**Gender Pay Gap Data as of 31st March 2023**

The Government requires all employers with over 250 employees to report their gender pay gap on an annual basis. This is the 7th year in which these figures have been published.

Our 20 year vision for 2023 – 2043 is to be a place where people live healthy, happy and fulfilled lives. ‘Our Council’ Change Programme’ is ensuring we are a modern and inclusive employer which includes future proofing the organisation and facilitating culture change through leadership development, learning, support, and wellbeing offers for all employees.  We will ensure the refreshed Council values and behaviours underpin everything we do so that we are a transparent and open Council. Our people are our most valuable asset, and we want to enable them to be committed to doing the very best for residents and communities.

At the heart of our approach is fair treatment and equal opportunity. Approximately 70% of the Council’s employees currently live in the Borough and we are committed to improving the gender pay gap within our organisation.

The Council is an equal pay employer. This report does not refer to work of equal value. Our pay structure is subject to transparent and robust job evaluation processes using the recommended Gauge System.

The Council collected data on 31st March 2023 at which time our workforce consisted of 2764 full pay relevant employees, 737 men and 2027 women (27% / 73% respectively). This data does not include school-based employees.

**Gender Pay Gap Data on 31st March 2023**

The figures in the table below show that the Council has a mean gender pay gap of 13.2% which is the difference between average hourly rate of pay of male and female full pay relevant employees. This has decreased from 16.2% in March 2022.

The median gender pay gap is the difference between the median hour rate of male and female full pay relevant employees and is 16.8%, which is a decrease from 18.0% in March 2022.

The Council’s workforce breakdown is made of up 60% full time employees (30 hours per week or more) and 40% part time employees. There are 1104 employees who work part time (less than 30 hours per week) and 86% of these employees are female. If the data is analysed to compare full time and part time employees separately the mean and median figures are shown below:-

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | All employees | Full time employees | Part time employees |
| Mean | 13.2% | 5.9% | 9.6% |
| Median | 16.8% | 3.0% | 14.1% |

In March 2022 the mean hourly rate for men was £16.65 which increased to £17.92 in March 2023, an increase of 7.6%. The mean hourly rate for women increased from £13.95 to £15.56 over the same period which is an increase of 11.5% and this has contributed to the decrease in the mean gender pay gap.

The Council does not pay bonus payments and therefore does not have a gender pay gap in this area.

The proportion of men and women in each pay quartile is shown below. 55% of the total number of women (1106 employees) are in the lower and lower middle quartiles compared to 37% (276 employees) of men. 45% of women (921 employees) are in the upper middle and upper quartiles compared with 63% (461 employees) of men

Proportion of men and women in each pay quartile (%) - Men Women

 **About pay quarters,**

Pay quarters show the percentage of men and women employees in four equal sized groups based on their hourly pay. Pay quarters give an indication of women's representation at different levels of the organisation.

**Recognising the challenges**

The Council is responsible for delivering a number of diverse services in areas such as Adult Social Care & Commissioning, Children’s Families and Social Care through to the Learning and Early Help Services, ICT, Finance, Legal Services, Regeneration and Environment, Leisure Services etc. Roles within these areas are very different in terms of requirements and hours of work and certain roles have, historically seen a gender bias. Roles in areas such as Refuse Collection, ICT and Construction Services have tended to attract more men, whereas roles in areas such as Social Care, Customer Services, Catering and Cleaning have tended to attract more women especially in areas where a high proportion of roles are part time.

For example, our Catering and Cleaning Services make up 19.5% of our full pay relevant employees in the March 2023 workforce data with 539 employees. These services consist of predominately part time, lower paid roles within the Council. 522 (97%) employees within these services are women whilst only 17 (3%) are men. Of the 522 female employees, 85% (446) are part time compared to 35% (6) of the male employees in the services. A number of Councils have outsourced these services to the private sector. The Council has decided not to do this as we highly value these services. However, for illustrative purposes our gender pay gap figures would reduce to a **mean of 5.8% and a median of 1.4%** if these services were outsourced.

