



To: Members of the Remuneration Committee

## ***Notice of a Meeting of the Remuneration Committee***

**Wednesday, 15 January 2025 at 10.10 am**

**Room 2&3 - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND**

If you wish to view proceedings online, please click on this [Live Stream Link](#).  
However, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.

Martin Reeves  
Chief Executive

January 2025

*Committee Officer:* **Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Democratic Services Manager**  
*Tel: 07393001096 Email: colm.ocaomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk*

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### **Membership**

Chair – Councillor Liz Leffman  
Deputy Chair - Councillor Liz Brighthouse OBE

### *Councillors*

Stefan Gawrysiak  
John Howson

Kieron Mallon  
Nigel Simpson

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**If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.**

# AGENDA

## 1. Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments

## 2. Declarations of Interest - see guidance note

## 3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2025 (RC3) and to receive information arising from them.

## 4. Petitions and Public Address

*Members of the public who wish to speak at this meeting can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection.*

*To facilitate 'hybrid' meetings we are asking that requests to speak or present a petition are submitted by no later than 9am four working days before the meeting. Requests to speak should be sent to [committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk).*

*If you are speaking 'virtually', you may submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that your views are taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9am 2 working days before the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.*

## 5. Gender Equality and Ethnicity Pay Gap Reports 2024 (Pages 5 - 32)

Report of the Director of Human Resources and Cultural Change

Oxfordshire County Council has an agreed set of strategic priorities, one of which is to be an employer of choice. One of the ways in which to demonstrate this to current and prospective colleagues, and to other key stakeholders, is by reporting the gender equality and ethnicity pay gap data and taking action to close it when necessary.

**The Committee is RECOMMENDED to:**

**a) Note the 2024 gender equality and ethnicity pay gap reports.**

**The Committee is RECOMMENDED to RECOMMEND COUNCIL to:**

**b) Note the council's statutory gender equality pay gap report of 2024 and approve it for onward submission to the Gender Pay Gap Service by 30 March 2025.**

**c) Note the council's voluntary ethnicity pay gap report of 2024.**

**6. Pay Policy Statement (To Follow)**

## **Councillors declaring interests**

### **General duty**

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed 'Declarations of Interest' or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

### **What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?**

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your employment; sponsorship (i.e. payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

### **Declaring an interest**

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

### **Members' Code of Conduct and public perception**

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member 'must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself' and that 'you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned'.

### **Members Code – Other registrable interests**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your other registerable interests then you must declare an interest. You must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and you must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Wellbeing can be described as a condition of contentedness, healthiness and happiness; anything that could be said to affect a person's quality of life, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect their wellbeing.

Other registrable interests include:

- a) Any unpaid directorships

- b) Any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority.
- c) Any body (i) exercising functions of a public nature (ii) directed to charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

### **Members Code – Non-registrable interests**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to your financial interest or wellbeing (and does not fall under disclosable pecuniary interests), or the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate, you must declare the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects your own financial interest or wellbeing, a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate or a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under other registrable interests, then you must declare the interest.

In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied:

Where a matter affects the financial interest or well-being:

- a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- a) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

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# Agenda Item 3

## REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Monday, 4 November 2024 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 10.20 am

**Present:**

**Voting Members:** Councillor Liz Leffman – in the Chair

Councillor Liz Brighthouse OBE (Deputy Chair)

Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak

Councillor John Howson

Councillor Nigel Simpson

**Officers:**

Whole of meeting Lorna Baxter, Deputy Chief Executive, Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer; Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance; Cherie Cuthbertson, Director of HR and Cultural Change; Katrina Pennington, HR Business Partner; Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Democratic Services Manager

*The Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, and decided as set out below. Except as insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda and report, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.*

### **18/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS**

(Agenda No. 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Kieron Mallon.

### **19/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE**

(Agenda No. 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

### **20/23 MINUTES**

(Agenda No. 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2024 and resumed on 5 September 2024 were approved as an accurate record.

### **21/23 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda No. 4)

No requests had been received.

## **22/23 EXEMPT MINUTES**

(Agenda No. 5)

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2024 and resumed on 5 September 2024 were approved as an accurate record.

## **23/23 CHANGES TO THE APPRAISAL PROCESS FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)**

(Agenda No. 6)

Members were asked to consider a proposed process for the conduct of appraisals for the position of Chief Executive.

The Monitoring Officer stated that she believed that the report and annexes 1, 3 and 4 should not have been deemed exempt when publishing the agenda. Annex 2 Appraisal Report by South East Employers was correctly identified as including exempt information in the following categories:

1. Information relating to a particular individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

Members agreed with this view. It was agreed that the agenda should be republished allowing public access to the report and annexes 1, 3 and 4. Annex 2 will remain exempt.

Members confirmed that they did not wish to discuss anything in the exempt annex and the discussion continued in public session.

Cherie Cuthbertson, Director of HR and Cultural Change, introduced the report. She stated that the current Chief Executive commenced in the position in March 2023. An appraisal was conducted in January/February 2024 but no specific process had been defined. It was decided to commission South East Employers (SEE) to recommend a process.

There were a number of approaches that could be taken but it was recommended that the appraisal be conducted by the Remuneration Committee and the Members of the Committee receive training on how to conduct the appraisal. This was with a view to conducting the first appraisal under this process in January 2025.

In response to comments and questions from Members, officers responded as follows:

- It was recommended that Council make amendments to the Constitution regarding the Terms of Reference of the Remuneration Committee and a process had yet to be conducted to check if there were any consequential amendments that needed to be made.
- It was planned to provide the training in mid-December so that the appraisal could be conducted in January.



- The appraisal would be conducted by the whole committee and not a subcommittee of it.
- The appraisal itself would be conducted in private.

Members welcomed the proposals from South East Employers and the provision of a structured process for appraisals of the Chief Executive.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Brighthouse, seconded by Councillor Simpson and agreed.

**RESOLVED to**

- a) Agree to accept and recommend to Council the proposed changes to the appraisal process for the Chief Executive (Head of the Paid Service) as set out by the South East Employers (SEE) review report (Annex 2), including a change to the Remuneration Committee’s terms of reference to include operating as the Appraisal Panel for the Chief Executive appraisal process.

**to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL to:**

- b) Approve the proposed changes to the appraisal process for the Chief Executive (Head of the Paid Service) as set out by the South East Employers (SEE) review report (Annex 2).
- c) Delegate to the Remuneration Committee to constitute the Appraisal Panel and undertake the appraisals for the Chief Executive.
- d) Approve amendments to the Constitution to include acting as an Appraisal Panel and undertaking Chief Executive’s appraisals to the terms of reference to Remuneration Committee at Part 5.1C and to delegate to the Director of Law and Governance and the Monitoring Officer to make any consequential amendments to the Constitution.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing .....

