

Agenda Item	15
Report No	RES/32/23

The HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Corporate Resources

Date: 6 September 2023

Report Title: Equalities Reporting

Report By: Chief Executive

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Equalities Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes Progress Report 2023 was considered at the Communities and Place Committee on 24 May 2023. The report informed members that the updated employee data was not available at the time of presenting the report in May 2023. This was due to work being undertaken in payroll to implement the revised pay model which impacts on our lowest paid staff (HC1-HC3 grades).
- 1.2 Staff equalities data was omitted from the Equalities Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes Progress Report which has now been collated and presented in the Equalities in Employment Monitoring Report 2023 and the Gender Pay Gap for 2023 which are attached to this report.
- 1.3 The Council's Equal Pay Statement has been revised in accordance with our legal duty and is attached.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - i. Note the analysis of protected characteristics and steps being taken to improve the collation of equalities data;
 - ii. Note the improvement and changes in the Gender Pay Gap; and
 - iii. Approve the Equal Pay Statement.

3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource – implementation of the equalities commitment in Equal Pay Statement will be monitored to assess if any additional resources are required.

- 3.2 Legal – the Council has a legal duty to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, failure to comply has the potential to result in enforcement action.
- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island) – delivering on the equalities commitments in the Equal Pay Statement will provide positive outcomes for recruitment and retention of staff with protected characteristics working and living in our communities.
- 3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever – there are no implication arising from this report.
- 3.5 Risk – non-compliance with equality duties may lead to legal challenges or loss of reputation.
- 3.6 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people) – delivering on the equalities commitments in the Equal Pay Statement will promote positive health and wellbeing for our staff.
- 3.7 Gaelic – there are no implications arising from this report.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination for people on the grounds of nine ‘protected characteristics’:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
- 4.2 Section 149 of the Act also places a ‘general’ Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) on bodies such as the Council to give ‘due regard’ to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 4.3 The Equality Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes Progress Report 2023 was considered by the Communities and Place Committee on 24 May 2023 as part of the legislative requirement under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. The report provided information we are required to publish on progress on equality work that contributes towards meeting the public sector equality duty as follows:
- achieving previous Equality Outcomes for the two-year period 2021-2023;
 - how equality is mainstreamed in the Council;

- annual employee data including the progress made in gathering and using the information to better meet the duties of the legislation; and
- updated gender pay-gap information.

4.4 The Communities and Place Committee were advised that annual employee data was not currently available to publish with the report and the updated pay-gap information would be reported to the September Corporate Resources Committee.

5. Employee Information and Gender Pay Gap

- 5.1 As part of the equality reporting requirements, the Council must publish an annual breakdown of the information collected under its duty to gather and use employee information by protected characteristics and provides details of the progress made in using this information.
- 5.2 Since 2013, the Council has been required to publish information on its gender pay gap on an annual basis. This includes the percentage difference among its employees, between men's average hourly pay and women's hourly pay, and is one of the Council's Statutory performance indicators.
- 5.3 The Equalities in Employment Monitoring Report 2023 **Appendix 1** contains an analysis of protected characteristics – age, disability, race (ethnic group), sex (gender), sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership and maternity. It should be noted that the Council has limited information on some of the protected characteristics due to the voluntary basis on which this data is collected. This is currently being addressed by encouraging staff to complete and submit their data to allow more robust reporting in future.
- 5.4 The Gender Pay Gap 2023 details are contained in **Appendix 2**. Analysis of data is contained in para 2.2 of the Appendix. Para 2.3 provides an explanation of contributory factors impacting on pay gaps. Actions to address gender segregation and the availability of part time work in senior grades are outlined in para 2.4. Para 2.6 illustrates an improvement for all employees and non-teaching employees (represents all employees excluding teachers) in the three categories - combined, full time and part time workforce. There is also an improvement in SJC employees in the combined and part time workers. There was a slight decline in all three categories for teachers however for combined and full-time category gaps these changes remain within acceptable banding of less than + or - 5%. Trends over the last 10 years are contained in para 2.7 showing significant improvements over this period. Median Pay Gap information is shown in para 2.9.
- 5.5 The Council has undertaken an exercise to fully consolidate the Scottish Local Government Living Wage (SLGLW) rate with the development of a new pay and grading model. This reintroduces incremental progression for staff on lower grades which due to the timing of the data used, the anticipated continued improvement in the gender pay gap will be reflected in future analysis.

6. Equal Pay Statement

- 6.1 The Council has a duty to review and publish a policy Statement on Equal Pay which is outlined in **Appendix 3**. The statement reaffirms the council's key objectives to:
- monitor the application of our pay and grading systems to monitor gender pay gap;

- identify and take appropriate remedial caution to eliminate any unfair, unjust or unlawful practices that impact on pay; and
- promote equality or opportunity and the principles of equal pay throughout the workforce.

Designation: Head of People

Date: 18 August 2023

Author: Elaine Barrie

Background Papers: Equality Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes Progress Report 2023

Appendices: Appendix 1: Equalities in Employment Monitoring Report 2023
Appendix 2: The Gender Pay Gap 2023
Appendix 3: Statement on Equal Pay

Equalities in Employment Monitoring Report - 2023

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 obligated to meeting these.

The data contained in the report is relevant for the period January – December 2022.

This report includes the findings of analysis relating to the protected characteristics including age, disability, race (ethnic group), sex (gender), sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership and maternity.

The Council currently holds data on 100% of the workforce in relation to age and sex (gender), 29% of the workforce in relation to disability and 22% in relation to race (ethnic group). Limited information is currently available for the other protected characteristics and is below levels that would provide meaningful data. A process is in place to encourage staff to complete their data and submit to allow more robust reporting data.

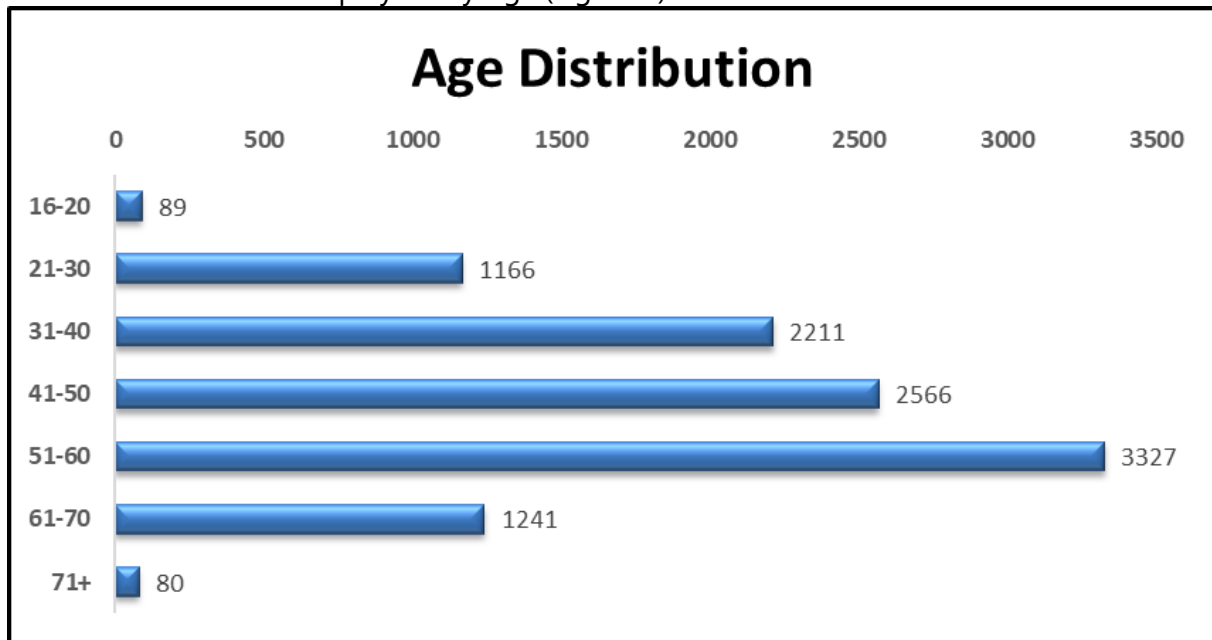
The Council has recently changed the way equalities data relating to the protected characteristics is collected. The system now has the ability to collect more robust and relevant equalities data and employees are currently being encouraged to complete this to enable future reporting. We have extracted some data as shown in some of the tables below. However, these should be viewed as an indicator only as they are only a small snapshot reflecting a small percentage of the whole workforce. The data being requested matches the Census 2022 categories.

The outcomes and action plans supported by this report are published in the Equalities Mainstreaming Progress Report which was considered by Communities and Place Committee in May 2023.

Age

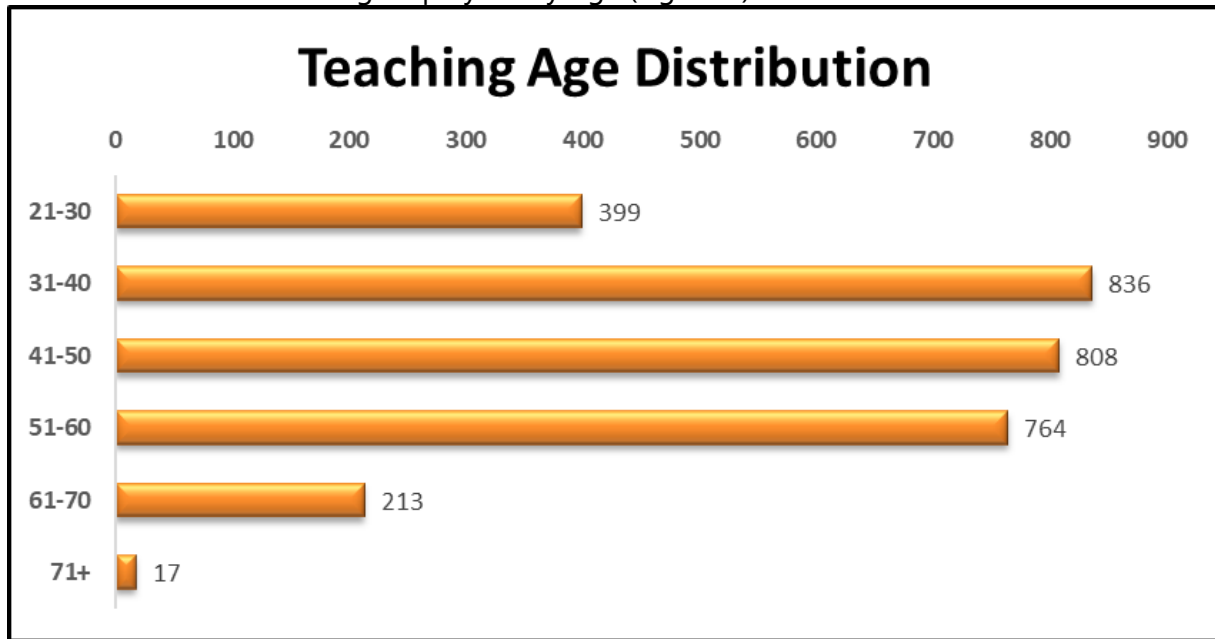
Analysis of data relating to age distribution shows a high proportion of staff aged between 41 and 60 years of age and a low proportion of staff aged 30 and under.

