



## Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

### Employee Equality Monitoring Statistics 2023

This report contains the employee monitoring statistics, covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 for Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

All data has been collated from various internal sources including the Comhairle's Payroll and HR systems. MyView is the self-service portal utilised by the Comhairle for employees to update their own Equal Opportunities data, which is linked to both HR and Payroll systems. All Comhairle employees are encouraged to review their equality monitoring data annually. Data relating to recruitment is collated through MyJobScotland.

Access to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's IT systems have been affected by a Criminal Cyber Incident on the 7th of November 2023. The incident has caused significant disruption, including partial loss of data concerning the statistics in this report. Therefore, direct comparisons cannot always be drawn with previous years.

The Comhairle, like all Councils, is facing multi-faceted workforce capacity pressures, including challenges of recruitment, retention, staff absence, and an ageing workforce. The scale of the problem is growing and spans a wide range of skills, professions and occupations, which means the Comhairle is struggling to find and to keep the staff needed to provide the complex and pressured services our local communities rely upon.

The rising cost of living has affected families and individuals across the UK with rising inflation and fuel price increases. These increases have been particularly felt by individuals, families and communities throughout the Outer Hebrides, which as well as being a relatively low wage economy also has high levels of fuel poverty. Significant and relentless budget cuts over recent years impact profoundly on the services delivered by local government and the lives of the communities they serve. Communities are experiencing increasing poverty and financial hardship, at a time when councils have reducing capacity to support them.

The Comhairle remains as committed as ever to ensuring that our strategies and priorities resonate with the people we serve and that local communities are at the heart of our decision-making. These ambitions are not limited by budget, and we will continue to explore all available opportunities to access funding to achieve these ambitions.



## Workforce Profile

In 2023, the Comhairle employed 2001 employees (Including teachers and relief staff); this is a notable decrease from 2022 where there were 2118 employees. In some instances, multiple part-time posts are held by one individual, these duplications have been omitted and each employee has only been counted once. The figures discussed throughout this report also exclude employees who hold relief or supply posts.

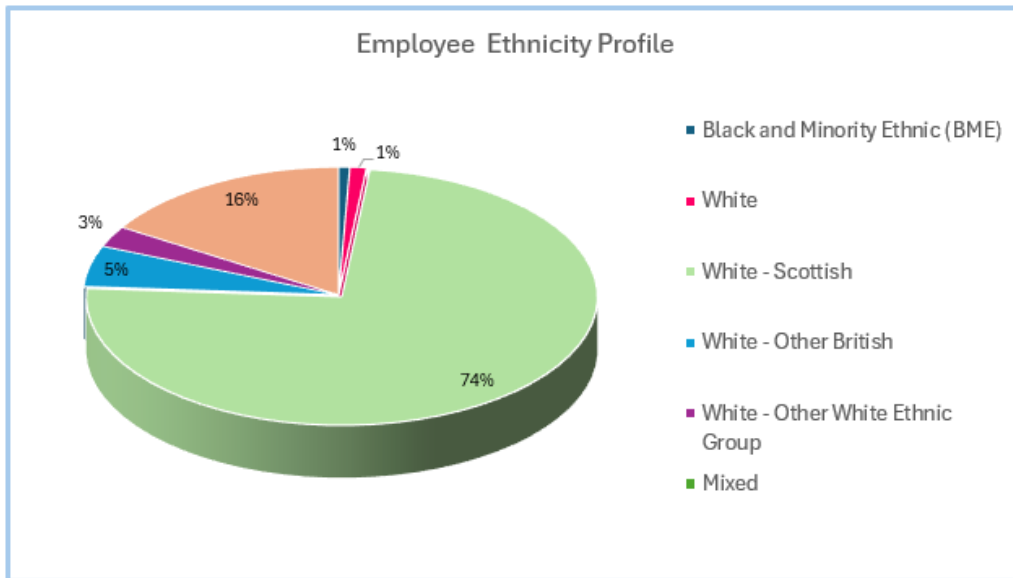
## Workforce Ethnic Origin Profile

Figures included in the table below are based on the 2001 Comhairle employees. The ethnicity equality data for 2023 and the previous five years are given, for benchmarking purposes.

Ethnic Origin	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)	*	*	12	12	16	14
White	44	34	32	32	28	21
White - Scottish	1690	1696	1701	1667	1609	1479
White - Other British	66	55	56	113	113	103
White - Other White Ethnic Group	87	98	128	71	59	53
Mixed	*	*	*	*	*	*
Other	*	*	*	*	*	*
Prefer not to answer (PNTA)/Non-Disclosed	155	185	188	221	282	321
Total	2068	2105	2125	2128	2118	2001

Table 1: Ethnic Origin Profile

\* As per Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) guidance where numbers are below 10 employee information is not disclosed.



*Figure 1: Employee Ethnicity Profile*

The majority, 74%, of Comhairle employees describe themselves as ‘White – Scottish’, which is a slight decrease from 76% in 2022 and a further decrease from 78% in 2021. At the last Scottish census in 2011, 86.9% of the local population in the Western Isles described themselves as ‘White Scottish’. 2022 Census data is not available for comparison at publication of this report. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of all ethnicities within the Comhairle’s workforce.

Ethnicity profiles of Comhairle employees have stayed stable relative to previous years. BME, as per the 2001 definition, are individuals that do not describe themselves as white. The Comhairle’s workforce profile comprises of 0.7% BME employees, which is a slight decrease of 0.1% compared to previous year’s data.



## Workforce Sex Profile

In 2023, of the 2001 Comhairle employees 452 were male and 1549 were female. Figure 2 depicts the sex breakdown of all Comhairle staff in 2023. The percentage of male and female employees has remained the same since 2021. Consistently for several years three quarters of Comhairle workforce have been female. Certain service sectors, including teaching and health & social care, have a high representation of female employees. The Comhairle's flexible working policy allows a high proportion of female employees to work whilst accommodating caring responsibilities and childcare.

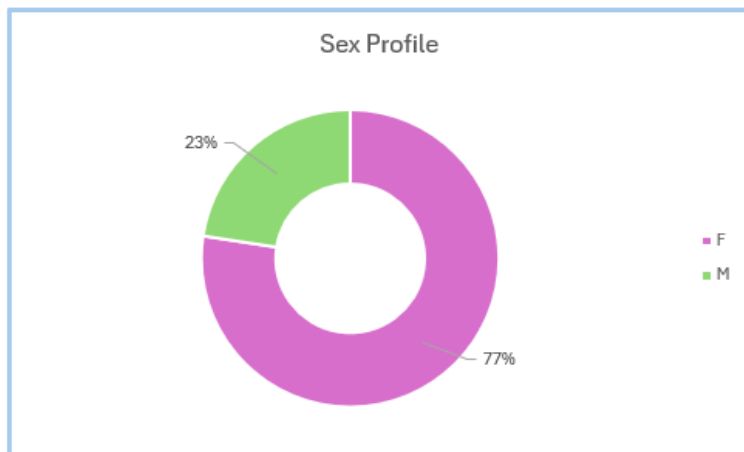


Figure 2: Employee Sex Profile

Table 2, below, details the percentage of Comhairle female employees who are in the top 2%, 5% and 10% of earners. In 2023 there has been a shift in the distribution of female employees between the top 2%, 5% and 10% of Comhairle earners but no increase in the percentage of female employees in the top earner groups. The job evaluation grading model is utilised to all Comhairle posts to ensure employees are paid alike for work of equal value.

