

Gender Pay Gap Explanatory Narrative

for Bolton Council's workforce data as at 31 March 2021

1. Background to the Gender Pay Gap at Bolton

From April 2017, all organisations that employ over 250 employees are required by law to report annually on their gender pay gap under The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

This is therefore the fourth year that Bolton Council has reported its gender pay gap data. In line with the legislation and data transparency, this information is available to the public on the [council's website](#) and also on the [Government's portal](#) for Gender Pay Gap reporting.

The council is committed to minimising any gender pay gap and as an organisation invests in their lower-paid staff, paying the Living Wage rate, and provides favourable terms and conditions regardless of gender.

The council offers a competitive reward package including staff benefits, pension contributions, training opportunities, occupational health support and flexible working options, in addition to pay.

There are many career pathways, investment in training and leadership development and clear progression routes enabling staff to develop into more senior roles.

There also continues to be apprenticeships across many areas of the organisation.

Regarding remuneration, the council completed a fundamental Pay and Grading review in 2009 and all NJC posts in scope were evaluated and assimilated onto a single pay spine. Other terms and conditions, including additional payments, were reviewed as part of the implementation, including the removal of bonus payments. The rate for the job is based on the role and responsibilities of the post, irrelevant of the post holder's gender. All jobs are assimilated to grades based on a full 13 factor evaluation of the duties and responsibilities, to ensure pay parity and no gender bias when determining pay rates.

As an equal opportunity employer, our recruitment and selection policy is fairly and consistently applied to ensure equality of opportunity for all, to value diversity and encourage men and women to apply equally for all roles and progression within the organisation.

The council provides many different exciting career opportunities, clear progression routes and a flexible working environment. Our many training and development schemes evidence our investment in staff and their ambitions and aspirations, to ensure maximum retention and effective succession planning.

Publishing the data is part of our commitment to put actions in place to minimise the gap further.

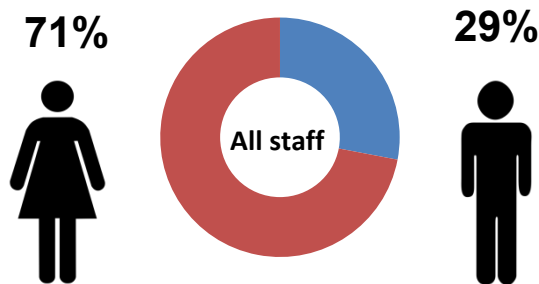
2. Analysis

These regulations require the relevant organisations to publish their gender pay gap data by 30th March annually, including mean and median gender pay gaps; the mean and median gender bonus gaps; the proportion of men and women who received bonuses; and the proportions of male and female employees in each pay quartile.

The gender pay gap is different to Equal Pay. Equal Pay deals with the differences between men and women who carry out the same job or undertake work of equal value. It is illegal to pay people unequally because of their gender. The Council's equality proof pay structure,

implemented in 2009, ensures fair and consistent job evaluation of all roles, regardless of the job holder's gender. The gender pay gap shows the difference in the average pay rates between all men and all women in the workforce.

Bolton's workforce



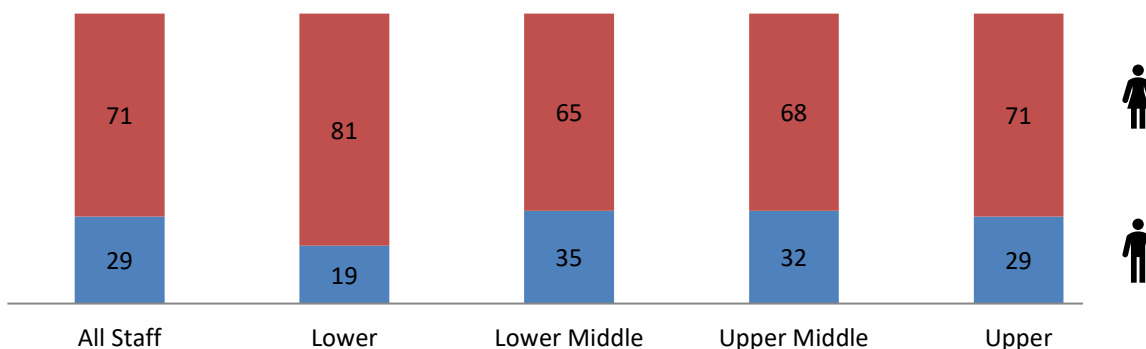
- Within the council around 71% of staff are women and 29% men
- Around 52% of our workforce works full time and 48% part time
- 85% of part time employees are women and 15% are men

3. The Gender Pay Gap data 2021

Bolton Council's mean gender pay gap is **5.1%** i.e. the average hourly rate for women is **5.1%** lower than the average hourly rate for men. This is equivalent in monetary terms to 78p more per hour for men.

