accolade.

This award means the authority's website is tested to work with assistive technologies such as screen readers for partially sighted and blind users, and can be navigated using only a keyboard, helping those who cannot operate a mouse. It also means the text is easily visible by users with a range of sight problems and that the wording on the site is simple and easy to understand. It is acknowledged that accessible websites perform significantly better for all users and accessibility is a fundamental test in Socitm's annual "Better Connected" report of council websites.

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9846/highland\\_council\\_website\\_achieves\\_gold\\_standard\\_for\\_digital\\_accessibility](http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9846/highland_council_website_achieves_gold_standard_for_digital_accessibility)



## **Public awareness**

We use a range of ways to demonstrate how the Council makes a positive contribution to a more equal society and to promote equality and good relations to the wider community in Highland.

Increasing this is through digital means, including the Council website, and social media to promote activities and events and to circulate information both internally and externally. Traditional means such as Press Releases and committee reports continue to be used. We also use webcasting of public meetings to improve public access to meetings and information.

Some examples include:

Stonewall Scotland No Bystanders campaign: This week is [#AntiBullyingWeek](#). We will never be bystanders to hateful language or abuse. Will you?  
<https://t.co/e3khSXPIrW> [#NoBystanders](#)

Highland Council reassures Eastern European people living in Highland that they continue to be welcome following the EU Referendum result for Highland.  
[http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9551/highland\\_council\\_to\\_consider\\_impact\\_of\\_eu\\_referendum\\_result\\_for\\_highland](http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9551/highland_council_to_consider_impact_of_eu_referendum_result_for_highland)

Highland Council supports the Highland LGBT Forum to arrange a Ceremony to remember Orlando victims.  
[http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9523/council\\_supports\\_inverness\\_ceremony\\_to\\_remember\\_orlando\\_victims](http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9523/council_supports_inverness_ceremony_to_remember_orlando_victims)

Cultural contribution of Gypsy/Travellers in the Highlands is recognised.  
<http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/heritage/traveller-culture-on-verge-of-extinction-1-3808115>

Staff Newsletter covers Dementia Friends commitment by Highland Council  
[http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/15172/highpoints\\_issue\\_2\\_-\\_september\\_2015.pdf](http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/15172/highpoints_issue_2_-_september_2015.pdf)

Highland Council supports World Mental Health Day (10 October 2015)  
[http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9004/highland\\_council\\_supports\\_world\\_mental\\_health\\_day\\_10\\_october\\_2015](http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9004/highland_council_supports_world_mental_health_day_10_october_2015)

## Partnership and working with others

Partnership working is well developed in the Highlands and an [Equality and Diversity Partnership Group](#) has met since 2006 to share information and work in collaboration wherever possible. Examples of partnership working on equality and diversity would include the following:

- Access to Interpretation services
- Hate incident reporting
- Communication support for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing
- Violence Against Women strategy
- Development of a desktop Communication Aid with Lochaber Disability Access Panel and Sense Scotland – circulated to all Council offices and reception areas.

### **Case study: Supporting New Highlanders**

Highland Council made a commitment to resettle 25-30 Syrian refugee families in Highland, through the Government's Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation scheme (SVPR). The scheme prioritises people who cannot be supported effectively in their region of origin especially women and children at risk, people in severe need of medical care and survivors of torture and violence. The first families arrived in May 2016, and further families are due to arrive from March 2016.

There are clear equality, diversity and human rights elements to this work. This work has required detailed co-ordinated provision of a wide range of Council services, partner agencies and volunteers and the local community to enable the families to make a new life in Highland. This includes provide support with interpretation, language skills and cultural understanding; the Scottish Refugee Council provided training to partners agencies at an early stage. Key partners from statutory organisations and the third sector to develop and deliver a robust and effective resettlement plan to ensure that the families feel safe, secure and can integrate into Highland life as smoothly and quickly as possible. Feedback and evaluation from all the partners and the families themselves indicates a high level of success with this integrated approach to date.

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/917/housing/663/syrian\\_refugee\\_resettlement](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/917/housing/663/syrian_refugee_resettlement)

### **Hate Crime Event – October 2016**

Highland Council, Police Scotland, NHS Highland and Highlands and Islands Enterprise jointly planned the Tackling Hate Crime in Highland



event on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016. The purpose of the event was to increase knowledge and awareness of hate crime and hate incidents and to develop priorities and actions for a partnership hate crime action plan in Highland. Representatives from third party reporting organisations, community and equality groups and equality leads from public authorities attended. This consultation has led to a joint equality outcome from Highland Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise focused on hate crime and linked to a national Police Scotland outcome.

## Dementia Friendly Highland



In September 2016, Highland Council agreed a commitment to work towards being a Dementia Friendly organisation. 'The Highland Council recognises and supports a dementia friendly Highlands. However, it is often small changes by ourselves and other partners that can make a huge positive difference to the lives of those affected by dementia'.

A small Member-led working group has worked with Council officers and Alzheimer Scotland to produce an action plan and make recommendations on ways to achieve the goal of being Dementia Friendly. In addition to work with Alzheimer Scotland, Members have started to approach local businesses such as Stagecoach Scotland to encourage them to offer Dementia Friendly training for staff. Activities during 2017 will include encouraging joint awareness raising with partner agencies.

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/70829/item\\_15\\_dementia\\_friendly\\_highland\\_working\\_group\\_action\\_plan](http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/70829/item_15_dementia_friendly_highland_working_group_action_plan)

## Tackling discrimination and stigma

We know that responses to questions about attitudes to equality and diversity in Highland tend to be slightly less positive, and that of Citizen Panel respondents 19% feel there is sometimes good reason to be prejudiced against certain group. Discriminatory attitudes are more likely to be made about Black and Asian people, Muslims, lesbian and gay people, transgender people and Gypsy/Travellers.

Public messages from the Council Leadership to welcome families from Syria, giving reassurances to people from Eastern European that they are welcome in Highland, showing solidarity with the LGBT community following of the attack on an Orlando nightclub, condemnation of intolerance hate crime, and support for the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival in Highland, are just a few of the examples of public commitments to tackle discrimination and stigma.

### **Case study: Hate Free Highland**

Highland Council works closely with the NHS, Highland and Island Enterprise and Police Scotland have a long standing commitment to work together to promote the Hate Free Highland campaign. In 2016 the Hate Free Highland website has been refreshed with a direct link to the Police Scotland online reporting form and to raise awareness of hate crime and hate incidents and provide information about how these can be reported.

During 2016, the Council promoted the campaign, often alongside partners at events including Rock Challenge, European Day of Languages, International Women's day celebrations and the at the Highland LGBT Highland Forum open day.



## Mainstreaming Equality in Education

As the Education Authority in Highland, the Highland Council, continues its commitment to mainstream equality by way of the roll-out of a new Equal Opportunities policy and anti-bullying policy across schools, through its ASN activities and the integrated Children's Plan. Since the Council's first mainstreaming equality report in 2013, some of the new areas of work facing the Education include support for families and children coming to Highland under the Syrian Resettlement Programme, national commitments to reduce attainment gaps, and supporting Looked After Children across Care and Learning services.

In the delivery of the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), the Council aims to provide a coherent, flexible and enriched curriculum for all young people from 3-18. A key focus in the CfE on Health and Wellbeing enables work on attitudes, values and inclusion to be to the fore.

Additionally, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 aims to ensure that children's rights influence services and places duties on the Council to promote the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Supporting this work in schools, the Highland Council and its partners aim to improve and integrate services for children, families and young people. This is reflected in the Integrated Children's Plan, which uses the principles of GIRFEC (Getting It Right for Every Child). In Highland, GIRFEC has been fully in place since 2010, and it is now simply regarded as The Highland Practice Model.

The Highland Practice Model is underpinned by common values and principles reflecting the UNCRC and includes *promoting opportunities and valuing diversity: children and young people should feel valued in all circumstances and practitioners should create opportunities to celebrate diversity.*

### **Integrated Children's Plan: For Highlands Children 4**

*For Highlands Children - Volume 4* (FHC4) is the Children's Service Plan for the Care and Learning Service, which incorporates children's services delivered by NHS Highland. The Plan aims to improve services and outcomes for Highland's children against SHANARRI wellbeing themes (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included). There are a range of engagement mechanisms around FHC4 improvement groups.

- Local Youth Forums
- Pupil Councils
- Highland Youth Voice (the Youth Parliament)
- Highland Youth Convenor
- Highland Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament
- Director meets with children's representatives, prior to agenda setting for Committee

Improvement Groups work with partners to provide access to good quality services and improve outcomes for all children and young people, *and in particular will:*

- *Identify and address inequalities and disadvantage*
- *Tackle discrimination and stigma*

- *Seek to improve access to services for underrepresented, vulnerable and excluded groups and increase their involvement in employment and community life.*

*Partners will make positive contributions towards Highland being a fair and inclusive place for children and young people and shall demonstrate a commitment to equality of opportunity across each of the themes.*

FHC4 <http://www.forhighlandschildren.org/pdf/forhighlandschildren.pdf>

Using the Highland Practice Model <http://www.forhighlandschildren.org/5-practiceguidance/high-pract-model.pdf>

### **Whole School Equality Approach**

Equality issues in Education are progressed and monitored through a Care and Learning equalities working group. This group is represented on the corporate cross-service equalities group. A whole school approach to equality has been strengthened by the roll-out of a standard equality and diversity policy and revised bullying policy:

#### ***Promoting Equality and Diversity Policy/Toolkit***

A standard Highland School Equality and Diversity Policy and associated Toolkit were agreed in 2014. All schools are required to have an active and revised Equal Opportunities Policy in place based on the standard policy and toolkit and delivered equality, diversity and children's rights training by 2017 and adoption of the policy is monitored.

