

ANNUAL REPORT ON EQUALITIES SCHEMES 2010



1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek Joint Board approval for the publication of the attached Annual Equalities Report.

2 SUMMARY

The Board operates Equalities Policies in respect of Gender, Age, Equal Opportunities, Disability and Race. In terms of the Equality Act 2006 there is a requirement to produce and publish an annual report that provides information that demonstrates our commitment to equalities and the associated monitoring process.

Following approval, the report shall be published and made available on the Board's website.

3 RECOMMENDATION

The Board is requested to approve the attached report.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joan M Hewton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'J'.

Joan M Hewton
ASSESSOR

25 June 2010

ANNUAL REPORT ON EQUALITIES SCHEMES 2010



1 INTRODUCTION

Lothian Valuation Joint Board is committed to all its equalities policies and as such an annual review has taken place for 2009. This report covers Gender, Age, Equal Opportunities, Disability and Race Equality.

2 GENDER EQUALITY

The Joint Board has been committed to ensuring that all staff are treated fairly, irrespective of their gender and took measures to ensure that it fully meets the requirements of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Equal Pay Act 1970 and the Equality Act 2006.

2.1 Recruitment

Recruitment, progression and promotion is based on relevant criteria only and job application forms contain no reference to gender or any gender related criteria.

2.2 Selection

Candidates are selected on the basis of skills and abilities only. Only job related questions are asked of applicants. All successful applicants are subject to pre-employment medical screening irrespective of gender.

2.3 Training

Promotion and career development are provided equally for all staff whatever their gender.

2.4 Pay & Conditions of Service

Pay scales within the Joint Board are not gender related and incremental pay progression is based on staff ability.

2.5 Dignity at Work

Gender abuse, name calling/derogatory jokes, unacceptable or unwanted behaviour etc are serious disciplinary offences and are dealt with under the Joint Board's Disciplinary Procedure. To date we have had no reported incidents.

2.6 /....

2.6 Retirement, Voluntary Early Retirement & Voluntary Redundancy

It is recognised that staff may seek to retire at an earlier age. Consent for early retirement is based on entirely relevant criteria. Within the Joint Board it is acceptable for staff to apply to work beyond the normal retirement age of 65. Requests considered are based on entirely relevant criteria, which does not include gender.

3 AGE DISCRIMINATION

The Joint Board has been and will continue to be committed to ensuring staff and customers are treated fairly irrespective of their age and ensure it continues to fully meet the requirements of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

3.1 Recruitment

Recruitment, progression and promotion do not include age or age related criteria. Adverts contain no reference to age and person specifications focus on the requirements of the job. Age related details are separated from application forms via the equal opportunities monitoring form. All applications for positions within the Joint Board are monitored by age group.

3.2 Selection

Candidates for employment are selected on the basis of skills and abilities and interviewers are trained to ensure they do not discriminate against particular groups. Job related questions only are asked of job applicants. All successful applicants are subject to a pre-employment health examination irrespective of their age.

3.3 Training & Development

Career development opportunities are available for all staff irrespective of their age. Procedures, which relate to performance, re-grading and awarding of increments apply to all staff irrespective of their age.

3.4 Pay & Conditions of Service

Incremental pay progression and other service-based awards are an acknowledgement of the increasing experience and loyalty of staff and as a result pay scales are not age related.

3.5 Dignity at Work

Any age related abuse are dealt with under the Joint Board's Disciplinary Procedure but to date no incidents have been reported.

3.6 /...

3.6 Voluntary Early Retirement & Redundancy Pay

Any voluntary redundancy schemes are now based on objective criteria unless it may be justified under the relative regulations.

3.7 Retirement

The normal retirement age for Joint Board staff is 65 although requests for an earlier or later retiral date can be considered.

3.8 Absence Management

Monitoring of absences is applied to all staff across all age groups working within the Joint Board.

4 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Joint Board recognises the need for the promotion of equal access to all employment opportunities. Therefore, the merits and abilities of potential applicants are considered at the interview and selection stage. No irrelevant criterion is therefore permitted for consideration.

4.1 Employment Procedures & Practices

The Joint Board continues to promote equal employment opportunities when employing new staff or promoting existing staff. Application forms are regularly reviewed to ensure they comply with legislation and do not request any unnecessary information. Selection is based on an applicant's ability to undertake the duties of the relative positions on offer.