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## REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

15 January 2025

### Gender Equality and Ethnicity Pay Gap Reports 2024 Report of the Director of Human Resources and Cultural Change

#### RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to:**

a) Note the 2024 gender equality and ethnicity pay gap reports.

The Committee is RECOMMENDED to RECOMMEND COUNCIL to:

b) Note the council's statutory gender equality pay gap report of 2024 and approve it for onward submission to the Gender Pay Gap Service by 30 March 2025.

c) Note the council's voluntary ethnicity pay gap report of 2024.

#### Executive summary

2. Oxfordshire County Council has an agreed set of strategic priorities, one of which is to be an employer of choice. One of the ways in which to demonstrate this to current and prospective colleagues, and to other key stakeholders, is by reporting the gender equality and ethnicity pay gap data and taking action to close it when necessary.
3. The gender pay gap is the difference between the average (mean or median) earnings of men and women (\*see important note at paragraph 13) across a workforce. Whilst reporting the council's gender equality pay gap is a statutory requirement, reporting of the ethnicity pay gap is currently voluntary, and a matter of best practice.
4. Reporting annually is an important way to track how the council's recruitment, reward, and progression decisions impact its ability to achieve a diverse, inclusive workforce.
5. As at 31 March 2024 (the snapshot date) the council's mean gender equality pay gap was 2.95%. This represents a widening of the gap since 2023, when it was reported as 1.2%.
6. As at 31 March 2024 the council's mean ethnicity pay gap was 2.59%. This also represents a widening from 0.22% in March 2023.
7. Oxfordshire County Council recognises that as one of the largest employers in the county it has a responsibility to lead by example. To that end, it is

important to continually look behind the headline figures to understand how culture, policies and practice, transformation, and actions can help close the gaps that exist.

8. Whilst the council's gender equality and ethnicity pay gaps are positive compared to its peer groups, it is not complacent about their respective widening since last year.
9. The council's data points towards a need to enable current and prospective female, and Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees to be appointed or promoted into more senior roles.
10. A combination of filling the remaining vacancies arising from the Tiers 2, 3, & 4 leadership review, the next stages of the organisation restructure, the embedding of the employee performance management framework, and a greater focus on succession planning and employee development may all provide opportunities to do just that.
11. Flexible, agile working, and family friendly policies will also assist the council to attract and retain employees in a competitive labour market and in a geographical area with low unemployment.
12. Consideration is also being given to providing quarterly management information so that performance in relation to the gender equality and ethnicity pay gaps can be monitored on a more regular basis, and in doing so consider whether immediate remedial action is required, rather than waiting for 12 months before considering how sustained performance improvements may be made in these areas.

**\*Important note**

13. The Government Gender Pay Gap Reporting Service acknowledges the importance of being sensitive to how an employee identifies their gender. The gender pay gap regulations do not define the terms 'men' and 'women'. For the purpose of this report the definitions of men and women have been used throughout. In doing so, it is recognised that this may exclude some genders. However, the report follows Government reporting guidelines, which continues to require the reporting definitions of men and women and provides advice that if an employee does not self-identify as either gender, they may be excluded from the calculations. No-one has been excluded from the calculations in the data supporting this report.

## **Background**

### **Gender equality pay gap reporting requirements**

14. From 2017, an employer which has a headcount of 250 or more employees on a 'snapshot date' must comply with regulations on gender pay gap reporting.

15. Gender equality pay gap reporting does not compare men and women doing the same, equivalent, or work of equal value. Instead, it looks at the pay of the typical (mean or median) female employee with that of the typical male employee at the same workplace. The report has the aim of narrowing and eventually eliminating the pay differential between men and women.
16. Often the pay differential is driven by several factors such as the gender profile at senior level, or occupational segregation.

### **Snapshot date**

17. Gender equality pay gap calculations are based on employer payroll data drawn from a specific date each year known as the 'snapshot date'. The 'snapshot date' for Oxfordshire County Council (as with most other public sector employers) is 31 March.
18. For the purposes of this report, data was drawn on 31 March 2024 and must be reported and published by 30 March 2025. This means that the data will be almost twelve months old at the time of reporting. The council is considering ways to improve the way in which it uses the data so that it can monitor trends on a continuous basis and develop timely intervention plans where required.
19. This is an important consideration as the council continues its organisational restructure. Inevitably it means that with changes to structure also comes change in the workforce profile, which has the potential to impact the gender equality and ethnicity pay gaps. This is addressed further within the main body of the report.

### **Gender equality pay gap calculations**

20. Where applicable, employers must calculate, report, and publish the following gender pay gap figures:
  - percentage of men and women in each hourly pay quarter \*
  - mean (average) gender pay gap using hourly pay\*
  - median gender pay gap using hourly pay\*
  - percentage of men and women receiving bonus pay
  - mean (average) gender pay gap using bonus pay
  - median gender pay gap using bonus pay
21. \*Those indicated with an asterisk are applicable to the council for the 2024 report. The council does not use bonus payments.

### **Reporting**

22. As a public sector employer, the council is required to submit its annual pay gap report to the Gender Pay Gap Reporting Service by 30 March each year.

23. The council is also required to publish its gender equality pay gap information on its website, tell its employees where they can find this information, and keep it online for at least 3 years.

## **Oxfordshire County Council Gender Equality Pay Gap 2024**

### **Mean gender pay gap**

24. As at 31 March 2024 Oxfordshire County Council's mean gender equality pay gap widened (increased) to 2.95% (59p per hour), as shown in Table 1 below. Notwithstanding the widening of the council's gender equality pay gap in the last twelve months, it remains below that of the national public sector and the Office of National Statistics (ONS) UK gender pay gap data, based on both the mean and median hourly rate of pay as reported in paragraphs 33 - 39.