*Promoting Equality and Diversity policy and toolkit*

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/11627/promoting\\_diversity\\_and\\_equality\\_policy](http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/11627/promoting_diversity_and_equality_policy)

#### ***Positive Relationships and Bullying Prevention Policy, Guidance and Toolkit***

The focus of this Policy is the prevention of bullying behaviours, exploring whole school approaches to reducing incidents of bullying behaviours, whilst streamlining related procedures. A bi-annual Lifestyle survey is used to ask questions about perceptions of bullying in schools and an additional classroom survey has identified homophobic bullying as the most prevalent form of bullying.

*Positive Relationships and Bullying Prevention Policy, Guidance and Toolkit*

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/12121/positive\\_relationships\\_and\\_bullying\\_prevention\\_policy\\_guidance\\_and\\_toolkit](http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/12121/positive_relationships_and_bullying_prevention_policy_guidance_and_toolkit)

#### ***Working with Stakeholders***

Schools and Education staff work with a range of local and national stakeholders to support equality and diversity activities, some examples include:

- Stonewall Education Champions programme <http://www.stonewallscotland.org.uk/get-involved/get-involved-education/local-authorities-0>
- LGBT Youth Scotland involvement in an Education LGBT sub-group <https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/>
- Respectme, Scotland's anti-bullying service <http://respectme.org.uk/>

- Highland Children's Forum: developing ways to hear the voice of children in need <http://www.highlandchildrensforum.org/>
- Enquire: Scottish advice service for additional support for learning <http://enquire.org.uk/>
- CHIP: offers information, support and advice to the families and carers of children and young people with additional support needs, and to professionals who work with them in Highland <http://www.chipplus.org.uk/>
- STEP: supports education for Travelling people within Curriculum for Excellence <http://www.step.education.ed.ac.uk/>

### **Information gathering**

Practice is monitored through the audit of need and child's plans, as well as through complaints and references to tribunals, through violent incidents and incidents of bullying that are reported. Much work is underway to improve data collection systems and ensure staff are aware of the importance of using this information in order to understand and prioritise needs.

Area managers also monitor part-time attendance and exclusions, linking these to specific pupils and to disability in particular, so that we can track these pupils and work on a return to full-time education for them, as this was an identified equality issue. Absence and attendance will remain a focus.

### **Advancing equality: meeting the individual needs of pupils**

There is a great deal in place to meet the individual needs of pupils and access to the curriculum, and Highland Council has been able to sustain levels of funding for Additional Support Needs in Primary and Secondary Schools.

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9540/additional\\_support\\_needs\\_in\\_highland\\_schools](http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9540/additional_support_needs_in_highland_schools).

Provision for pupils requiring additional support in schools comes under different pieces of related legislation which, helpfully, share the same principles as the Highland Practice model including:

- The additional support for learning (ASL) framework (Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act, 2004 and 2009);
- The Equality Act 2010;
- Accessibility strategies (The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002)

***Additional Support for Learning:*** The Highland Council provides strategic development and planning for children and young people who require additional support, long or short term, in order to help them make the most of their school education and to be included fully in their learning. Additional support can be arranged for a variety of reasons and examples include:

- Children and young people with autism
- Children and young people with hearing impairment
- Children and young people with visual impairments
- English as an additional language Gypsies

- Travellers and interrupted learners
- Information for professionals
- Pre-school home teaching service
- Psychological Service Support for learners Technology support for learning

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools - additional support needs](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/886/schools_-_additional_support_needs)

**Accessibility Strategy:** The Highland Council's revised Accessibility Strategy 2016-19 sets out plans to continually improve access to education for disabled pupils in schools managed by the Highland Council. The strategy recognises the rights of disabled pupils to appropriate education through improved access to information, curriculum and environment. Much has been achieved in terms of improving accessibility but we are aware that further work is still needed to achieve full accessibility in a consistent way across educational establishments.

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/site/scripts/google\\_results.php?q=accessibility+strategy](https://www.highland.gov.uk/site/scripts/google_results.php?q=accessibility+strategy)

**Involving families:** Where appropriate, schools adopt multi-agency working, including the parent / carer and the child, to address concerns and create, monitor and evaluate individual plans. The pupil will also have opportunities to make known their feelings about the plan and have them recorded.

Accommodations are routinely made for pupils whose parents wish them to adhere to their family religious or beliefs, e.g. they may wish to opt out of inclusion in elements of religious education or worship, they may require their child to wear a particular form of dress, or have dietary requirements etc.

Where identified, support is provided to involve parents and carers and to keep them informed about their child's education, particularly where additional needs have been identified. These include opportunities to influence school policies through the Parent Council, and where required, information in the parent/ carer's first language or provision of an interpreter.

### **Education: Case Studies**

There are a wider range of activities carried out in schools that provide examples of how the Council meets its equality duties, from the services above delivered to pupils with ASN, to curriculum topics or innovative projects on inclusion and diversity. A number of these have been reported in the Council's previous two mainstreaming reports. This section includes an update of some more recent case studies:

#### **Case study: Gender variance guidance**

Research suggests that gender variant and transgender young people have a particularly difficult time within education. During 2016, Highland Council's Educational Psychologist team developed practice guidance to support schools and to improve understanding of the experiences of gender variant and transgender children. The guidance aims to reassure and support school staff and others working with children and young people who express gender variance or identify as transgender in order to ensure that children and young people's



experience of education is as positive and supportive as it possibly can be. Information was gathered from a number of sources:

- Current literature on gender variance
- Relevant equality policy and legislation
- Good practice from other areas within the UK and internationally
- Information from schools, families and young people in Highland (and beyond) on how best to support them

It is hoped that the guidance greatly improve inclusion and experiences for children, young people and their families and has been well received by schools and families in Highland and beyond.'

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/15434/gender\\_variance\\_guidelines](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/15434/gender_variance_guidelines)

### **Case study: Highland LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) Equality Sub-Group**

In order to provide a specific focus on issues that relate to gender and sexual orientation, this group was established as a sub-group of the Care and Learning Equalities Improvement Group. The group has representation from primary and secondary schools, High Life Highland, Police Scotland, LGBT Youth Scotland and others and has had a focus on homophobic bullying in schools. Two early outputs of the groups were a survey into homophobic bullying in a Highland school, and signing the Highland Council up to the Stonewall Education Champions programme, to support the work being undertaken to promote inclusive practice in relation to LGBT issues. The Stonewall Education Index, is a rigorous audit of policy, strategy, intervention and partnerships, and as a result of the group's proactive work Highland Council ranked 29<sup>th</sup> in UK and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Scotland in the Education Champion's Index in 2016. The group supported the development of the Gender Variance guidance, and has ensured that LGBT issues are embedded in equality work across Education services. Awareness of the extent and impact of homophobic and transphobic violence is gradually rising and other related activities include a number of LGBT support groups in secondary schools and support for young people by the LGBT Youth Scotland youth group in Inverness called Pillar.

**STONEWALL  
EDUCATION  
EQUALITY  
INDEX 2016**

Celebrating difference and preventing and tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in Britain's schools

### **Time for Inclusive Education Committee Report**

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/71508/item\\_16\\_time\\_for\\_inclusive\\_education](http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/71508/item_16_time_for_inclusive_education)

### **Case study: Holocaust Educational Trust**

A number of schools in Highland have worked with the Holocaust Educational Trust as part of its Outreach Programme which brings Holocaust survivors into schools and allows young people to hear their testimonies.



The Holocaust Educational Trust educates and engages students from across the UK, from all communities about the Holocaust and there can be no better way than through the first-hand testimony of a survivor. John's story is one of tremendous courage during horrific circumstances and by hearing his testimony, students will have the opportunity to learn where prejudice and racism can ultimately lead.

Milburn and Culloden Academies Holocaust Educational Trust visit 2016

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9302/inverness\\_schools\\_welcome\\_survivor\\_from\\_the\\_holocaust\\_educational\\_trust](http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9302/inverness_schools_welcome_survivor_from_the_holocaust_educational_trust)

### **Case study: Scottish Council on Deafness Star Awards**

In November 2016, the Scottish Council on Deafness (SCoD) awarded Dingwall Academy and the pupils won the 'Lifelong Learning Initiative' category and were shortlisted in the 'Children and Young People Achievements' Category Winning the Lifelong Learning Initiative award – Dingwall Academy Deafbase was described as: "A school with a sense of community – a school where, by taking a collective responsibility, pupils and staff have the opportunity to achieve extraordinary things. The values of the school are Respect, Responsibility, Honesty and Determination."