4.2 Training & Development

Training for Joint Board staff is undertaken across the organisation to ensure all staff meet the requirements of their current posts. Training requirements are considered in terms of Best Value and reflect trainee contracts, Performance Review and Development reports and any career development identified.

4.3 Grievance & Discipline

All staff grievance, disciplinary and related matters are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner. During 2009 one member of staff was dismissed.

4.4 Flexible Working for Staff

The Flexible Work Options Policy came into effect 5 years ago. To date the Joint Board has accommodated a large number of requests from staff for part-time, job share and compressed working. At present there are approximately 41% of staff on patterns other than a normal 5-day working week.

5 DISABILITY EQUALITY

5.1 Making Sure the Scheme Works

The Joint Board's published scheme is available on the staff Intranet and website. Equalities have been added as a standing item on the agenda's for the Joint Board's Management Group and Joint Consultative Committee. All policies are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure they do not contain barriers to the promotion of disability equality.

5.2 Access to Buildings, Functions & Services

The Joint Board offices have an induction loop at reception, an accessible entrance, lifts to all floors and disabled toilets/showers. We have made every effort to ensure our website is as accessible by as many people as possible. This website has been tested for compatibility with the latest versions of the most popular stand-alone browsers, including Microsoft Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox and Opera. They are all free to download. Correspondence can be provided in any size font and translation/tape can be provided on many policies, documents and forms, on request. A small number of requests have been received and provided.

5.3 Employment

Applications from prospective employees who are disabled and meet the relative job criteria will continue to be interviewed for vacant posts within the Joint Board. At present we have three registered disabled members of staff.

5.4 Actions

Highlighting awareness of the Disability Policy will continue and has been added to our new start induction programme. The Joint Board will continue its support to disabled staff by making reasonable adjustments to their working environment. Various adjustments have been made to accommodate the varying levels of disability of staff within the Joint Board. We have installed a minicom, a vibrating paging device connected to the fire bell for a deaf employee and a large screen with associated software to enhance display for a visually impaired employee. Specialist seating has been provided in accordance with the recommendations of the Joint Board's Occupational Health provider as have adaptations to staff members work stations, as required or requested.

6 RACE EQUALITY

6.1 Commitment

The Joint Board will continue to ensure compliance with all relevant legal provisions and good practice guidelines concerning issues of race. We continue to be committed to tackling racism, any form of aggravation, harassment and discrimination, either direct or indirect, on the grounds of race.

6.2 /...

6.2 Accessibility

The Joint Board continues to review the services provided to ensure they meet the needs of the community. All documentation can be translated into various languages, on request. Language Line provides an interpretation service and in 2009 there were 12 Polish, 3 Arabic and 1 Cantonese telephone translations undertaken.

6.3 Monitoring

We will continue to monitor our employees by ethnic origin, salary grade and training. We also collect data in relation to recruitment in respect of race. To date, we have had no reported anti-social incidents involving racial harassment but will continue to monitor and take relative action should any occur.

6.4 Communication

The Race Equality policy is available to staff on our local Intranet and is included in the staff induction process for new staff. All equality policies are also available on the Joint Board's Internet site www.lothian-vjb.gov.uk

6.5 Employee Development

The induction programme for new employees includes training and awareness of the race equality policy within the Joint Board.

7 MINORITY GROUPS

7.1 Participation in Local Events

To ensure continued support and participation in the local community, Joint Board staff attended a homelessness event in the Lanthorn Community Education Complex, Livingston; an event at Strathbrock Partnership Centre in Broxburn as part of West Lothian's diversity week; staff arranged for voter registration forms to be handed out the Scottish Country Dance Event which involved persons with disabilities in the audience and performing; the West Lothian Disability AGM; a Multi-Cultural event in Broxburn; and provided voter registration forms to staff assisting with the Rock Trust (project for 16 to 25 year olds experiencing homelessness or feel socially isolated).

8 CONCLUSION

Lothian Valuation Joint Board continues to promote equality for all staff and stakeholders and is committed to ensuring that all its equalities policies are adhered to and our services are accessible to all.