25. **Table 1: Oxfordshire County Council mean Gender Equality Pay Gap performance 2022 – 2024**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Gender equality pay gap</b>	<b>Hourly rate (men earn more than women)</b>
2022	2.3%	41 pence
2023	1.2%	22 pence
2024	2.95%	59 pence

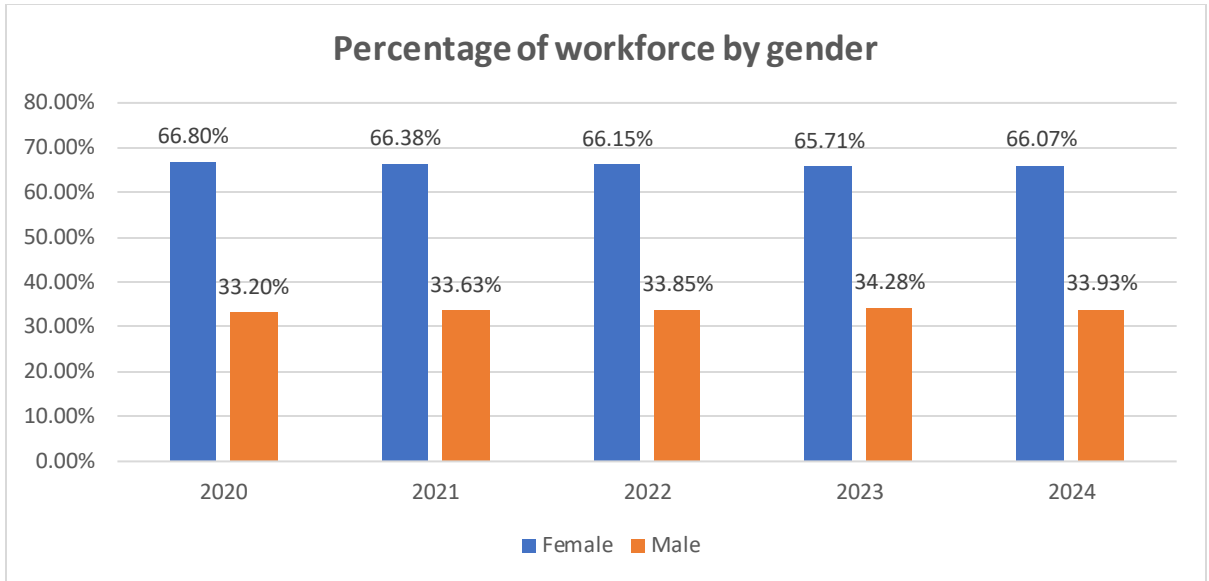
26. Looking at this more closely, this translates to a mean hourly rate for men of £19.98 per hour and a mean hourly rate of £19.39 per hour for women. The detailed gender equality pay gap report for 2024 is shown at Annex 1.

### **Oxfordshire County Council workforce profile by gender**

27. Table 2 shows the profile of the council's workforce by gender across all pay grades (including casual workers), drawn from the council's workforce diversity report.

28. It illustrates that 66.07% of the council's workforce are female. It is also a steady representation of the composition of its workforce since 2020.

29. **Table 2: Percentage of Oxfordshire County Council workforce by gender (extract of Workforce Diversity report 2024)**



30. For the purpose of statutory gender equality pay gap reporting, casual workers are excluded from the data as they are not employees.

31. When casual works are removed from the data for the purposes of the gender equality pay gap report submission, the council employed 5,216 employees of which 64.97% (3389) were female.

### **Median gender pay gap**

32. As at 31 March 2024 the median hourly rate of pay for men working at Oxfordshire County Council was the same as for women, at £18.04 per hour. This gives a median gender pay gap of 0% (0p per hour).

### **Benchmarking**

33. In October 2024 the Office of National Statistics (ONS) reported the 2024 UK gender pay gap, as follows:

- The national gender pay gap has been declining slowly over time; over the last decade it has fallen by approximately a quarter among full-time employees. In April 2024, it stood at 7.0%, down from 7.5% in 2023.
- The national gender pay gap is larger for employees aged 40 years and over than those aged under 40 years.
- The national gender pay gap is larger among high earners than among lower-paid employees.
- In April 2024, the national gender pay gap was highest in skilled trades occupations and lowest in the caring, leisure and other service occupations.
- In April 2024, the national gender pay gap among full-time employees was higher in every English region than in Wales, Scotland, or Northern Ireland.

- The gender pay gap measures the difference between average hourly earnings excluding overtime of men and women, as a proportion of men's average hourly earnings excluding overtime; it is a measure across all jobs in the UK, not of the difference in pay between men and women for doing the same job.

34. Tables 3, 4, and 5 below provide benchmark performance data for other public sector organisations, regional comparisons, and the link between employer size and the median gender pay gap.

**35. Table 3: Public sector comparison\*\***

Economic sector	Responses	Median gender pay gap (%)
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	496	4.50%
Oxfordshire County Council		0%

**36. Table 4: Regional comparison\*\***

Region	Responses	Median gender pay gap (%)
London	2,680	11.50%
Southeast England	1,591	10.50%
Oxfordshire County Council		0%

**37. Table 5: The link between employer size and the gender pay gap\*\***

	Responses	Median gender pay gap (%)
5,000-19,999	513	7.84%
Oxfordshire County Council		0%

38. \*\* Source; Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, May 2024, based on March and April 2023 snapshot data.

39. Despite the widening of the council's mean gender equality pay gap compared to last year, the benchmark data provides reassurance that the council is still performing well against its peer groups in respect of both the mean and median gender equality pay gap when looked at in isolation.

### **Why has the council's gender equality pay gap changed?**

40. Whilst the council's gender equality pay gap is positive compared to its peer groups, it is still important to observe what has caused it to widen, and how the council might take steps to ensure that it does not widen further.



41. It is notable that whilst the council's workforce is predominantly made up of female employees, there was a slight change in the workforce profile between 2023 and March 2024 (the date upon which the data is required to be taken).
42. Specifically, the council saw a 4% increase in female employees in the lower and lower-middle pay quartiles, and fewer in the upper and upper middle quartiles.
43. This was compounded by a 1.2% decrease in male employees in the lower-middle pay quartile, and an increase of 5.5% male employees in the top two quartiles.
44. The council also experienced a large percentage of female leavers (70.23%) in the 23 / 24 financial year.

### **Ethnicity pay gap**

45. Unlike the gender pay gap, the council is not legally required to publish its ethnicity pay gap. However, positive steps have been taken to measure and be transparent about the council's performance in this area.
46. The council's ethnicity pay gap data has been calculated using the same methodology set out in the Government regulations for calculating its gender pay gap. The same snapshot date of 31 March 2024 has also been used. The details included in this report are:
  - Mean ethnicity pay gap in hourly pay;
  - Median ethnicity pay gap in hourly pay;
  - Proportion of White, Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees in each pay quartile.

### **Mean ethnicity pay gap**

47. The percentage difference in mean hourly rate between white employees and employees who identify as Black, Asian, or of minority ethnicity background is 2.59% (51p per hour). This represents a significant increase from 0.22% in March 2023 (4p per hour).

