

Gender Pay Gap Narrative – 31 March 2022

Introduction

Gender Pay Gap legislation (developed by the Government Equalities Office) introduced in April 2017 requires all employers of 250 or more employees to publish their gender pay gap for workers in scope as of 31 March 2022.

The gender pay gap shows the difference between the average earnings of men and women. As a concept it is different from “equal pay” which deals with any pay difference between men and women who carry out the same or similar jobs or jobs of equal value.

The gender pay gap is calculated as the difference between average hourly earnings (excluding overtime) of men and women as a proportion of average hourly earnings (excluding overtime) of men’s earnings. For example, a 4.0% gender pay gap denotes that women earn 4.0% less per hour, on average, than men. Conversely, a negative 4.0% gender pay gap denotes that women earn 4.0% more, on average, than men.

The Council uses these results to assess:

- The levels of gender equality in our workplace
- The balance of male and female employees at different levels.

What do we report on?

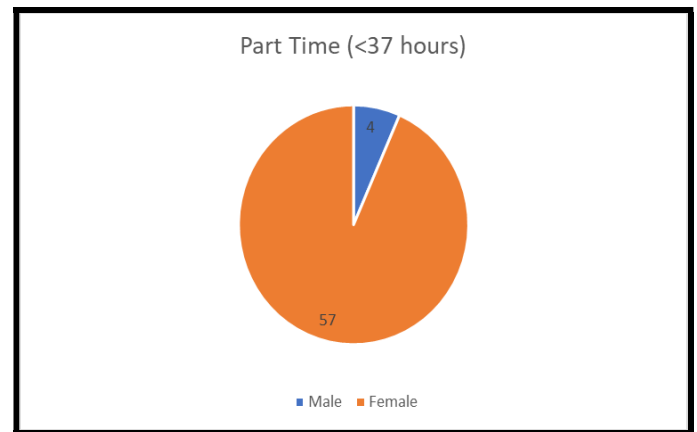
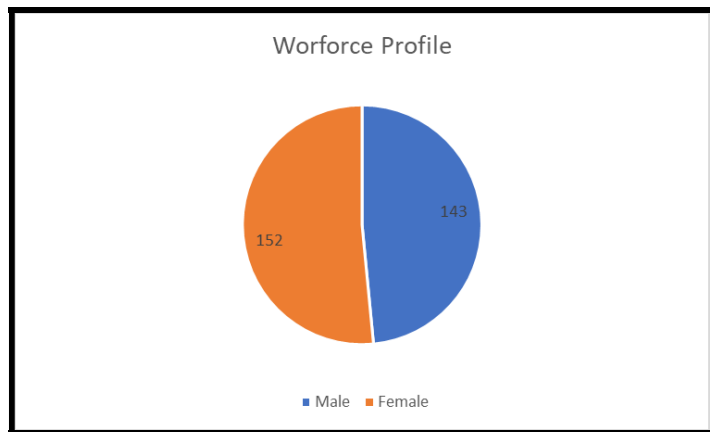
Mean gender pay gap	The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male employees and that of female employees.
Median gender pay gap	The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male employees and that of female employees.
Mean bonus pay gap	The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male employees and that paid to female employees.
Median bonus pay gap	The difference between the median bonus pay paid to male employees and that paid to female employees.
Bonus proportions	The proportions of male and female employees who were paid bonus pay during the relevant period.
Quartile pay bands	The proportions of male and female employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands.

Overall, the gender pay gap is defined as the difference between the median (actual midpoint) basic pay of men and women expressed as a percentage of the median basic pay of men:

$$\text{Gender pay gap} = \frac{\text{Median pay men} - \text{Median pay women}}{\text{Median pay men}} \times 100$$

Workforce Profile

There were 295 employees (headcount) working on the snapshot date of 31 March 2022.



Average weekly hours worked:



32.79 Hours



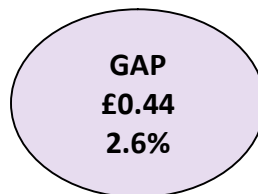
36.53 Hours

Results – 31 March 2022

Mean: Average hourly rate of pay and the percentage difference:



£16.52 per hour



£16.96 per hour

Mean Pay Gap – 2.6% (Previously 5.8%)

