

# **GENDER PAY GAP REPORT**

**SNAPSHOT: 31 MARCH 2020**





## INTRODUCTION

Epping Forest District Council is required to publish an annual Gender Pay Gap report in accordance with The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017. The information contained within this report is for the snapshot date of 31 March 2020.

## GENDER PAY GAP DATA

- The mean gender pay gap is 6.77%
- The median gender pay gap is 12.41%
- The proportion of Males and Females who received bonus payments is:-

**Male:** 94.26%                      **Female:** 96.14%

- The mean gender pay gap in bonus pay is 21.01%
- The median gender pay gap in bonus pay is 24.47%

The percentage of male and female split into quartile figures are as follows:-

<b>Band</b>	<b>Pay Quartile</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
A	Lower	63%	37%
B	Lower Middle	67%	33%
C	Upper Middle	57%	43%
D	Upper	51%	49%

The figures set out above have been calculated using the standard methodologies used in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 using data from the Council's HR and Payroll system. Please note that the figures have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number.

## WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL'S GENDER PAY GAP?

Under the law, men and women must receive equal pay for:

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

Epping Forest District Council is 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. It has a clear policy of paying employees equally for the same or equivalent work, regardless of their sex (or any other characteristic as set out above). As such, it:-



- Publishes an annual pay statement which is discussed by Cabinet for final agreement by full Council.
- Evaluates job roles and pay grades as necessary to ensure a fair structure.

Epping Forest District Council is therefore confident that its gender pay gap does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work. Rather, its gender pay gap is the result of the roles in which men and women work within the organisation and the salaries that these roles are evaluated at.

Across the whole economy, men are more likely than women to be in senior roles (especially very senior roles at the top of organisation), while women are more likely than men to be in front-line roles at the lower end of the organisation. In addition, men are more likely to be in qualified technical and IT related roles, which attract higher rates of pay than other roles at similar levels for seniority. Women are also more likely than men to have had breaks from work that have affected their career progression, for example to bring up children. They are also more likely 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 Epping Forest District Council's workforce, where most of its lower graded posts are held by women. However, pleasingly, since our last report in 2019 (reporting on the 2018 snapshot date) the number of women in line manager and senior manager roles has increased.

This can be seen above in the table depicting pay quartiles by gender. This shows Epping Forest District Council's workforce divided into four equal-sized groups based on hourly pay rates, with Band A including the lowest-paid 25% of employees (lower quartile). For there to be no gender pay gap, there would need to be an equal ratio of men and women in each Band.

Similar to our 2019 report (2018 snapshot date), there remains more women than men in the lower pay bands, however the split across the upper pay bands has changed and there are now more women than men in these bands. This shift has resulted in our gender pay gap reducing by 8.66%.

## **HOW DOES EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL'S PAY GAP COMPARE WITH THAT OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS?**

Most organisations have a gender pay gap and we are pleased to be able to say that Epping Forest District Council's gap compares favourably with that of other organisations, including those within the public sector.

The mean (average) pay gap for the whole economy (according to the October 2020 Office for National Statistics (ONS) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) figure is 14.6%, while in the public sector it is 14.5%. This year, Epping Forest District Council's mean gender pay gap of **6.77%** is considerably lower than both the national and public sector figures.

The median (middle) gender pay gap for the whole economy (according to the October 2020 ONS ASHE figures) is 15.5%, while in the public sector it is 15.8%.



At 12.41% Epping Forest District Council's median pay gap is again, lower than both the public sector and whole economy figures.

In March 2020, Councillors approved to pay permanent and fixed term employees a 1.5% bonus as a thank you for the significant effort employees had made in maintaining service delivery during a time of change and rigorous restructure. The bonus was based on salary, pro-rata to contractual hours and pro rata to length of service in the 2019/2020 year. To qualify for the bonus a minimum of one month's service had to have been accrued at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

Bonuses were not paid to Chief Officers, casual workers or those with less than one month's service.

This bonus payment resulted in a mean gender pay gap of 21.01%, which can be attributed to the greater number of women in part time roles.

### **WHAT IS EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL DOING TO ADDRESS ITS GENDER PAY GAP?**

Since Gender Pay Gap reporting began, EFDC have undertaken several initiatives to reduce its pay gap, most notably:-

- A top down restructure of the Council resulting in the promotion of our female Strategic Director, to the position of Chief Executive; a first for this Council.
- Our restructuring programme has also enabled us to develop, promote and appoint far more female senior managers than we have ever had, and we expect this trend to continue.
- Provision of the Springboard training programme for its female staff members to encourage employees to challenge themselves to think differently about their life and career goals. This programme is designed to help women assess themselves and their current situation, set goals and then develop the practical skills and self-confidence needed to achieve those goals.

The main benefits reported within Epping Forest District Council were: increased confidence, improved working relationships, delegates feeling more motivated and optimistic, increased enthusiasm and willingness to take on additional tasks and feeling calmer and healthier through addressing work life balance issues.

- We have developed a programme called "Our Ways of Working" (OWOW) which will make Epping Forest District Council a more attractive place for all employees and potential employees to apply for more senior roles and support them while they are in role. Some of the key aspects of OWOW are detailed below:-
  - How we work – rethinking how we deliver services and improving delivery; focussing on outcomes rather than outputs.
  - Where we work – making best use of our assets, while lowering our environmental footprint; hybrid working will be our new normal.



- What we do – focussing on what we do, not when we do it; promoting a better work/life balance, improving employee mental and physical wellbeing and enabling truly flexible working
- The provision of a comprehensive corporate training programme supports all staff in updating their skills and providing personal development opportunities. The programme also supports employees to study whilst at work as well as opportunities for internal apprenticeships.
- A Coaching and mentoring programme is available.

Epping Forest District Council continues to promote gender diversity in all areas of its workforce include the following: -

The introduction of Recruitment via our new HR and Payroll software has now been launched and in future, we will be able to create an accurate evidence base, to identify any barriers to gender equality and inform priorities for action. Epping Forest District Council will be able to introduce gender monitoring to understand:

- The proportion of men and women applying for jobs and those appointed;
- the proportion of men and women applying for and obtaining promotions;
- the proportion of men and women leaving the organisation and their reasons for leaving;
- the numbers of men and women in each role and pay band;
- take-up of flexible working arrangements by gender and level within the organisation;
- the proportion of men and women who return to their original job after a period of maternity or other parental leave; and
- the proportion of men and women still in post a year on from a return to work after a period of maternity or other parental leave.

None of these initiatives will, of itself, remove the gender pay gap and we recognise that our scope to act is limited in some areas – it has, for example, no direct control over the subjects that individuals choose to study or the career choices that they make.– however we have seen an improvement and we expect this to continue into the future.

In the meantime, Epping Forest District Council is committed to reporting on an annual basis on what it is doing to reduce the gender pay gap and the progress that it is making.



I Paula Maginnis, Service Director – Corporate Services, confirm that the information in this statement is accurate.

Signed *Paula Maginnis*

Date: 18 May 2021