### **Median ethnicity pay gap**

48. The percentage difference in median hourly rate between white employees and employees who identify as Black, Asian, or of minority ethnicity background is 0% (0p per hour). This is a positive indication of equality.
49. It is also notable that this percentage difference has decreased since the first reporting period in March 2020 where the difference was -5.5% (-82p per hour). There has also been a decrease since the previous reporting period where the difference was -2.74% (0.48p per hour).

## **Distribution by pay quartiles**

50. The quartile information is calculated by listing all salaries from highest to lowest and then splitting that information into four equal quarters to determine the percentage of White and Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees in each quartile.

### **Upper quartile**

51. The percentage of Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees in the upper quartile decreased from 9.5% in March 2023 to 8.7% in March 2024.

### **Upper middle quartile**

52. The highest proportion of Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees remain in the upper middle quartile, although the percentage decreased from 13.4% in March 2023 to 12.4% in March 2024.

53. Further analysis shows that most Social Worker posts are in this pay quartile where the council employs a high proportion of Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees. 24.03% of Social Workers are from Black, Asian, and ethnic minority groups.

### **Lower middle quartile**

54. The proportion of Black, Asian, and Ethnic Minority employees in the lower middle quartile steadily increased from 8.7% in March 2022 and 9.5% in March 2023 to 10.7% in March 2024. There is a high percentage of Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees in adults and children's social care roles at this level (9.9%).

### **Lower quartile**

55. The percentage of Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees in the lower quartile increased from 8.1% in March 2023 to 10.2% in March 2024.

56. Whilst the highest proportion of Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees remain in the upper middle quartile it is important that the council continues to raise awareness of the impact of unconscious bias and considers its advertising reach and development programmes so that employees or prospective employees from Black, Asian, and ethnic minority groups can develop the potential to perform senior leadership / upper quartile roles. With the recent implementation of a new applicant tracking system, the HR and Culture Change Service will be in a better position to collate and use the data available to identify and monitor trends in this area.

57. The detailed ethnicity pay gap report for 2024 provides further detail about the data and is shown at Annex 2.

## **The future legal framework**

58. The Government has confirmed that as part of its "Make Work Pay" plan, it will introduce gender pay gap action plans and require larger companies to publish information on their ethnicity and disability pay gaps. Large

employers will also be required to produce action plans on how to address their gender pay gaps and on how they will support employees through the menopause. This will be backed up by a Regulatory Enforcement Unit for equal pay. There are currently no confirmed dates for these changes to take effect.

### **Closing the gender equality and ethnicity pay gaps**

59. Closing the gender equality pay gap requires a meaningful, consistent, and sustained shift in cultural norms. Despite the council's positive position when compared against other organisations, it is important to continually work to close the gender equality pay gap.
60. There may be many reasons why the council has a gender equality pay gap, including:
- the number of women appointed into more junior roles, rather than higher levels
  - faster rates of turnover of female workers compared to men and;
  - successful promotion opportunities of women compared to men.
61. The HR and Culture Change Service will continue to work closely with the corporate leadership team and other services to further improve the gender equality and ethnicity pay gaps through the council's approach to opportunity, inclusion, fairness and change, delivery of the Our People and Culture Strategy and making smarter use of all relevant data.

### **Our people and culture strategy**

62. Pay gap reporting is an important part of ensuring a fair workplace and demonstrating the council as an employer of choice, as well as having clear business benefits such as attracting and retaining talent by showing a commitment to good practice.
63. To be an employer of choice it is important to understand the barriers that colleagues may face, not only in relation to pay, but also in terms of recruitment, promotion, development, and flexible working opportunities. Together this information will help the council identify and tackle the causes of gender inequality.
64. The HR and Culture Change Service has developed an "Our People and Culture Strategy" for the period 2024 – 2025. The strategy has four key pillars:
- ✓ **Attract - Attracting, recruiting and retaining talented people**  
It is essential that we are able to attract, recruit and retain our talented people to deliver excellent services for the residents of Oxfordshire.
  - ✓ **Thrive - Enabling our people to thrive and perform**

Creating a positive and inclusive work environment built on fairness, trust and transparency will allow our People to thrive and perform.

- ✓ **Grow - Enabling our people to grow and evolve for the future**  
Providing growth opportunities both on and off the job to build our knowledge, skills and behaviours will help us all deliver the future together
- ✓ **Lead - Enabling our people to lead and transform for the future**  
Empowering our leaders to embrace the skills and behaviours needed to achieve high performance and effective outcomes.

65. The strategy focuses on the vision of being an employer, partner and place shaper of choice, including developing the council's approach to recruitment and retention, pay transparency, flexible working, parental leave, and leadership, amongst other important initiatives. Each of these will also contribute to closing the gender equality and ethnicity pay gaps and driving continuous improvement and high levels of performance.

### **Data informed decision making - continuous improvement**

66. Paragraph 22 of this report describes how the data used for the purposes of statutory reporting is produced at a one-off snapshot date, on a recurring basis. This provides a consistent baseline position for the Gender Pay Gap Service to monitor and compare organisation performance nationally.

67. Whilst there is some advantage to this at the external macro level, there are also disadvantages to the council's current arrangements at a local level, as it impedes its ability to be proactive and timely with intervention plans when performance declines.

68. Consideration is being given to providing quarterly management information so that performance can be monitored on a more regular basis, and in doing so consider whether immediate remedial action is required rather than waiting for 12 months before considering how sustained performance improvements may be made in these areas.

69. As reported above, smarter use of the data available, including that which is being built into the applicant tracking system will enable the council to monitor and report upon the candidate journey and how that translates to the council's workforce profile and gender / ethnicity pay reports.

### **Organisation redesign programme**

70. Given the data was based on 31 March 2024, the impact of the council's organisation redesign programme, designed to deliver financial savings, create efficiencies, improve performance, and introduce new ways of working does not take into account the review and implementation of leadership tiers 2-4 (Directors, Deputy and Assistant Directors, and Heads of Service) which took place during the 2024/25 financial year.

71. It is important that consideration is given during recruitment to vacant posts at Tiers 2, 3, and 4, and in the design stages of the Tier 5 and onwards structures, to the impact of turnover, promotion, and recruitment upon the council's workforce profile and future gender and ethnicity pay gap reports.

## **EU Pay Transparency Directive**

72. The EU Pay Transparency Directive came into force on 7 June 2023. It is aimed at ensuring that the right to equal pay is upheld across all member states. It introduced new employer obligations:

1. Disclose salaries at recruitment.
2. Comply with employee requests for pay data.
3. Publish gender pay gap statistics.
4. Face compulsory audits and penalties when unjustified discrepancies come to light.

73. Whilst the Directive only directly applies to EU Member States and non-EU employers who employ people in the EU, it will undoubtedly raise expectations of pay transparency both across Europe and into the UK and could increase pressure on the UK Government to legislate to match the new standards of pay transparency set by the EU.

