

PEOPLE AND OD COMMITTEE

Gender Pay Gap Reporting

5th March 2024

Report of the Chief Officer – People and Policy

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To enable the Committee to consider the Gender Pay Gap report, and the comparison between figures for 2022 and 2023.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) That People and OD Committee notes the gender pay gap report and the figures provided for 2023.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 require that organisations with 250 employees or more publish specific figures about their gender pay gap on a snapshot date of 31st March each year.
- 1.2 The Council is due to publish its figures in line with these regulations, and the report is appended.
- 1.3 The figures published show both the mean and median pay gaps, which are lower than the national averages. The report also clarifies the reasons why figures are at the level they are, specifying the composition of our workforce at various levels.
- 1.4 The Committee should note that the Council has a set of pay grades, each with its own salary range. All employees carrying out the same job are paid within a specific grade, and all employees within each grade benefit equally from progression within the grade, up to the maximum salary payable. Jobs are allocated to specific grades within the Council using the analytical job evaluation scheme the Council currently uses. Both of these approaches ensure that the Council complies with equal pay legislation.

2.0 2023 Gender Pay Gap figures

- 2.1 Gender Pay Gap figures for 2023 are as follows:
 1. Mean Gender Pay Gap 10% (compared to 7.8% in 2022)
 2. Median Gender Pay Gap 14% (compared to 11% in 2022)
- 2.2 These figures, when compared to the figures for 2022, show that the mean and median figures have increased slightly, but remain below the national average. The median national pay gap in 2023 was 14.3%.

2.3 Casual staff have historically been included in the methodology for gender pay gap reporting at the Council. Removing Casual staff results in a gender pay gap as follows:

1. Mean Gender Pay Gap 2.4%
2. Median Gender Pay Gap 0%

3.0 Analysis

3.1 There are a higher proportion of females in our lower quartile of the data reported which impacts on our pay gap figures.

3.2 The vast majority (72%) of employees in our in-house cleaning team (Grade 5) are female, and these positions are paid within the lower quartile. This is historically a female dominated profession and attracts a higher proportion of female applicants.

3.3 A high proportion (61%) of casual roles (Grade 5) such as catering assistants, general assistants (cleaning) and events staff are also occupied by females. Casual roles are known to be largely attractive to females due to often potential caring and childcare responsibilities falling onto females. Our casual roles allow employees to refuse work when offered if they are not available. Section 2.3 illustrates the core workforce gender pay gap excluding casual staff for comparative purposes.

3.4 The existence of a gender pay gap does not make it unlawful. Having a gender pay gap does not mean the Council is discriminating in relation to gender pay. A gender pay gap is not solely the result of pay practices. It is about much broader influences. Gender pay gaps are the outcome of economic, cultural, social and educational factors.

3.5 Nevertheless, the Council is committed to reducing the gender pay gap. Activities to address this include:

Engagement with the Women's Network which led to suggestions including:

- Share the Council's flexible working policy and guidance information with all staff
- Ensure vacancy forms ask recruiting managers to consider whether a job share or part time working could be an option
- Create shadowing and mentor opportunities at all levels to ensure women have the opportunity to experience other roles to help them understand their development needs and to help build confidence
- Continue to provide safe spaces for women to share and discuss topics that are meaningful to them

3.6 Some of these suggestions have already been actioned and others are included in our existing three-year People Plan. Other workforce strategies within the plan include:

- A commitment to reviewing our EDI practices and policy – the plan to ensure our recruitment and employment practices are non-discriminatory
- Our training and development programme for all people managers – which will cover equality issues in HR workshops and through accredited leadership qualifications
- Continued review of our recruitment practices to reduce the potential for unconscious bias, including our use of structured interviews so all applicants are assessed using pre-specified criteria and digitalisation
- Our increased focus on intelligent decision making – through the use of the HR dashboards and putting it on the leadership team agenda
- Our restructuring, which puts people management (and therefore EDI in employment practices) on the senior leadership team – making it central to all decision making

- Our commitment to maintaining our Real Living Wage accreditation and using our job evaluation scheme to ensure that grades are allocated to job roles according to responsibility carried and nothing else
- Our continued commitment to hybrid working and other flexible working practices – making it easier for those with caring responsibilities to balance them with their work
- New approach to employee engagement to improve the options available for people to feedback on issues
- Continued embedding of our values and behaviours so that employees understand our commitment to inclusion
- New approach to talent management and development of career pathways, with the aim of supporting the potential in all of our people to develop, including the promotion of apprenticeships to increase skills, qualifications and experience
- Continued tight monitoring of any requests for changes in pay

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 The Council continues to pay its staff in accordance with internal policy and procedure and complies with employment legislation in ensuring pay rates follow the principle of 'equal pay for work of equal value'. The Council is also a Real Living Wage Employer.
- 4.2 The primary reasons for the Gender Pay Gaps as reported above are the make-up of our workforce. Our lower quartile roles are attracting female applicants due to external circumstances and due to historically roles being female dominated in these areas.
- 4.3 The Council's gender pay gap is favourable when compared to national averages. However, the Council has continued to develop and promote a range of workforce strategies, as outlined above, that contribute towards addressing the gender pay gap by enabling the Council to recruit and retain talent.

<p>CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing):</p>

<p>There is no impact. Should actions be proposed as a result of this paper, then impact assessments will be carried out in relation to those specific actions.</p>

<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p>

<p>There are no legal implications arising from this report.</p>
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<p>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</p>

<p>There are no financial implications arising from this report.</p>
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<p>OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces:</p>
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<p>There are no resource implications arising from this report. However, should actions be proposed as a result of this report, then it is expected that the Human Resources team would be responsible for progressing those actions, and would need to review capacity when considering timescales alongside other priorities.</p>

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

2023 Gender Pay Gap Report paper to be published on the council's website by 31st March 2024

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