**Progress towards closing the gap**

Our recently published People Strategy has five themes: Inspirational Leadership, Attraction and Recruitment, Engagement and Retention, Positive Employee Experience and Modernising our People Services all of which have an inclusive culture at the heart and will enable us to strive towards reducing the gender pay gap through many of the priorities set out in our strategy.

We recognise that providing flexible working arrangements enables all employees to effectively balance home and work life priorities and we have a number of flexible working policies and arrangements in place which are continuously reviewed. Summer 2022 saw the launch of the extended flexi band width, for flexible working between the hours of 6am – 10am. By offering this we are supporting employees who may have the responsibility of being a carer(s), this can also assist with childcare and improve employee wellbeing in general. 60% of our female employees and 31% of our male employees work less than full time hours which includes, job share, part time, term time only etc so we are confident our flexible working arrangements are attractive to all employees, but we need to ensure that men are equally encouraged to utilise these policies when they may wish too.

The Council believes that our recruitment processes are fair and transparent and free from gender bias but we will continue to embed this in all our training and development. We deliver Recruitment and Selection Training to our managers which includes information on all areas of discrimination, genuine occupational requirements and fair selection methods to ensure there is non-biased approach to all recruitment. We continue to ensure our recruitment adverts have gender-neutral language and vacancies are advertised through a number of channels to attract a broad range of applicants, from utilising LinkedIn, and other social media platforms, through to adverting on the Council’s website, and attending recruitment fairs, from schools, colleges through to Universities to promote various posts available from Social Workers roles through to Residential Workers and also linking in with external partners.

We have started to implement our EDIB journey within the authority, to ensure this is embedded within our culture and is continued to be threaded through the organisation. Since 2022-2023 within the authority, we have established 5 networks for our employees including LGBTQ+, Neurodiversity/Disability, Women’s Networks which incorporates Menopause, as this will affect a large proportion of employees with the aim to raise awareness within the workplace, and to also provide support, thus ensuring women can access help and advice as and when needed. This is incorporated with our Period Poverty Pledge to ensure all employees who require sanitary products can obtain these items free within the workplace. The Carers network links in with external parties as most people will be a carer at some point within their life. Another network established with external parties is the Armed Forces/Reservists, Volunteers with Uniformed Services and employees with Armed Forces family-links, our networks continue to grow in membership which is an excellent support mechanism for employees. With the addition of further networks due to be launched during 2024, including a Racial Equality Network, Apprenticeship Network and Age Pledge Network. We are committed to work with our Women’s network to talk about barriers that might be faced in relation to applying for higher paid roles and will raise awareness and hold masterclasses on areas such as confidence building and ‘Women in leadership’.

We have reviewed our succession planning and talent development opportunities. We are continuing to identify development opportunities for all employees, utilising opportunities via the apprenticeship levy to implement career pathways across services. We are currently delivering a Leadership Development Programme, identifying our key talent for succession progression and providing bespoke development to this group. We ensured that access to this programme was flexible to ensure employees across all services and working arrangements were able to be considered. Further bespoke development programmes are available - an Aspiring Managers Programme to support those employees looking to progress in to a manager or supervisor role, Management Development Programme primarily aimed at new managers or those who have not had any formal management training or management qualification and an ELT/CLT (Extended Leadership Team)/(Corporate Leadership Team) Development Programme aimed at our top team to support the Leadership Team in driving forward our culture change programme and includes new modules specifically incorporating (EDIB) Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging.

We are also using the Apprentice Levy to deliver Management Development Programmes. The Level 3 Team Leader/ Supervisor Apprenticeship is aimed at supervisory or first line managers and will give practical knowledge and skills from team leading through to project and resource management. We have a higher proportion of female employees at this level and they will be able to access this training to develop their skills and help with career progression in their first supervisory roles. The Level 5 Operations/Departmental Manager Apprenticeship is aimed at managers responsible for creating and delivering operational plans, managing projects and leading and managing teams, to managing change, financial and resource management, coaching and mentoring. Access to both of these development opportunities has been widely circulated and open to all employees. We also offer Level 7 Strategic Management Apprenticeships.