As at December 2023	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Number of Contracted employees (Minus 0 hours employees)	1614	1758	1640	1594	1623
Total Number of contracted Council Employees in top 2% of earners	32	36	33	36	37
Total Number of female council employees in top 2% of earners	7	10	8	11	12
Percentage of female council employees in top 2% of earners	22%	28%	24%	30%	32%
Total Number of contracted Council Employees in top 5% of earners	80	141	138	131	115
Total Number of female council employees in top 5% of earners	37	74	69	65	53
Percentage of female council employees in top 5% of earners	46%	52%	50%	50%	46%
Total Number of contracted Council Employees in top 10% of earners	160	187	164	214	201
Total Number of female council employees in top 10% of earners	89	105	86	115	111
Percentage of female council employees in top 10% of earners	56%	56%	52%	53%	55%

Table 2: Female Employees in top 2%, 5% and 10% of earners



### Workforce Disability Profile

Since 2022 there has been a slight increase in the number of Comhairle employees reporting having a disability, from 41 to 44 individuals.

30% of Comhairle employees have not disclosed their disability status, as shown in Figure 3. Due to the high non-disclosure rate, it can be assumed that the actual figure of disabled employees may be higher. The 2011 Census found that 9.8% of the authority's population were limited by a disability or health condition.

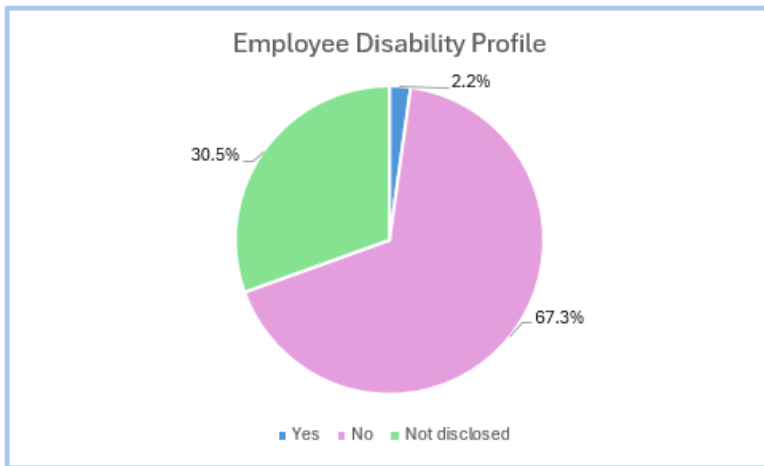


Figure 3: Employee Disability Profile

During the recruitment process the Comhairle will guarantee a job interview to an individual who declare they have a disability and meet all the essential criteria of the post. Reasonable adjustments will be made by the Comhairle to help ensure employees with a disability can continue to carry out the duties necessary of the post held.



## Workforce Age Profile

Figure 4 illustrates the age profile of Comhairle employees for 2023, compared to data from 2022. Due to the Cyber-attack the Comhairle experienced in November 2023, older data is not accessible at this time. However, Figure 5 has been copied from the Employee Equality Monitoring Statistics 2022 to better illustrate the development in staffing age groups.

In 2023, the number of employees has decreased overall, which is reflected in all age groups. The largest decrease is noted in the 35–44-year age bracket, followed by 45-54-year-olds. In 2021 the median age of the Outer Hebrides population was estimated to be 49.8. The Comhairle’s workforce age distribution reflects this local population statistic as the 45-54-year age group is still the second largest, however, in 2023, the 55-64-year age group has decreased less than the 45-54-year age group.

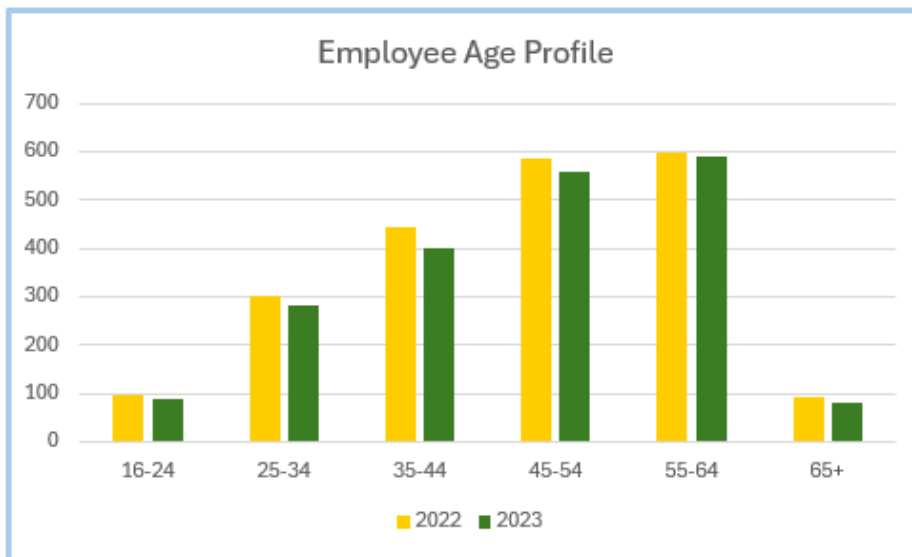


Figure 4: Employee Age Profile 2022 to 2023

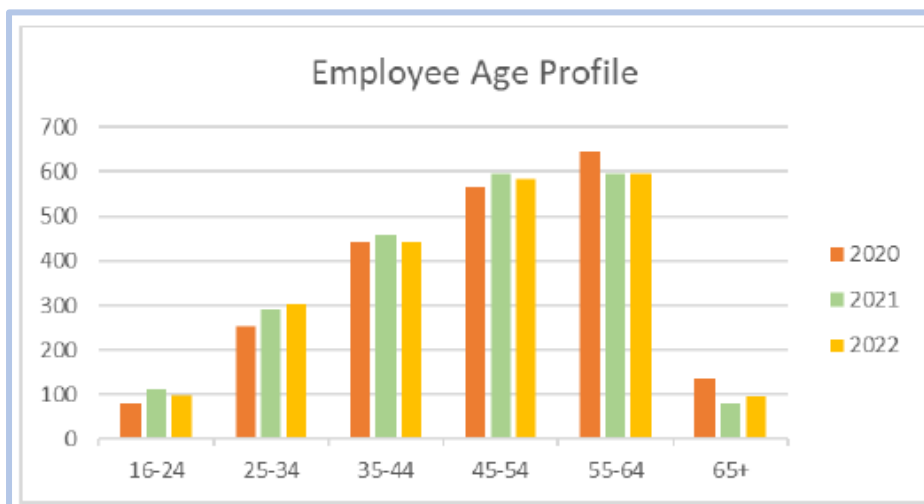


Figure 5: Employee Age Profile 2020 to 2022



Figure 6 demonstrates the age distribution of the workforce, comparing male and female employees. Data for both male and female employees follow the same trend and the largest age group of the workforce is now 55-64 years of age. In consequence, the mode has increased from being around 55 to 61.