D/deaf Pupils at Dingwall Academy were also runners up in the Children and Young People Achievements award for a new innovative Deaf Studies course that was introduced in 2014. This is delivered at the Academy enabling the hearing and D/deaf communities to come together giving equality and empowerment through shared learning.

[http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/17162/highpoints\\_issue\\_6\\_-\\_december\\_2016](http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/file/17162/highpoints_issue_6_-_december_2016)

### **Going Forward:**

*The Care and Learning Equality Working Group will continue to monitor progress and promote activities in Education. This will include:*

- *Continued Engagement with care Experienced Young People*
- *Ongoing work to close the Attainment Gap There is a focus on early years, Looked After Children and others with ASN, including children where English is an Additional Language and Gypsy Travellers.*
- *Roll-out and monitoring of new Equality and Diversity policy, and Bullying and Positive Relationship Policy and associated training across schools*

## Highland Licensing Board

The Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 (“the Act”) makes provision for regulating the sale of alcohol and licensed premises. Section 6 of the Act requires every Licensing Board to publish, every three years, a statement of their policy in respect of their functions under the Act. The Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2015 will extend this period to four years. Transitional arrangements have now been brought into force to extend the period of current policy statements to 4 November 2018.

In preparing their licensing policy statements, Boards must seek to promote the licensing objectives as set out in Section 4 of the Act. These licensing objectives are:

1. preventing crime and disorder
2. securing public safety
3. preventing public nuisance
4. protecting and improving public health
5. protecting children from harm

The Highland Licensing Board has responsibility for liquor licensing functions under the Act across the whole of The Highland Council and is responsible for various functions under the Act, including the grant of:

- Premises Licences
- Personal Licences
- Occasional Licences
- Provisional Licences
- Temporary Licences
- Extensions to Licensed Hours
- Transfers of Premises Licences
- Variations to Premises Licences, and

The Board also has responsibility for conducting reviews of premises licence where a valid ground of review (breach of licence conditions or any other ground relevant to a licensing objective) has been alleged. The Act confers powers on the Board to impose sanctions where, following a review hearing, it is satisfied that the ground is established.

The Board also has responsibility for certain licensing functions under the Gambling Act 2005.

The Board is supported by a Clerk, one Depute Clerk, support staff and three licensing standards officers. All staff carrying out the Board’s responsibilities are recruited and employed by the Council.

The work of the Licensing Board is reviewed by the Highland Licensing Forum which gives advice and makes recommendations to the Board but does not review or give advice on individual cases.

### **The Licensing Board and Equality**

The Licensing Board and Equality Board aims to provide excellent services for all. In 2013, the Board set out its commitment to equality in its Equality Strategy where it and recognises that equality is a continuing journey. Since 2015, the Board has aligned its equality outcomes, mainstreaming equality activities and reporting responsibilities with those of the Highland Council and the Highland Education Authority. This approach acknowledges the work of each body to contribute to common aims to advance equality.

### **Mainstreaming Equality**

- All members of the Licensing Board have attended Equality, Diversity and Human Rights training delivered during 2015.
- All Licensing staff have attended equality and diversity training and any new staff will undertake such training.
- The Licensing Board follows the Highland Council approach to assessing the equality impact of policies, and screenings are undertaken of any new or revised policies.
- The Board will make information available in accessible formats on requests. Licensing staff will provide support with completion of applications where literacy or language issues present barriers, and interpreters will be used at hearings where required because the applicant does not have English as a first language.

### **Case study: Violence Against Women leaflet**

An Information Pack was prepared in conjunction with the local Violence Against Women Training & Development Manager to be issued to all prospective licensees who seek to add 'adult entertainment' as an activity to their liquor licence. It comprised of:

- an information leaflet for licensees on adult entertainment;
- The Violence Against Women Partnership's Position Statement in relation to 'adult entertainment' and
- The Women's Support Project information leaflet on 'adult entertainment'

### **Case Study: Tackling child sexual exploitation**

In December 2016, supported by the Highland Licensing Board, a series of two-hour briefing sessions will help people recognise the signs and indicators of child sexual exploitation and provide an opportunity to discuss the role of the night time economy in helping tackle any issues at the early possible opportunity. This new initiative forms part of the Child Protection Committee's Child Sexual Exploitation plan and recognises the role the wider community has in helping identify and address concerns about children and young people who may be being exploited.

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[http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9917/highland licensing board to provide sessions on protecting children](http://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/9917/highland%20licensing%20board%20to%20provide%20sessions%20on%20protecting%20children)

## The Council as an employer

As an employer, the Highland Council is committed to providing equality of opportunity in employment. No job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. Our working culture aims to promote dignity and to respect the contributions of all. Employees are expected to behave in a manner that reflects our commitment to fair treatment and respect.

Staff are supported to achieve these aims through policies, management guidance and a range of training and awareness activities. Relevant policies include Equal Opportunities; Flexible Working; Grievance and Harassment; Maternity, Paternity and Adoption; Attendance Management; Recruitment and Selection. Key related activities include:

- Implementing flexible working arrangements to support staff employees to achieve a balance between work and their life outside work.
- Ensuring reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates and employees.
- Actions to support youth employment in the Highlands.
- The Council signs up to the “double tick” scheme to promote employment opportunities for disabled people. This commitment is moving to the new Disability Confident scheme during 2017.
- Adoption of the Scottish Living Wage
- Work is ongoing to improve returns of equality monitoring data
- Participation in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index programme which promotes LGBT inclusion in the workplace.

In addressing equal pay we include pay arrangements, but also measures to make sure there are fair promotion and development opportunities, and to tackle occupational segregation. Details about equal pay and occupational segregation are provided in separate reports. A number of actions have been taken to address gender segregation and the availability of part time work in senior grades. For example:

- Female role models in male dominated job groups have been identified and achievements publicised in corporate communications.
- Encouraging applications from candidates who wish to work on a part time basis part time applications.
- Job Descriptions and Person Specifications have been reviewed to ensure that they contain no gender bias.
- Review of workplace facilities.
- Significant areas of gender segregation have been reviewed to identify and address any barriers to employment.
- Flexible working arrangements have been developed to support women to progress their careers.

## **Learning, Development and awareness**

To support the Council's equality work, we aim to ensure that staff and elected members are aware of our equality duties and how they apply to service delivery and staff management. We do this by:

- Providing staff and elected Members with an understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998, and concepts such as discrimination, prejudice and diversity.
- Promoting knowledge and understanding of the Public Sector Equality Duty amongst our employees, elected Members and communities.
- Identifying and addressing training needs of employees in relation to the duties. This includes identifying key staff to undertake training in carrying out equality impact assessments.

Key components of this work are:

- An equality and diversity section in the Council's induction programme
- A one-day training course for staff on equality and diversity which is part of the Council's core competencies. This is an in-house course, reviewed on a regular basis and is a rolling programme which is delivered in locations across Highland. This can be adapted for staff groups or Member training, and during 2015 all Members undertook equality and diversity training.

Additionally, we continue to build a portfolio of equality related training, e-learning and resources and, carry out training of trainers on specific issues:

- Equality and Diversity training
- Custom built Public Sector Equality Duty e-learning
- Custom built disability equality awareness e-learning
- Using interpreters and communication support
- Mental health in the workplace (face to face and e-learning)
- Women in Management workshops and online resource
- Customer care training – building in equality and diversity
- Equality impact assessment training – face-to-face and e-learning
- Stonewall LGBT awareness e-learning course
- Cultural Awareness (Faith and Religion awareness) e-learning
- Violence Against Women training
- Dementia Awareness training
- Link to sensory awareness training developed by See Hear Highland Education & Learning Services

Additional resources are added as they become available.

During 2015-17, some specific initiatives include:

- The development of a Living and Working with Long Term Conditions course launched in July 2016 to support Highland Council staff who have been diagnosed with long term conditions.
- As part of the Council's Dementia Friends commitment, Alzheimer Scotland have delivered awareness sessions to Council staff and members and have developed a programme of event with the Council's Learning and Development team
- In April 2016, a new online Mental Health and Wellbeing Toolkit was launched for staff, providing individuals with advice about caring for their mental health and wellbeing, and management guidance for supporting colleagues who experience mental health problems
- In early 2017, a pilot Mental Health Representative training course will be piloted. This one day course aims to provide staff with the skills to promote mental health in the workplace and be a first point of contact for colleagues with mental health difficulties.
- During 2015/16 the Council invited interpretation providers (both foreign language and BSL/English interpreters) to attend it's training on Child Protection delivered by Highland Council and Adult Protection delivered by NHS Highland.

Other means of raising awareness with staff on equality issues include:

- Information on the Council website
- Use of social media
- Briefings for Senior Managers and elected members
- Specific agenda items to Council committees
- Highlighting external training and annual events such as International Women's Day or LGBT History month on the Council intranet.