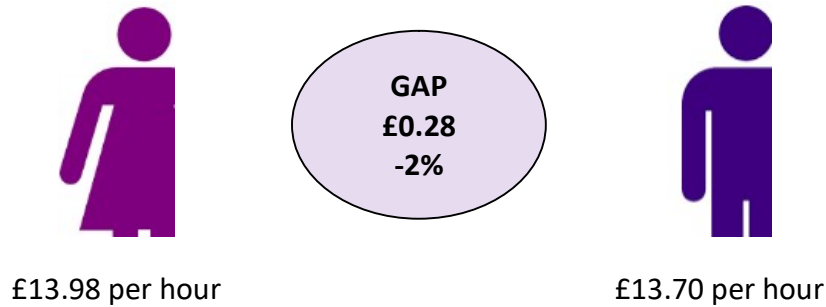
ONS Summary*:

The Council's median gap is significantly different to that of the national average of 14.9% (for all employees, those working over 30 hours per week based on ONS calculations in April 2022)

According to the Office of National Statistics (ONS), taken from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2022, the Gender Pay Gap nationally was 14.9%. Specifically, for 'Local Government administrative occupations' there was a 14.8% Gender Pay Gap.

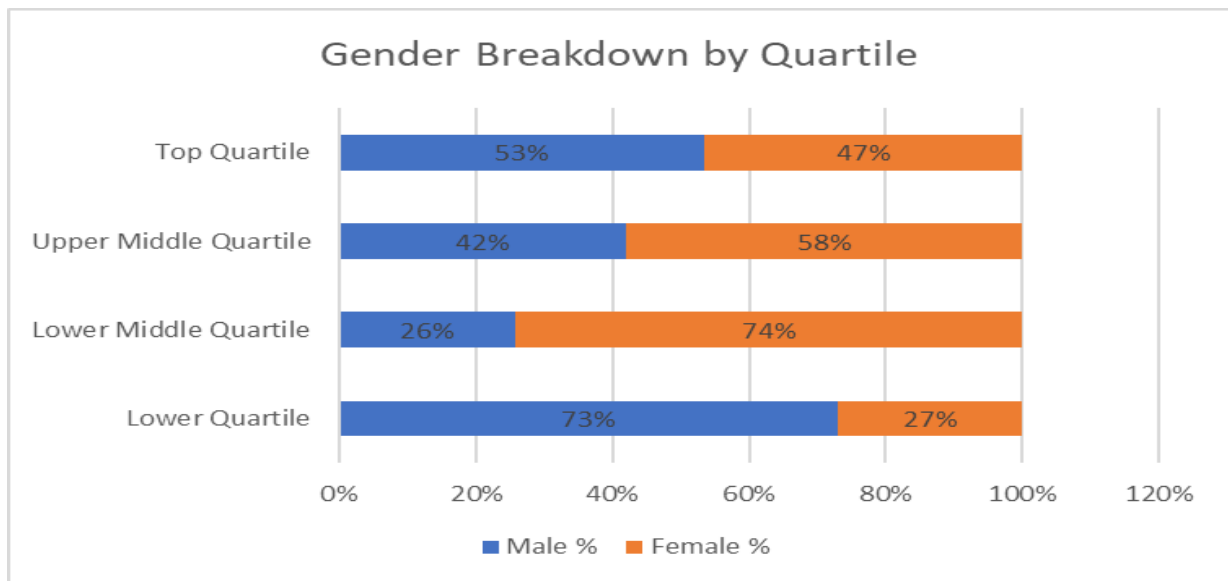
*[Office of National Statistics](#) Annual survey of Hours and Earnings 2022 figures

Median: Middle hourly rate of pay and the percentage difference between:



Median Pay Gap – -2% (previously 12.1%)

Pay Quartiles



Quartiles	Female	Male
Proportion of employees in the lower quartile pay band	27	73
Proportion of employees in the lower middle quartile pay band	74	26
Proportion of employees in the upper middle quartile pay band	58	42
Proportion of employees in the top quartile pay band	47	53

Bonus Pay Gap

Fenland District Council does not operate any performance related pay or bonus scheme and therefore has no bonus gender pay gap.

No Bonus Gap

Analysis of Data

Currently there is no published information to define what level of pay gap is regarded as a cause for concern, the gender pay gaps identified are relatively small, and continue to be less than the statistics reported by the ONS (shown above).

With a mean gender pay gap of 2.59%, this would suggest that ranges of pay are spread fairly equally but the average pay for men remains higher. Similarly, the median hourly pay gap of -2% is well below the average for public and private sector organisations.

The results are also likely to be due to workforce distribution across the pay bands and length of service amongst the male employees. A reason could be that there are a higher proportion of operational staff that are male that are working full time within the organisation.