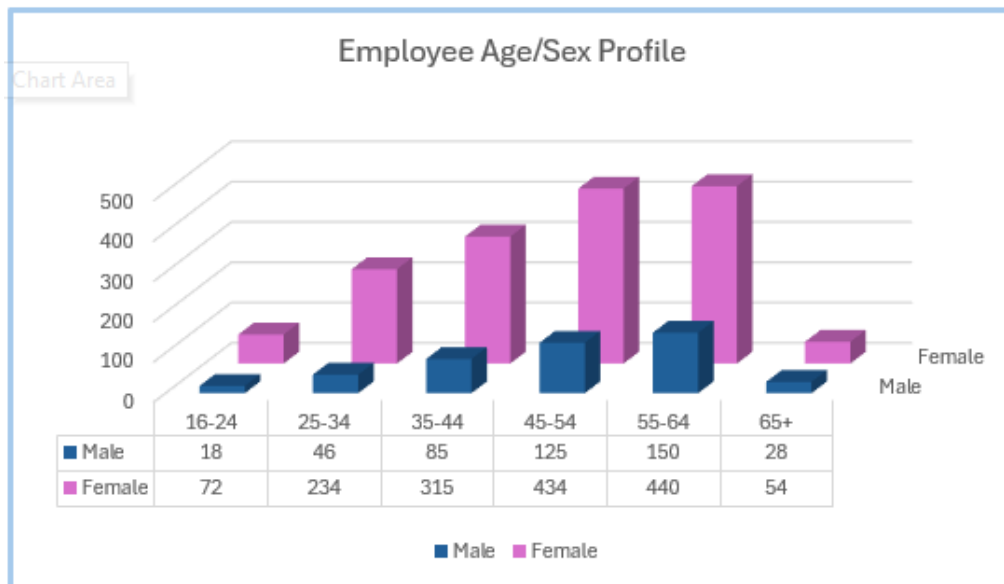


Figure 6: Employee Age/Sex Profile

### Workforce Religion Profile 2022

In 2022, Employees stating their religion as The Church of Scotland accounted for 26% of the Comhairle's workforce. The non-disclosure rate had only slightly increased at 40% in 2022 compared to 39% in 2021. Employees stating their religion being Roman Catholic accounted for 9% of the workforce in 2022. Other religions, including Hinduism and Buddhism, were reported by employees however the specific numbers are not listed as there are less than 10. Employees stating they have no religion in 2022 accounted for 12% of the workforce.

Due to the Cyber Attack in November 2023, updated figures for the Comhairle Workforce Religion Profile in 2023 are unavailable.



### Workforce Sexual Orientation Profile

Most employees, 57%, stated that they are heterosexual in 2023. The level of non-disclosure for this protected characteristic during the same period was 42%; a 1% increase since 2022. Employees stating they are homosexual or bisexual accounted for less than 1% of the Comhairle’s workforce. Figure 7 depicts this breakdown of the sexual orientation profile.

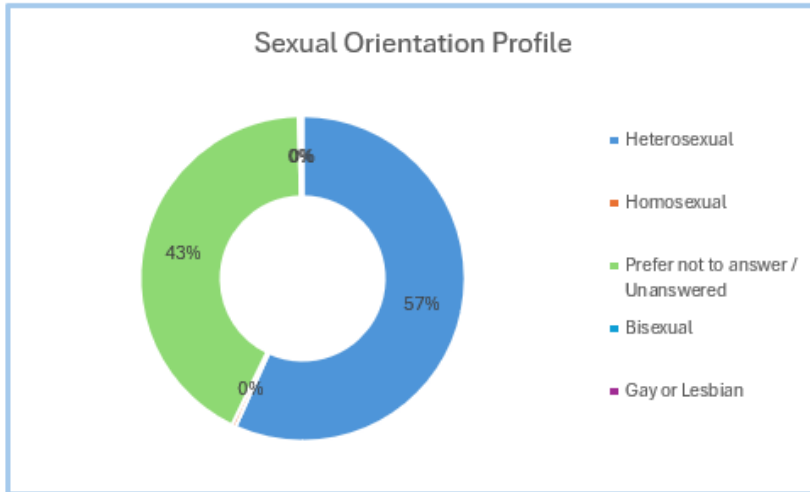


Figure 7: Sexual Orientation Profile

### Workforce Transgender Profile

Figure 8 shows the transgender profile of the Comhairle’s workforce. Since 2021 there has been an increase of non-disclosure rate for this protected characteristic, from 51% in 2021, 53% in 2022 to 54% in 2023. No Comhairle employee stated that they identify as transgender. 46% of employees stated that they do not identify as transgender.

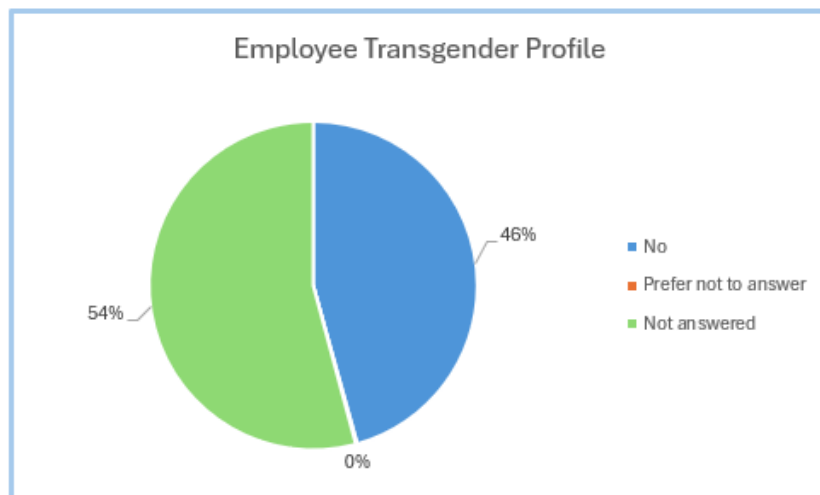


Figure 8: Employee Transgender Profile





## Equality Profile of Councillors

In 2023 there were 29 elected members, representing an estimated population of 26,900 across the local authority area. The islands are separated into eleven ward areas, of which the elected members serve.

