

Diversity impact assessment

Appendix 3

TITLE
Workforce Report 2025/26
DATE
1 September 2026
LEAD OFFICER.
Lesley Jones, EDI Lead
1 Summary description of the proposed change
What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed? How does it compare with the current situation?
The Workforce Report 2025/26 provides an annual overview of Medway Council's workforce composition, recruitment, retention, turnover, sickness absence and equality monitoring information. The report supports the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty by monitoring workforce representation, identifying emerging workforce trends and assessing progress against equality objectives. The report identifies a number of positive developments during 2025/26, including workforce growth, reductions in turnover, reductions in first-year turnover and improvements in sickness absence. It also identifies areas requiring further improvement, including equality data quality, workforce planning, succession planning and the monitoring of equality outcomes. A Workforce Report Action Plan has been developed to address these findings.
2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment.
Eg: Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user. Eg: Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile
The assessment is based on workforce data covering the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, including: • Workforce headcount and FTE data. • Recruitment, retention and turnover analysis. • Sickness absence monitoring. • Workforce equality monitoring across protected characteristics. • Workforce representation compared with Medway population data. • Existing workforce governance and equality monitoring arrangements. Key findings include: • Workforce headcount increased from 3,064 to 3,330 employees. • Turnover reduced from 12.7% to 9.7%. • First-year turnover reduced from 29.8% to 27.3%. • Sickness absence reduced from 10.46 to 9.97 days per FTE. • Ethnic minority representation remained broadly aligned with the Medway population. • Declaration rates reduced for ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation, affecting equality data quality.

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3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age		x	x
Disability		x	x
Gender reassignment		x	x
Marriage/civil partnership		x	x
Pregnancy/maternity		x	x
Race		x	x
Religion/belief		x	x
Sex		x	x
Sexual orientation		x	x
Care experience		x	x
Other (eg low-income groups)		x	x

4 Summary of the likely impacts

Who will be affected?

How will they be affected?

The report itself does not introduce changes to policy, terms and conditions or employment practices. However, the workforce monitoring and associated action plan support the identification of inequalities, improvement of workforce representation and development of evidence-based workforce interventions.

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The Workforce Report is intended to have a positive impact across all protected characteristic groups by improving understanding of workforce representation and equality outcomes. It supports compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and enables the Council to identify potential barriers, monitor workforce diversity, improve workforce data quality and develop targeted improvement activity where required.

The report also provides evidence to support workforce planning, recruitment, retention and wellbeing activity, helping to ensure that employment practices remain fair, transparent and inclusive.

5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?

Are there alternative providers?

Can demand for services be managed differently?

The report identifies several actions that will contribute to improving equality and workforce inclusion:

- Improve equality declaration rates and workforce data quality.
- Strengthen recruitment and onboarding arrangements.
- Improve employee retention and first-year turnover.
- Enhance workforce planning and succession planning.
- Increase understanding of equality outcomes across protected characteristics.
- Continue monitoring workforce diversity and representation.
- Strengthen workforce wellbeing support and attendance management.

6 Action plan

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Implement and monitor the Workforce Report Action Plan accompanying the Workforce Report 2025/26. The action plan includes measures to improve equality data quality, strengthen workforce planning and succession planning, improve recruitment and retention outcomes, enhance employee wellbeing, improve workforce diversity and develop equality outcomes monitoring.	EDI Lead / HR Service	Monitored throughout 2026/27, reported through existing workforce governance arrangements

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7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence.

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

Proceed with publication of the Workforce Report 2025/26 and implementation of the Workforce Report Action Plan.

The assessment identifies no adverse impacts arising from publication of the report. The report supports the Council's equality duties by improving workforce intelligence, monitoring workforce representation and identifying actions to improve equality outcomes, workforce inclusion and organisational effectiveness.

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

Assistant Director / Strategic Service Manager

Sam Beck-Farley

Date of authorisation