The council's median gender pay gap is **7.6%** i.e. the midpoint in all employees' hourly pay. Women's median pay is **7.6%** lower than the average hourly rate for men. This is equivalent in monetary terms to £0.96 more per hour for men.

Hourly pay quartiles – the workforce, in order of hourly rate separated into four quarters. The gender % in each quarter is as below:



The bonus data reporting required does not apply at Bolton Council as bonuses are not paid.

4. Explanation of the pay gap

Potential causes of the pay gap are varied:

- 84% of our part time workforce are women and analysis of the part-time roles shows that the majority of these are within the lower graded job families e.g. cleaners, general assistants, and care assistants etc.
- There are differences in job groups predominantly occupied by men and women. Women occupy a large percentage of the lowest paid jobs e.g. cleaning, catering, administrative and care functions. Whereas the lowest paid and largest job groups predominantly occupied by men e.g. refuse, neighbourhood services roles which are evaluated at a slightly higher grade, due to the duties of the job (and therefore the scoring of these duties on our job evaluation scheme).
- The quartile analysis explains why the median gap is higher than the mean. When pay is ordered from lowest to highest as a percentage of all women across the organisation, a large majority (81%) of workers in lowest quartile are women. The result pushes the median pay for men slightly higher than the median pay for women.
- Considering the national picture, women do play a greater role in caring for children, as well as for sick or elderly relatives. As a result, more women work part time, and a significant proportion of these jobs tend to be lower paid roles. For example, around 80% of those working in the lower paid care and leisure sector are women. Conversely, men make up the majority of those in the highest paid and most senior roles, for example, there are just 8 female Chief Executives in the FTSE 100¹.

5. Our progress

At Bolton the median gender pay gap has increased from 6.6% but reduced from 5.4% for the mean, which can be attributed to very senior leadership changes in the upper quartile. Bolton's figures compare favourably with the published median gender pay gap for all companies that reported in 2020 which was **7.4%** ([Gender pay gap in the UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peopleinwork/earningsandincome/articles/genderpaygapintheuk/2020)).

Since 2009 our mean gender pay gap has reduced from 10.4%. This can be attributed to the implementation of the Pay and Grading Review and Living Wage Supplement but also our flexible working policies, which help support many staff work flexibly to balance their home and caring responsibilities. These provisions include part time and term time working, flexi time, condensed hours, home working, holiday purchase scheme, shared parental leave and flexible retirement. Furthermore, this is supported by the figure that around 62% of our senior managers are women.

The council is fully committed to paying the highest possible rate for our lowest earners. Over the last few years a series of improvements to the pay structure have been made including the introduction of a Living Wage Supplement in 2016. The council's lowest hourly rate rose to £9.50 in 2021, above the National Living wage. The majority of workers on these rates are women and this has helped to reduce the (mean) GPG.

Our average hourly rate across the council is **£14.38** which is far higher than the minimum and living wage levels.

¹ *The Fawcett Society – the UK's leading charity campaigning for gender equality and women's rights.*

* Pay award pending for 2021-22

6. Further action to eliminate the gender pay gap

As the analysis shows, some of the gap is inherently caused by the job roles chosen by men and women.

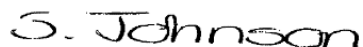
The council will consider any actions to eliminate the gender pay gap. The corporate leadership team has asked departmental leadership teams to analyse the gender profile of professions within their divisions with a view to address any barriers to women accessing career pathways, e.g. could job roles be made more flexible and entry level posts, such as apprenticeships be facilitated.

The council's commitment will also continue to ensure policies and procedures, including recruitment and retention practices, career development opportunities and job evaluation processes are fair and transparent.

7. Agreement

I confirm that Bolton Council is committed to the principle of gender pay equality and has prepared its 2021 pay gap results in line with mandatory requirements.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Johnson".

Sue Johnson

Deputy Chief Executive

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