There were now two female councillors since the 2022 elections. Prior to the 2022 elections encouragement has been given to women to stand for political office. The Women into Politics workshops focused on allowing women to share their political ambitions, get information on different political roles available to them, hear from a previous female Councillor about her experiences and explore barriers to entry that are unique to the Western Isles. These events were open to all women. Two female Councillors have been voted into office in the 2022 elections.

Figure 9 shows the age and sex profile of the 29 councillors in 2022, displaying the majority are aged over 55. Some councillors reported having a disability in 2022, but the breakdown of this and other protected characteristics cannot be reported on as the numbers are too low.

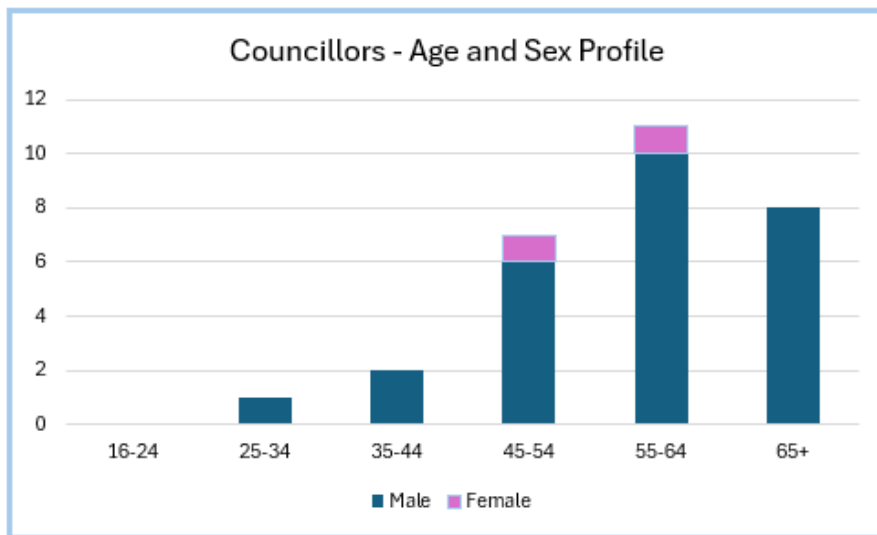


Figure 9: Councillors - Age and Sex Profile



## Equality Profile of Recruitment Applications

Through 2023, 1077 posts were advertised on the My Job Scotland portal, and a total of 2013 applications were received for the posts advertised. Table 3 shows the ratio of applications to posts advertised over the last six years. The downward trend of the applications per post ratio is even more pronounced in 2023 with 0.5 applications per post less than in 2022.

Year	No of posts advertised	No of applications received	Average Ratio
2023	1077	2013	1.9 applications per post
2022	882	2089	2.4 applications per post
2021	625	1671	2.7 applications per post
2020	303	1231	4.0 applications per post
2019	381	1607	4.2 applications per post
2018	380	1926	5.0 applications per post

Table 3: Ratio of applications received to posts advertised

Less than half of the 1077 posts advertised through 2023 were for part-time or temporary posts; these have been required to meet the needs of the service. There has been difficulty recently recruiting for posts in the Comhairle. Therefore, posts may have been advertised on more than one occasion before an appointment was made. This will be giving an inflated, higher, number of posts advertised for 2023.

## Recruitment Applications Ethnic Origin Profile

Most applicants through 2023 described themselves as 'White – Scottish', this has been the case for numerous years. However, there is a noticeable increase of applicants of other ethnic origin since 2021 when the number of 'White – Scottish' applicants was 70% in total. 'White – Scottish' applicants account for 58% of all application received. There is a notable change within the 'BME' group of applicants, from a total of 5% in 2022 to 17% in 2023. There are more than ten applications in each of the various ethnic groups, which is why the chart below is showing a break-up of the percentages.

Applications received from individuals of a BME ethnicity (as per the 2001 census definition – "people who do not identify themselves as white") is beginning to show an upward trend. In 2021 0.82% of all applicants identified their ethnicity as BME, however in 2022 figure was 5%, and rose to 17% in 2023. The non-disclosure rate in 2023 was 4%, a decrease from 11% in 2022.



Figure 10 illustrates the ethnicity of all individuals that applied for posts in the Comhairle in 2023.

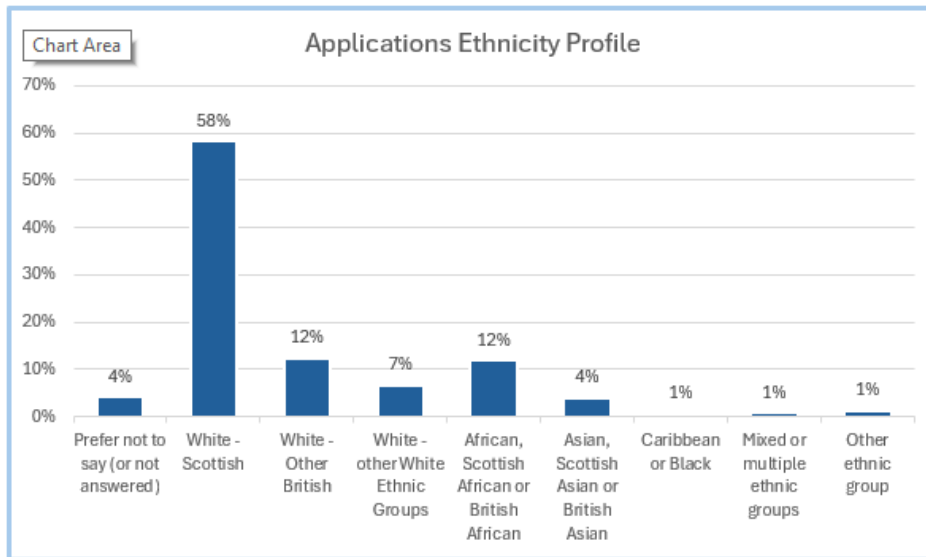


Figure 10: Applications Ethnicity Profile

Figure 11 illustrates the developing trends of reduction in 'White – Scottish' applicants and increase in 'BME' applicants