#### *Going forward*

- *The Council has signed up to the DWP Disability Confident campaign which is to replace the 'Two Ticks' commitment. Actions will be identified to demonstrate how this commitment will be met.*
- *The Council has continued to sign up to the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index during 2017, new actions are to be identified once the results of the associated staff survey 2016 are released.*
- *Learning and Development staff are working with equality staff in NHS Highland to develop and deliver joint equality and diversity training.*
- *A new equality and diversity course is being developed for teachers and staff working with children by the Care and Learning Service and the Learning and Development team to be launched in late 2017.*



# **Equalities in Employment Monitoring Report 2015-2017**

**The Highland Council**

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## Introduction

The Highland Council is committed through policy and action to eliminate discrimination and promote equality. The Council is particularly aware of the duties under the Equality Act 2010 in terms of employment monitoring and is committed to meeting these.

The data contained in the report is relevant for the period April 2016 – December 2016.

This report includes the findings of analysis relating to age, disability, ethnic group and gender. The Council currently holds data on 100% of the workforce in relation to age and gender and 45% of the workforce in relation to disability and ethnic group. The Council is now collecting data in relation to the other protected characteristics and will report on these when the data allows for meaningful analysis.

The outcomes and action plans supported by this report are published in the Equalities Mainstreaming Report.

## Age

Analysis of data relating to age distribution shows a high proportion of staff aged between 41 and 60 years of age and a low proportion of staff aged 30 and under. Comparison of the two major groups, teaching staff and Scottish Joint Council (SJC) staff show an even more marked skew in the SJC workforce with 3.7 times as many employees aged 51 to 60 as aged 21 to 30.

SJC staff under 30 are found predominantly in the Technical & Practical, Personal Care and Business Support job families and in the lower grades 1 to 5. The majority of staff who continue to work beyond 71 years of age do so in Technical & Practical jobs and in lower graded work.

(See figures 1 to 5)

## Disability

1.4% of the Council workforce identify as being disabled. As a percentage of those staff on for whom the Council hold data this equates to 3% of the workforce. Given the makeup of the Highland Community disabled people appear to be under represented in the workforce.

In relation to occupational segregation, compared with employees who do not identify as being disabled, employees who do identify as being disabled work in similar roles. Disabled and non-disabled employees are found in similar ratios across Business Support, Technical & Practical and Personal care roles. Disabled employees are slightly over represented in Professional and Community roles and underrepresented in management roles.

Disabled employees are underrepresented in the most senior grades with none in grades HC12-15. That said given the small number of employees on these grades on or two appointments could make a significant difference.

There are still significantly more opportunities for part time and working in the lower SJC grades (HC01 – 06).

(See figures 6 to 10)

## Ethnicity

Based on the percentage of the workforce on whom the Council hold data, the make-up of ethnic groups employed by the Council largely reflects the wider Highland population as described in the 2001 census. During the reporting period the population of Black & Ethnic Minority staff was unchanged with no new starts or leavers. Given the small number of people from minority ethnic communities living in Highland, and reflected in the Council workforce, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions from the analysis. Despite the small numbers it is hoped that over time monitoring will provide evidence of any trends that need to be analysed and addressed.

In relation to occupational segregation, compared with employees who identify as being White British/Scottish, employees who identify with a minority ethnic group work in similar roles. Employees from both groups are found in similar ratios across Community, Technical & Practical and Personal Care roles. Employees who identify as being from a minority ethnic group employees are slightly over represented in Management and Professional & Specialist roles.

Employees from minority ethnic groups are underrepresented in the most senior grades with none in grades HC12-15. That said given the small number of employees on these grades a small number of appointments could make a significant difference.

(See figures 11 to 15)

## Gender

Analysis of the data relating to gender shows a predominantly female workforce (74%). This is the case for both the SJC and teaching workforce.

In relation to occupational segregation, the pattern of male and female employment is varied. Male and female employees are found in similar ratios across Community, Technical & Practical and Management roles. Female employees are significantly over represented in Personal Care, Business Support and Professional & Specialist roles. Care must be taken in the drawing conclusions from the Technical & Practical group as horizontal segregation persists with males working predominantly in community works roles and females working predominantly in catering, caring and cleaning roles.

In 2017 49% of the 180 managers employed in SJC Management posts are women. There has been a significant change in the distribution of female employees across the SJC Management grades (HC09 to HC15). The 2013 data identified a peak in the number of female managers in Management 2 (HC10) posts. The 2015 and 2017 data identifies that this peak was in Management 4 (HC12) posts and the distribution of female managers across the grades is generally more even. This reflects more closely the distribution of male managers.

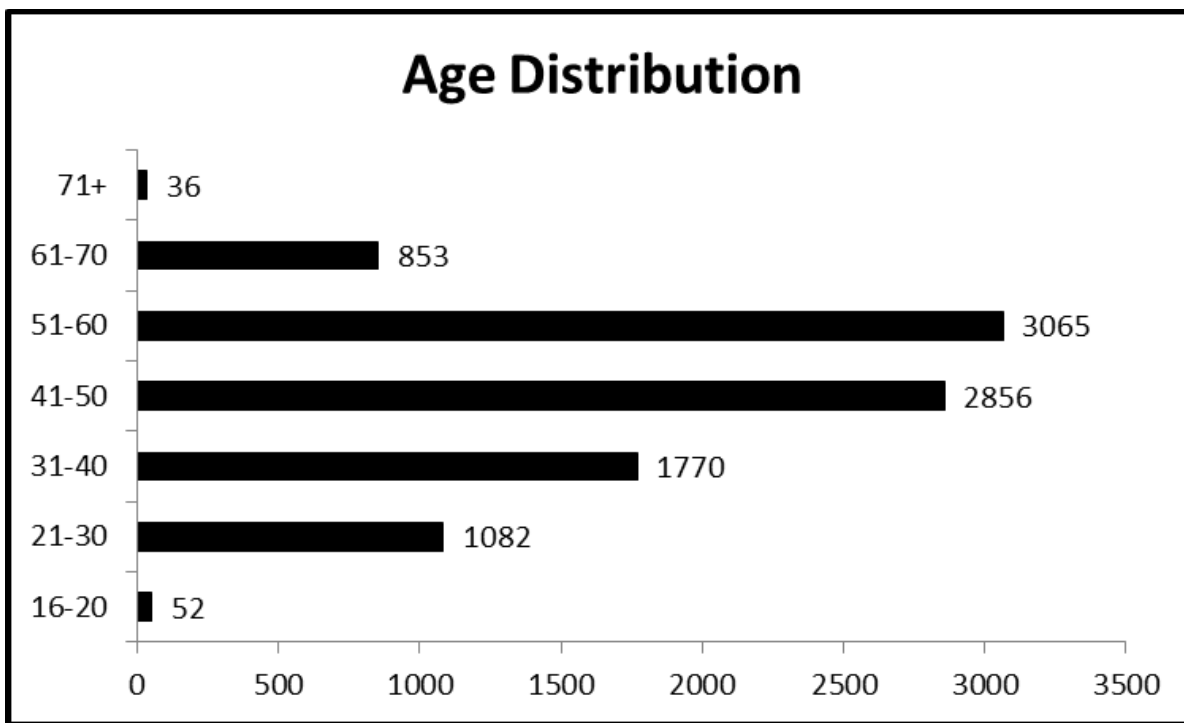
There are still significantly more opportunities for part time and term time working in the lower SJC grades (HC01 – 06).

Information and analysis of [gender pay gaps](#) is published separately as is the [gender pay gaps](#).

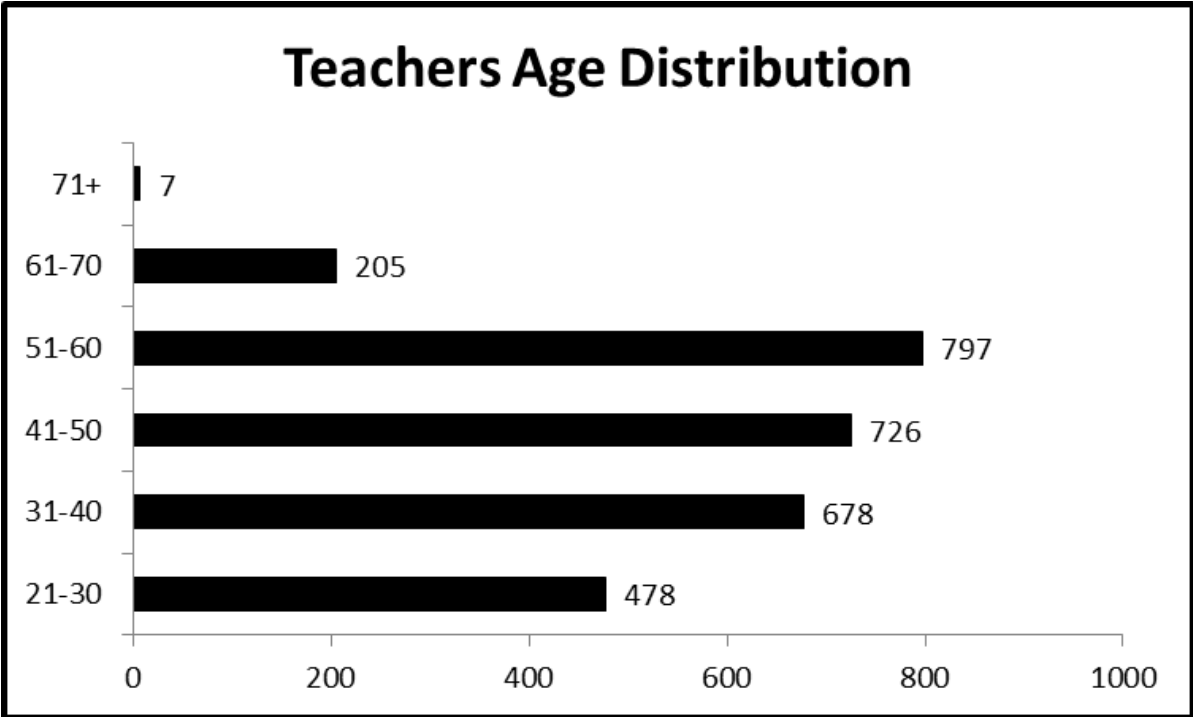
(See figures 16 to 21)