The Distribution of All Employees by Age (Figure 1)

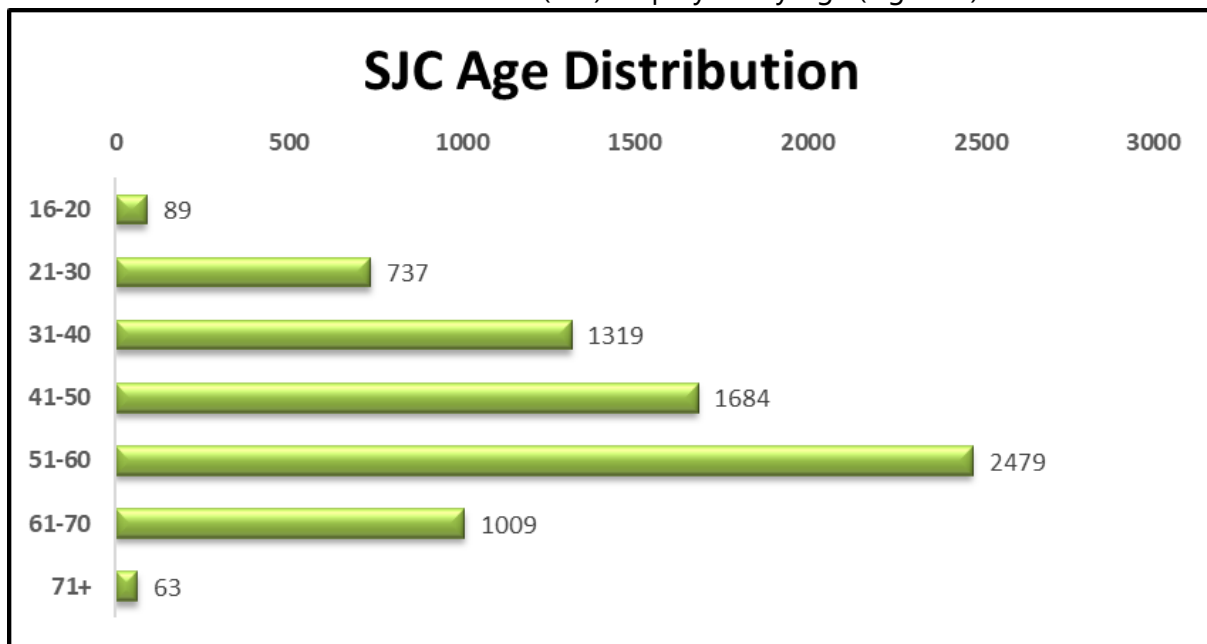


Comparison of the two major groups, teaching staff and Scottish Joint Council (SJC) staff continues to show an even more marked slant in the SJC workforce with over 3 times as many employees aged 51-60 versus those aged 21-30.

The Distribution of Teaching Employees by Age (Figure 2)



The Distribution of Scottish Joint Council (SJC) Employees by Age (Figure 3)



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.

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	16	1	0	34	1	37	89	1.2%
21-30	134	14	3	315	59	212	737	10.0%
31-40	163	40	9	539	158	410	1319	17.9%
41-50	206	60	40	644	219	513	1682	22.8%
51-60	320	106	87	712	303	945	2473	33.5%
61-70	114	40	25	254	97	479	1009	13.7%
71+	11	3	0	9	4	36	63	0.9%
Total	964	264	164	2507	841	2632	7372	

The Distribution of Scottish Joint Council (SJC) Employees by Age and Grade (Figure 5)

Grade	Age Range							Total
	16-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71+	
HC01	9	15	34	62	111	70	7	308
HC02	15	57	141	158	233	134	16	754
HC03	17	123	194	199	288	119	14	954
HC04	24	175	306	482	693	291	14	1985
HC05	24	210	269	304	428	145	4	1384
HC06	0	68	138	128	162	71	1	568
HC07	0	44	94	108	182	66	2	496
HC08	0	16	35	54	70	22	4	201
HC09	0	28	63	92	131	41	0	355
HC10	0	1	34	54	89	25	1	204
HC11	0	0	9	23	42	9	0	83
HC12	0	0	2	10	18	8	0	38
HC13	0	0	0	6	8	6	0	20
HC14	0	0	0	1	11		0	12
HC15	0	0	0	2	12	2	0	16
Total	89	737	1319	1683	2478	1009	63	7378

Disability

Of the Council workforces' respondents, 2.7% identify as being disabled. In the 2011 census, 18.6% of the Highland community identified themselves as having a long-term health problem or disability. On this basis, people with disabilities appear to be under-represented within the Council workforce.

The Distribution of All Employees by Disability (Figure 6)

Total Workforce	Workers identifying as disabled		Workers identifying as non-disabled		Disability status of workers unknown	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
10680	84	0.79%	2638	24.70%	7958	74.51%

The Distribution of All Employees Joining and Leaving the Council by Disability (Figure 7)

	Starters	Leavers
Disabled	7	10
Non-Disabled	76	241
Unknown	1351	1143

In relation to occupational segregation, there is no discernible difference between those employees who identify as being disabled versus those who do not who 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 overrepresented in Professional and Community roles and underrepresented in management roles.

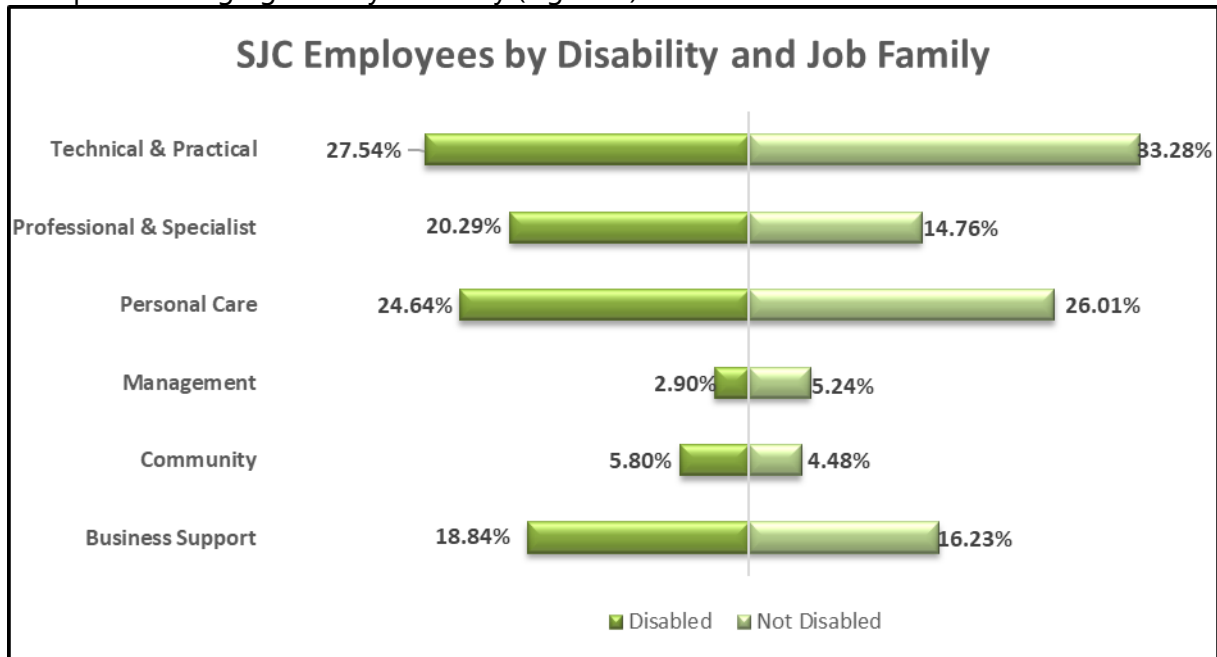
Disabled employees are underrepresented in the most senior grades, HC12-15.

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

The Highland Council is committed to equality of opportunity and are proud to be recognised as a Disability Confident Employer. We are now working to achieve Disability Confident Leader status by Autumn 2023.

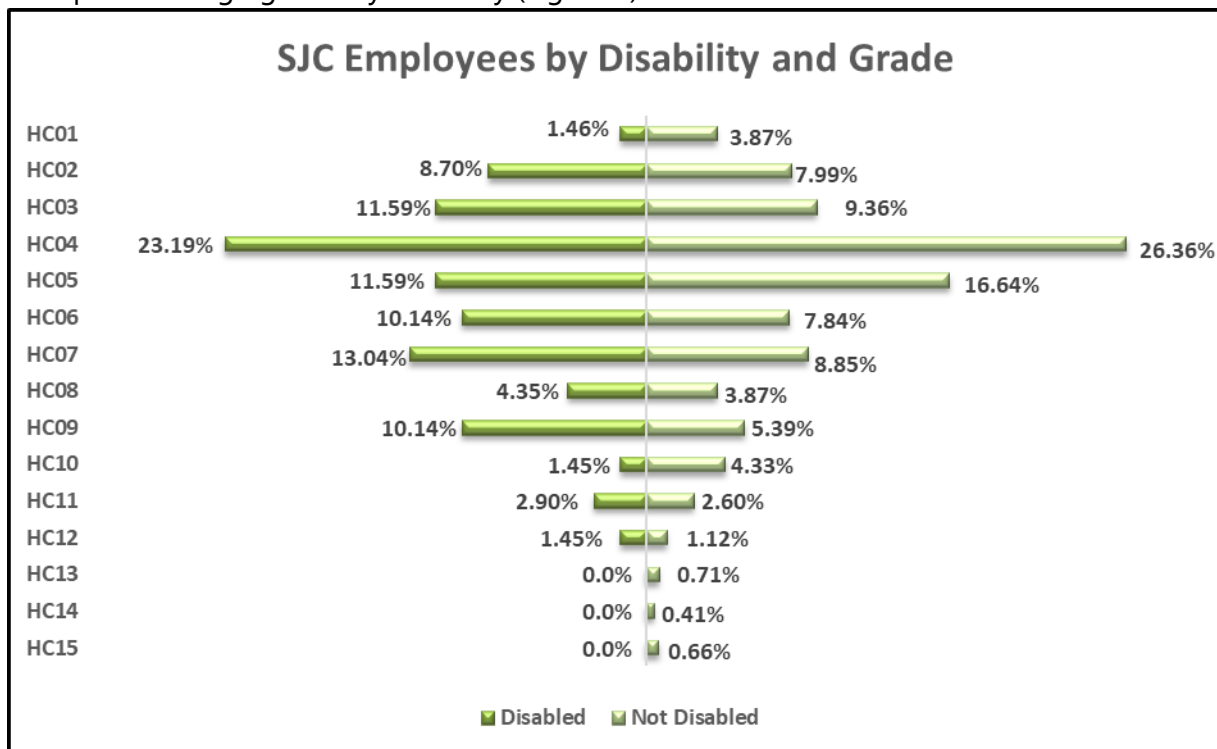
Our approach will allow new and existing staff members with a disability or long term health condition across all grades to a tailored approach to managing their workplace environment and ensuring it is safe and accessible. The Disability passport also supports staff with a disability if they move to different roles in the organisation.