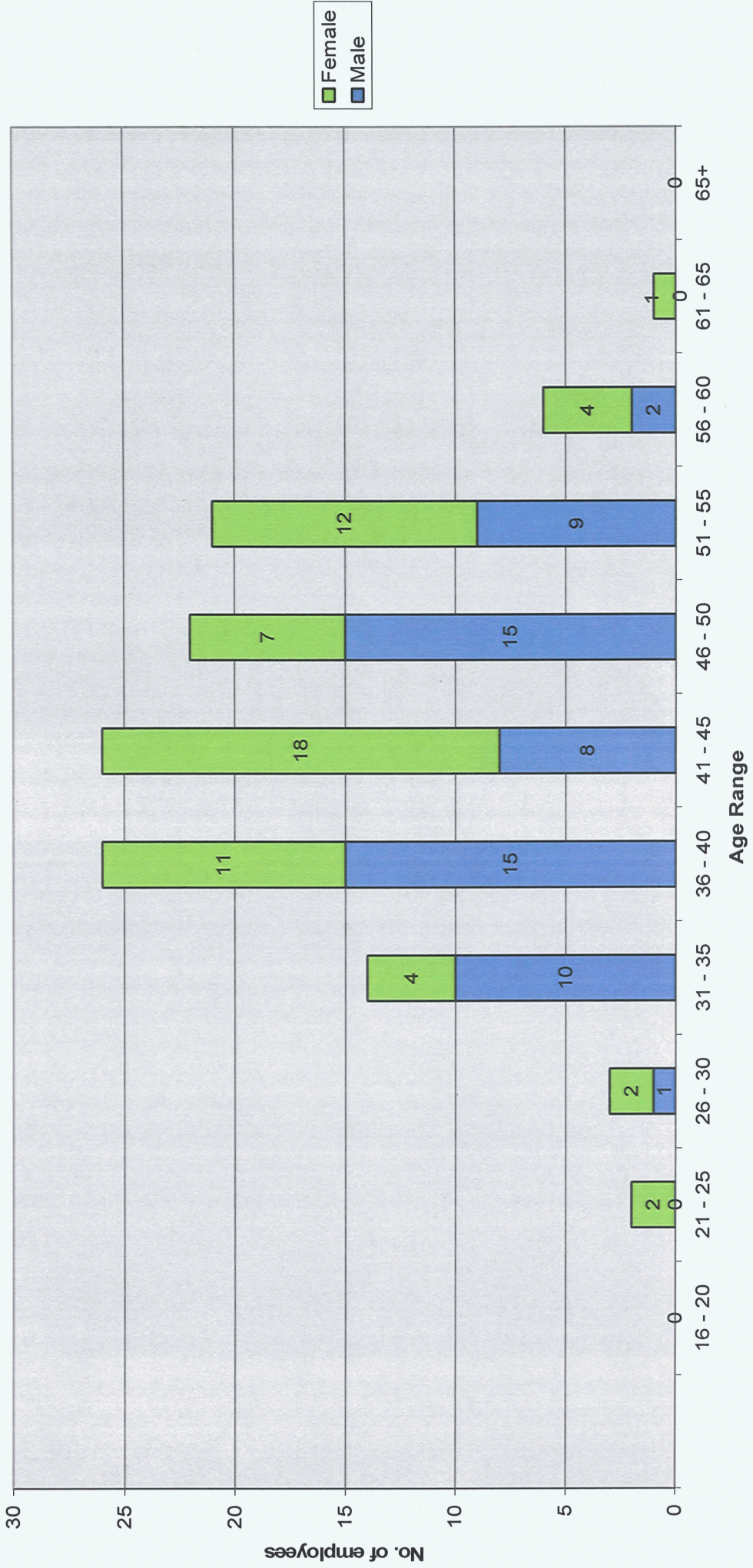
APPENDICES/....

APPENDICES

1. Employees Age
2. LVJB Training
3. LVJB Salaries
4. Working Patterns/Flexible Working in LVJB
5. Applicants in 2009
6. Applications received and Successful Candidates
7. LVJB Leavers
8. LVJB Employees by Ethnic Origin, Gender and Disability

