

Workforce Report 2025

Introduction

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, Suffolk County Council must, when exercising its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 requires the Council to publish information at least annually to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. As the Council employs more than 150 people, that information must include workforce equality information. This report supports those statutory requirements by providing evidence to inform transparent, accountable decision-making and the Council's consideration of equality in its employment practices.

Data Scope and Approach

The workforce data is a snapshot on 31 December 2025 and covers 6,144 employees.

Broad categories are used to provide a clear public overview and reduce the risk of identifying individuals. "Not disclosed" figures are included to demonstrate the completeness and limitations of the data sets.

The report presents available information for characteristics protected under the Equality Act, where there is a defined statutory requirement to record them including age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Recording sex

On 16 April 2025, the UK Supreme Court gave judgment in *For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers*. The Court clarified that, for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, the terms "sex", "woman" and "man" refer to biological sex, and that possession of a Gender Recognition Certificate does not change a person's sex for the purposes of that Act. The protected characteristic of gender reassignment remains protected under the Equality Act 2010.

The sex data presented in this report is based on the "legal sex" information currently held by the Council. To support future monitoring of the protected characteristic of sex, the Council intends to introduce a separate field to record biological sex.

Future reports will clearly explain the basis of the sex data used. Once the biological sex field is available and data is sufficiently complete, reporting will be based on biological sex rather than legal sex.

Workforce Profile

The table below provides the Council's headline workforce profile. Percentages are rounded and may not total 100% because of rounding.

Characteristic	Category	Employees	% of workforce
Age	Under 20	19	0.3%
	20-29	739	12.0%
	30-39	1,402	22.8%
	40-49	1,582	25.7%
	50-59	1,556	25.3%
	60+	846	13.8%
Disability	Disabled	553	9.0%
	Not disabled	3,515	57.2%
	Not disclosed	2,076	33.8%
Sex	Female	4,425	72.0%
	Male	1,719	28.0%
Race / ethnicity	White British	4,591	74.7%
	Minority ethnic groups	692	11.3%
	Not stated	861	14.0%
Religion or belief	Christian	1,706	27.8%
	Minority religion or belief	297	4.8%
	No religion	2,285	37.2%
	Not stated	1,856	30.2%
Sexual orientation	Gay, lesbian, bisexual and other minority sexual orientations	207	3.4%
	Heterosexual	4,058	66.0%
	Not stated	1,879	30.6%

Disclosure Rates

Disclosure is voluntary for most characteristics, other than legal sex and date of birth, so non-disclosure limits the conclusions that can be drawn.

Disclosure rate is the proportion of the 6,144 employees for whom a response is recorded for the characteristic. "Not stated" or "not disclosed" responses are treated as non-disclosure. Percentages are rounded to one decimal place.

Characteristic	Employees disclosed	Employees not disclosed	Disclosure rate
Age	6,144	0	100.0%
Disability	4,068	2,076	66.2%
Sex	6,144	0	100.0%
Race / ethnicity	5,283	861	86.0%
Religion or belief	4,288	1,856	69.8%
Sexual orientation	4,265	1,879	69.4%

What the Information Tells Us

The profile provides evidence about workforce composition and the completeness of the Council's monitoring information. It highlights the following matters:

- Disclosure remains incomplete for disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Improving confidence in voluntary disclosure would give the Council a fuller evidence base.
- The workforce is concentrated in the 40 to 59 age groups. This evidence can support workforce and succession planning.
- Women comprise 72% of the workforce. This information can support lawful review of employment policies and workforce outcomes.
- Employees from ethnic groups other than White British comprise 11.3% of the workforce, while 14.0% have not stated their ethnicity.
- Declared disabled employees comprise 9.0% of the whole workforce and 13.6% of employees who disclosed a disability status. This evidence is relevant to the Council's legal duty to make reasonable adjustments.

These observations identify areas that may warrant further analysis through internal workforce monitoring, assessment, employee engagement and policy review.

Statutory Requirements and Future Approach

The Council will review its statutory objectives and supporting arrangements in line with the law and the Putting Suffolk Communities First strategic priorities. The focus will be clear, proportionate and practical: fairness for everyone, equal respect and dignity, decisions based on evidence and individual need, and a workforce able to deliver high-quality services for Suffolk residents.