Occupational Segregation by Disability (Figure 8)



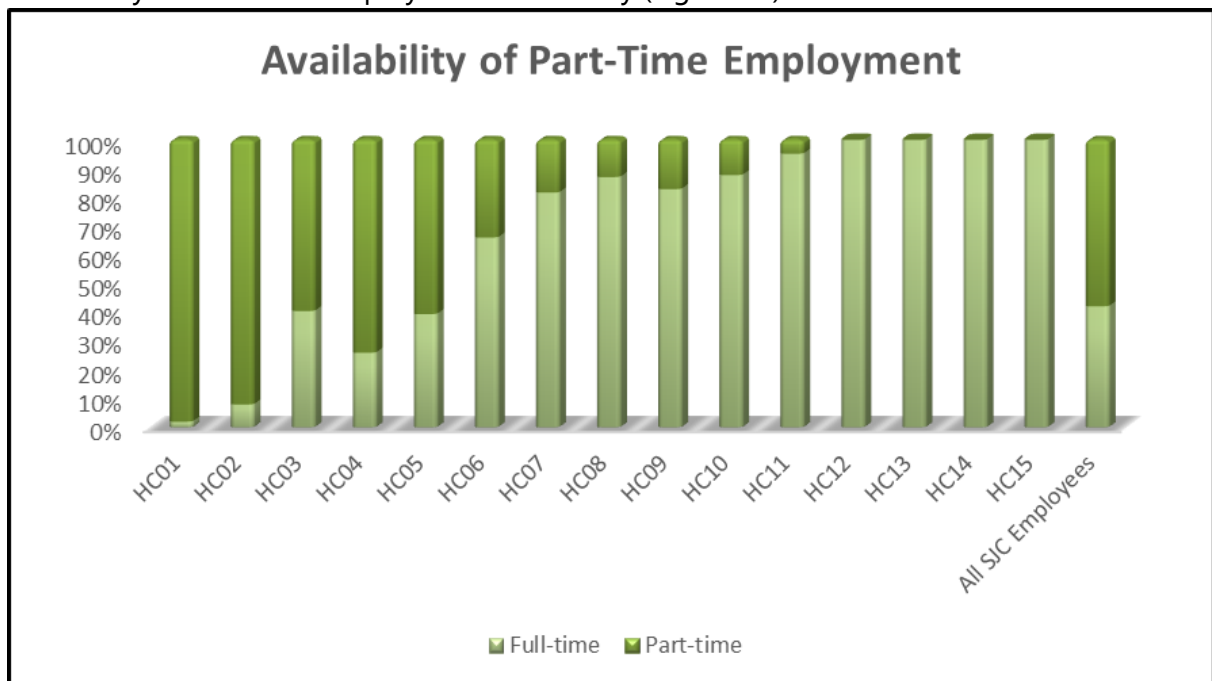
(Figure 8. based on total respondents 3080 of which 2034 indicated 'Disabled' or 'Not Disabled')

Occupational Segregation by Disability (Figure 9)



(Figure 9. based on total respondents 3080 of which 2034 indicated 'Disabled' or 'Not Disabled')

Availability of Part-Time Employment – Disability (Figure 10)



Race (Ethnic Origin)

The representation of race (ethnic groups) employed by the Council largely reflects the wider Highland population as described in the 2011 census. The 2022 census outcome is not yet known.

The Distribution of All Employees by Ethnic Group in Comparison with the Highland Population (Figure 11)

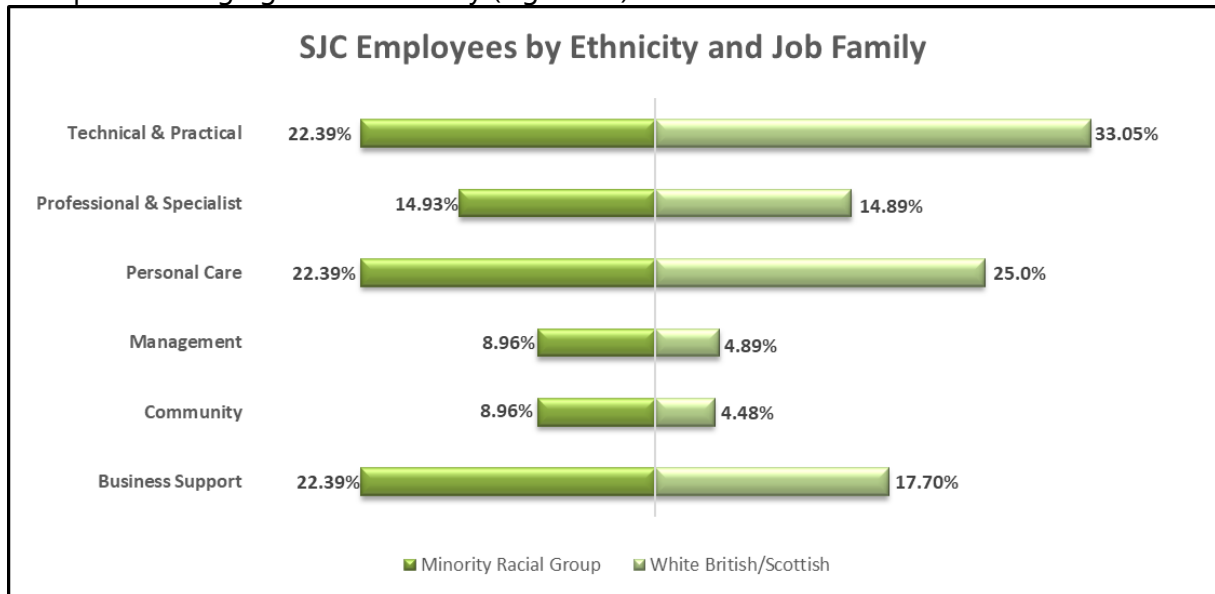
Ethnicity	No. of Employees	Highland Council 2023	Census 2011
Other Minority Ethnic Groups	10	0.42%	0.6%
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	7	0.30%	0.8%
Not Disclosed	21	0.89%	0.0%
White - Other British	280	11.81%	14.7%
White - Irish	13	0.55%	0.6%
White - Other	68	2.87%	2.0%
White - Polish	1	0.04%	1.5%
White - Scottish	1970	83.12%	79.9%
All Employees	2370		

Figure 11 should be viewed as an indicator only as it represents just under a quarter of the whole workforce. It is envisaged that, as employees are now completing their own equalities data, evidence of any trends that need to be analysed and addressed will be provided in the future.

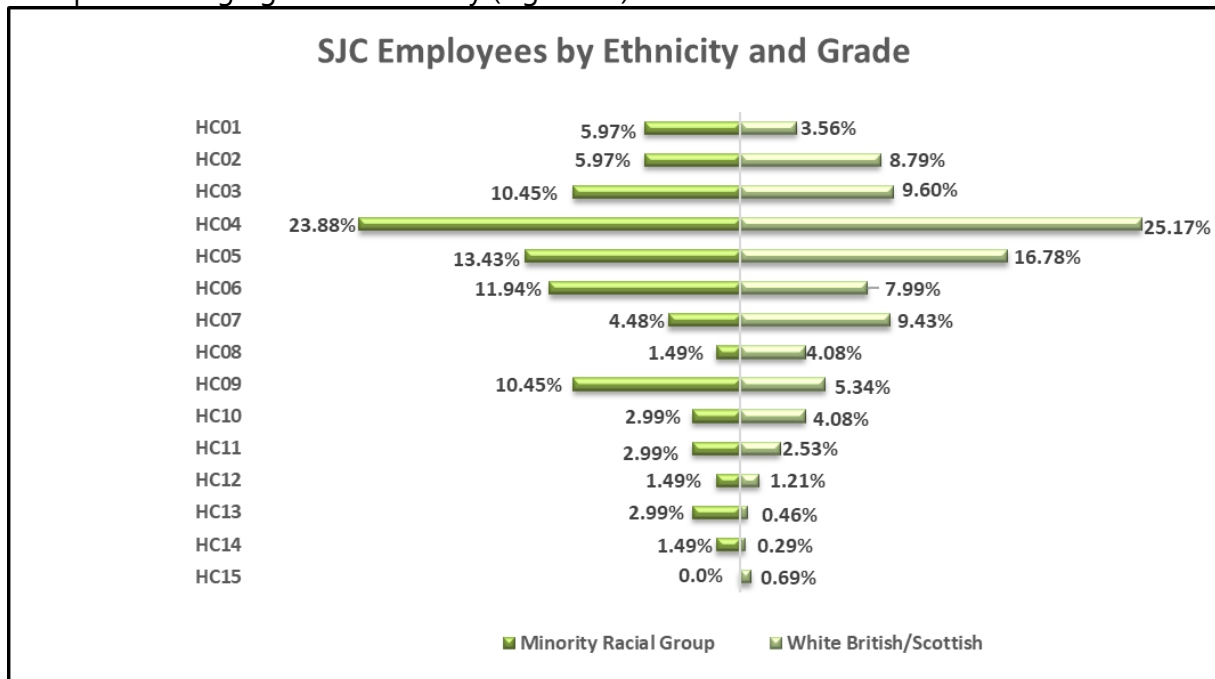
The Distribution of Employees Joining and Leaving the Council by Ethnic Group Jan – Dec 2022 (Figure 12)

	Starters	Leavers
Black & Minority Ethnic Groups	3	0
White Groups	89	268
Unknown	1342	1126
Total	1434	1394

Occupational Segregation – Ethnicity (Figure 13)



Occupational Segregation – Ethnicity (Figure 14)



Gender Reassignment

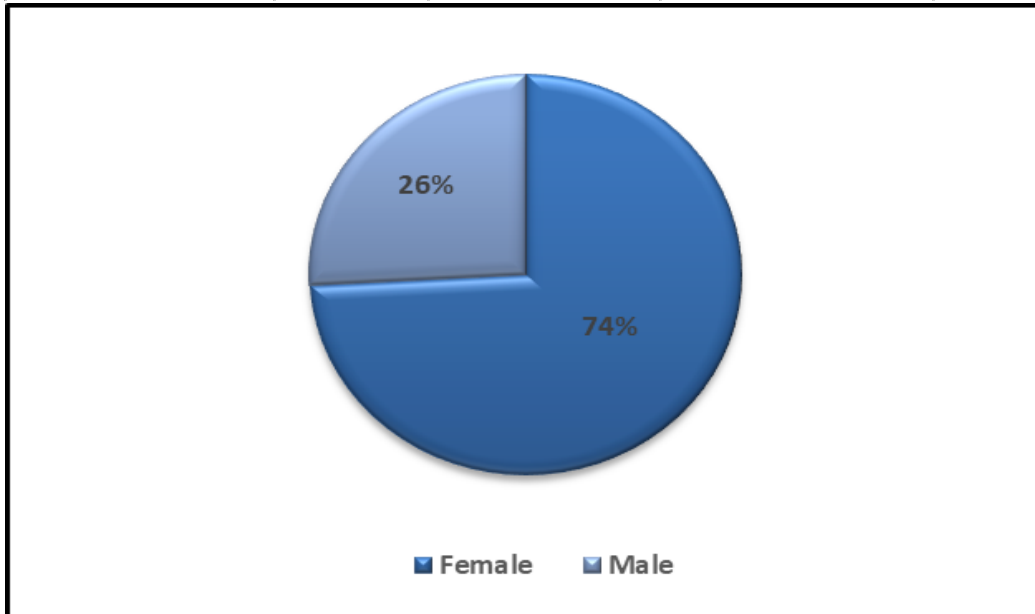
We do not currently hold data on gender reassignment and cannot be reported.

