

Annual gender pay gap report 2021/22

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils (the councils) are required by law to publish an annual gender pay gap report.

This is the report for the snapshot date of 31 March 2021.

- The mean gender pay gap is 4.26%
- The median gender pay gap is 2.78%
- The mean gender bonus gap is 0%
- The median gender bonus gap 0%
- The proportion of male employees receiving a bonus is 0% and the proportion of female employees receiving a bonus is 0%.

Pay quartiles by gender

Band	Males	Females	Description
A	39.06%	60.94%	Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them at or below the lower quartile
B	31.50%	68.50%	Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them above the lower quartile but at or below the median
C	37.01%	62.99%	Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them above the median but at or below the upper quartile
D	44.88%	55.12%	Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them above the upper quartile

The figures above have been calculated using the standard methodologies in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

What are the underlying causes of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils gender pay gap?

The law requires men and women to receive equal pay for:

- the same or broadly similar work;
- work rated as equivalent under a job evaluation scheme; or
- work of equal value.

The councils are confident that the gender pay gap does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work. The gender pay gap is the result of the roles and number in which men and women are employed within the organisations and the salaries associated with those roles. The councils acknowledge that individuals within comparable roles may fall within different spinal column points due to length of service at the Councils. However, comparable roles

fall within the same Grade, and individuals have the capacity to increase a spinal column point as part of the annual Pay Award process. Grades have a maximum cap to ensure individuals can catch up with those with a longer service at the Councils.

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).
- Women are more likely than men to be in front-line and administrative roles at the lower end of the organisation.
- Men are more likely than women to be in specialised roles (such as technical and IT-related), which attract higher rates of pay than other roles at similar levels of seniority.
- Women are more likely than men to have breaks from work that have affected their career progression, for example to bring up children.
- Women are more likely than men to work part time, and many of the jobs that are available across the UK on a part-time basis are relatively low paid.

This pattern from the UK economy as a whole is reflected in the make-up of the councils' workforce, where the majority of front-line administrative services are women. However, the majority of line manager roles at the councils are also made up of women and there is a balance of male and females in senior manager positions.

This can be seen in the table depicting pay quartiles by gender. This shows the councils' workforce divided into four equal-sized groups based on hourly pay rates, with band A including the lowest-paid 25 per cent of employees (the lower quartile) and band D covering the highest-paid 25 per cent (the upper quartile). In order for there to be no gender pay gap, there would need to be an equal ratio of men to women in each band. The percentage of female to men is higher in all bands.

There have been 78 new starters included in this report since the last South and Vale gender pay gap report. Of those 78 new starters, 41 of them fall in Band A, the lower quartile group. Within this group of new starters in Band A, 71% were male, which has positively impacted the mean and median calculations.

How does South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Councils gender pay gap compare with that of other organisations?

At the time of reporting, the mean gender pay gap for the whole economy (according to the reported figures in 2021 Office for National Statistics (ONS) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) figures) is 14.9 per cent, whilst in the public sector it is 14.8 per cent. At 4.26 per cent, the councils mean gender pay gap is significantly lower than both. There has also been a decrease in the mean gender pay gap in comparison to last years' South and Vale gender pay gap report.

The median gender pay gap for the whole economy (according to the 2021 ONS ASHE figures) is 15.4 per cent, whilst in the public sector it is 18 per cent. At 2.78 per cent, the councils median gender pay gap is significantly lower than both. There has also been a decrease in the median gender pay gap in comparison to last year's South and Vale gender pay gap report.

The councils do not make bonus payments.

It is worth noting that the data provided here is a snapshot during which the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) was available in the UK. Whilst approximately 4.5 million employees were furloughed in March 2021, no staff members at the Councils were furloughed nor was their pay reduced during this time. As such we do not believe that the councils' data will have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

What is South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils doing to address its gender pay gap?

Whilst the councils' gender pay gap compares favourably with organisations across the whole UK economy and within the public sector, this is not an issue we are complacent about. The councils are committed to the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment for all employees, regardless of sex, race, religion or belief, age, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or disability. We have a clear policy of paying employees equally for the same or equivalent work, regardless of any characteristic mentioned above.

We are committed to doing everything we can to reduce our gender pay gap. However, the councils also recognise that the scope to act is limited in some areas - for example, we have no direct control over which roles individuals apply for.

The steps that the councils take to promote gender equality in all areas include the following:

Open and transparent reporting

To identify any barriers to gender equality and inform priorities for action, in 2016 the councils introduced annual gender monitoring to understand:

- the proportions of men and women applying for jobs and being recruited;
- the proportions of men and women leaving the organisation and their reasons for leaving;
- the numbers of men and women in each-pay band;
- working patterns

Annual pay review

Every year the councils undertake a pay review with trade union representatives to ensure fair and equal pay across all roles.

Pay Scales transparency

Every year following the pay review, pay scales are made available to all council staff via the Councils internal website. A breakdown of the process, including cost of living and increments is also provided. This allows all staff to easily view the structure of each pay grade, meaning staff are not discouraged from salary negotiations.

Regardless of gender, all staff will begin at the bottom of a Grades spinal column points. The councils acknowledge that some roles have the ability to be awarded outside of the grade scales, regardless of gender. This process must be approved by a Head of Service and is still subject to the annual Pay Award process.

Vacant roles are advertised with pay scale included, so that all applicants (internal and external) can know what to reasonably expect when applying for a role.

Flexible working

The councils have had a long commitment to flexible working. The councils' annualised hours policy applies to all officers below service managers, allowing for staff to achieve a good work/life balance. Additional holiday allowance is given to senior managers and above. As mentioned above, childcare arrangements can impact the gender pay gap, and these options give all staff greater flexibility day to day regardless of their personal commitments.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns in the UK, staff were given the option to carry forward additional holiday on top of their usual maximum of 5 days. This is to provide staff equal opportunity to manage their time given potential impact on their usual routine.

Job evaluation scheme

All roles are subject to formal job evaluation process to ensure a fair structure. All staff can put forward a business case for their role to be reviewed against the job evaluation scheme, regardless of gender. This includes any negotiations to move to a higher spinal column point, which must be approved by the Head of Service. This process is also reviewed by UNISON. Any changes agreed will apply to all staff within the amended job role.

I, Mark Stone, CEO, confirm that the information in this statement is accurate.

Signed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Stone', with a horizontal line underneath it.

26/01/2022