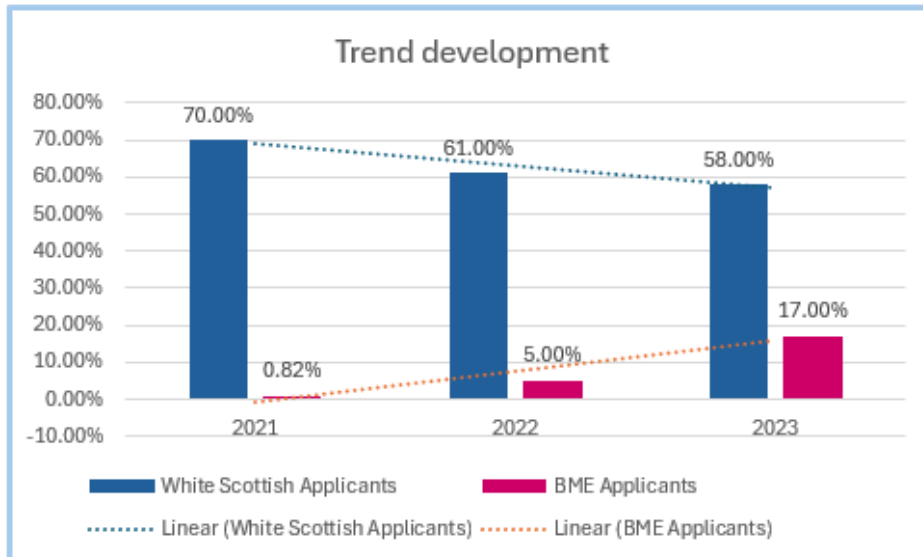


Figure 11: Trend development White - Scottish and BME applicants



### Recruitment Applications Sex Profile

In 2023 the majority, 67%, of applications were submitted by females. This is similar to the previous years' data where 71% in 2021 and 64% in 2022 were female. The level of non-disclosure for this protected characteristic has significantly decreased from 10% in 2022 to 2% in 2023.

Figure 12 shows the apportionment of male to female applications.

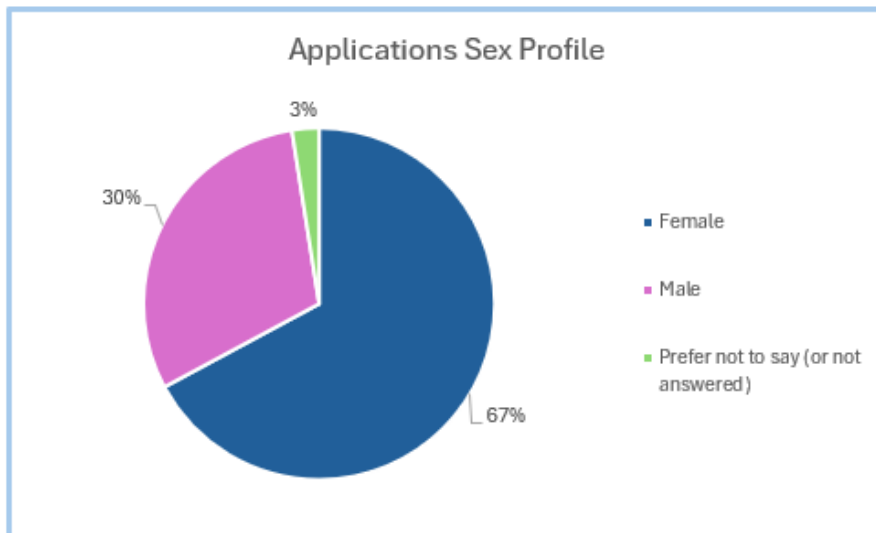


Figure 12: Applications Sex Profile

### Recruitment Applications Disability Profile

Of the 2013 applications received through 2023 85 applicants considered themselves disabled; this equates to 9% of applications. Less than 10 applicants consider them to be limited a lot by their disability. The non-disclosure rate for 2023 is 5%, down from 13% in 2022. Figure 13 shows the breakdown of disability profile for all applicants.

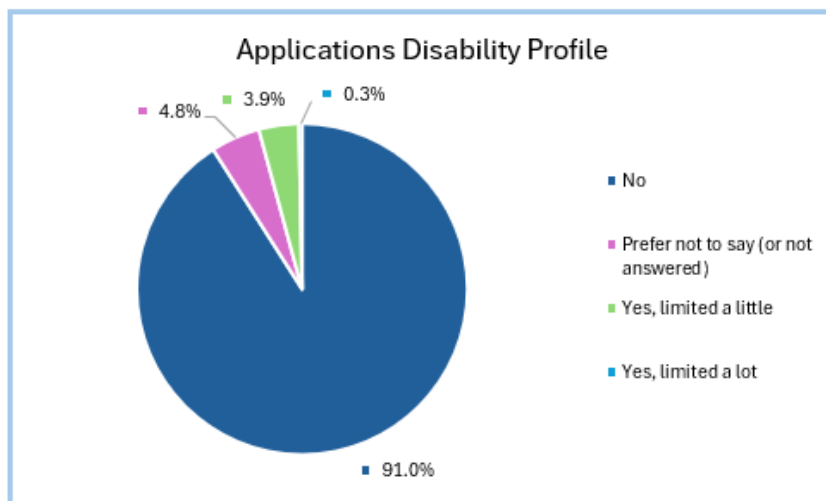


Figure 13: Applications Disability Profile



### Recruitment Applications Religion Profile

The majority, 32%, of applicants stated they had no religion in 2023. The non-disclosure rate in 2023 was 9%, this is a drop from 17% not disclosing their religion in 2022. Church of Scotland remains the largest religion selected by applicants, accounting for 23% of all applications in 2023 and 21% in 2022. Applications religion profile is more varied than in previous years, with a number of other religions being disclosed by more than 10 applicants. Other religions disclosed by less than 10 applicants has been included into 'Other religion or body'. Figure 14 shows the breakdown of religion profile for applications received in 2023.