Sex (Gender)

Analysis of the data relating to sex (gender) shows a predominantly female workforce across the whole of the Council (74.1%). This is the case for both the SJC and teaching workforce.

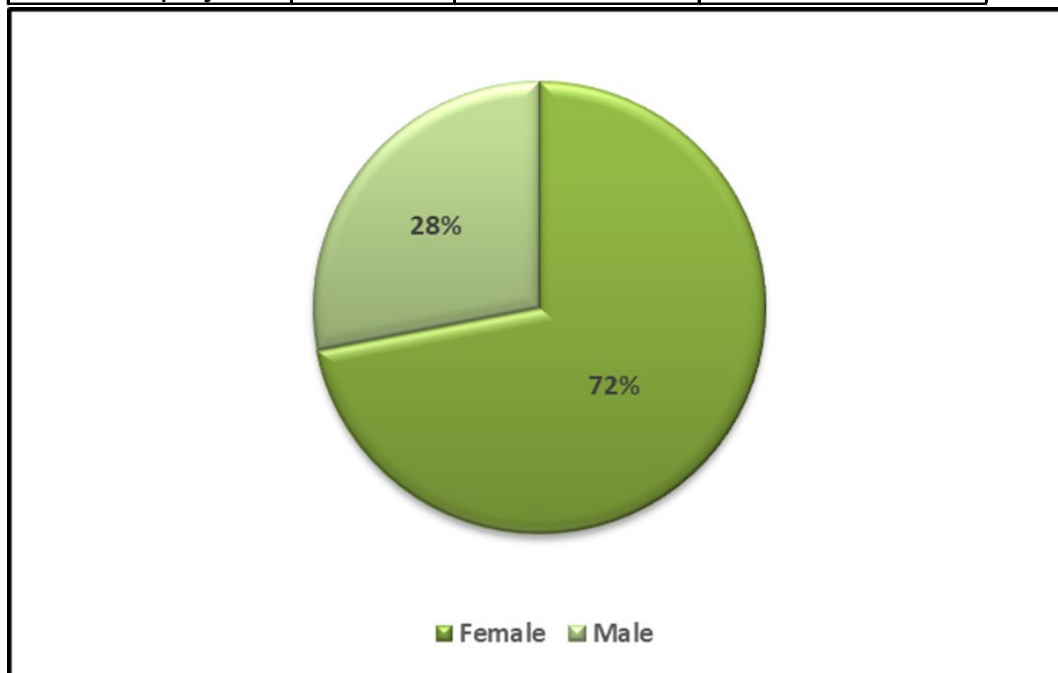
Distribution of All Employees by Sex (Figure 15)

Sex	Female	Male	Total
No. of employees	7919	2761	10680



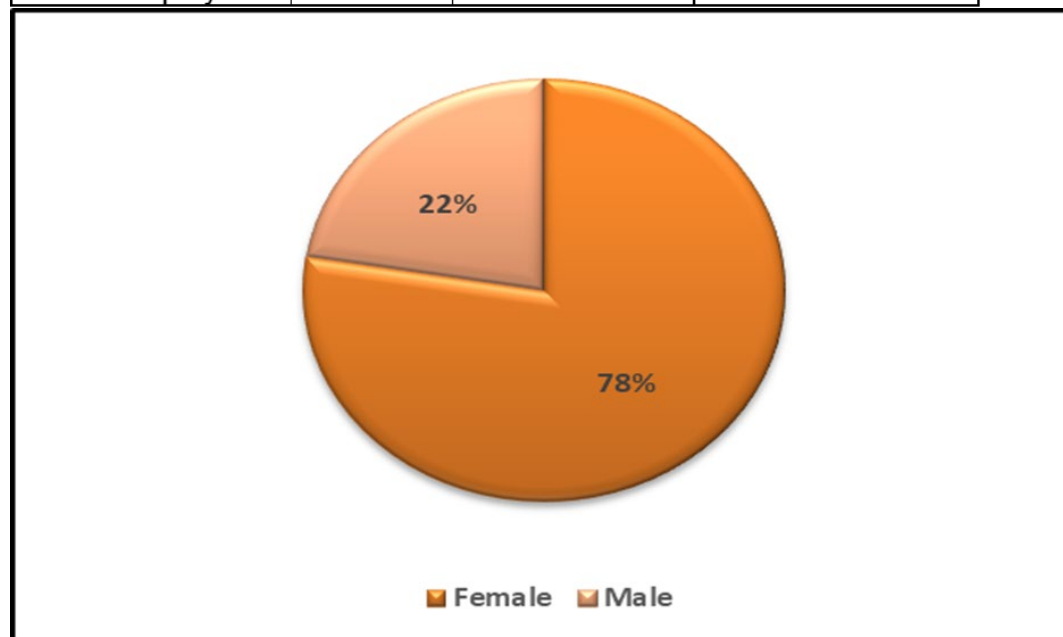
Distribution of Teachers by Sex (Figure 16)

Sex	Female	Male	Total
No. of employees	5312	2068	7380



Distribution of Scottish Joint Council (SJC) Employees by Sex (Figure 17)

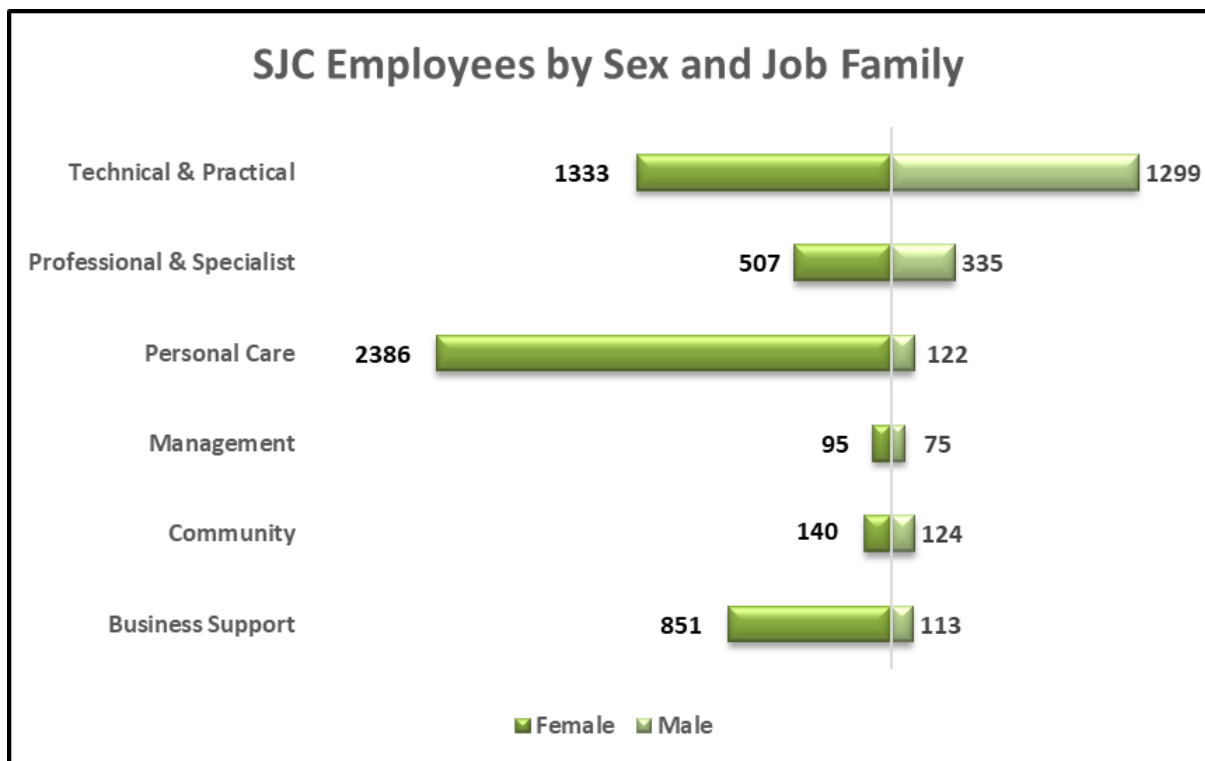
Sex	Female	Male	Total
No. of employees	2356	681	3037



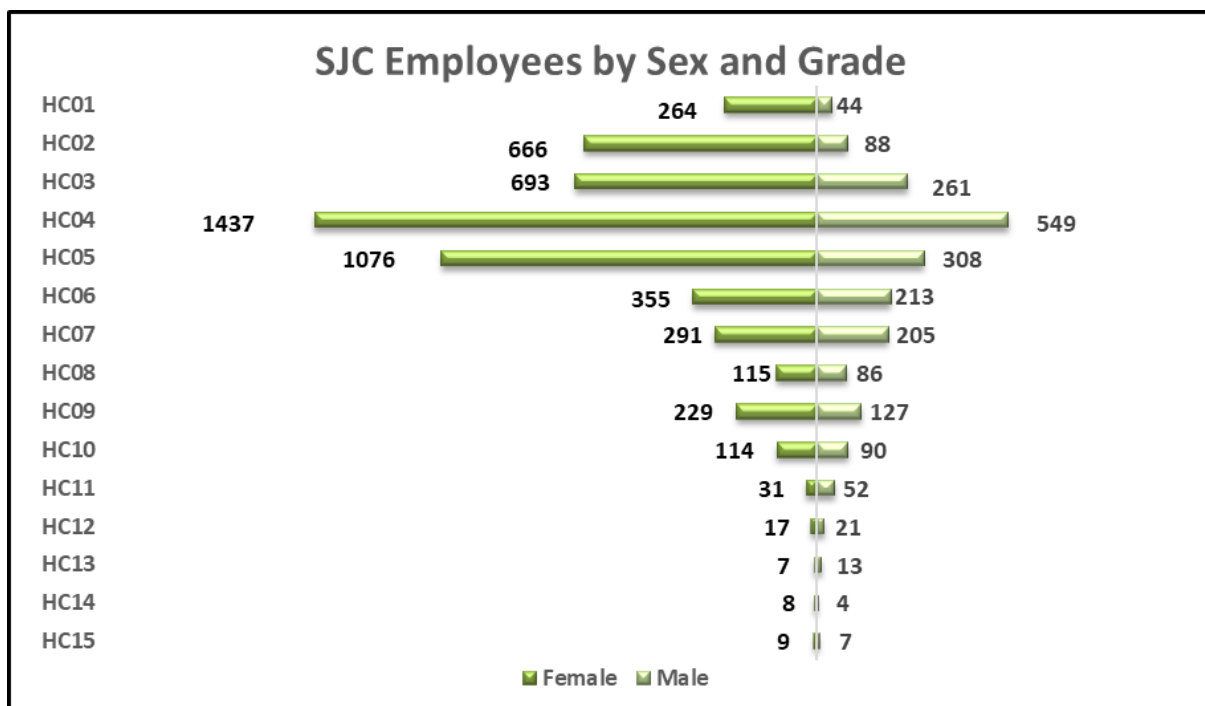
In relation to occupational segregation, the pattern of male and female employment is varied. Male and female employees are found in similar ratios across the job roles within Community, Technical & Practical and Management. Female employees are significantly overrepresented in Personal Care, Business Support and Professional & Specialist roles.