## Age (Figures 1 to 5)

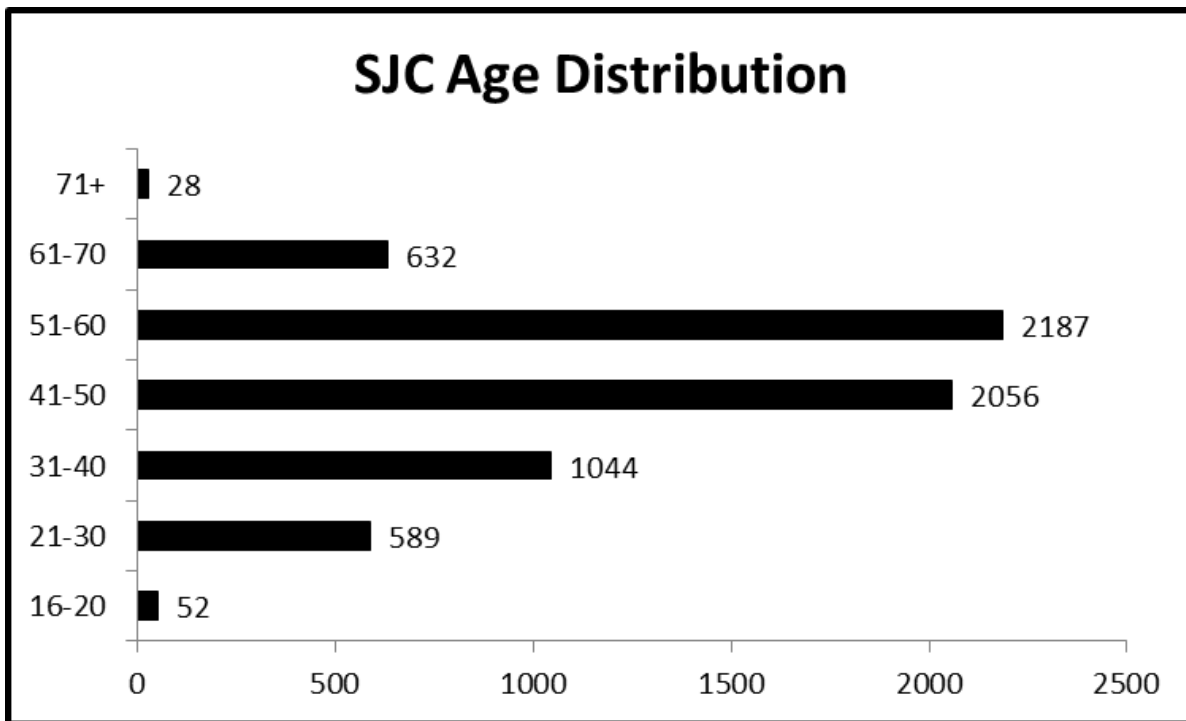
The distribution of all employees by age (Figure 1)



The distribution of teaching employees by age (Figure 2)



The distribution of Scottish Joint Council (SJC) employees by age (Figure 3)



The distribution of Scottish Joint Council (SJC) employees by age and Job Family (Figure 4)

Age Range	Business Support	Community	Management	Personal Care	Professional & Specialist	Technical & Practical	Total	%
16-20	13	0	0	9	0	30	52	0.79%
21-30	114	12	1	226	45	191	589	8.94%
31-40	199	31	17	328	167	302	1044	15.85%
41-50	315	55	55	665	250	716	2056	31.21%
51-60	291	81	95	653	210	857	2187	33.20%
61-70	95	27	12	126	53	319	632	9.59%
71+	2	2	0	4	2	18	28	0.43%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1029</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>2433</b>	<b>6588</b>	<b>n/a</b>

The distribution of Scottish Joint Council (SJC) employees by age and grade (Figure 5)

Grade	16-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71+	Total
HC01	15	32	38	65	118	48	3	319
HC02	5	53	109	241	232	113	13	766
HC03	9	96	128	259	281	105	2	880
HC04	6	109	224	601	637	160	5	1742
HC05	17	193	205	352	363	75	1	1206
HC06	0	47	98	144	150	39	2	480
HC07	0	26	84	118	122	26	0	376
HC08	0	3	28	47	42	17	0	137
HC09	0	26	84	123	88	27	0	348
HC10	0	3	38	52	60	12	1	166
HC11	0	0	6	33	40	8	1	88
HC12	0	0	1	12	26	1	0	40
HC13	0	0	0	2	12	1	0	15
HC14	0	0	0	3	8	0	0	11
HC15	0	0	1	4	8	0	0	13
Total	52	588	1044	2056	2187	632	28	6587

## Disability (Figures 6 to 10)

The distribution of all employees by disability (Figure 6)

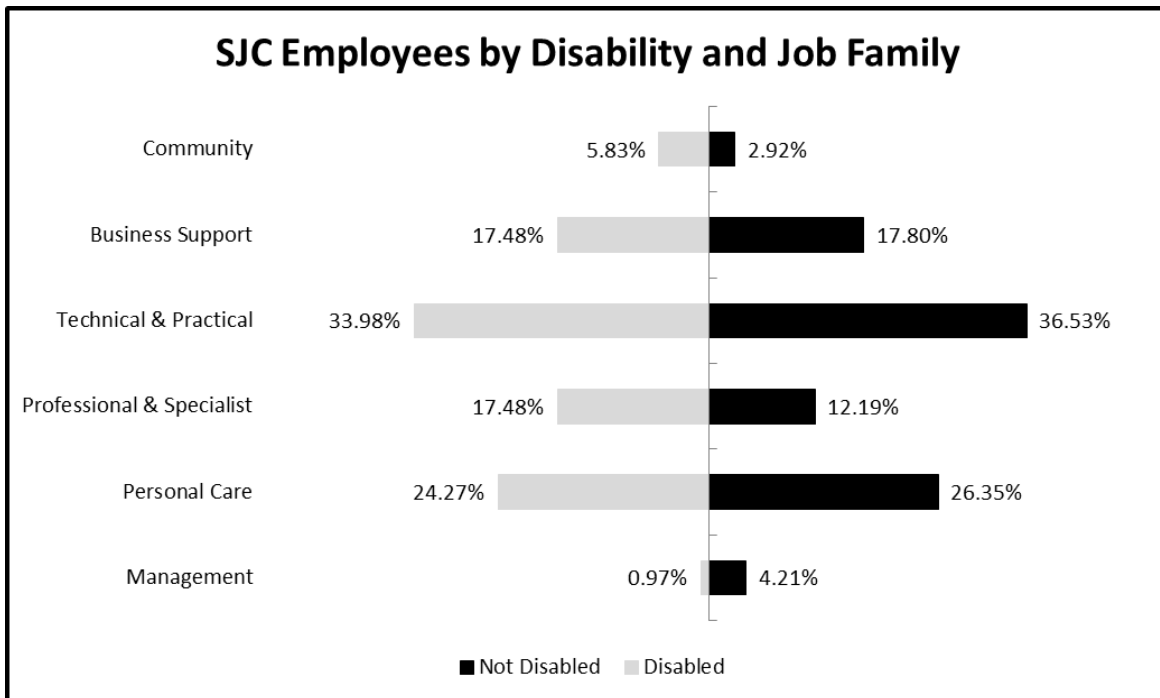
Local Authority	Date when data gathered	Total of workforce employed	Workers identifying as disabled	Workers identifying as non-disabled	Disability status of workers unknown
Highland	Dec-16	9714	134 1.4%	4233 43.6%	5347 55.0%