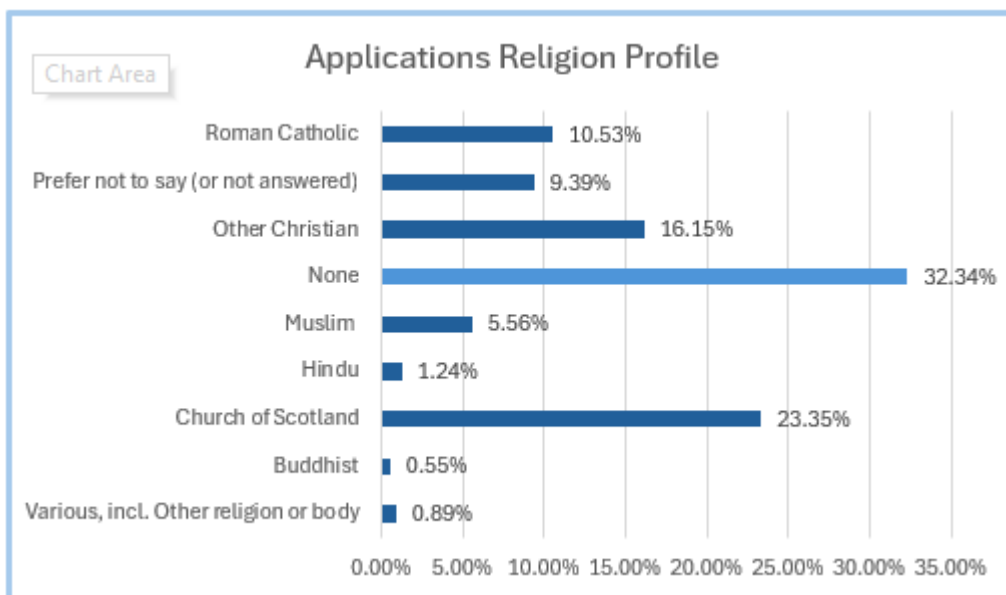


Figure 14: Applications Religion Profile



### Recruitment Applications Sexual Orientation Profile

Applicants declaring that they are heterosexual accounted for 89% of all applications received in 2023. Just 1% of individuals stated that they were homosexual or bisexual. Figure 15 illustrates this summary.

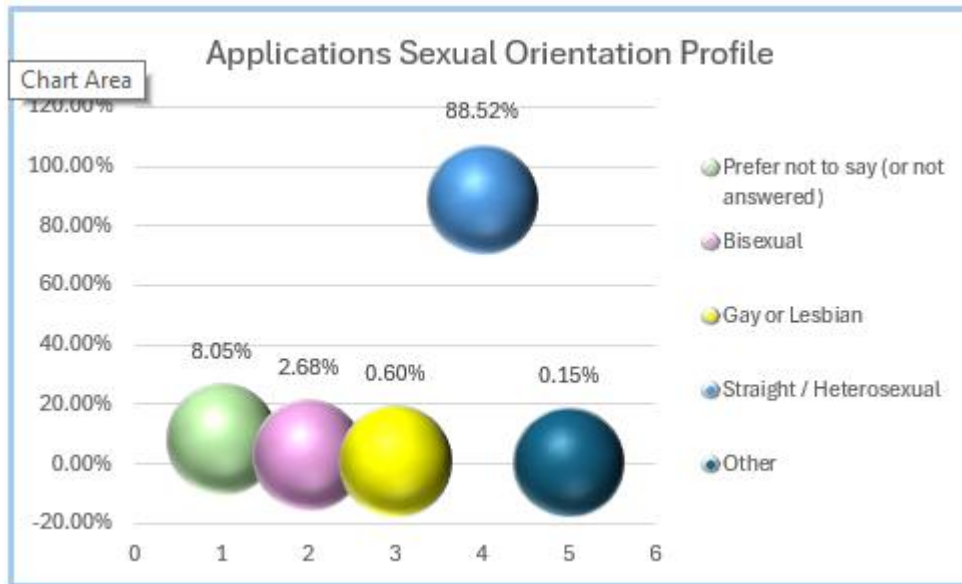


Figure 15: Applications Sexual Orientation Profile

### Recruitment Applications Transgender Profile

In 2023 less than ten applicants (0.15%) declared that they identify as a transgender person. 4% of all individuals who applied did not disclose whether they identified as transgender, a decrease from 11% in 2022. 96% of applicants stated they were not a transgender person.



## Appointed Candidates

From the 2013 applications 454 candidates were appointed to a post within the Comhairle. In some instances, more than one appointment may have been made to a post, for example to establish a pool of carers.

## Appointed Candidates Ethnicity Profile

The majority of appointed candidates in 2023 identified as 'White -Scottish', accounting for 69% of all appointments. 4% of appointed candidates identified as BME while 2% applicants of BME were appointed in 2022. Successful candidates not disclosing their ethnicity decreased from 17% in 2022 to 10% in 2023. Figure 16 shows the ethnicity profile of appointed candidates.

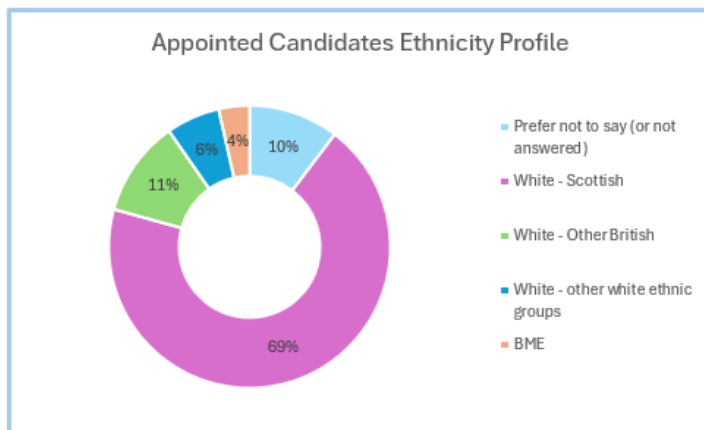


Figure 16: Appointed Candidates' Ethnicity Profile

## Appointed Candidates Sex Profile

Of the 454 candidates appointed in 2023 73% described their sex as female and 18% of appointed candidates identified as male, as shown on Figure 17. The remaining 9% did not disclose the information for this protected characteristic, decreasing from 17% non-disclosure of gender in 2022.

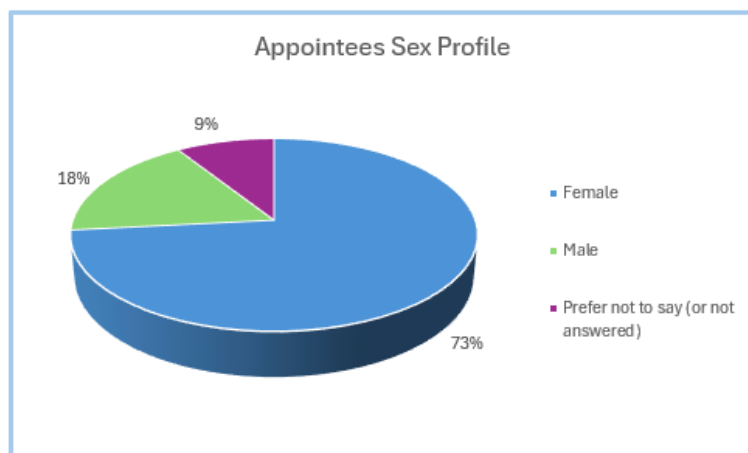


Figure 17: Appointed Candidates' Sex Profile



### Appointed Candidates Disability Profile

11% of the appointed candidates in 2023 did not disclose their disability status. Of the 454 individuals, 2% disclosed that they have a disability, the remaining 87% stating they are not disabled. This summary is demonstrated by Figure 18.