## **Financial implications**

74. There are no financial implications arising from the report.

Comments checked by:

Lorna Baxter, Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Resources & S151 Officer  
([Lorna.Baxter@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Lorna.Baxter@oxfordshire.gov.uk))

## **Legal implications**

75. In submitting this report to Remuneration Committee and Full Council in January / February respectively, the council will meet its statutory obligation to publish its 2024 gender equality pay gap report by 31 March 2025.

76. The law does not require employers to justify the size of their gender equality pay gaps. Nonetheless, the government encourages organisations to publish a narrative explaining their figures and any actions they are taking.

77. As set out in the report the council is not required by legislation to report on any ethnicity pay gap but chooses to do so as part of its strategic priority to be an employer of choice and to aid transparency.

Comments checked by:

Anita Bradley, Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer  
([Anita.Bradley@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Anita.Bradley@oxfordshire.gov.uk))

## **Staff Implications**

78. The Our People and Culture Strategy has been designed with the council's strategic priority of being an employer of choice in mind which will contribute to closing the gender and ethnicity pay gaps.

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

79. The council is committed to the principles of equality, diversity, fairness, and inclusion. Regardless of identity or background, everyone deserves to be able to develop their skills and talents to meet their full potential, work in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment, be fairly rewarded, recognised for the work they do, and have the opportunity to have their say on matters that affect them. The council is also committed to achieving a diverse workforce that fully reflects its community.

80. Whilst the council's gender equality and ethnicity pay gaps are positive compared to its peer groups, it is not complacent about their respective widening since last year.

81. The data at paragraphs 41-44 and 51-55 points towards a need to enable current and prospective female, and Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees to be appointed or promoted into more senior roles. With that in mind, the council will continue to explore its inclusion initiatives, particularly where there are barriers for women, and Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees to progress into higher paid roles, or roles where they are under-represented.

82. A combination of filling the remaining vacancies arising from the Tiers 2, 3, & 4 leadership review, the next stages of the organisation restructure, the embedding of the employee performance management framework, and a greater focus on succession planning and employee development may all provide opportunities to do just that.

83. Flexible, agile working, and family friendly policies will also assist the council to attract and retain employees in a competitive labour market and in a geographical area with low unemployment.

84. As set out in paragraphs 68-69 consideration is being given to providing quarterly management information so that performance in relation to the gender equality and ethnicity pay gaps can be monitored on a more regular basis, and in doing so consider whether immediate remedial action is required, rather than waiting for 12 months before considering how sustained performance improvements may be made in these areas.

**Cherie Cuthbertson**  
**Director of Human Resources and Cultural Change**

Annex 1: Gender Equality pay gap report data 2024

Annex 2: Ethnicity pay gap report data 2024

Background papers:

- 1) Gender Equality pay gap report 2023
- 2) Ethnicity pay gap report 2023
- 3) Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Reward analysis, May 2024

Contact Officer: Jo Pitman, Strategic Lead, Pay and Reward (She / Her)  
January 2025

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## Gender Equality Pay Gap Report 2024

### Background

1. The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 stipulate that all businesses, public sector, and third sector organisations with over 250 employees must publicly report the average pay differences between their male and female employees. The Regulations require employers to publish their:
  - i. Mean gender pay gap in hourly pay
  - ii. Median gender pay gap in hourly pay
  - iii. Mean bonus gender pay gap
  - iv. Median bonus gender pay gap
  - v. Proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment, and
  - vi. Proportion of males and females in each pay quartile.
2. As a public sector organisation Oxfordshire County Council is required to publish its pay gap information within 12 months of taking the “snapshot date” at 31 March 2024.
3. The calculations in this report follow the legislative requirements as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties & Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. All employees who were deemed to be relevant employees at 31 March 2024 are included. For the purposes of the report, casual workers are excluded as they are not employees.
4. This information will be published on the council’s website for a minimum of 3 years and published on the government website ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) by 31 March 2025.

### Equal pay and gender pay gap

5. The purpose of gender pay gap reporting is to achieve greater gender equality in terms of pay across the UK, and to increase pay transparency. This differs from equal pay which deals with differences between men and women who carry out the same roles.

## **Detail within this report**

6. Using a snapshot of employees' pay as at 31 March 2024, 3 of the 6 required calculations detailed in section 1 were made. This is because the council does not use bonus payments. The 3 calculations are shown below:
  1. Mean gender pay gap
  2. Median gender pay gap
  3. The proportion of men and women divided into four quartile pay bands

## **Information required for publication**

### **Definition of relevant employee**

7. An employee who was on full pay (not reduced to parental leave pay or sick pay) at the point of the data snapshot as at 31 March 2024.

### **Definition of mean gender pay gap**

8. The mean is defined as the average of the figures and is calculated by adding up all the figures and dividing by the number there are.

### **Definition of median gender pay gap**

9. The median is defined as the salary that lies at the midpoint and is calculated by ordering all salaries from highest to lowest. The median is the central figure.

### **Quartile pay bands**

10. The quartile information is calculated by listing all salaries from highest to lowest and then splitting that information into four equal quarters to determine the percentage of male / female employees in each quartile.

## National gender pay gap 2024

11. The national gender pay gap stood at 7.0% in April 2024, down from 7.5% in 2023. (Source: *Gender pay gap in the UK: 2024: Office of National Statistics*). In April 2024, the gender pay gap was highest in skilled trades occupations and lowest in the caring, leisure and other service occupations.

## Oxfordshire County Council workforce profile

12. On 31 March 2024, Oxfordshire County Council had 5,216 relevant employees, of which 35.03% (1827 employees) were men and 64.97% (3389 employees) were women.