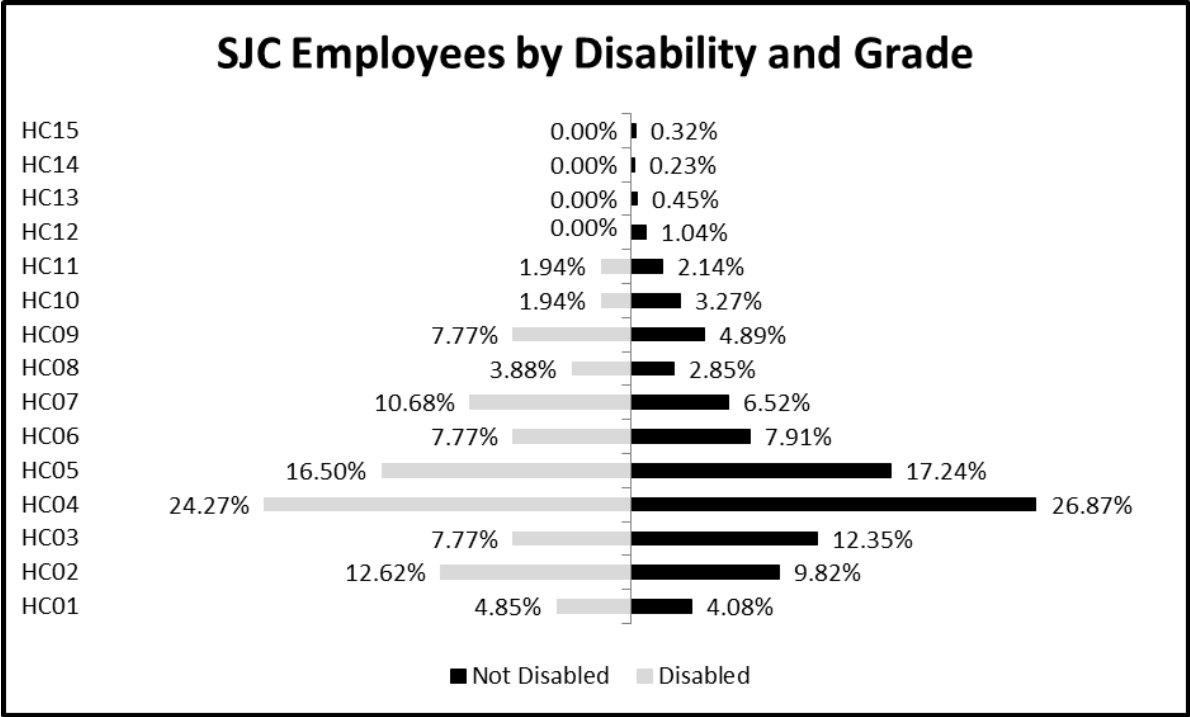
**The distribution of employees joining and leaving the Council by disability (Figure 7)**

	<b>New Starts</b>	<b>Leavers</b>
Disabled	7	9
Not Disabled	0	453
Unknown	1110	676

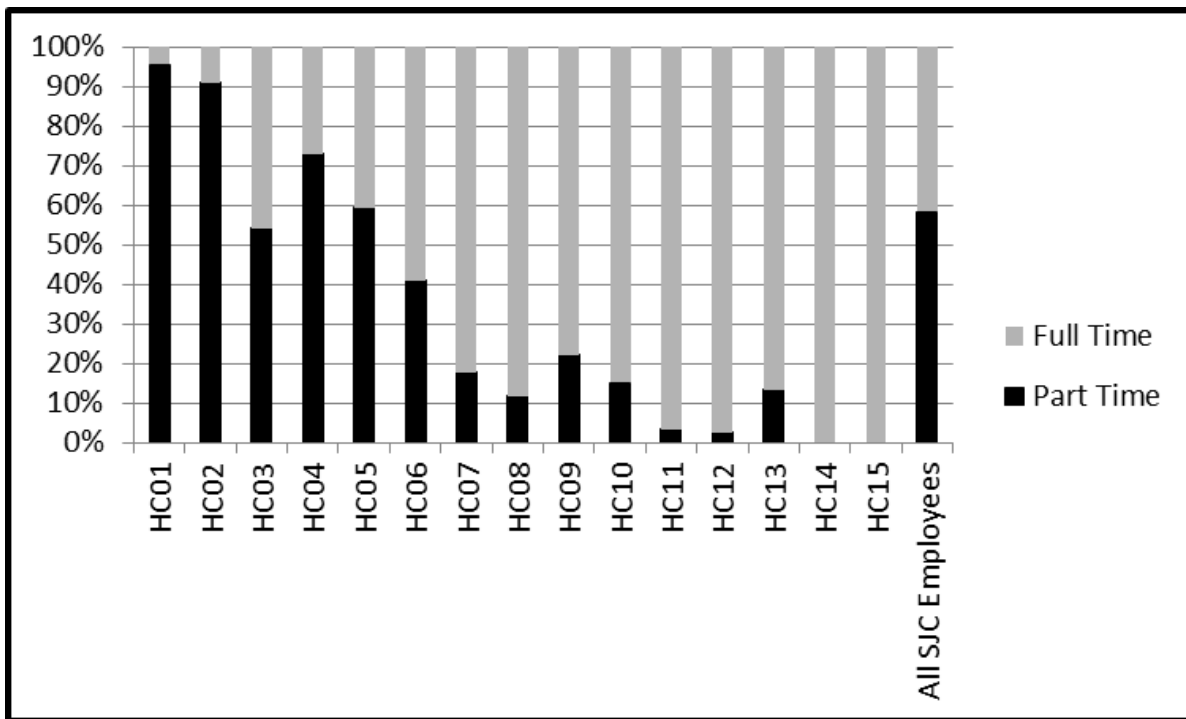
**Occupational Segregation by Disability (Figure 8)**



Occupational Segregation by Disability (Figure 9)



Availability of Part Time Employment – Disability (Figure 10)



## Ethnic Group (Figures 11 to 15)

The distribution of all employees by ethnic group in comparison with the Highland Population (Figure 11)

Ethnicity	No. of Employees	Highland Council %	2011 Census %
Minority Ethnic Groups	13	0.34	0.7
Asian, Asian Scottish, or Asian British	8	0.21	0.8
Not Disclosed	57	1.49	0.0
White - Other White Ethnic Group	115	3.02	4.0
White - Other British	478	12.54	14.7
White - Scottish	3142	82.40	79.9
All Employees	3813		

### The provision of training by ethnic group (April-December 2016) (Figure 12)

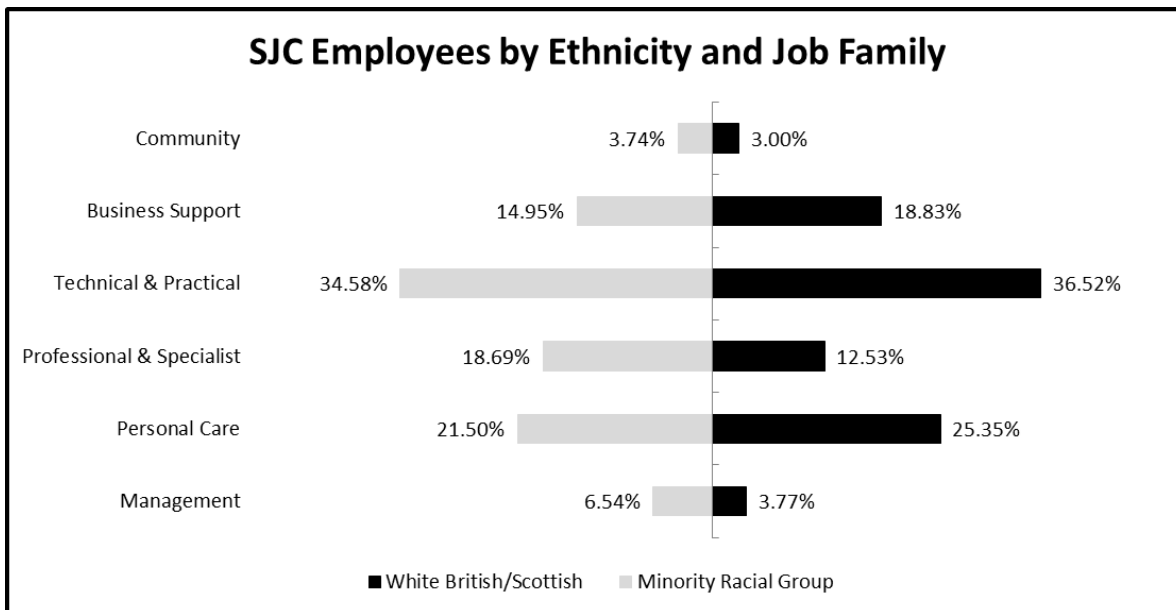
Ethnic Origin	Applied		Received	
	No.	%	No.	%
Minority Ethnic Groups	*	*	*	*
Asian, Asian Scottish, or Asian British	*	*	*	*
Not Disclosed	6	0.4%	6	0.4%
White - Other White Ethnic Group	10	0.6%	10	0.6%
White - Other British	53	3.1%	53	3.1%
White - Scottish	332	19.4%	332	19.4%
Unknown	1305	76.4%	1305	76.4%
All Employees	1708	100.0%	1708	100.0%

\* Where numbers total 5 or less the exact figures will not be reported publicly.