Appendix 1

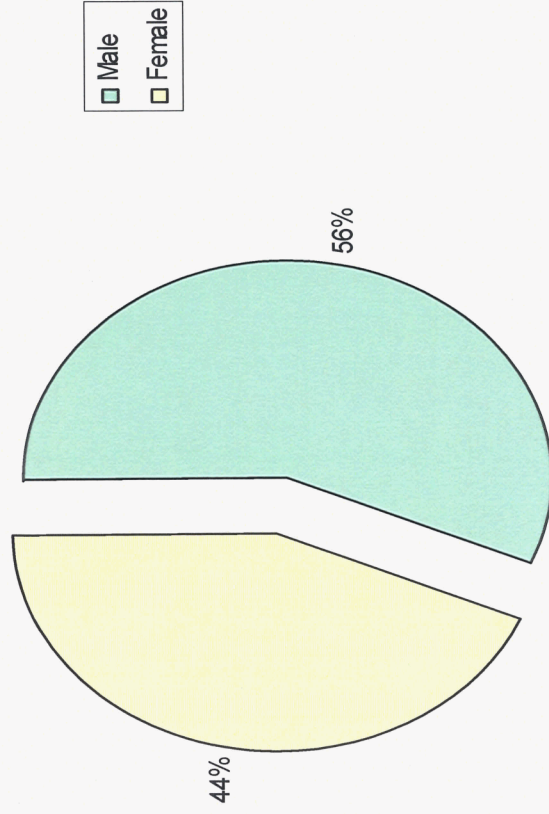
LVJB Employee Age Range 2009



Appendix 2

Training By Gender 2009

TRAINING BY AGE 2009 - All L VJB Employees		
Age Categories	Training Days	
	M	F
16 - 20	0	0
21 - 25	0	1
26 - 30	1	3
31 - 35	16	8
36 - 40	18	15
41 - 45	17	18
46 - 50	19	7
51 - 55	11	10
56 - 60	3	3
61 - 65	0	1
65+	0	0
Total:	85	66