Fenland District Council has well established Job Evaluation schemes in place and has undertaken a comprehensive review of pay and allowances to ensure there is no disparity. The most recent changes were in April 2019, when we carried out an equal pay audit and as a result, amended our pay band structures accordingly for all NJC salary bands.

Across the UK economy as a whole, men are more likely than women to be in senior roles (especially very senior roles at the top of organisations), while women are more likely than men to be in the front-line roles at the lower end of the organisation. In addition, men are more likely to be in technical and IT-related roles, which attract higher rates of pay than other roles at a similar level.

Women are also more likely than men to have had breaks from work that have affected their career progression, for example to bring up children. They are also more likely to work part time. It remains the case that more women than men work part time because most caring responsibilities within the home are still taken on by women.

This pattern from the UK economy as a whole is reflected in the make-up of Fenland District Council's workforce, where the majority of front-line customer services staff are women, while the majority of operational roles are held by full time men.

We are pleased to be able to say Fenland District Council's gender pay gap compares favourably with that of other organisations, including those within our sector, see below a comparison on other District Councils that at the time of writing had reported their data.

Comparison

Comparison of other local authority districts that had reported their data at the time of writing this report:

Employer	Employer Size	% Difference in hourly rate (Mean)	% Difference in hourly rate (Median)	% Women in lower pay quartile	% Women in lower middle pay quartile	% Women in upper middle pay quartile	% Women in top pay quartile
Arun District Council	250 to 499	8.7	13.5	51	72	69	72
Basildon District Council	500 to 999	1.9	0	45	55.5	65.5	52.3
Bassetlaw District Council	500 to 999	1.3	-0.2	45.8	48.5	51.9	44.6
Blaby District Council	250 to 499	0.8	1.8	46.5	69.4	55.3	48.2
Bolsover District Council	500 to 999	2	2.9	59.5	45.2	45.2	51.2
Broadland District Council	Less than 250	-4.8	-3.8	75	80	66	43

Bromsgrove District Council	250 to 499	-1.8	-4.4	25.3	36.9	37.9	35.8
Cannock Chase District Council	250 to 499	11.3	24.1	59	71	52	41
Cherwell District Council	500 to 999	-1.6	-2.9	46.8	48	53.2	47.2
East Devon District Council	500 to 999	8.4	0.6	40	64	65	41
East Suffolk Council	500 to 999	11.1	18	54.1	51	54.9	54.5
Epping Forest District Council	500 to 999	9.5	5.7	69.9	64.2	63.5	50.4
Fenland District Council	250 to 499	2.6	-2.0	27	74	58	47
Hambleton District Council	500 to 999	5.2	1.5	44.1	67.9	48.6	57.1
Horsham District Council	250 to 499	-13.6	-16.8	22.6	46	59.6	52.2
Huntingdonshire District Council	1000 to 4999	-1.4	-9.3	48.5	48.9	54.1	55.7
Lichfield District Council	250 to 499	2.4	-8.2	51	29	64	49
Mid Devon District Council	500 to 999	0.1	0	40	64	56	54
Mid Sussex District Council	250 to 499	15	15.7	72.7	72.7	57.1	38.2
New Forest District Council	500 to 999	2.5	3.1	28.7	58.4	51.6	33.7
Sedgemoor District Council	250 to 499	12.7	12.1	62	70	61.5	46
South Cambridgeshire District Council	500 to 999	-10.5	-17.7	27	54	61	57
South Lakeland District Council	250 to 499	-2.3	-10.4	21.5	43.9	56.1	44.9
Stratford-On-Avon District Council	250 to 499	24.3	21.5	74.3	67.1	64.3	39.1
Tandridge District Council	Less than 250	3.2	7.5	52.4	60.7	50	50.9
Teignbridge District Council	250 to 499	-4.9	-1.1	21.8	63.2	34.6	50.8
Tendring District Council	500 to 999	5.8	0	57	60	57	55
Three Rivers District Council	250 to 499	-12.4	-36.9	8.6	54.4	67.5	55.1
Uttlesford District Council	250 to 499	1.4	-2.9	42	62	70	42
Wealden District Council	250 to 499	2.2	15.5	71	67	62	45
Wyre Forest District Council	250 to 499	-6	-6.5	36.1	47.6	66.3	56.6

Action we are taking

The Council is committed to reviewing the results of equal pay audits it carries out to ensure there is no gender bias in respect of pay or in other processes. Although the gender pay gap is not significant and the median shows females are paid more, it is recognised that changes to the workforce will cause fluctuations in the data each year. As such the Council will continue to implement actions to ensure equality, including:

- Where possible the council applies an agile working method, giving staff maximum flexibility providing that the delivery of the service is not compromised.
- The council's use of the National Joint Council Job Evaluation scheme ensure that there is a consistent, thorough evaluation of individual job roles against agreed criteria, which does not allow for gender bias. The Council will ensure that grades continue to be determined through objective analysis and job evaluation to maintain the integrity of the pay and grading system.
- There are no opportunities for managers to pay bonus or any other non-objective payments to any employee.