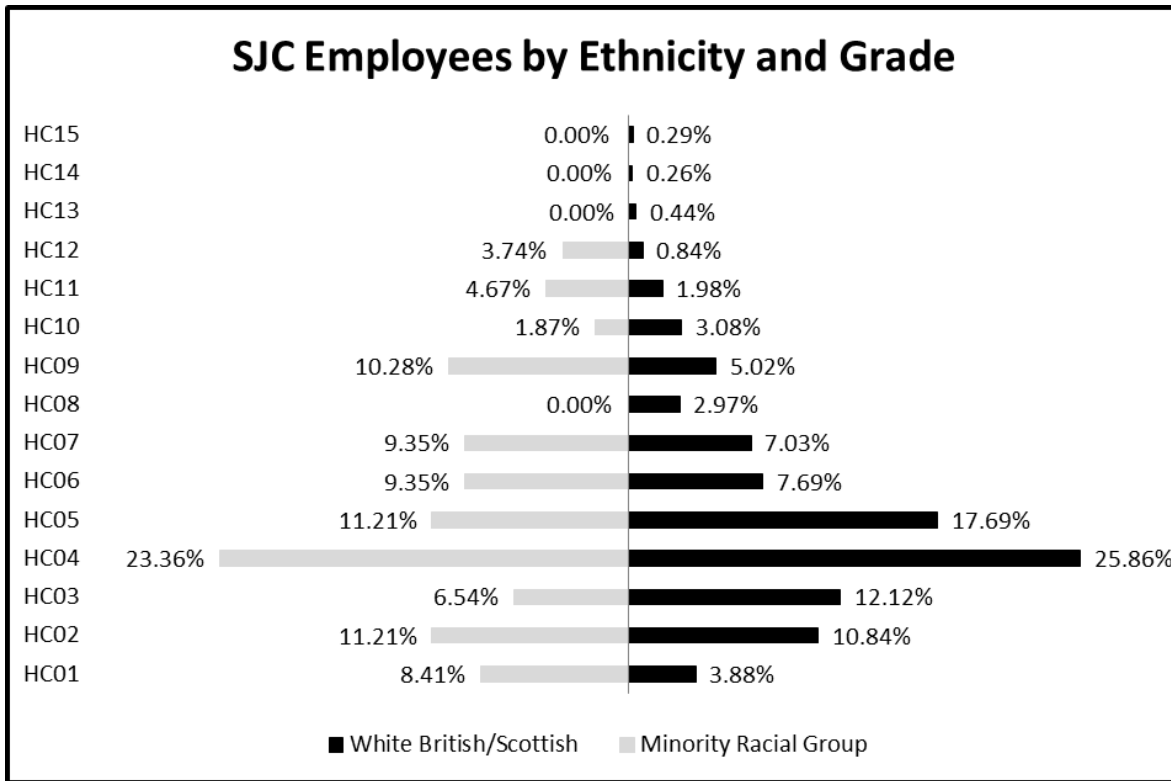
### The distribution of employees joining and leaving the Council by ethnic group (Figure 13)

	New Starts	Leavers
Black and Minority Ethnic Groups	0	0
Not Disclosed	0	0
White Groups	7	413
Unknown	1110	725

### Occupational Segregation – Ethnicity (Figure 14)



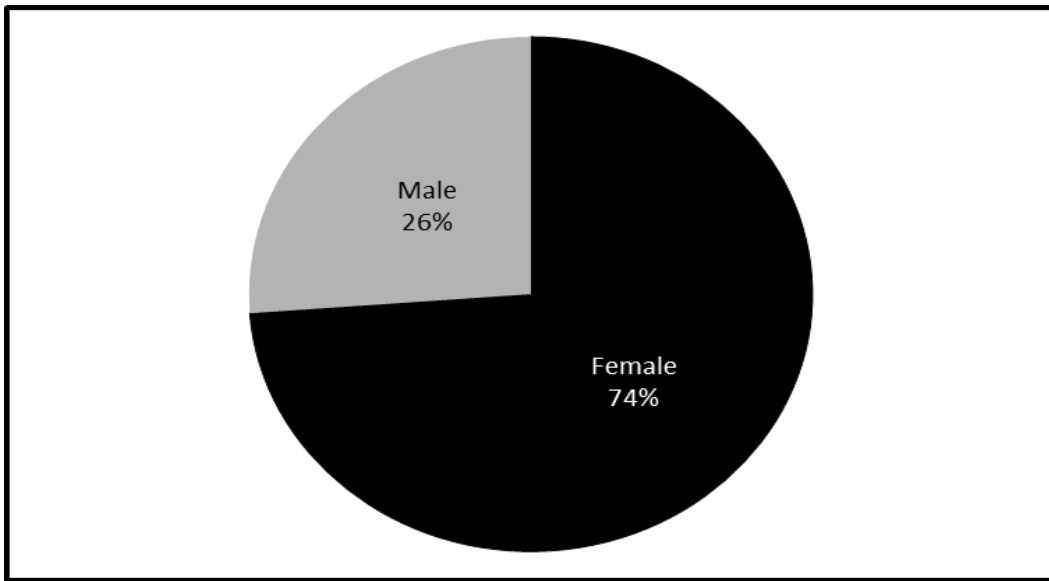
### Occupational Segregation – Ethnicity (Figure 15)



## Gender (Figures 16 to 21)

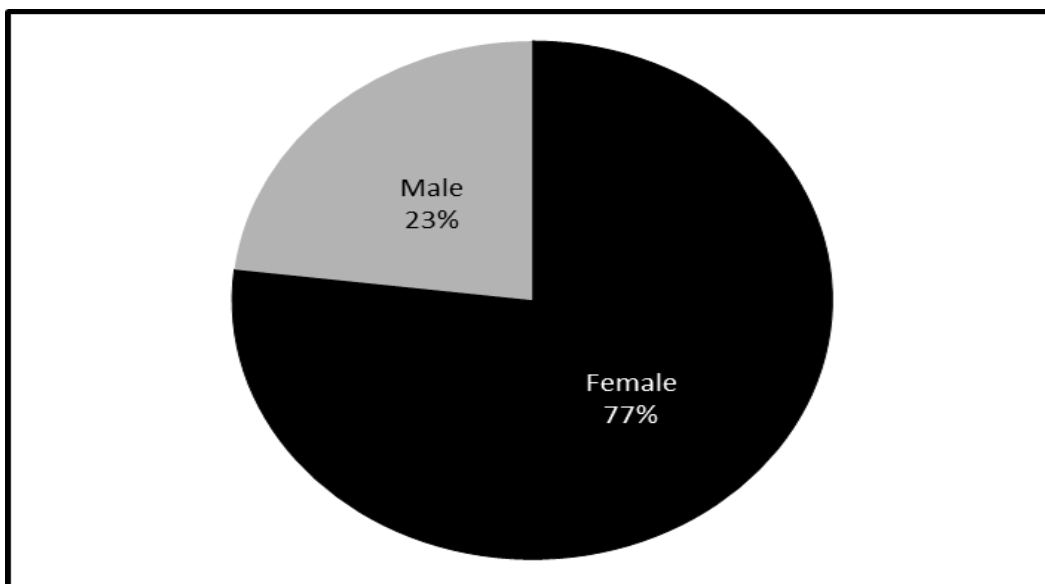
The distribution of all employees by gender (Figure 16)

Gender	Female	Male	Total
No. of Employees	7171	2543	9714



The distribution of teachers by gender (Figure 17)

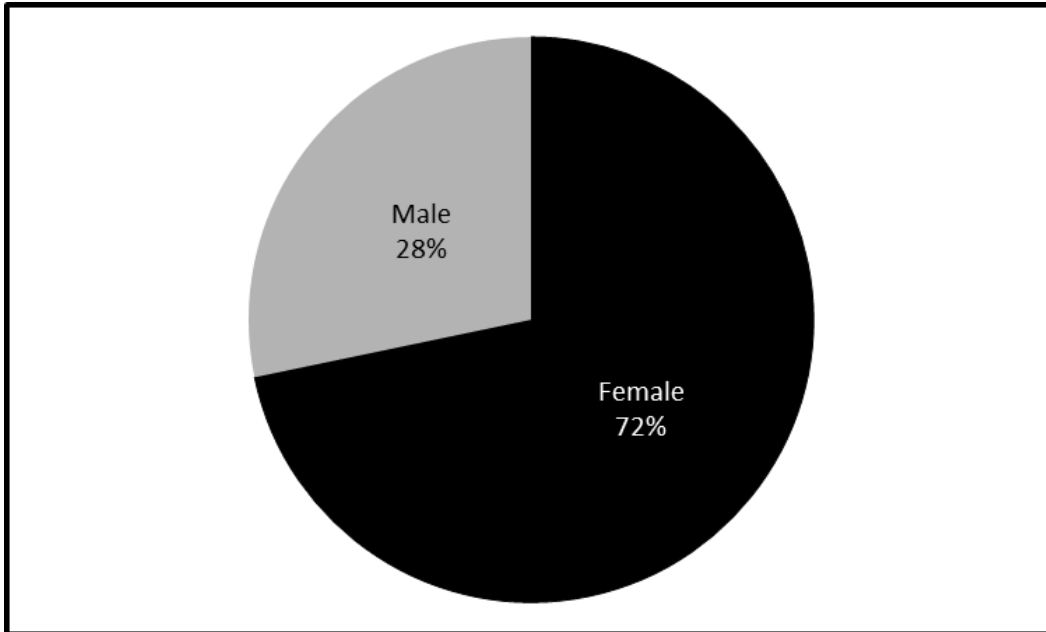
Gender	Female	Male	Total
No. of Employees	2223	668	2891