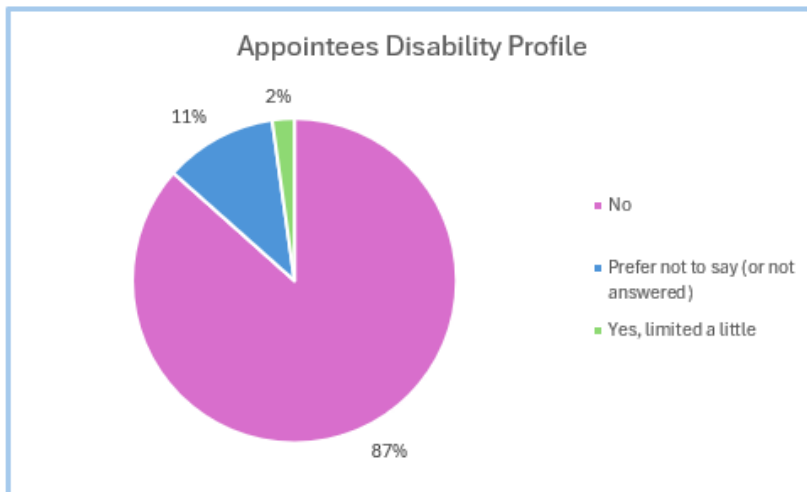


Figure 18: Appointed Candidates' Disability Profile

### Appointed Candidates Religion Profile

As per Figure 19 below, 28% of the appointed candidates stated that their religion was Church of Scotland, an increase from 24% in 2022. A further 10% of the candidates disclosed their religion as Roman Catholic. Candidates disclosing, they have no religion accounted for 35% of all appointed through 2023. The percentage of candidates not disclosing their religion has decreased from 23% in 2022 to 15% in 2023.

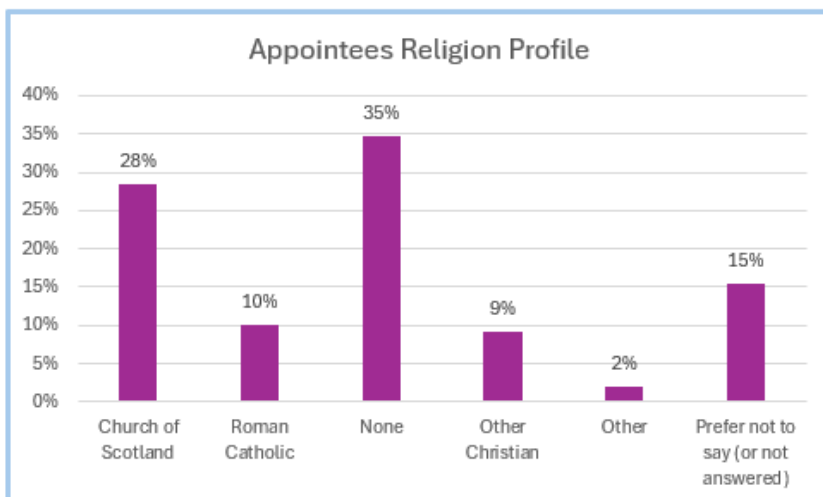


Figure 19: Appointed Candidates' Religion Profile





### **Appointed Candidates Sexual Orientation**

The majority, 86%, of appointed candidates identified themselves as heterosexual. This is an increase from 78% in 2022. The non-disclosure rate for this protected characteristic has decreased from 20% in 2022 to 13% in 2023. Less than 10 appointed candidates, accounting for 2%, indicated other sexual orientations.

### **Appointed Candidates Transgender Profile**

None of the appointed candidates in 2023 declared that they do identify as a transgender person, however, 42 appointed candidates, accounting for 9%, did not disclose that information.



## Leavers

In 2023 a total of 226 employees left the Comhairle's employment, this includes those whose fixed term contracts came to an end.

### Leavers Ethnicity Profile

Through 2023 the majority of individuals that left the Comhairle were defined as 'White – Scottish'. This is in proportion to the current workforce of the Comhairle.

### Leavers Sex Profile

165 of the 226 leavers in 2023 were female, accounting for 73% of all leavers. The remaining 27% were identified as male. This percentage divide is in line with the Comhairle's current workforce sex profile.

### Leavers Disability Profile

62% of the individuals that left Comhairle employment in 2023 did not consider themselves disabled. Less than 10, out of the 226 leavers, disclosed that they were disabled.

### Leavers Religion Profile

52% of leavers in 2023 did not disclose their religion, 19% identified their religion as Church of Scotland, which is unchanged since 2022. A further 16% of leavers declared they had no religion, an increase of 4% compared to the previous year.

### Leavers Sexual Orientation

47% of leavers in 2023 identified themselves as heterosexual. The majority, 48% of leavers, did not disclose their sexual orientation.

### Leavers Transgender Profile

None of the leavers identified themselves as a transgender person, however 57% of leavers did not disclose this information.

### Leavers Age Profile

27% of leavers were aged between 55-64, a further 14% were aged 35-44. 28% were aged over 65. The percentage of leavers at retirement age has doubled compared to last year's 14%.



## **Performance Assessment**

The Comhairle do not record equality monitoring information during their Performance Appraisal procedures. Emphasis has been increased on self-appraisals on an annual basis in the Comhairle. The Comhairle does not operate any policy in which employees may suffer or benefit as a result of their performance.

## **Disciplinary, Grievance and Respect at Work**

### **Disciplinary**

Through 2023 there were ten instances where disciplinary action was required. This is a decrease of 33% compared to fifteen instances in 2022. It had been consistent in recent years that the number of disciplinary procedures and sanctions issued had remained particularly low.

The majority involved in disciplinary procedures were female, and their age profiles were mixed. All those involved in disciplinary procedures who disclosed this information were of White Scottish ethnicity. None of the employees disclosed that they were disabled or transgender.

### **Grievance**

As less than 10 grievances were formally processed through the Grievance Procedure during 2023, specific numbers cannot be reported regarding the protected characteristics discussed through this report.

### **Respect at Work**

This policy allows complaints to be resolved informally, where this is not possible a formal approach will be implemented.

There were less than ten complaints formally processed during 2023 through the Respect at Work policy.



## Training

Due to the cyber-attack, the training section lost data for courses taking place between 9<sup>th</sup> August and 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023. This is about 13 weeks' worth, equating to around 60+ training courses. All statistics in this section are referring to the available data and, even though shown side by side, cannot be directly compared to previous years.

During 2023 a total of 688 Comhairle employees undertook training, either online or face-face. This is a decrease of over 18% from 844 employees in 2022. Considering that about a quarter of the years' data is not included in this figure, one can conclude that the total number of participants is likely to have been on a very similar level to 2022, when 844 Comhairle employees participated in training courses.