- Continue to make use of the Apprenticeship Levy by upskilling our existing employees, particularly at the team leader and supervisor levels.
- All staff are provided with at least an annual review which includes consideration of their development.
- A pay and grading review was implemented 2019 and following the review of the pay scales, the change resulted in no grade containing more than six points. This helps staff with shorter service so they can reach the top of their pay scale within five years.
- The Council aims to recruit from the widest possible talent pool for advertising job vacancies widely, ensuring gender-neutral language in adverts, use of competency based selection techniques to guard against unconscious bias in recruitment processes.
- Actively promote the employee benefits we can offer in our recruitment advertising. It is hoped that an understanding of some of the non-cash benefits on offer such as flexi time, generous annual leave entitlements, discounted leisure membership as well as membership of the Local Government Pension scheme may attract a broader spectrum of candidates to roles across all pay structures.
- Continue to monitor shifts in the gender pay gap data each year to identify any trends and analyse underlying causes.

Summary

While women's mean hourly rate is 2.6% lower than men, this is not as a result of paying men more than women for the same or equivalent work. Fenland District Council staff are paid the same for the same job, but the gender pay gap exists due to our workforce profile.

Fenland District Council is therefore confident that its gender pay gap does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work. Rather its gender pay gap is the result of the roles in which men and women work within the organisation and the salaries that these roles attract.

Fenland District Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment for all employees and has a clear procedure to ensure employees are paid equally for the same or equivalent work, regardless of their sex or any other protected characteristic.

To ensure that the jobs employees undertake are of equal value, in setting the pay levels Fenland District Council undertakes job evaluation to determine the size of a job by following the nationally recognised job evaluation scheme for National Joint Council employees. Evaluations are undertaken regularly for new jobs and also as part of restructures where a job significantly changes.

There is additional support offered to women who return to work following maternity/adoption leave in order to enable them to return to work and fit around their work life balance. Additionally, there is shared parental leave that encourages male employees to also consider more time off for work life balance.

Being able to care for others should be a choice open to both men and women, and is a core issue when it comes to gender equality. It was therefore a key consideration when recently reviewing our policies and considering if our workplace culture is such that employees are supported to take on caring roles and responsibilities if they choose to.

The main reason for our organisation's gender pay gap is an imbalance of male and female colleagues across the organisation. The mean pay gap figure shows that overall male employees have higher pay than female. When the gender distribution is looked at by pay quartiles a more detailed picture is revealed which shows that, at the moment, there are fewer women in senior roles than men, and a higher proportion of men relative to women in the lower quartile.

Recommendations

Fenland District Council remains committed to ensuring ongoing robust delivery of all people policies and practices to ensure no gender bias is in place when recruiting and appointing to new roles. The Council will continue to ensure that our pay and reward systems are fair and transparent.

The Council will continue to monitor our performance, along with initiatives that we have in place which have already contributed to these results such as:

- Family friendly policies and procedures
- Actively supporting parents returning to work from maternity leave, shared parental leave or adoption leave by offering job share, career breaks/sabbaticals or part time opportunities
- Career development opportunities
- Flexible working options in most services and many locations
- Agile working
- Compassionate and special leave arrangements
- Learning and development
- Apprenticeships
- Appraisals for all staff to allow for focussed discussions around learning and development
- Coaching programme
- Employee recognition scheme
- Salary bands that clearly show incremental progression and where appropriate related criteria.

The Council should continue to ensure that part time employees are well supported and are given opportunities to progress, which means that well-qualified, experienced women (and men who also take on caring responsibilities) are better able to keep participating in the workforce.

Any future action plan will need to focus on attaining even greater diversity in the workplace and we will continue to encourage and support all our employees to fulfil their full potential.

It is recommended that a further review is undertaken and monitored of these processes on a regular basis to ensure the ongoing delivery of best practice.

Few employers in Fenland can boast the breadth and variety of roles we enjoy at Fenland District Council, and we remain committed to promoting Fenland District Council as a fair and inclusive employer. Our flexible working practices and wide range of roles ensure that we encourage and support employees to come to work for us and to develop their long-term career to stay with us. We have a workforce to be proud of!