

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Employment and Appeals Committee
DATE: 12th April 2022
CONTACT OFFICER: Christine Ford, Diversity and Inclusion Lead
WARDS: All

PART I FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION

GENDER PAY GAP REPORT

1 Purpose of Report

To present members with the 2021 Slough Borough Council statutory gender pay gap figures and report for review and comment.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

That the Committee note the results of the 2021 gender pay gap for Slough Borough Council employees and associated recommendations.

3 The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy and the JSNA

Reducing inequalities and promoting improved outcomes for all groups relates to all aspects of the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy's priorities.

4 Other Implications

(a) Financial

There are no financial implications of the proposed action in terms of allocated budgets.

(b) Risk Management

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats/Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
Compliance with Gender Pay Gap Reporting	Legal challenge of non-compliance with duty to report gender pay gap.	Gender Pay Gap calculations have been based on statutory guidance and regulations using currently available payroll data.		GPG built into Agresso Payroll/HR reporting function

	Inequality in the workforce can affect recruitment and retention of staff	Report recommendation include actions on recruitment and retention		
	Can help identify any potential areas of indirect discrimination	EIAs conducted and data analysed		

(c) Legal Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 relevant employers are required to publish for 2017 and each subsequent year, the following information:

- The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full pay relevant employees and that of female full pay relevant employees
- The difference between the medium hourly rate of pay of male full pay relevant employees and that of female full pay relevant employees
- The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees
- The difference between the medium bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees
- The proportions of male and female relevant employees who were paid bonus pay, and
- The proportion of male and female full pay relevant employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands.

Relevant employers are those with a headcount of 250 or more. The guidance recommends adding a narrative to the report and an action plan, although publishing this is discretionary.

(d) Equalities Implications

In addition to the specific duty to report on gender pay gaps, the Council has a public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce that reflects the wider community of Slough will help to meet this duty and ensure that proposals, decisions and service

delivery is led and managed by staff with a diverse approach and background. This should help the Council in its decision-making processes.

By having an action plan, the Council aims to promote inclusion and gender equality in terms of pay.

Workforce

The council is committed to being an inclusive employer, promoting equality of opportunity for women and reducing the gender pay gap where possible.

5 **Supporting Information**

- (a) Since 2017, all organisations employing more than 250 staff are required by law to publish their gender pay gap (GPG) annually. SBC has met this obligation each year, including in 2020, when the government suspended the legal requirement due to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic (consequently over half of eligible employers failed to report). The requirement was further delayed in 2021, with the reporting deadline for that year extended by a further 6 months. In 2022, the reporting deadline has returned to its usual March deadline.
- (b) Many UK organisations will be seeing the exceptional impacts of the pandemic on the structures of their workforces, including the impacts of the furlough scheme and reduced working hours. Certain sectors (hospitality, leisure, retail etc.) have been disproportionately affected and these tend to be sectors that employ large numbers of women. Further comparisons will become available once all organisations have filed their figures, but based on 9, 628 organisations who reported last year, the average median gender pay gap was **10.4%** across all sectors. The sectors with the largest pay gaps on average were Education (26%), Finance and Insurance (24%) and Construction (23.8%). Public Administration (which includes local government) had an average median gender pay gap of **9%**.
- (c) Overall gender equality remains a strength at SBC. The council employs more women than men in all pay quartiles and in the last staff engagement survey (conducted Oct 2020), 70% of respondents agreed that there was gender equality for staff. The council has striven to support those with caring responsibilities (which remain mainly women) with a suite of HR policies, including flexible and agile working and enhanced maternity pay. However, as is the case in many organisations, women remain under-represented in the most senior positions and gender occupational segregation can still be seen in some areas of the workforce. Often those sectors which tend towards lower pay (e.g. the care sector) have a largely female workforce. As a council it is essential that we remain fully committed to calculating and publishing our gender pay gap figures as this is crucial in promoting wider diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
- (d) 2021 Figures (please see Appendix A for full report)
The figures show that on mean average, women **earn 0.91 % less than men**. This is a reduction in the mean pay gap from last year (10 %). The median average has, though, increased to 3.82 % (from a negative value in favour of women of -3.1% in 2020) meaning **that women's median pay rate is now lower than that of men's**

Mean gender pay gap %	0.91%
Median gender pay gap %	3.82%

In real salary terms:

- Mean male hourly rate: £16.57
- Mean female hourly rate: £16.42
- Median male hourly rate: £15.70
- Median female hourly rate: £15.10

When we look at future aspirations to reduce the gender pay gap, we must be aware that the council's GPG figures are likely to fluctuate for several years, as we stabilise the permanent workforce and re-shape services. For this reason, the recommendations in Appendix A focus on understanding and mitigating where we can the impact of these decisions on gender quality in our workforce, and seek to develop practical steps which will further support our female staff in the workplace.

1. Continue with staff engagement, through surveys, focus groups and the SBC Women's Network Group
2. Complete impact assessments on future restructuring plans and seek to identify and mitigate negative impacts where possible.
3. Continue with anonymised recruitment processes and statistical analysis of workforce profiles.
4. Update, develop and monitor HR policies to support gender equality
5. Explore opportunities for partnership working with other organisations around training, mentoring and sponsorship schemes.

(e) The gender pay gap figures have been published on the national gender pay gap website <https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/> as per the statutory requirements.

6 **Comments of Other Committees**

None

7 **Conclusion**

The council is committed to improving gender equality in its workforce and will strive to be an employer where women are supported at all levels. Our gender pay gap remains lower than average, however any restructuring will impact on future figures.

8 **Appendices Attached**

'A' - 2021 Gender Pay Gap Report

9 **Background Papers**

None