Care must be taken in drawing conclusions from the Technical & Practical group as horizontal segregation continues to persist with males working predominantly in community works roles and females working predominantly in catering, caring, and cleaning roles.

Occupational Segregation – Sex (Figure 18)

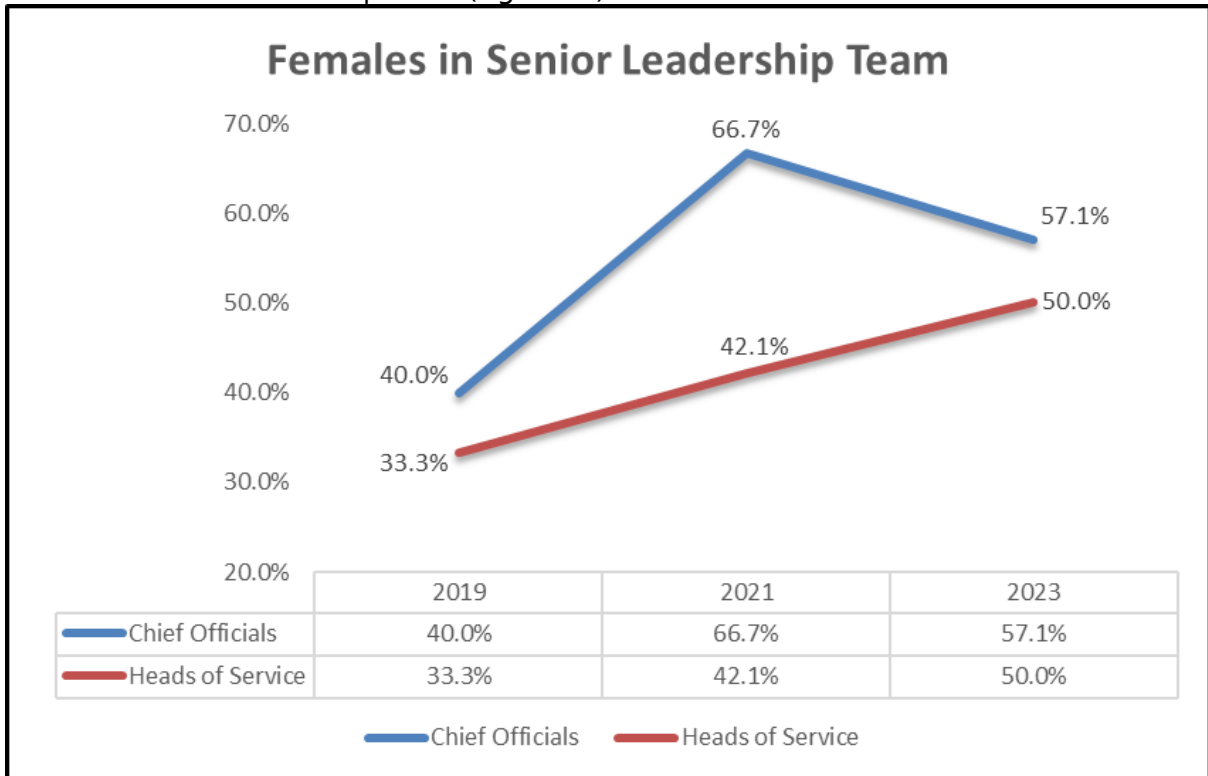


Occupational Segregation – Sex (Figure 19)



In 2023, 55.6% of the managers employed in SJC Management posts are women which does not evidence a significant difference between male and female in these roles.

Females in Senior Leadership Team (Figure 20)



Numbers in Senior Leadership Team								
Chief Officials	2019	2021	2023	Heads of Service	2019	2021	2023	
Female	2	6	4	Female	6	7	7	
Male	3	3	3	Male	12	9	7	
Total	5	9	7	Total	18	16	14	

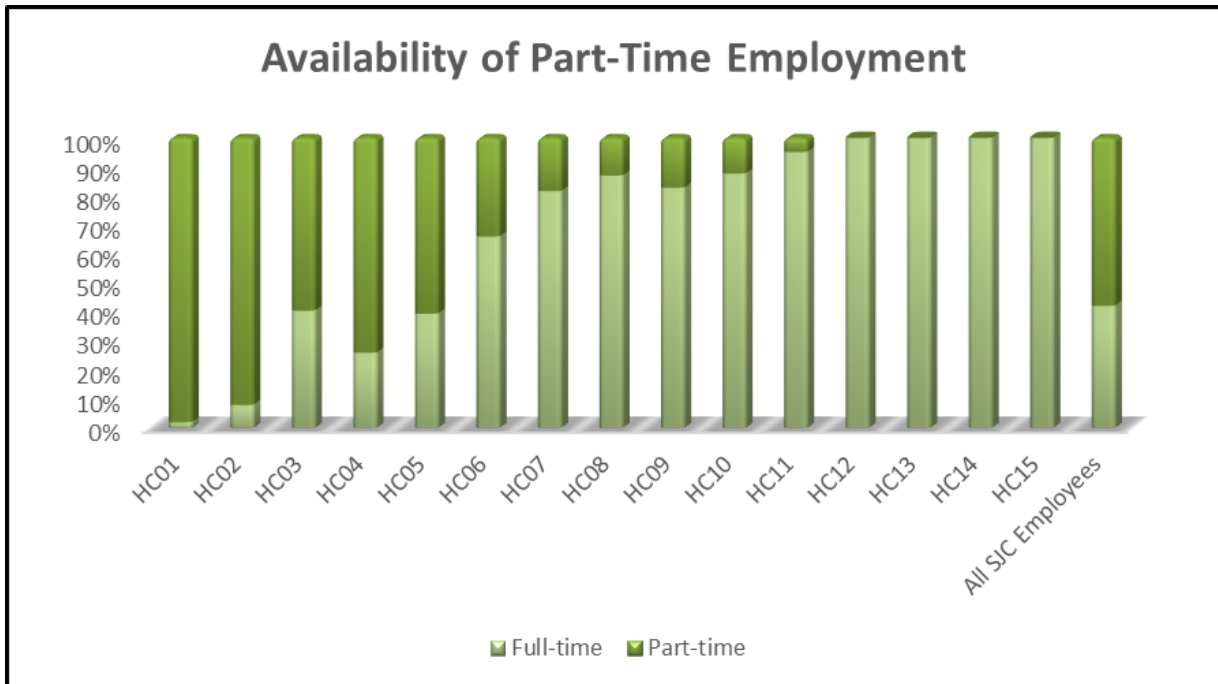
In 2023, 52.4% of the senior leadership team are women.

This is a 2.4% increase since 2021.

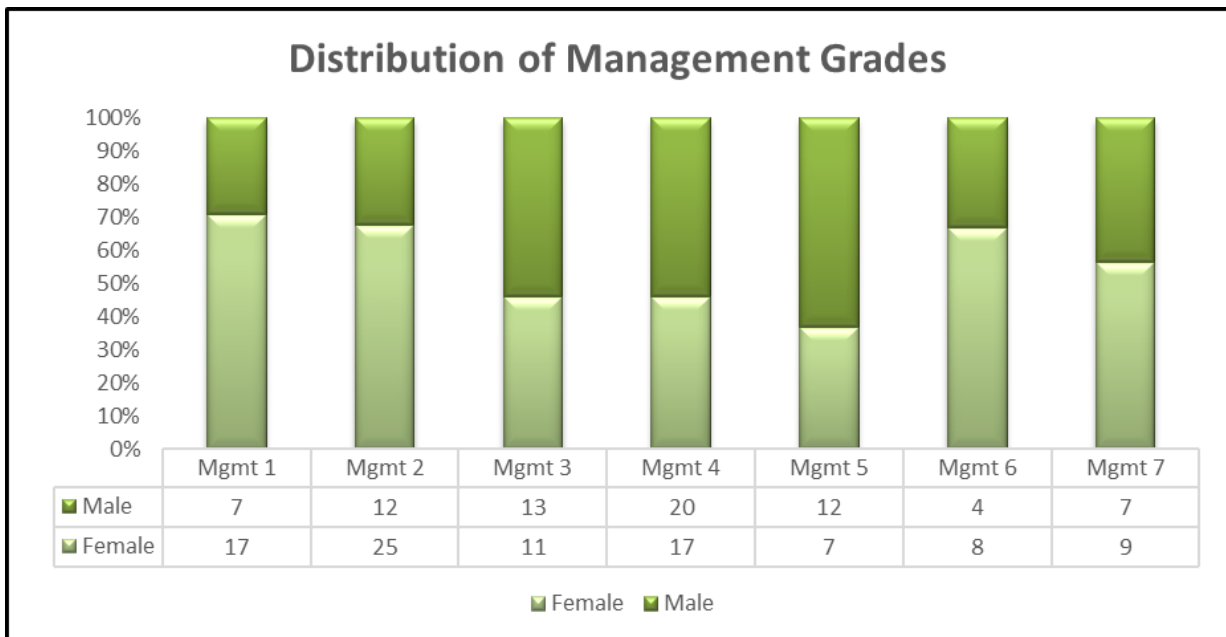
There are still significantly more opportunities for part time and term time working in the lower SJC grades (HC01 – 06).

Information and analysis of gender pay gaps is published separately.

