

## **Maldon District Council: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion annual report**

January 2024



### **1. Introduction**

To ensure transparency and to assist in the performance of the public sector equality duty, the Equality Act 2010 [Specific Duties] Regulations 2011 requires public authorities to publish information to demonstrate compliance annually and to publish equality objectives at least every four years.

Having the right equality information helps local authorities to understand the composition and potential needs of its community. Making use of that information also helps councils to identify what steps need to be taken to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010.

### **2. Our Population**

The population of Maldon District as of 2021 was 66,600

The population of the district between the ages of 16-64 as at 2021 was 39,100. The jobs density, i.e., the ratio of total jobs to population aged 16-64 for the district as of 2022 was 0.70, a total of 27,000 jobs available to its residents. The total jobs include employees, self-employed, government-supported trainees, and HM Forces.

Source: [Nomis – Official Labour market Statistics](#).

### **3. Our Community and Having Due Regard to the Equality Duty**

#### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

We recognise and value the diversity of our residents as well as those who choose to work and who visit the district. The Council is committed to continue to look to build an inclusive workplace, promoting EDI through its business functions and work to ensure that people are treated fairly and that everyone can live, learn and relax in the district.

The Council recognises that it serves our employees and customers but also works to engage its communities to deliver positive change in the district. The policy has three specific focuses:

- Our workforce
- Our customers
- Our communities

#### **Equality, Diversity, Inclusion objectives**

The following objectives are set out within the policy; the Council will achieve its vision by delivering against each of these:

**Objective 1:** We will identify the ways to improve our workforce data collection which will be used to inform policy development and workforce strategy.

**Objective 2:** We will provide learning opportunities for our workforce and our Members to develop a wider understanding of our communities and their diverse needs

**Objective 3:** As officers and Members we will improve our knowledge of, and our contact with, all communities and ensure that communities can continue to be involved in decision making processes.

The policy for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) is reviewed annually to ensure our objectives are met and to consider revising objectives for the following year.

An internal audit was carried out in 2023, which has reviewed EDI status at the Council. Areas to consider were highlighted and an action plan was developed with recommendations.

The role of internal EDI champions is being developed to support and actively promote activities within the organisation through identifying learning and development opportunities.

#### **Protected Characteristic: All**

- All new employees are required to complete an Introduction to Equality & Diversity learning package.
- The Council utilises its public facing engagement platforms, including our website, Facebook, Nextdoor and Instagram, to raise the profile of EDI through communication campaigns.
- In 2023 the Council provided training on neurodiversity, to enable managers and staff to support their colleagues and raise awareness within the workplace.

#### **Protected Characteristic: Age**

- The Council provides equal opportunities for development and training to all employees and roles, regardless of age.
- No roles within the organisation have a compulsory retirement age, protecting the ageing workforce to continue employment through choice and ability.
- The Council supports flexible working arrangements for employees by adopting flexible retirement practices within the provision of the Local Government Pension Scheme, helping to retain the knowledge, skills, and experience of long serving and valuable employees.
- The Council is a partner in the Maldon Livewell Partnership Board. The group is an operational group that has a purpose of improving health and wellbeing in the Maldon district. The board is comprised of a range of delivery partners working together to address the health priorities of Maldon residents.
- The Council is a partner in One Maldon District. One Maldon District is a senior level partnership, working together to ensure a healthier and prosperous District. This seeks to maximise collaboration to ensure there is an abundance of opportunities for enhanced health, wellbeing, community safety and feeling of safety within communities across the district.
- StartWell and AgeWell are two key components of the Livewell group which look to reduce health inequalities by ensuring children have the best start in life and that older adults can lead a healthy lifestyle.
- Maldon District Council administers various projects through the Livewell Grant scheme to improve physical health, mental health and combat social and rural isolation and reduce loneliness.
- The Council provides free office accommodation for the charity Homestart which provides support for young families.
- It is also part of the Mid Essex Be Well subgroup which focuses on healthy lifestyles around food for children.
- The **Mid Essex Children's Partnership Board (MECPB)** has invited Maldon District Council to a meeting that will be discussing the future remit of its work. At this meeting we will discuss with key partners the relevance and need for a Maldon Youth Strategy group within the context of getting a better collective understanding the MECPB's strategic remit. The meeting is scheduled to take place in Quarter 1.

