

COUNCIL
9 December 2025

GENDER AND ETHNICITY PAY GAP REPORTS FOR 2024/25

Report by the Director of HR and Cultural Change

RECOMMENDATION

1. **Council is RECOMMENDED to**
 - a) Note Oxfordshire County Council's statutory Gender Pay Gap report of 2025 and approve it for onward submission to the Gender Pay Gap Service by 31 March 2026.
 - b) Note the Council's voluntary Ethnicity Pay Gap report of 2025.
 - c) Agree to the publishing of both reports on the Council's website by 31 March 2026.

Executive Summary

2. 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 on average pay differences between their male and female employees.
3. 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.
4. The figures are taken at a date of 31 March each year, this year's figures are from 31 March 2025. The figures set out the mean and median pay gaps. The mean is the average pay gap. The median is the middle point of a range of numbers arranged in order. If there is an even number in the range, the median is the mean (average) of the 2 middle numbers.
5. As at 31 March 2025 the Council's mean gender pay gap was 1.89%. This represents a reduction in the gap since 2024, when it was reported as 2.95%.
6. As at 31 March 2025 the Council's mean ethnicity pay gap was 2.11%. This also represents a reduction in the gap from 2.59% in March 2024.

Context

7. The gender pay gap is the difference between the average pay of men and women in an organisation. The Council is required to work out the:
 - mean (average) and median gender pay gap for hourly pay and bonus pay
 - percentage of men and women in each hourly pay quarter
 - percentage of men and women receiving bonus pay
8. Any employer with 250 or more employees on a specific date each year must report their gender pay gap data.

Positive and Negative Figures

9. A positive percentage shows that women have lower pay or bonuses than men in the Council.
10. A negative percentage shows that men have lower pay or bonuses than women in the Council.
11. A zero percentage shows that there is equal pay or bonuses between men and women within the Council.

Gender Pay Gap

12. At 31st March 2025, the Council's mean gender pay gap was 1.89% (39p per hour). This is a reduction from 2024, when the mean gender pay gap was recorded as 2.95% (59p per hour). This indicates the gender pay gap is closing.
13. At 31st March 2025, the Council's median gender pay gap was 0% (0p per hour). This is unchanged from 2024, when the median gender pay gap was also recorded as 0% (0p per hour). This demonstrates there is equal pay between both males and females.
14. The Council's workforce was 65.52% female and 34.48% male on 31st March 2025.
15. In comparison to other authorities at the time of reporting data from 2024, the Council's mean gender pay gap was in the lower quartile of responses provided. The Council will continue to benchmark against other councils and compare initiatives that could potentially have an impact on further reducing the gender pay gap.

Table 1: Local Authority Comparison of Gender Pay Gap 2024

Authority	Gender Pay Gap	Median
Buckinghamshire Council	3.9%	0.8%
Hampshire County Council	12.8%	13.4%
Oxfordshire County Council	2.95%	0%
Warwickshire County Council	0.4%	2.5%

Ethnicity Pay Gap

16. The Ethnicity Pay Gap is calculated in the same way as Gender Pay Gap, however this is not a statutory requirement currently.
17. As at 31st March 2025, the percentage difference in mean hourly rate between white employees and employees who identify as Black, Asian, or of minority ethnicity background is 2.11% (43p per hour). This represents a decrease from 2.59% in March 2024 (59p per hour), which is an improvement in reduction of the ethnicity pay gap.
18. As at 31st March 2025, 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) and has remained at this level for the previous two reporting periods. This is a positive indication of equal pay between employees of different ethnic minorities.
19. As it is not currently a statutory obligation to report on the ethnicity pay gap, comparison data is not readily available. South East Employers have been contacted as our regional employer to determine if any comparison data is available from other authorities in order to consider the Councils position in this area.

Forward Look

20. The Council wants to ensure that the progress with pay gap reporting is accessible and understood as widely as possible and will consider how this reporting can be achieved by the use of plain English and visual examples within the report that is published.
21. As the Employment Rights Bill moves through Parliament to become law, the Council will monitor the impact on pay gap reporting and incorporate further additions, such as the Disability Pay Gap.

Financial Implications

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

Comments checked by:

Lorna Baxter, Executive Director of Resources (S151 Officer)
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Legal Implications

23. The Equality Act 2010 prohibits both direct and indirect sex discrimination at work and requires equal pay for equal work between the genders.
24. The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 ("the Regulations") imposes a duty on all employers with 250 or more employees to report on the gender pay gap annually. The reporting deadline for public sector employers is 31 March. The aim of the Regulations is to identify and reduce disparities in earnings between the genders.
25. As set out in this report, the Council is not required by legislation to report on any ethnicity pay gaps but the Council chooses to do so as part of its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, it's strategic priority to be an employer of choice and to aid transparency.

Comments checked by:

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Staff Implications

26. 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

27. The Council's 'Including Everyone' Framework outlines the commitment to equalities, diversity and inclusion - across communities, service delivery and the workforce. The Council is working hard to ensure the working culture is inclusive and employee demographics reflect the diversity of the communities served, as well as ensuring that senior leaders and managers lead the way in making sure everyone feels confident to be themselves at work. The Council has partnered with Inclusive Employers, the UK's leading workplace inclusion community, to promote inclusion and best practice, as well as put in place a Reciprocal Mentoring scheme to pair senior leaders with aspiring leaders from underrepresented groups. In addition, a specific EDI HR Consultant is being recruited into the HR and Cultural Change team to embed good EDI practice into people initiatives in accordance with and underpinning the 'Our People and Culture Strategy'.

28. 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.
29. Alongside these initiatives, the Women's network and REACH network are two of the colleague inclusion networks, which provide colleagues with the opportunity to get to know others across the organisation and put forward ideas for improvement and to overcome any barriers they may find in progressing.

Cherie Cuthbertson
Director of HR and Cultural Change

Annexes: Annex 1 – Gender Pay Gap Report
 Annex 2 – Ethnicity Pay Gap Report

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