Availability of Part-Time Employment – Sex (Figure 21)



Distribution of Management Grades – Sex (Figure 22)



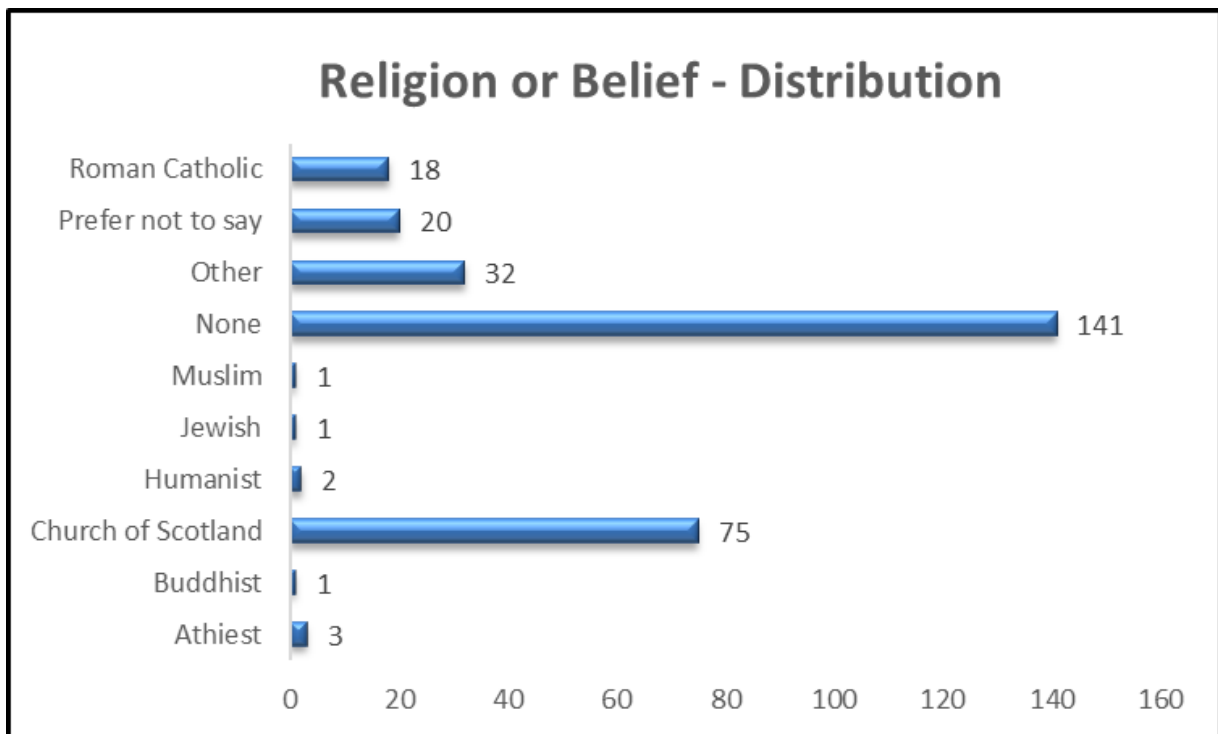
Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Marriage & Civil Partnership, Gender Reassignment & Pregnancy & Maternity

Our current workforce data for the additional protected characteristics, namely religion or belief, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership is limited.

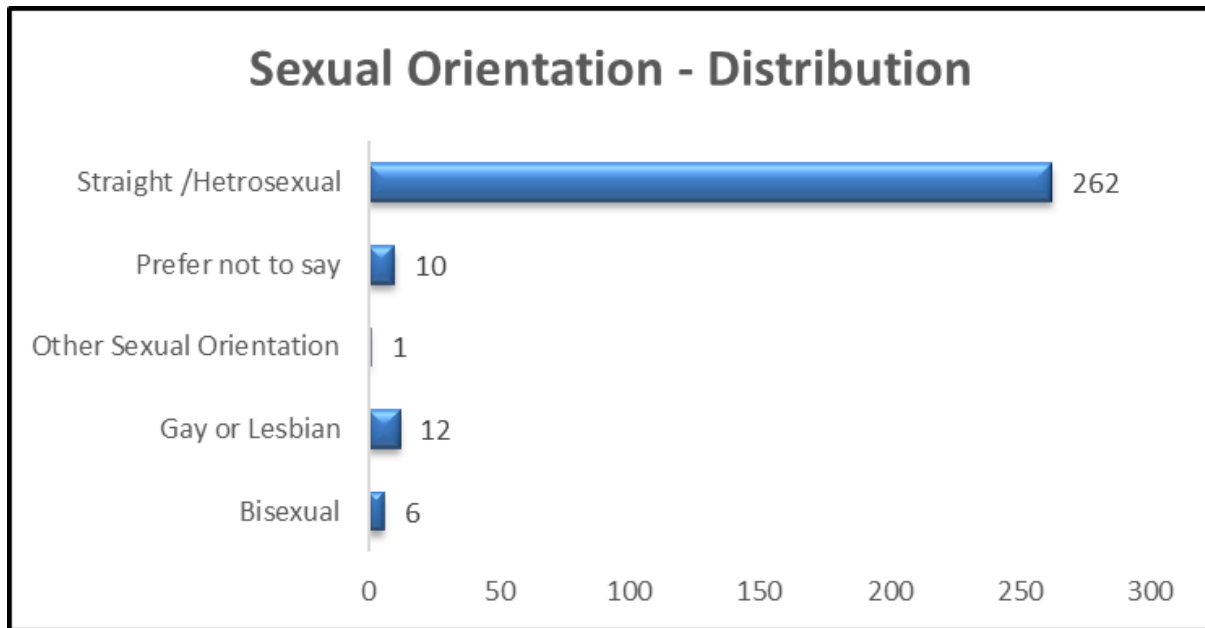
We do not currently hold any data for gender reassignment or pregnancy. However, we can report 3% of employees were on Maternity leave during 2022.

The tables below should be viewed as an indicator only as they represent less than 10% of the whole workforce. It is envisaged that as employees are now completing their own equalities data, evidence of any trends that need to be analysed and addressed will be provided in the future.

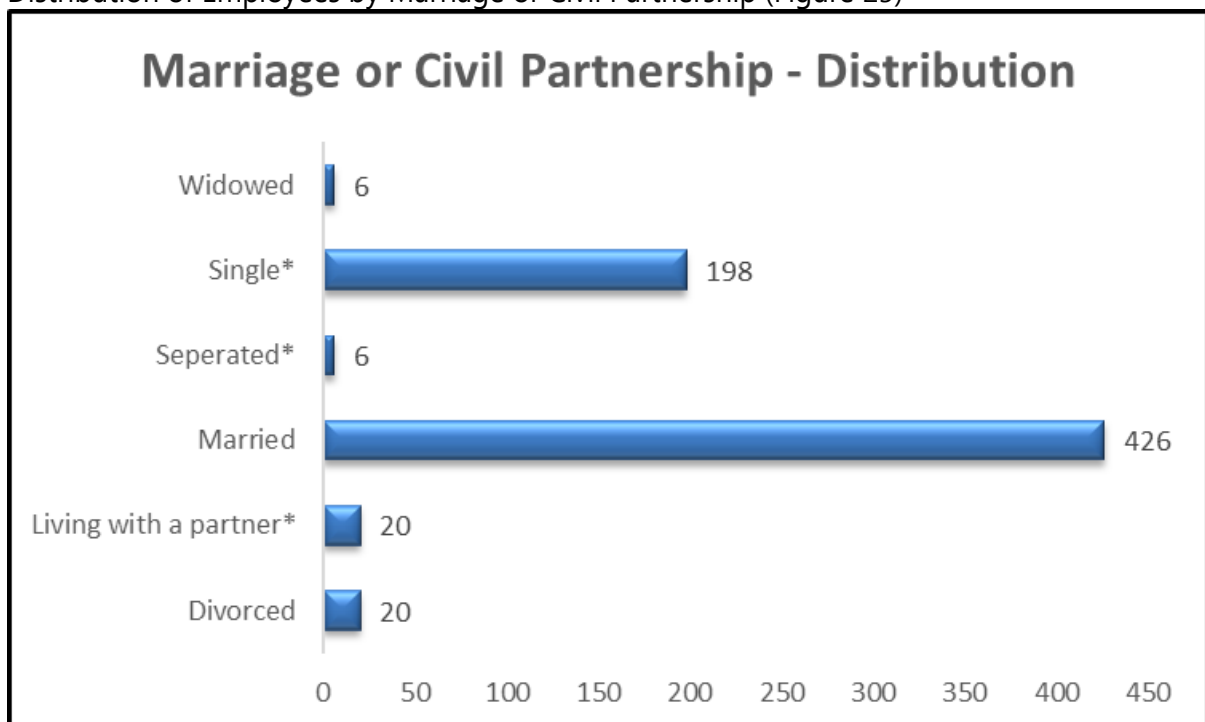
Distribution of Employees by Religion or Belief (Figure 23)



Distribution of Employees by Sexual Orientation (Figure 24)



Distribution of Employees by Marriage or Civil Partnership (Figure 25)



*Please note data in Figure 25 above is based on the categories collected prior to Census 2022

Gender Pay Gap 2023

2023	Combined Gap	Full Time Gap	Part Time Gap
All Employees	+4.5%	-15.8%	+20.8%
Non-Teaching Employees	+9.3%	-9.3%	+20.6%
Teaching Employees	+4.9%	+4.3%	+11.2%
SJC* Employees	+10.6%	-8.2%	+21.5%

*Scottish Joint Council (HC01 to HC15)

Note: A positive figure denotes a gap to the advantage of male employees. A negative figure denotes a gap to the advantage of female employees.

Average Hourly Rates 2023	Combined Gap		Full Time Gap		Part Time Gap	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
All Employees	£19.03	£18.18	£19.56	£22.65	£16.67	£15.50
Non-Teaching Employees	£16.07	£14.57	£16.62	£18.17	£13.51	£13.20
Teaching Employees	£28.07	£26.69	£28.71	£27.48	£25.46	£25.49
SJC* Employees	£16.00	£14.31	£16.55	£17.91	£13.47	£13.00

* Scottish Joint Council (HC01 to HC15)

Note: A positive figure denotes a gap to the advantage of male employees. A negative figure denotes a gap to the advantage of female employees.

1. Context

- 1.1** The main provisions of the Equality Act came into force on 1 October 2010. The Act brings together the previous strands of equality and discrimination legislation and aims to simplify and strengthen the law.
- 1.2** The Act also introduces a general duty on public bodies to give due regard in all their work for the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Specific duties introduced in Scotland in 2012 by Regulations require the Council to publish information on the Council's equal pay gap.

- 1.3** Guidance on meeting the requirements of the various duties is provided by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and supported by Close the Gap. Close the Gap is an organisation funded by the Scottish Government, working in partnership with the EHRC and the Scottish Trades Union Congress to guide and assist employers. All pay gap calculations are based on their guidance.
- 1.4** An organisation's gender pay gap is the difference between the average male and female pay rates.
- It is calculated by dividing the average female hourly pay rate by the average male hourly pay rate.
 - The full-time gender pay gap is the gap between the average hourly pay rate of female employees who work full time and male employees who work full time.
 - The part time gender pay gap is the gap between the average hourly pay rate of female employees who work part time and male employees who work full time.
- 1.5** The Council is required to publish the gender pay gap between male and female employees. It is also required to publish this data separately on employees in Education (Teaching employees). The EHRC and Close the Gap also strongly advise publishing separate full time and part time gender pay gaps.