### **Protected Characteristic: Pregnancy and Maternity**

- The Council offices is a Breast-Feeding friendly site. This enables new and nursing mothers to breast feed within the Council premises with confidence and in a relaxed and comfortable environment, where office-working is applicable.
- Maternity and Adoption Leave Pay Policy and Procedure ensures that pregnant women and those who have just given birth are treated fairly. The inclusion of adoption within this policy ensures that all sexes are eligible for adoption leave, advancing equality of opportunity for people within same sex partnerships.

### **Protected Characteristic: Sexuality and Transgender**

- The Council flies the Rainbow flag each year to celebrate Essex Pride and also marks the Transgender Day of Remembrance, which honours the memory of those whose lives were lost or who suffered as a result of anti-transgender violence. The Council flies the Transgender Remembrance flag as a sign of respect.
- Corporate messages ensure employees email signatures are regularly updated to promote relevant topics during the year.
- The Council enables equal opportunity in all aspects of employment.
- Job specifications are limited to the requirements only necessary for the effective performance of the job.
- One Maldon District (OMD) hosted LGBTQI+ workshops in 2023. OMD partners are reflecting on completion of this action as part of evaluating OMD's performance against its action plan for 2023.24. Future actions to ensure sustained commitment from OMD partners in becoming visibly more open and supportive to the LGBTQI+ community will be agreed at the end of Quarter 1.
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### **Protected characteristic: Disability**

- Some employees have been trained as mental health first aiders, to recognise signs of mental ill health in colleagues and can offer help and advice. Similarly, some staff have been trained in helping customers and colleagues who are at risk of taking their own lives and can help with suicide prevention.
- In 2023 the Council achieved Level 2 Disability Confident Employer following several core actions around recruitment, training, retention, consultation, and disability awareness.
- Offering a Guaranteed Interview Scheme and adjustments to the recruitment process as requested.
- Maldon District Council is a member of the Maldon District Dementia Friendly Community which works collaboratively to build a dementia friendly community.
- Maldon District Council is supporting those suffering with Dementia having been awarded accreditation by the Alzheimer's Society and Maldon District Dementia Friendly Community to show that it is "Working to Become a Dementia-Friendly Community". The process to become a fully dementia friendly community can take several years. The Council has therefore developed an action plan which sets out what it will do to increase opportunities for people affected by dementia to access local services and the wider community.
- The Council provided Dementia Training during 2022/23 for both its Councillors and staff to increase awareness of how dementia can affect people.

- Maldon District Council has been awarded £100,000 to provide two new Changing Places toilets in the district.

#### **Protected characteristic: Race**

- The Council has continued to support an array of awareness raising events through its internal and external engagement platforms.
- The Council enables equal opportunity in all aspects of employment.

#### **Protected characteristic: Religion**

- Maldon District Council is a member of the Essex Faith Covenant. The aim of the covenant is for different religious groups, along with the public sector, to work together to strengthen community cohesion and tackle social isolation.

### **4. Our Employees**

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires that public authorities publish information about their employees to show that they understand the key equality issues around the workforce and can make decisions accordingly.

The Council collects certain personal information to enable it to monitor equal opportunities to ensure an awareness of the protected characteristics of its workforce. A summary of this is provided below. Due to the time of publication of this document, statistics are provided for the first two quarters of the current and last financial years for comparators.

#### **Headcount by Gender**

		Q1		Q2	
		23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23
<b>Female</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	129	135	134	134
	<b>FTE</b>	108	115	113	112
	<b>% Workforce</b>	61%	61%	63%	61%
<b>Male</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	81	86	78	86
	<b>FTE</b>	80	83	77	82
	<b>% Workforce</b>	39%	39%	37%	39%
<b>Total</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	210	221	212	220
	<b>FTE</b>	188	198	190	194

#### **Working styles by gender (headcount)**

	Q1		Q2			Q1		Q2	
	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23		23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23
<b>Female</b>					<b>Male</b>				
Full Time	72	80	75	79	Full Time	74	77	72	80
Part Time	56	55	59	57	Part Time	9	7	6	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>85</b>

#### **Ethnic Group (headcount)**

	Q1		Q2	
	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23
White British	154	164	158	161
White English	34	40	35	41
Other/Unspecified	8	3	3	4

White Irish, White Scottish, White Welsh, Mixed White & Asian, Mixed White & Black, Bangladeshi, Asian, Asian British, Pakistani, Chinese, Chinese British. Other Ethnic Chinese, Mixed White & Black Caribbean, Black, Black British African, Black Caribbean, Mixed White & Black African, prefer not to say	14	16	16	14
Total	210	223	212	220