What provisions are in place to help people from ethnic minorities to access employment support and advice?

Positive action initiatives are being taken forward to provide opportunities for everyone to participate in society irrespective of protected characteristic by ensuring all residents have equal access to education, training and employment. The evidence in 2013 suggested a lack of understanding between groups with different protected characteristics, this is a continuing issue with a lack of understanding in relation to disability and sexual orientation in accessing employment there is no evidence suggesting residents face discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnicity.

As an employer, the council provides information about employment opportunities, available on the council’s website, about the broad range of careers within the council, promoting the wide ranging benefits package available to all employees, and demonstrates our commitment to equalities and diversity.

Census 2011 shows that 74.90% of residents in Aberdeenshire are economically active (Figure 1).

**Fig 1 Economic Activity in Aberdeenshire (2011)**

The chart (Figure 2) provides an analysis of residents working full-time, part-time or retired. Most Aberdeenshire’s residents are in full-time, part-time or self-employed. All forms of employment account for 69.5%.

**Fig 2 Analysis of Economic Activity (2011)**
A number of programmes are in place to increase employment opportunities, these are targeted to all, irrespective of protected characteristic. An example being the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme, available to applicants of all ages/ethnicity.

**What provisions are in place to recognise and address the lower employment rates among some ethnic minority groups compared to others?**

Recruitment data on applicants for vacancies (Figure 3) demonstrates that the council’s recruitment process works well in both attracting applicants from ethnic minority groups. No complaints have been received by the council’s recruitment team with respect to the recruitment process and any barriers or discrimination in terms of race.

**Fig 3 Recruitment Data – Aberdeenshire Council Applicants for Employment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Eastern European</td>
<td>1.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White - Nr Irish</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White - Scottish</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White - British</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Ethnic Background</td>
<td>1.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>0.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African other</td>
<td>1.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>0.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian - Bangladeshi</td>
<td>0.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian - Indian</td>
<td>0.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Arab</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Ethnic Background</td>
<td>0.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Arab</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are there any innovative approaches being taken to address the challenges some people from ethnic minorities may experience in trying to access employment advice and support?

**Tackling Inequalities - Active Labour Market Project**

A partnership approach to delivering 16 + Options to ensure all young people, including Looked After Children, who are not in a positive and sustainable destination, have an activity agreement. Employer engagement that delivers skills training which meets their needs and ensures that appropriately trained people are available for hard to fill vacancies - construction, care, retail, hospitality, digital facilitation, and rural skills.

**Skills and Talent Attraction** - Ensuring a consistent stream of talent for local businesses and inward investors is of paramount importance to future growth in the region. Our focus covers two aspects to talent attraction; attracting new talent from the UK or overseas and retaining and maximising the potential of indigenous talent, including creating pathways for young people from school to jobs.

The percentage of school leavers with Positive Destinations (Figure 4) confirms this as 93.7%.

The numbers of unemployed people assisted into work via the council’s Employability Programme (funded and delivered directly by the council) are shown at Figure 5 below. Community engagement feedback suggests there’s a continuing need to assist more people into work which we are taking forward to improve access to education, training and employment in Aberdeenshire for all.

**Fig 5 - Unemployed People Assisted into Work from Council Operated/ Funded Employability Programme**

Recruitment, retention and promotion

What evidence is there that discrimination in recruitment, retention and promotion is an issue in Scottish workplaces?

There is no evidence of discrimination in recruitment, retention and promotion within Aberdeenshire Council.

Retention In terms of leavers, the available data indicates that there is a higher retention rate amongst all ethnic groups with a leaver rate of less than 1% for all groups, with 59.6% of leavers being White Scottish employees. However, 23% of leavers are recorded against the ‘unknown’ category which is likely to include ethnic minority employees.

Promotion All employees have the same access to training and progression opportunities. Data is not currently collected to determine career progression amongst ethnic groups.

What are the barriers that lead to unequal outcomes (including lower rates of employment and employment segregation)?
It can be seen from the makeup of employees within Aberdeenshire Council (Figure 6) that the percentage of ethnic minorities is slightly lower than that in the wider Aberdeenshire community (Figure 7). The information doesn’t allow us to make a robust determination because the proportion of ethnic minorities within the general population figures is so small. This is further compounded by the fact that although the council takes significant measures to gather equalities information, there is always an option not to disclose specific detail within the information requested. This is shown by the high percentage falling in the ‘unknown/no return’ category which demonstrate these figures may not be truly representative and could be closer or higher than in the community depending on the numbers concealed within this category.

**Fig 6 Race in Aberdeenshire Council Workforce (2014)**

![Race in Aberdeenshire Council Workforce (2014)](image1)

**Fig 7 Race in Aberdeenshire Community (Census 2011)**

![Race in Aberdeenshire Community (Census 2011)](image2)
Promoting positive action

What measures are being taken to tackle workplace discrimination and segregation?

There is no evidence of workplace discrimination and segregation – any such issues would be addressed through the grievance and disciplinary process. A robust Prejudice Incident Reporting process is in place enabling members of the public and employees to report discriminatory behaviour to appropriate agencies.

Is there a need for a scheme that recognises positive action taken by employers (a “double tick” scheme for example)?

As all individuals comprise of multiple protected characteristics there is greater value in ensuring effective policies, processes and practice is established ensuring all individuals have equal access to employment and promotion irrespective of protected characteristic. The council promotes itself as an equal opportunities employer, which is reinforced by the publication of its Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Reports which demonstrates our commitment to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

By establishing such a scheme, it would increase the administrative burden on employers and could have potential cost implications if implemented.

What are the examples of good practice that have improved outcomes, and if so what has been the key to their success?

All external jobs are advertised online ensuring accessible to all members of the community.

In addition to the following work streams have demonstrated success.

- Employability Group
- Support for Unpaid Carers to Gain Qualifications
- Project Search - Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
- Literacy and numeracy
- Tackling Inequalities - Active Labour Market Project
- Tackling Inequalities - Early Years Project
- Skills and Talent Attraction

Further details of the work streams are available in the Aberdeenshire’s Equalities Mainstreaming Progress Report 2015.

Fig 8 - School Leavers in Positive Destinations

The percentage of school leavers with Positive Destinations above in Figure 8 confirms 93.7% proceed to positive destinations. For those young people with English as an additional language, there is also a high level of positive destination with almost 98% of young people in higher education, further education, training, employment, voluntary work or activity agreements.
Further information is available outlining the impact of actions underway to progress the council’s Equality Outcomes and within the Aberdeenshire’s Equalities Mainstreaming Progress Report 2015.

Donna Redford
Improvement Manager
Aberdeenshire Council
2 July 2015