It is considered that any pay gap of 5% or more is considered significant and in need of further analysis.

2. Gender Pay Gap

2.1 Background:

The 2021 Gender Pay Gap analysis identified the following equal Pay Gaps:

2021	Combined Gap	Full Time Gap	Part Time Gap
All employees	+5.0%	-18.0%	+23.2%
Non-Teaching employees	+11.1%	-9.6%	+22.5%
Teaching employees	+4.2%	+3.3%	+9.3%
SJC employees	+13.0%	-7.0%	+23.7%

* Scottish Joint Council (HC01 to HC15)

Note: A positive figure denotes a gap to the advantage of male employees. A negative figure denotes a gap to the advantage of female employees.

2.2 Analysis of this data suggested that:

- i. The Teacher pay and grading structure is robust and supports equal pay.
- ii. The Scottish Local Government Living Wage (SLGLW) has risen over recent years, which created compression in the lower grades within the Council's Pay & Grading Structure. The Council has now undertaken a pay modelling exercise to address this issue. At the time of reporting, the outcome of this model has not been reflected in the percentages, however it is expected with the revised pay model's inclusion there will be further improvements in the SJC pay gap when we review these figures at the end of 2023.
- iii. Significant workforce gender segregation in SJC Job Families (Business Support, Personal Care, Technical and Practical), Craft and Teaching posts correspond with significant part time pay gaps.
- iv. Lower availability of part time working in SJC grades HC6 and above corresponds with a significant SJC part time pay gap.
- v. Lower availability of part time working in promoted teaching grades corresponds with a Teaching part time pay gap.

2.3 Previous reports found that the following issues could contribute and impact the pay gaps.

- i. Vertical gender segregation (disproportionately low number of women in senior posts) in Teaching posts and in SJC Business Support and Management posts.
- ii. Horizontal gender segregation in teaching posts (disproportionately low number of women Head Teachers in Secondary Schools).
- iii. Lower uptake of part time working opportunities in senior teaching posts and in SJC posts graded HC06 and above.
- iv. Horizontal gender segregation (males in Community Works and females in Catering, Cleaning and Caring posts) within Technical & Practical posts.

2.4 A number of actions continue to be taken to address gender segregation and the availability of part time work in senior grades. For example:

- i. Female role models in male dominated job groups are encouraged within the structure.
- ii. Where service delivery allows, we have various policies in place to support employees achieve a work life balance. These include family friendly staff policies, flexible working opportunities and hybrid working.
- iii. Job Descriptions and Person Specifications continue to be monitored and reviewed to ensure that they contain no gender bias.
- iv. Services have reviewed workplace facilities to ensure that both genders are adequately provided for.
- v. Significant areas of gender segregation are monitored and reviewed to identify and address any barriers to employment. New system reporting software contained in TechnologyOne (the recently procured joint finance, HR and Payroll system) due to be implemented by 2025 will enable more robust reporting on this particular area.
- vi. Strategic workforce planning should help address and further promote flexible working arrangements that support women to progress their careers.
- vii. The Council is participating in the "Bronze" award of the programme run by Close the Gap (working towards Equally Safe at Work accreditation). Evidence required for this award includes a section on gender-disaggregated data gathering, aligned to the Equality & Human Rights Commission requirements.
- viii. Accreditation as a Living Wage Employer since 2019.

2.5 These actions demonstrate a general improvement in the Highland Council's gender equal pay gaps in the 2 years since the last report.

The 2023 gaps are as follows:

2023	Combined Gap	Full Time Gap	Part Time Gap
All Employees	+4.5%	-15.8%	+20.8%
Non-Teaching Employees	+9.3%	-9.3%	+20.6%
Teaching Employees	+4.9%	+4.3%	+11.2%
SJC* Employees	+10.6%	-8.2%	+21.5%

**Scottish Joint Council (HC01 to HC15)*

Note: A positive figure denotes a gap to the advantage of male employees. A negative figure denotes a gap to the advantage of female employees.

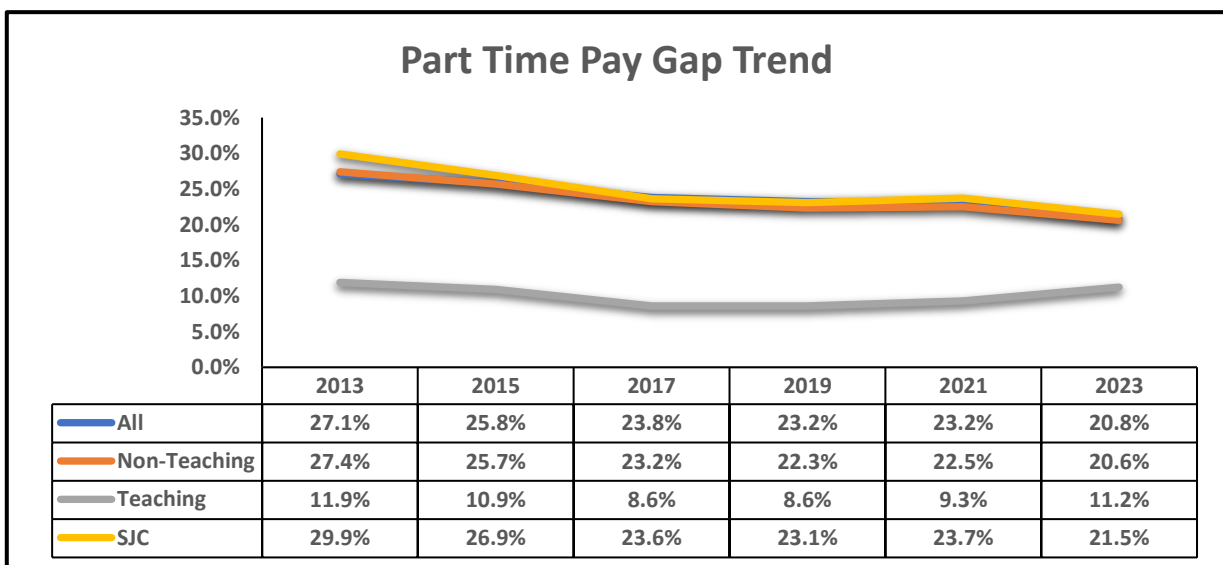
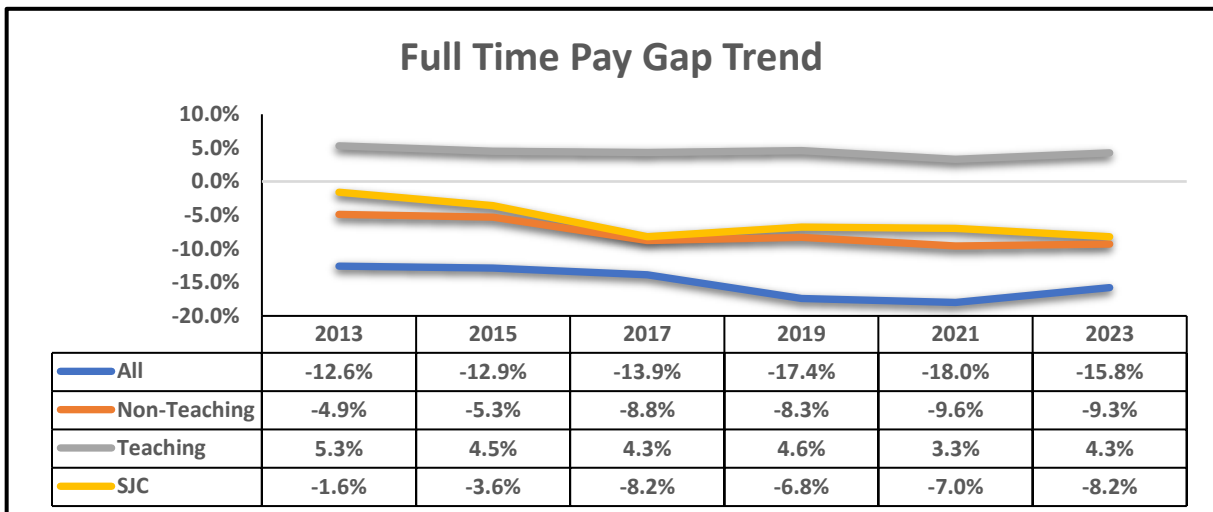
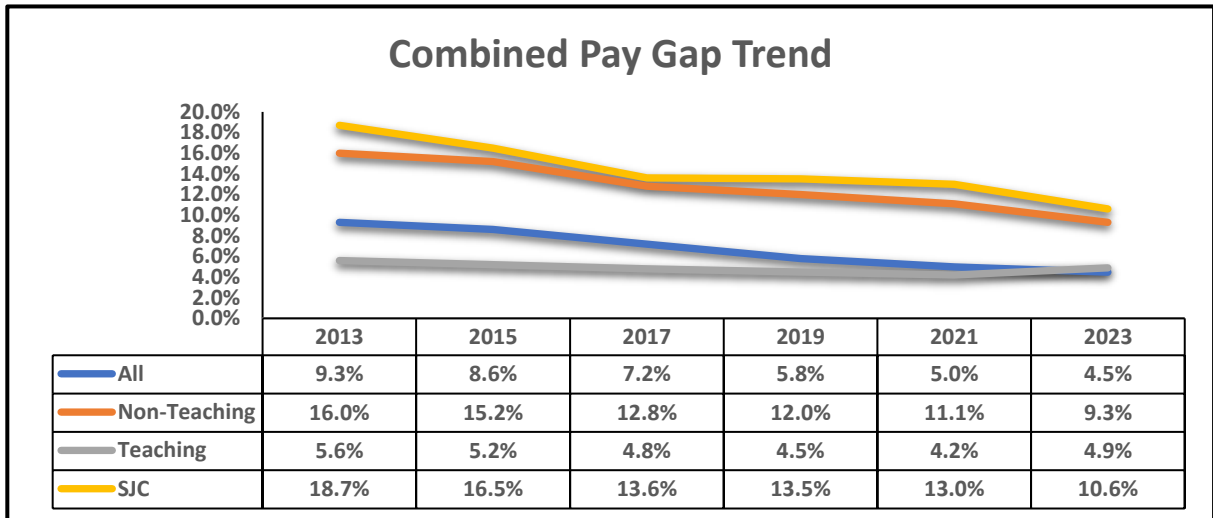
2.6 Improvements in these pay gaps over the period 2021-2023 are as follows:

Improvements 2021 - 2023	Combined Gap	Full Time Gap	Part Time Gap
All Employees	0.5%	2.2%	2.4%
Non-Teaching Employees	1.8%	0.3%	1.9%
Teaching Employees	-0.7%	-1.0%	-1.9%
SJC* Employees	2.4%	-1.2%	2.3%

** Scottish Joint Council (HC01 to HC15)*

Note: A positive figure denotes a gap to the advantage of male employees. A negative figure denotes a gap to the advantage of female employees.