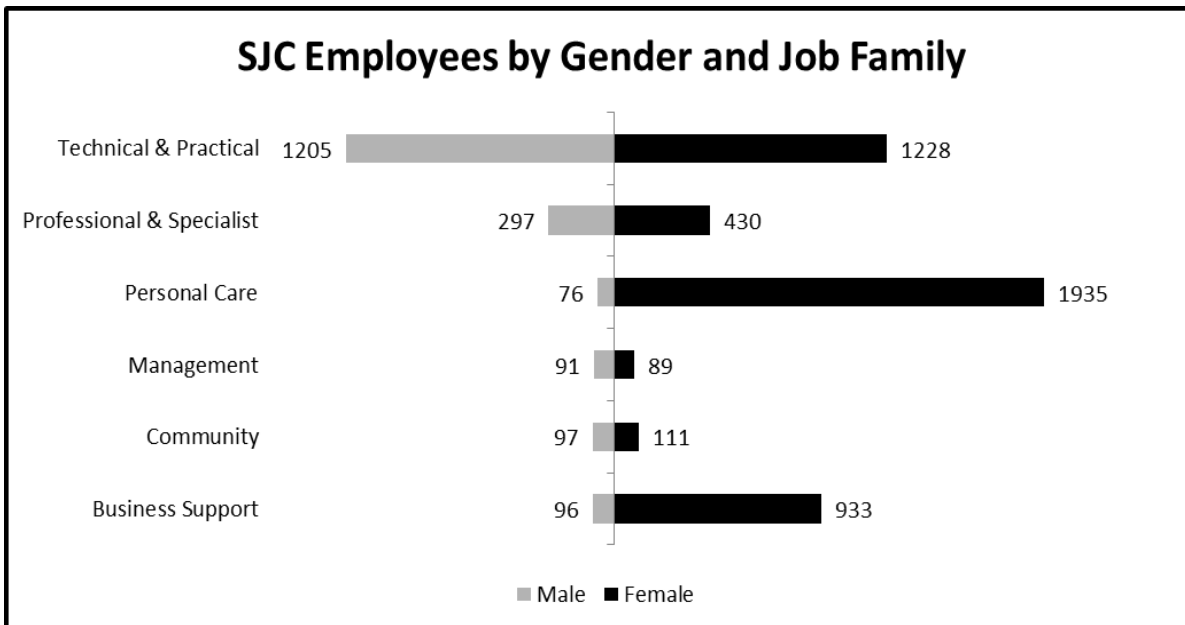
The distribution of Scottish Joint Council (SJC) employees by gender (Figure 18)

Gender	Female	Male	Total
No. of Employees	4726	1862	6588

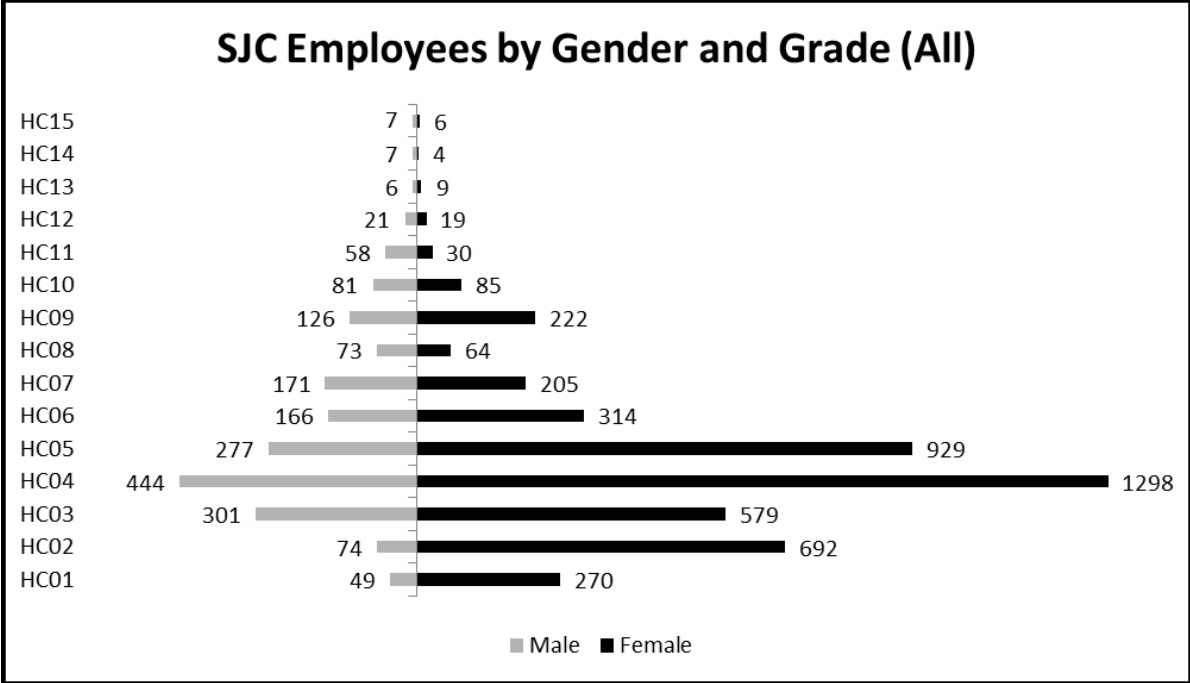




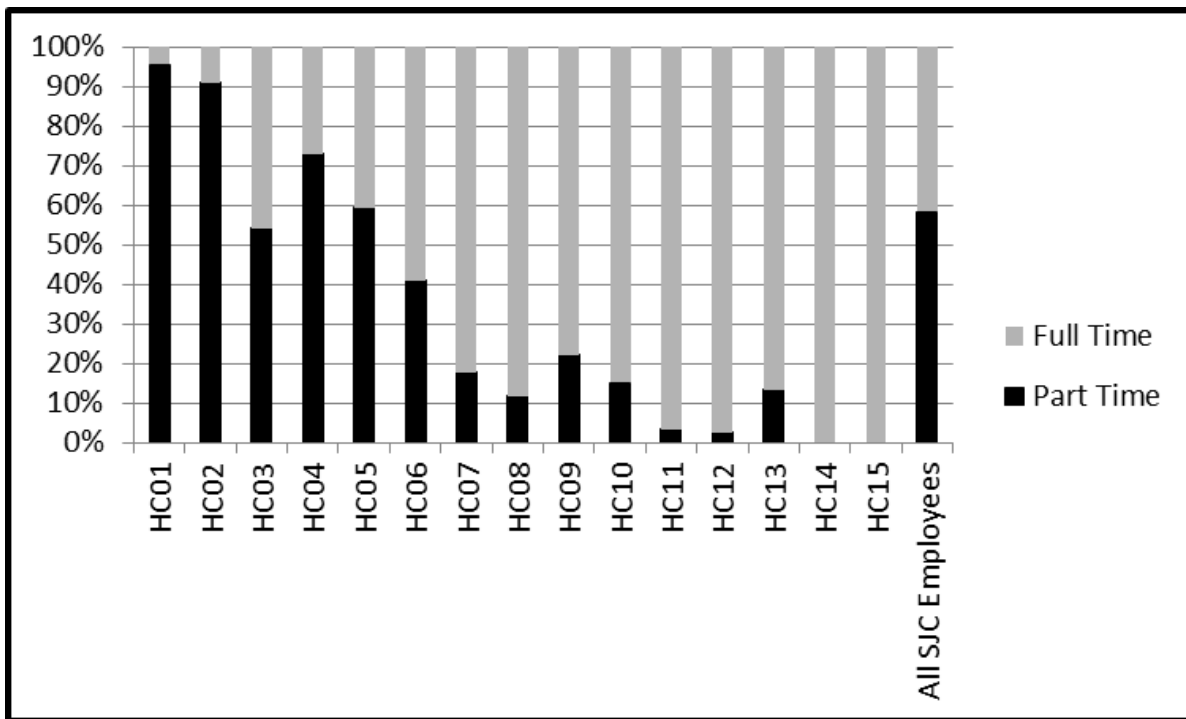
Occupational Segregation - Gender (Figure 19)



Occupational Segregation - Gender (Figure 20)



Availability of Part Time Employment – Gender (Figure 21)



<sup>i</sup> Communities and Local Government (2007), [Fairness and Freedom: The Final Report of the Equalities Review](#),  
<sup>ii</sup> EHRC (2016) [Is Scotland Fairer?](#)