Training is provided for employees internally to meet requirements of their post, undertake duties of the post or for professional career development. Training includes introductions to the organisation and its policies and procedures. In addition to this, training is given to cover a variety of subjects including manual handling, first aid and recruitment & interview training.

All staff that enrol onto an internal training course is given an Equal Opportunities Form to complete, however this is voluntary. All information disclosed within these forms are recorded and held by the Comhairle's Human Resources section. Equal opportunities data is not held for employees who complete external or online training

Digital platforms are also being utilised to provide online training to employees, thus providing a more flexible approach. LearnPro is used by the Comhairle to provide this style of training, with over 6000 programmes available, covering a wide range of topics.

## Training Ethnic Origin Profile

The majority, 83%, of employees attending internal training in 2023 described themselves as 'White – Scottish', this is a slight drop from previous years and can be compared in Table 4 below. The non-disclosure rate has increased from 2% in 2022 to 7% in 2023, contrary to the increased participation trend in disclosure of this information in previous years. Specific numbers of ethnicities cannot be disclosed if there are less than 10 employees selecting them, these are therefore combined into the 'Other' category.

Ethnic Origin	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
White – Scottish	80%	81%	86%	85%	87%	83%
Other White British	6%	7%	6%	8%	8%	7%
Not disclosed/PNTA	9%	9%	6%	4%	2%	7%
Other	4%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%

Table 4: Training Ethnicity Profile



### Training Sex Profile %

Nearly full disclosure rates were obtained for this protected characteristic. The sex profile for employees attending training in 2022 was 80% women and 20% men, with a non-disclosure rate of 0.29%.

### Training Disability Profile

Employees attending training that consider themselves to have a disability accounted for 6% of all attendees, an increase from 3% in 2022. 10% of participants did not disclose whether they had a disability, in comparison to 2022 when 5% of participants chose not to disclose that information.

### Training Age Profile

Of the 688 employees attending training in 2023, 618 disclosed their age, which is a disclosure rate of 90%, slightly less than in 2022 (95%). The highest number of employees attending training sat within the 55-64 age bracket, as shown on figure 20. This is a shift since 2022 when the highest number of employees attending training sat within the 45-54 age bracket.

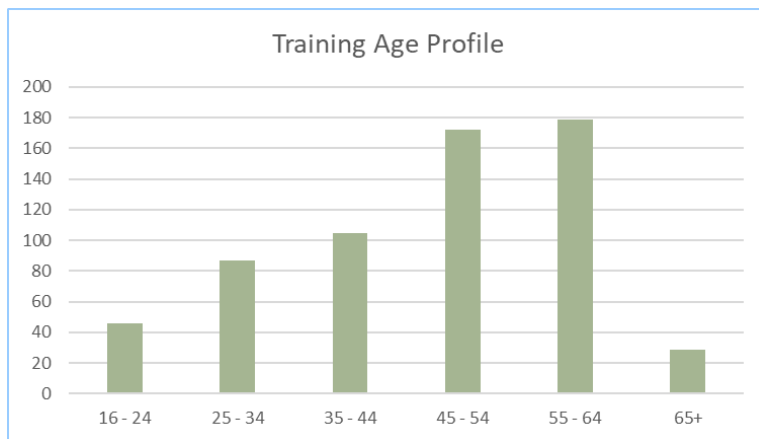


Figure 20: Training Age Profile



### Training Religion Profile

As shown in figure 21, 45% of employees attending training identified their religion as 'Church of Scotland', with a further 13% identifying as 'Other Christian', and 14% identifying as 'Roman Catholic'. 8% of employees did not disclose their religion. Specific numbers of religions cannot be disclosed if there are less than 10 employees selecting them, these are therefore combined into the 'Other' category.

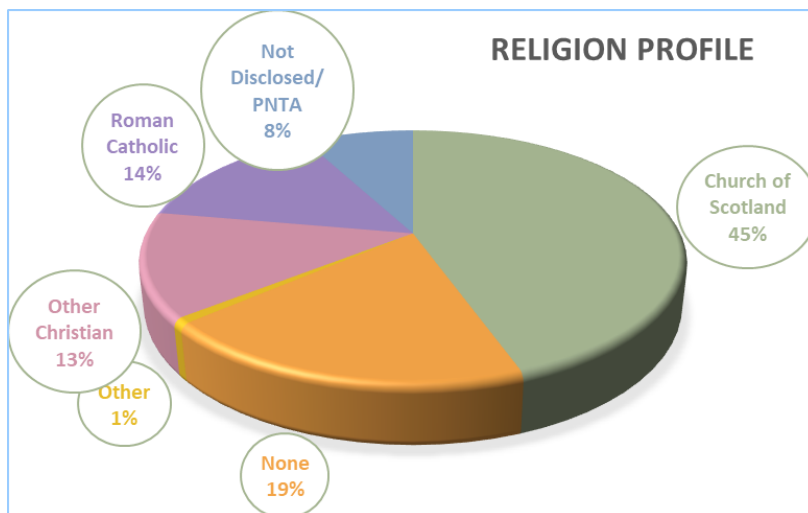


Figure 21: Training Religion Profile

### Training Sexual Orientation Profile

92% of training attendees through 2023 described themselves as heterosexual. Those identifying as homosexual accounted for under 1% of employees. 6% of employees did not disclose their sexual orientation which is 1% higher than disclosure rates in 2022. Specific numbers of sexual orientations cannot be disclosed if there are less than 10 employees selecting them, these are therefore combined into the 'Other' category, consisting of 2% of employees.

### Training Transgender Profile

Some employees identified themselves as a transgender person whilst completing training, however specific numbers cannot be disclosed as there are less than ten. 30.96% of all attendees did not disclose any information. 68.90% of employees stated they were not transgender.



## Improving the Workforce Disclosure Rate

Employees are encouraged to update their Equal Opportunity data on an annual basis. This can usually be done on 'MyView', a self-service facility used by the Comhairle which is linked to their HR and Payroll systems. Paper forms can also be provided for any employee who does not have access to the internet. Anyone starting employment with the Comhairle is also requested to complete an Equal Opportunities form. This is encouraged with the aim to reduce the non-disclosure rates across the protected characteristic groups discussed through this report. However, 'MyView' was affected by the cyber-attack and has not been available since November 2023. The most recent reminder by Human Resources to all staff to update their data was sent on 01.12.2022, no reminder was sent end of 2023 due to the system issues.

Table 5 shows the employee's non-disclosure rates for the last five years. Non-disclosure rates for Religion is not available for 2023.

Characteristic	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Disability	27%	26%	25%	28%	28%
Ethnicity	9%	9%	10%	13%	13%
Religion	45%	44%	39%	40%	N/A
Sexual Orientation	47%	46%	41%	41%	39%
Transgender	58%	57%	51%	53%	53%

Table 5: Non-disclosure rates

End of document