2.7 Trends in the Council's gender pay gaps since they were first recorded in 2013 are set out below.



2.8 The Council's pay gaps are interesting in that the full time pay gaps generally benefit women. The part time pay gaps for all employees are more in line with what would be expected given the composition of our workforce. This marked difference between the full time and part time gaps suggests that one of the underlying reasons for the combined gap is the greater availability of part time and term time work in the lower pay grades.

2.9 Median Pay Gap

The median pay gap is calculated and based on all employees

2023 Median Pay Gap	Female	Male	Gap
Combined Gap	£14.78	£16.69	+11.4%
Full Time Gap	£23.21	£16.91	-37.3%
Part Time Gap	£13.25	£16.91	+21.6%

Highland Council do not pay bonus. Allowances are based on hourly rates already analysed in the hourly pay gaps.

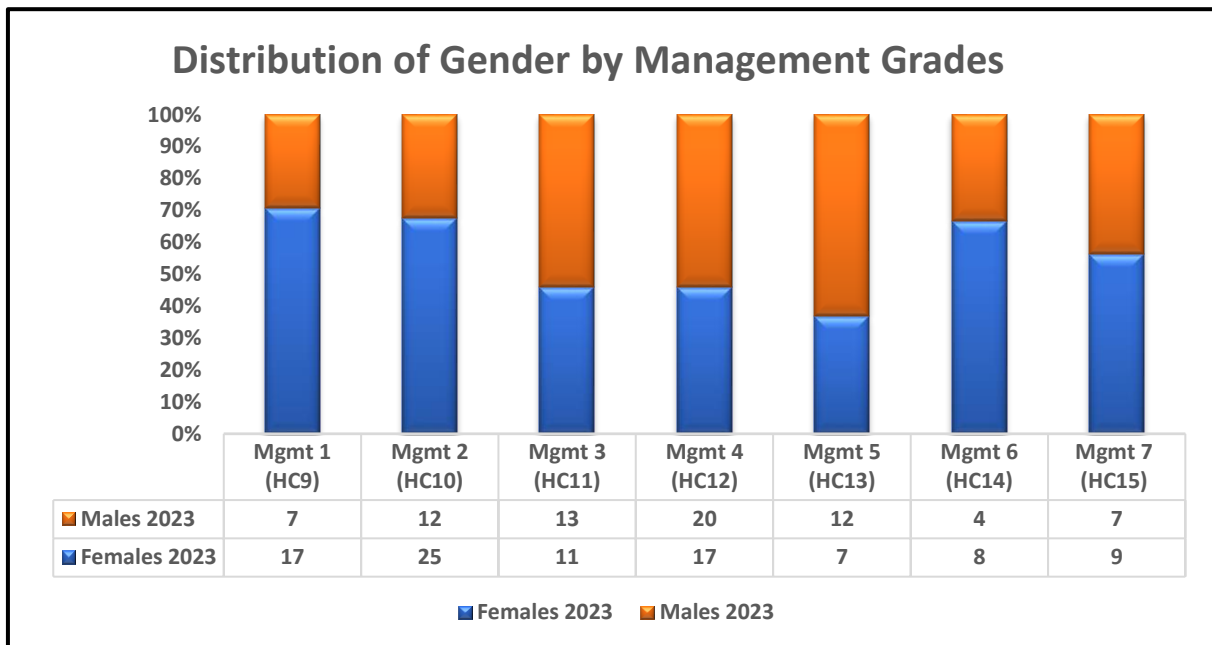
The proportion of men and women in each pay quartile is as follows:

Quartile	Male	Female
Q1	25.8%	74.2%
Q2	31.1%	68.9%
Q3	24.7%	75.3%
Q4	21.8%	78.2%

3. Women in Management

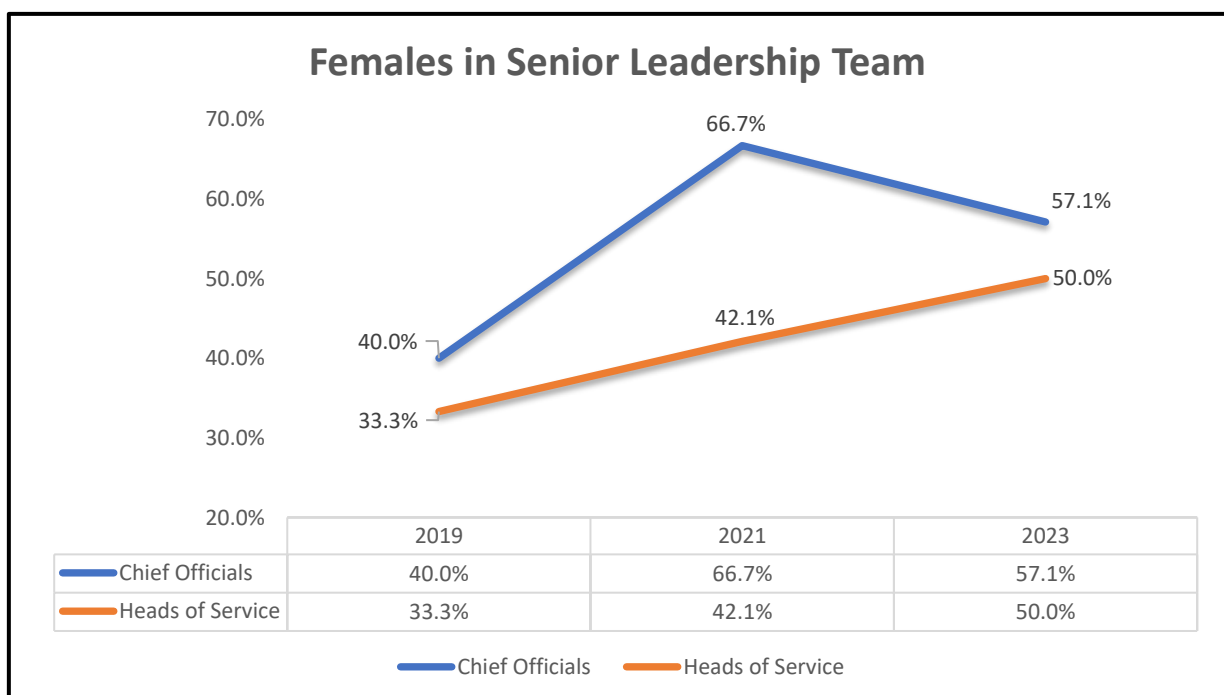
3.1 The combined pay gap relating to all SJC Management employees graded HC9 to HC15 has reduced year on year and is now at 3.6%.

3.2 In 2023, 55.6% of the managers employed in SJC Management posts are women. This is a 2.4% increase since 2021.



3.3 Senior Leadership Team

In 2023, 52.4% of the senior leadership team (Heads of Service and Chief Officials) are women. Since 2021, although the number of Chief Officials has reduced, overall there is an upward trend of 2.4%.



4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Although significant improvements are in evidence since the first Equal Pay Report in 2013, it is imperative to maintain momentum. This will be particularly important going forward as the gaps could be impacted by the current cost of living crisis, ongoing recovery post covid and the continued evolving workforce composition.

A review of strategic workforce planning is ongoing with recommended actions driving change in how the organisation designs and develops roles to meet future service requirements. The distribution of the workforce is extensive, with a significant percentage of employees working out with the Council's Inverness Headquarters.

Hybrid and Remote ways of working have evolved and increased thus providing opportunities for flexibility with the potential to effect gender segregation within roles.


Ongoing monitoring of our pay structure, policies and recruitment processes should continue to have a positive impact on future gender pay gap reporting.



Human Resources
Goireasan Daonna

Equal Pay Statement 2023

Aithris Pàighidh Co-ionann



This statement, taken together with our Equality in Employment Policy, sets out The Highland Council's commitment to ensuring that our pay systems are fair and equitable for all our employees

It is in the interest of the Council to ensure that it has equitable pay, grading and benefits structures which do not discriminate unlawfully across any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.

By having a fair and transparent pay system that aims to identify and eliminate any potential pay discrimination, we believe that the Council sends a positive message to its employees and the Highland community. This not only helps demonstrate our role as a fair employer, but it also makes good business sense and helps the Council to manage costs.

It is important that our employees have confidence in the Council's pay structures and the Council is committed to achieving this through consultation with employees and the recognised trade unions.

The Council recognises that occupational segregation in the workforce may have a negative effect on equal pay gaps. The Council is committed to monitoring and analysing areas of occupational segregation and implementing actions to address these. Information on our employee data in relating to workforce segregation can be found in our [Equalities in Employment Monitoring Report \(link once approved\)](#).

Previous analysis of pay data suggests that the greater availability of part time work in senior grades could have a positive impact on pay gaps. The Council is committed to taking action to achieve this.


The Council's objectives are to:

- Monitor the application of its pay and grading systems. This includes monitoring gender pay gaps, occupational segregation (both vertical and horizontal segregation) and the availability of part time and flexible working arrangements at all levels in the organisation.
- Identify and take appropriate remedial action to eliminate any unfair, unjust or unlawful practices that impact on pay
- Promote equality of opportunity and the principles of equal pay throughout the workforce



The Council will:

- Operate a pay strategy for Scottish Joint Council (SJC) employees that ensures equal pay for work of equal value and single status terms and conditions of employment for remuneration. Former craft workforce are remunerated under SCJ rates and conditions.
- Apply the agreed job sizing arrangements for the grades and pay of teachers and incorporate SNCT agreements locally through LNCT bargaining process.
- Operate a Flexible Working Policy that opens opportunities to all employees across the pay grades.
- Appoint on merit, properly assessing the abilities of candidates for recruitment and promotion.
- Take positive action to support employees within underrepresented groups where occupational segregation exists.
- Provide training and development to support employees to develop their careers where barriers may exist.
- Develop a culture that supports employees to achieve their full potential.
- Review and plan actions to provide equal pay with recognised trade unions in line with Engagement and Partnership Framework.
- Fully integrate the Real Living Wage in line with recent government guidance for Public Sector which has resulted in a revised pay and grading model (effective April 2021).
- Provide appropriate training and guidance on equal pay for those involved in determining pay and grading matters in terms of job evaluation, new appointments, progression, grievances and providing advice.
- Ensure employees understand how their pay is determined through effective communication and the administration of fair and transparent pay systems.

- 
- In consultation with relevant trade unions, conduct regular equal pay reviews within the council and thereby:
 - identify and understand the reasons for any differences in pay within and between employee groups.
 - take action to eliminate pay gaps/ differences that cannot satisfactorily be explained on grounds other than those relating to a protected characteristic.

Complaints

We will respond to grievances on equal pay in accordance with the Council's Grievance Policy.

Monitoring and Review

The Council will review, and where necessary revise, this Equal Pay statement and actions at least every 4 years and in accordance with the publication requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. The next statement review will be due in 2027.

Every two years, the Council will publish data on its pay gap information, occupational segregation, and employee equality data as part of the council's Equality Mainstreaming Report

On behalf of the Executive Leadership team, the Council's Head of People is responsible for the implementation and review of all policy related to pay and benefits.