

Kent County Council
Gender Pay Gap Reporting Statement

2023

What is Gender Pay Gap Reporting?

This is KCC's seventh Gender Pay Gap Report. For the public sector, the calculation is based on the hourly pay rate for each employee during the pay period that includes 31 March each year.

The gender pay gap is not the same as equal pay. Most organisations that pay men and women the same rate for work at the same level will still have a gender pay gap. This is because of the different proportions of men and women working across the whole organisational structure. If there are proportionately more men at higher levels within organisations this is what the gender pay gap figures highlight. By undertaking this calculation, it helps organisations understand their own position and to consider ways to reduce the difference. Figures from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) indicate that the gender pay gap among all employees was 14.3% in 2023.

What we need to calculate

The legislation sets calculations to show the difference in hourly pay and other payments between men and women across the whole of the organisation. The mean percentage shows the difference in the average pay and the median is the middle value for all the payments when put in a list. In line with legislative reporting requirements, we also need to show the proportions of men and women receiving an amount outside of the hourly pay calculation, this is referred to as a bonus in terms of the regulations and the gender proportions in each quarter of the pay structure.

Our data

This is Kent County Council's (KCC) annual gender pay gap report for the snapshot date of 31 March 2023.

- The mean gender pay gap for KCC is 10.9% and the median is 13.8%.
- The mean gender bonus pay gap for KCC is 10.7% and the median is twice¹ as big for females than males.
- The proportion of male employees in KCC receiving a bonus is 7.1% and the proportion of female employees receiving a bonus is 3.3%.

Pay quartiles by gender

Band	Males	Females
Lower quartile	19%	81%
Lower middle quartile	15%	85%
Upper middle quartile	22%	78%
Upper quartile	27%	73%

¹ This means the middle number of a range of numbers in ranked order i.e. when all the bonuses paid are lined up in ranked order, the middle bonus figure is double the bonus figure paid to men.

What the figures indicate

- **Pay** – The median pay gap for KCC has increased from the figure last year which stood at 12.6%. This can be explained by the very small movement of 1% of males from the lower middle quartile to the upper middle quartile. KCC's mean pay gap has reduced to 10.9% from 11.4% previously. This is because there was a lower % of males in the upper pay quartile, and an increase of females in the upper middle quartile.

KCC compares favourably to those employers reporting pay gaps in the Southeast where the median pay gap is 18.3% and the mean pay gap is 15.7%. This is also the case for Kent based employers where the median pay gap is 16.6% and mean pay gap is 15.8% (ONS provisional data, 2023)

- **Bonus** – This has a broad definition within the scope of gender pay gap reporting requirements and KCC does not operate a traditional bonus scheme. As can be seen from the figures, only a small proportion of the workforce received these payments, and the data needs to be interpreted carefully because of this. Rather than a traditional bonus scheme, managers can recognise individual performance using cash awards. Compared to 2022 figures, the median figure has increased significantly with females receiving bonuses twice as big as males (as explained in our data above). The mean figure has decreased from 21.4% to 10.7%. Proportionately, more women received a cash award (bonus) than men. 351 payments were made above £150 of which 226 were to women.
- **Gender distribution** – The proportion of women to men across KCC is c.79% v 21% respectively. Within the lower half of the grading structure the balance is towards women, however the proportion is 73% v 27% within the upper quartile. There is, therefore, still a significantly greater proportion of women in each of the pay quartiles. This may help explain why the KCC mean gender pay gap is lower than the national average. Within our leadership cohort the balance is now c.60/40 in favour of women.

The wider KCC context

KCC is very clear that gender should not limit or define choices in or outside of the workplace. Reduction in the gender pay gap is dependent on many factors including societal expectations and norms. Aspects which are in our control involve the whole employment cycle such as recruitment, career progression, maternity/return to work, leadership development, apprenticeships, learning culture, organisational wellbeing, and the use of flexible working arrangements. We seek to identify and address barriers as a way of making practical and positive changes in the context of a supportive management culture and through the delivery of our People Strategy.

KCC's People Strategy aims to deliver on the Council's ambitions to be an inclusive employer, where our workforce can be their true selves at work and inclusion is embedded into everything we do. This includes the creating an inclusive environment in which we operate. As ways of working evolve, both the way our staff work and the way services are delivered, many of our roles can afford some flexibility to allow individuals to better balance their personal circumstances and commitments with work requirements. The policy frameworks and emphasis on good conversations between managers and staff to discuss and accommodate individual needs aims to have a positive impact on career progression and personal development for all staff, which will help with pay gaps.

KCC has a deep and longstanding commitment to the promotion of equality and fairness in the workplace. We know from undertaking equal pay audits previously that we pay men and women in a consistent way for work of equal value. This is underpinned by a grading structure and job evaluation system which considers roles rather than gender differences. It is, however, important not to be complacent. There are many touch points where both equality and diversity are promoted. These include: -

- A simple and robust approach to job evaluation is intended to ensure people are paid in a fair and consistent way for the roles which they undertake across the authority.
- Inclusive and accessible training – much training is now eLearning based which enables greater access and availability and is not dependant on where and when people work.
- Enhancing conversation and dialogue within our approach to managing performance will help individuals discuss their aspiration and identify the appropriate development and support to achieve these.
- Diversity training is promoted to all which increases knowledge and awareness of all aspects of equality and inclusion for protected characteristics.
- Staff groups are forums set up to support the equality and diversity agenda. There are six:
 - **Aspire** for employees under 30 which supports and develops younger people to realise their potential.
 - **Level Playing Field** promotes best practice and broadens the knowledge around disability issues within KCC.
 - **Staff Ethnic Diversity Forum** supports black and minority ethnic staff in all directorates and helps the council to develop and review council policies that affect both staff and the wider community to ensure that they are inclusive.
 - **Rainbow** supports those who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or questioning, and anyone else who identifies as LGBTQ+. It gives advice on the services that KCC provides to ensure that all aspects of the organisation's work are accessible and appropriate to all Kent's residents, regardless of sexual orientation.
 - **Mental Health Support Network** for all staff within KCC, provides support to members and encourages open conversations around mental health. It helps KCC to raise awareness of mental health and reduce the stigma in the workplace.
 - **Single Parent Staff Group** supports staff who are single parents with caring responsibilities for a child.
- Flexible working arrangements are used to help both men and women balance domestic and work/career commitments in a way which works for them and the organisation.

KCC will continue to find opportunities to promote and enhance pay parity. The principles and focus of our 'managing performance' expectation is to promote dialogue and inclusion. This is a key aspect for identifying aspirations, development opportunities and the support required to help people progress and ensure that any actual or perceived barriers are removed.

I confirm that the data reported is accurate.



Amanda Beer
Chief Executive