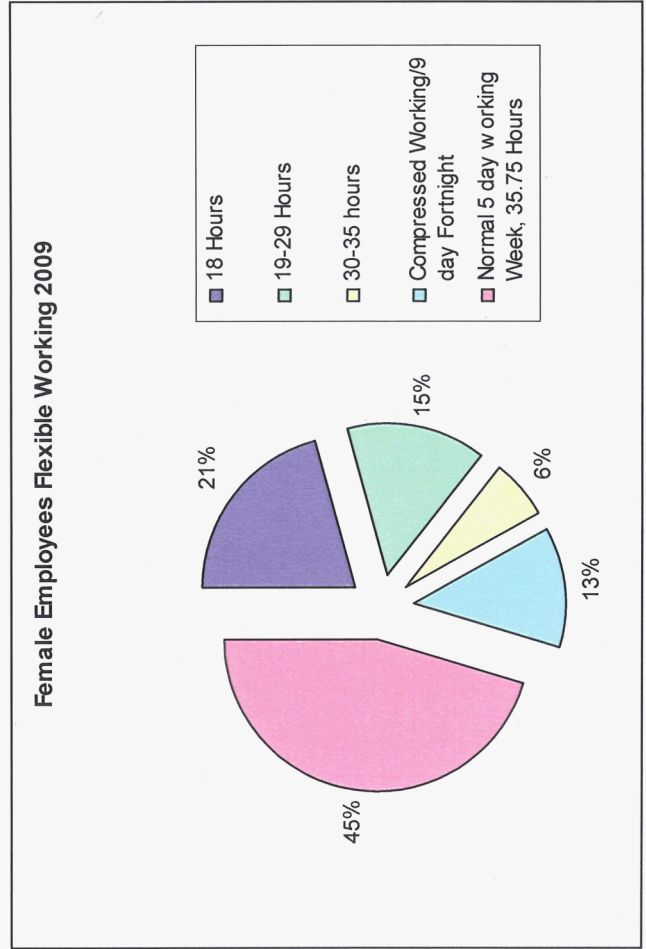
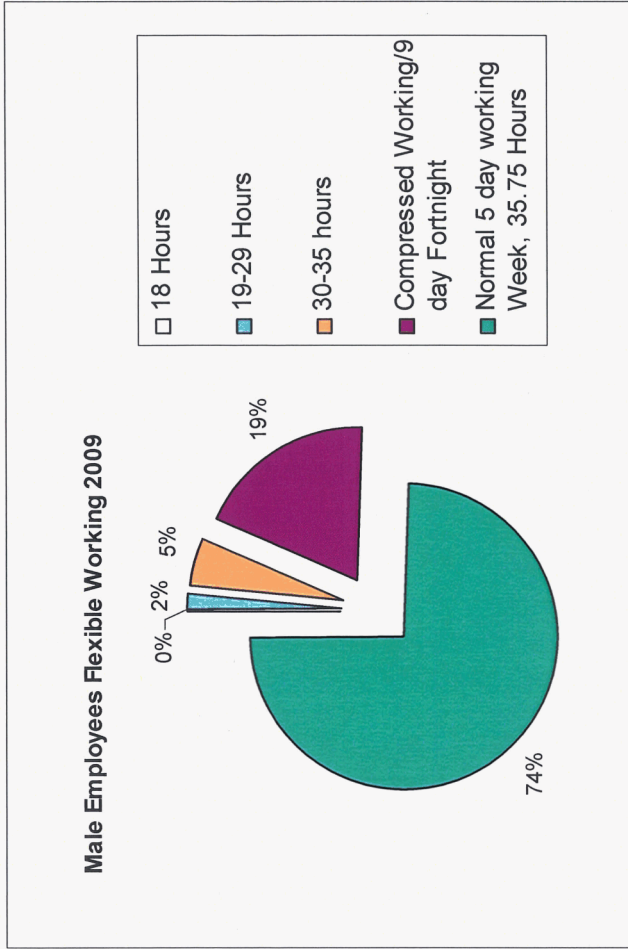
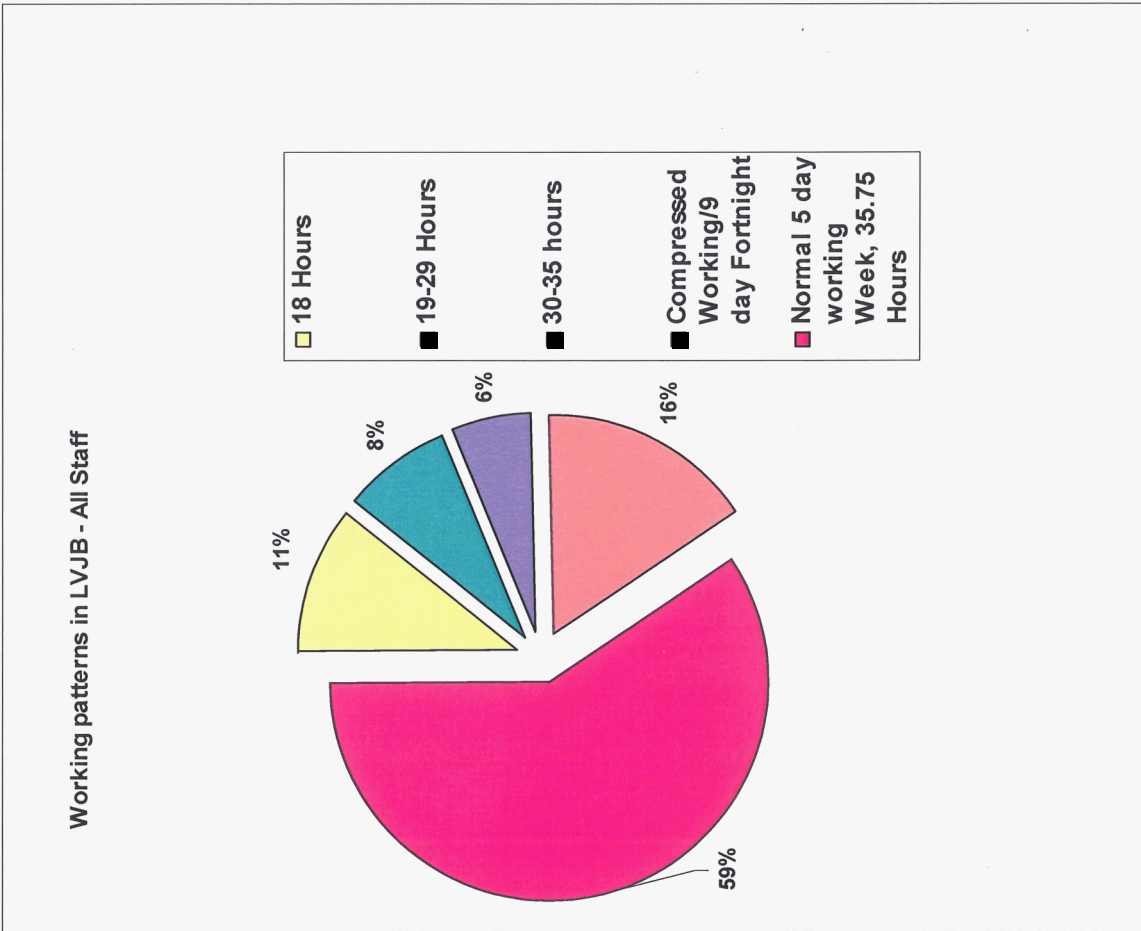