## Oxfordshire County Council gender equality pay gap as of 31 March 2024

Mean: percentage difference and average hourly rate of pay



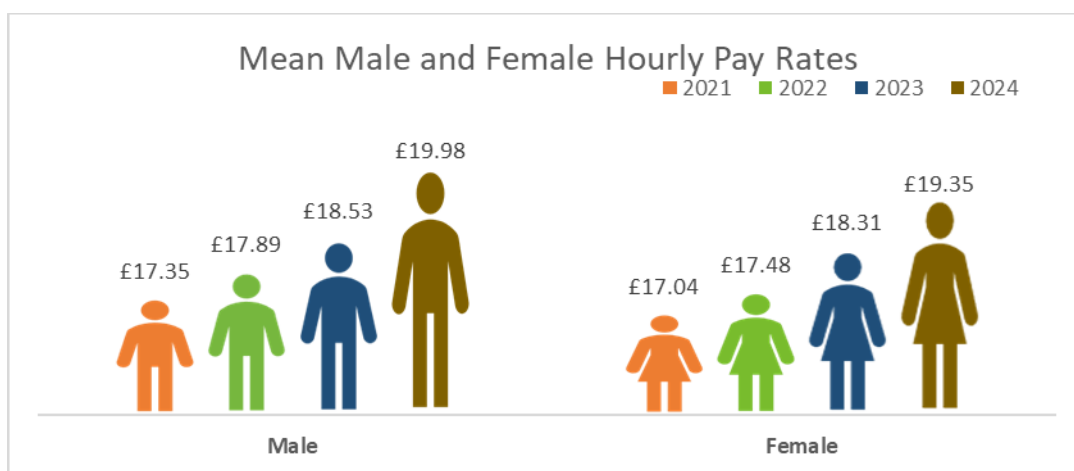
£19.98

Gap: 2.95% 59p per hour

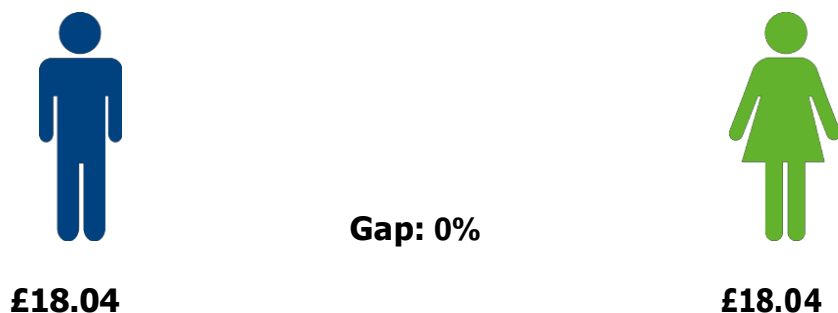


£19.39

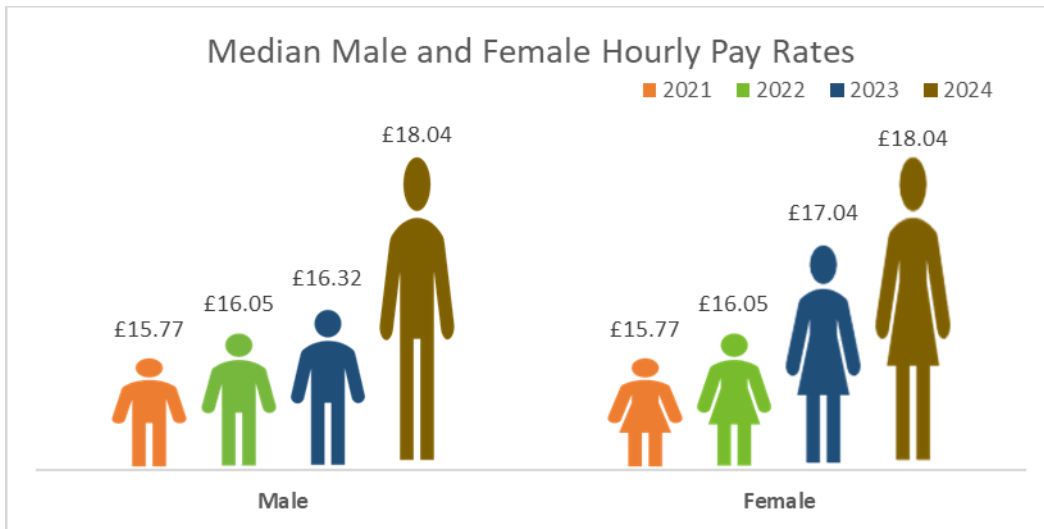
13. The mean difference for Oxfordshire County Council employees increased from 1.2% in March 2023 (22p per hour) to 2.95% (59p per hour) in March 2024. Despite this widening, it remains considerably less than the national pay gap.
14. As at 31 March 2024 the mean hourly rate for men working for Oxfordshire County Council was £19.98 per hour and for women it was £19.39 per hour. This means men earned an average of 59 pence per hour more than women, which equates to a mean difference of 2.95%.
15. The figures for 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 are illustrated in the table below, showing a less steep increase for females of £2.31 per hour over four years than the increase for males of £2.63 per hour.



**Median: percentage difference and hourly rate of pay**



16. As at 31 March 2024 the median hourly rate of pay for men working for Oxfordshire County Council was the same as for women, £18.04. This gives a median gender pay gap of 0%.
17. The national median hourly rate of pay excluding overtime for full-time employees rose from £17.40 - £17.52 in 2024. (Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics).
18. The figures for 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 are illustrated below, showing an equal increase for male and female employees of £2.27 per hour over four years.

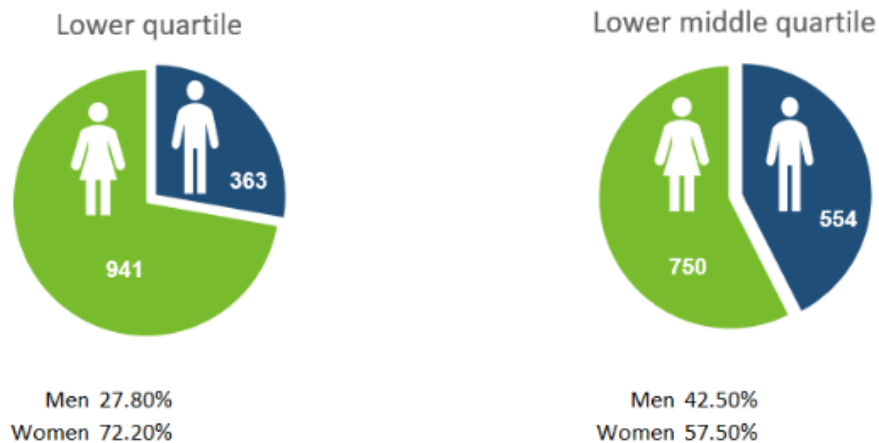


## Proportion of men and women receiving bonuses

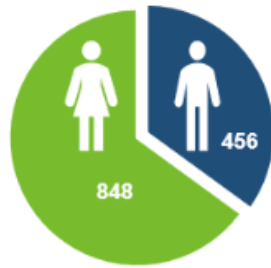
19. Oxfordshire County Council does not operate performance related pay or bonus schemes.

## Pay quartiles and segregation

20. As of 31 March 2024, Oxfordshire County Council employed a total of 5,216 relevant employees, averaging 1,304 employees per pay quartile. The gender split per quartile as at 31 March 2024 is shown below and serves as a useful benchmark to determine progression through the pay scales.