Appendix 3

LVJB SALARIES 2009		£10,000 to £14,999	£15,000 to £19,999	£20,000 to £24,999	£25,000 to £29,999	£30,000 to £34,999	£35,000 to £39,999	£40,000 to £44,999	£45,000 to £49,999	£50,000 to £54,999	£55,000 to £59,999	£60,000 to £64,999	£65,000 to £69,999	£70,000 +
Race	White	0	35	6	32	12	20	6	5	0	3	0	0	2
	Mixed													
	Asian/Far East													
	Asian Other													
	Black													
	Other European													
	Other													
Disability	Disabled	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Able bodied	0	32	6	31	12	20	6	5	0	3	0	0	2
Gender	Male	0	8	0	15	10	16	3	4	0	2	0	0	1
	Female	0	27	6	17	2	4	3	1	0	1	0	0	1
Total No. of Staff		0	35	6	32	12	20	6	5	0	3	0	0	2

* Please note: This information is based on full time equivalent salaries for ALL LVJB employees.

Appendix 4



Appendix 5

APPLICANTS BY ETHNIC ORIGIN, GENDER AND DISABILITY (2009)

	Applicants in 2009	No. of applicants	Interviewed	Offered post
Ethnic Origin	White	129	35	8
	Black - African	1	1	
	Black - Caribbean			
	Black - Other			
	Indian	2		
	Pakistani			
	Bangladeshi			
	Chinese			
	Other	2	2	
Disability	Disabled	6	1	0
	Able bodied	128	37	8
Gender	Male	82	24	6
	Female	52	14	2

Appendix 6

**APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AND SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES
BY GENDER AND DISABILITY – 2009**

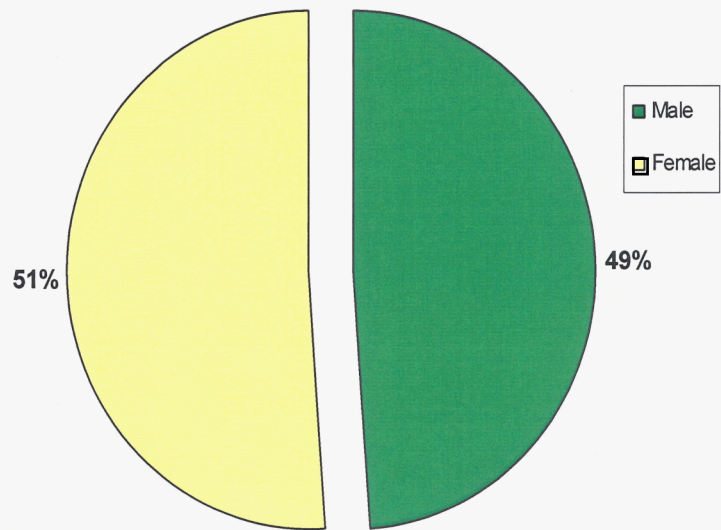
		APPLICANTS			SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE		
POST TITLE	No. of Application Forms rec'd	Male	Female	Disability	Male	Female	Disability
Admin Officer (Acting Up – Sickness Absence Cover)	4	2	2	1	0	1	0
Temporary Clerical Assistant	104	63	41	5	5	1	0
Valuer	7	6	1	0	1	0	0
Administration Assistant	19	11	8	0	0	8	0

Appendix 7

LVJB LEAVERS 2009		No. of Leavers	Resignation	Retiral	End of Temporary Contract	Redundancy	Other
Race	White	12	2	1	7	0	2
	Mixed						
	Asian/Far East						
	Asian Other						
	Black						
	Other European						
	Other						
Disability	Disabled	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Able bodied	12	2	1	7	0	2
Gender	Male	7	1	1	5	0	0
	Female	5	1	0	2	0	2

Appendix 8

Employment in LVJB by Gender



Employee Disability