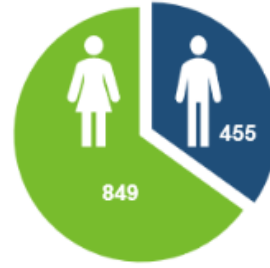


Upper middle quartile



Men 35.00%  
Women 65.00%

Upper quartile



Men 34.90%  
Women 65.10%

21. The hourly rates that represent each quartile are as follows:

- Upper - relates to the hourly rate of £22.49 and above
- Upper middle - relates to the hourly rate of £18.04 - £22.49
- Lower middle - relates to the hourly rate of £14.16 – 18.04
- Lower - relates to the hourly rate up to £14.16

## 22. Male and female segregation

The proportion of male to female employees in each quartile changed slightly from 2023, with slightly more females in the lower and lower middle quartiles, and slightly less in the upper and upper middle quartiles. This could be due in part to the large percentage of female leavers (70.23%) in the 23 / 24 financial year.

## 23. Female employees

The lower quartile saw a 0.4% increase of female employees since 2023, with 72.2% of the lower quartile being female – this is not reflective of the total workforce where 65% of the total workforce were female at the time of producing the data.

## 24. Male employees

There was a 1.2% decrease of male employees in the lower middle quartile since 2023 and an increase of 5.5% male employees in the top two quartiles.

## 25. Occupational segregation

In the lower quartile, the roles performed are mainly cleaning, administration, school crossing patrol, catering and customer services. For some of these functions there is currently no obvious career progression to secure higher earnings. However, it is important to emphasize that the council continues to promote development opportunities for employees to undertake apprenticeships and functional skills such as Math's and English.

At the time of producing the data 45.5% of the Extended Leadership Team (directors, deputy directors, and assistant directors) were women and 54.5% were men. Whilst a broadly even balance, it does not reflect the two thirds of the total workforce who were

women (at the time of producing the data).

## **Commitment to Equality**

26. The council is committed to the principles of equality, diversity, fairness, and inclusion. Regardless of identity or background, everyone deserves to be able to develop their skills and talents to meet their full potential, work in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment, be fairly rewarded, recognised for the work they do, and have the opportunity to have their say on matters that affect them. The council is also committed to achieving a diverse workforce that fully reflects its community.
27. The council will continue to explore its inclusion initiatives, particularly where there are barriers for women to progress into higher paid roles, or roles where they are under-represented.
28. Flexible, agile working, and family friendly policies will assist Oxfordshire County Council to attract and retain employees in a competitive labour market and in a geographical area with low unemployment.

## **Summary**

29. Oxfordshire County Council's gender pay gap is small. However, while publishing the data will not in itself remove the gap, continuing to do so is a step towards that aim. The council will continue to learn from best practice as part of its commitment to being a high performing, accountable, public sector organisation. The gender pay gap data will be analysed on at least an annual basis, and a comparison of figures will be completed year on year.

The council will ensure that job grades continue to be determined through objective analysis and job evaluation to maintain the integrity of the pay and grading system.

January 2025

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## **Ethnicity Pay Gap 2024**

### **Introduction**

1. Oxfordshire County Council is committed to increasing the diversity of its workforce and addressing any barriers to progression for the Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage (REACH) workforce.

### **Calculating the ethnicity pay gap**

2. Unlike the gender pay gap, the council is not legally required to publish its ethnicity pay gap. However, it has taken the important step to be transparent about its ethnicity pay gap and has calculated it using the same methodology set out in the Government regulations for calculating its gender equality pay gap, using the same snapshot date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.
3. The details included in this report are:
  - Mean ethnicity pay gap in hourly pay;
  - Median ethnicity pay gap in hourly pay;
  - Proportion of White, Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority employees in each pay quartile.
4. The council does not pay bonus so the mean and median bonus pay gap have not been included.

### **Median and Mean**

5. The data considers both the mean and the median measures.
6. The mean difference is the difference in average hourly pay, adding all pay rates together and dividing by the total number of people.
7. The median difference is the difference in hourly pay between the middle paid White employee and the middle-paid Black, Asian, and Ethnic minority employees (the person at the mid-point if you were to line all employees up). The median is the most representative measure of an 'average' employee as it negates high and low outliers in a data set that would normally skew the mean.

### **Relevant employees**

8. A relevant employee is an employee that received full pay (not reduced to parental leave pay or sick pay) as at the snapshot of data on 31 March 2024.

## **Workforce profile**

9. At the time of reporting (31 March 2024), Oxfordshire County Council employed 5405 relevant employees; of which 90.55% had disclosed their ethnicity. Whilst this is a significant proportion of the council's workforce, it is recognised that this does limit the accuracy of reporting. 9.45% of relevant employees have either chosen not to disclose their ethnicity or the council does not hold data about them. This is an increase from the council's first reporting period of 2020 where 8.5% of relevant employees did not disclose their ethnicity – this group has not been included in this report.
10. Of those relevant employees who have disclosed their ethnicity, 83.79% are from White backgrounds, 3.99% are from Black backgrounds, 3.83% are from Asian backgrounds, and 2.55% are from any other Ethnic Minority backgrounds.
11. In total, the percentage of employees reporting as Black, Asian, or Ethnic Minority is 10.37%. This represents an increase from 10.1% in 2023. This compares to 23.2% of the Oxfordshire population per the 2021 census.
12. For the purposes of this report White includes; White British, White Irish, White Eastern European and White Other ethnicity groups. Black, Asian, and other ethnic minority groups include; Black Caribbean, Black African, Black Other, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Asian Other, Arab, Mixed Asian, Mixed Black, Mixed Other and Other Ethnicity.
13. The number of relevant employees reporting as Black, Asian, Mixed or ethnic minority has increased by 24.56% since 31 March 2020 (first reporting period), from 397 to 510.

## **Ethnicity pay gap as at 31 March 2024**

### **Mean hourly pay**

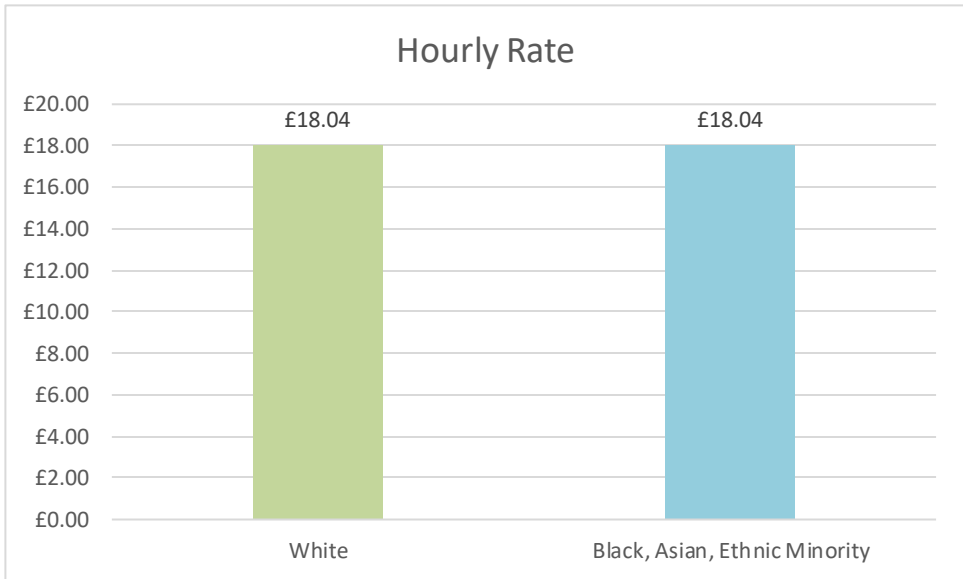
14. Percentage difference in mean hourly rate: 2.59% (51p per hour)



The mean pay gap between employees from White ethnic backgrounds and Black, Asian, and minority ethnic backgrounds has increased from 0.22% in March 2023 (4p per hour) to 2.59% in March 2024 (51p per hour).

**Median hourly pay**

15. Percentage difference in median hourly rate: 0% (0p per hour)



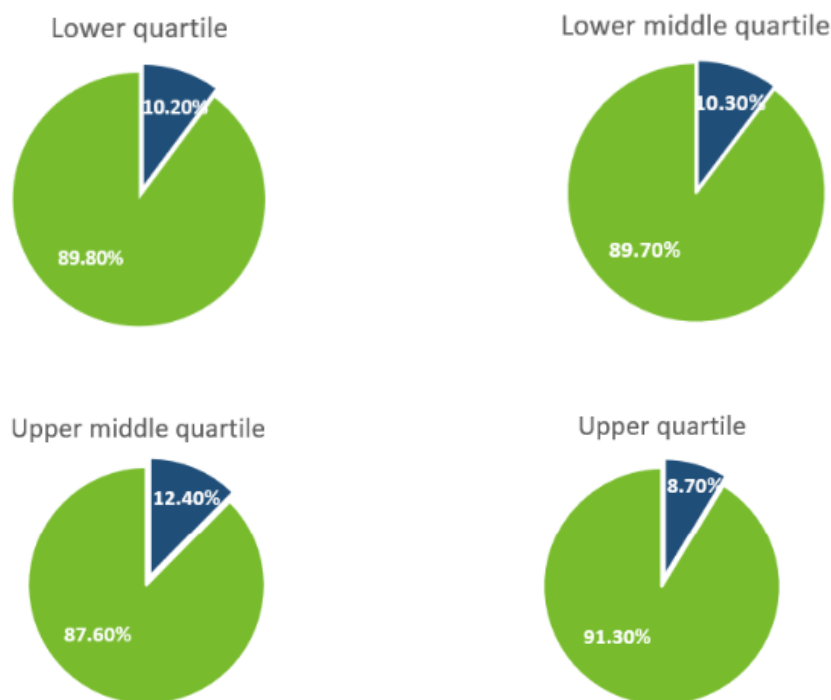
16. This percentage difference has decreased since the first reporting period in March 2020 where the difference was -5.5% (-82p per hour). There has also been a decrease since the previous reporting period where the difference was -2.74% (0.48p per hour).

**Pay quartiles**

17. The quartile information is calculated by listing all salaries from highest to lowest and then splitting that information into four equal quarters to determine

the percentage of White and Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees in each quartile.

18. Proportion of White and Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees by pay quartile:



19. The hourly rates that represent each quartile are as follows:

- Upper - relates to the hourly rates of £22.49 and above
- Upper middle - relates to the hourly rates of £18.04 - £22.49
- Lower middle - relates to the hourly rates of £14.16 – 18.04
- Lower - relates to the hourly rates up to £14.16

20. The highest proportion of Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees remain in the upper middle quartile, although the percentage decreased from 13.4% in March 2023 to 12.4% in March 2024.

21. Further analysis shows that most Social Worker posts are in this pay quartile where the council employs a high proportion of Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees. 24.03% of Social Workers are from Black, Asian, and ethnic minority groups.

22. The percentage of Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees in the upper quartile decreased from 9.5% in March 2023 to 8.7% in March 2024. The percentage of Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees in the lower quartile increased from 8.1% in March 2023 to 10.2% in March 2024.

23. The proportion of Black, Asian, and Ethnic Minority employees in the lower middle quartile steadily increased from 8.7% in March 2022 and 9.5% in

March 2023 to 10.7% in March 2024. There is a high proportion of Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees in adults and children's social care roles at this level (9.9%) such as Family Support Workers, Coordinators, and Special Educational Needs Support roles.

24. There is also a high proportion of this group in customers and organisational development roles (10.8%) which includes Specialist Customer Service Advisers, Business Support Officers, and Information Analysts. There has also been an increase in reporting of ethnicity by employees since 2020 which may have affected this increase.

## **Commitment**

25. The council is committed to the principles of equality, diversity, fairness and inclusion. Its approach to people management should not put any group at a disadvantage.

26. Regardless of identity or background, everyone deserves to be able to develop their skills and talents to meet their full potential, work in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment, be fairly rewarded, recognised for the work they do and have the opportunity to have their say on matters that affect them. The council is also committed to achieving a diverse workforce that fully reflects its community.

27. The council's work to improve its approach to equalities, inclusion and diversity is underway. Some of the initial actions taken so far include:

- delivered unconscious bias training to managers
- developing and piloting a reverse mentoring proposal
- reviewed our e-learning offer (EDI e-learning training also part of mandatory manager induction programme)
- reviewing our staff network support including introduction of a new Staff Network Co-ordinator
- The Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage Network - REACH (formerly known as BAME) produced a toolkit for managers to encourage open conversations about race and racism with the aim to positively impact change in the workplace

28. The council is committed to working with all employees to ensure effective career conversations with managers are consistently taking place, as well as recognition of the work they do for staff networks outside of their day jobs through the managing for performance framework (12:3:2). Skills obtained through network activities should be recognised with opportunities to use these skills in other aspects of their role.

29. The council is also focusing on how to develop career pathways, in particular enabling progression from roles in the lower quartile to the lower middle quartile as well as how to increase representation of Black, Asian, and ethnic minority employees in senior management roles.

January 2025

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