

Suffolk County Council: Gender Pay Gap Report 2018/19

Introduction

Public sector organisations who employ 250 or more people are required to publish their gender pay gap. The report must use six different measures and be published on the organisation's website and on a dedicated government site, by 30 March each year.

What is a gender pay gap?

A gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between the *average* pay men receive and the *average* pay women receive. It is not the same thing as 'equal pay'.

A 'positive pay gap' means that females on average earn less than males. A pay gap of zero means the average pay of men and women is the same. A 'negative pay gap' means that the average pay of female employees is higher than that for males.

What is equal pay?

Equal pay means that there should be no difference in the pay and contractual terms of a woman and a man doing the same or similar work (or work of equal value) for the same employer. It is unlawful to pay people unequally because they are a man or a woman. All Suffolk County Council (SCC) jobs go through a strict and consistent job evaluation process and the salary bandings / payscales are published.

What are the requirements?

Last year was the first time all organisations employing 250 or more individuals were required to publish their gender pay gap.

There is an expectation that where a gender pay gap exists employers will take actions to increase the number of females in senior roles, ensuring that their reward strategies, policies, practices and procedures reduce any gender pay gap and, in particular, remove any obstacles having a negative effect on the pay of female employees (or potential employees) or from applying for jobs or promotions.

What are the measures which need to be published?

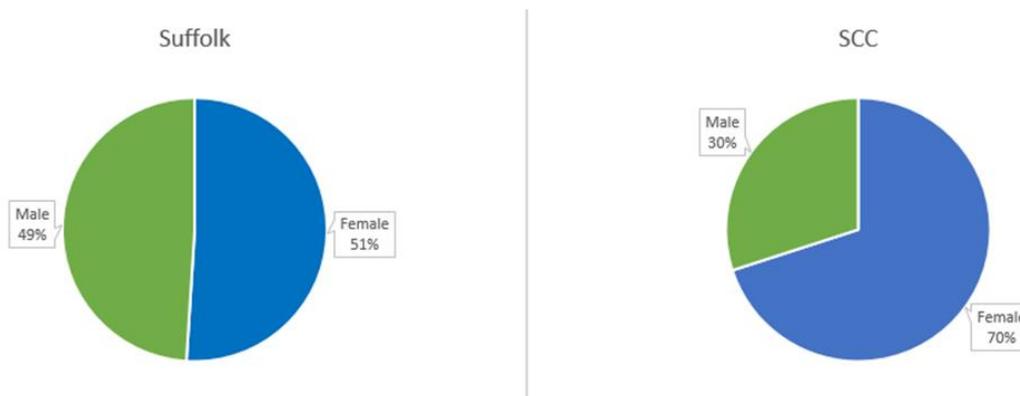
Mean gender pay gap	<i>The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full-pay employees and that of female full-pay employees</i>
Median gender pay gap	<i>The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full-pay employees and that of female full-pay employees</i>
Mean bonus gap	<i>The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male employees and that paid to female employees</i>
Median bonus gap	<i>The difference between the median bonus pay paid to male employees and that paid to female employees</i>
Bonus proportions	<i>The proportions of male and female relevant employees who were paid any bonus pay during the relevant period</i>
Quartile pay bands	<i>The proportions of male and female full-pay employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands</i>

What is the difference between mean and median?

Median earnings can be seen as a truer indicator, because the median is not affected by extreme values, such as changes in the earnings of a small number of very high earners. However, the mean gap is also an important indicator, because nationally the upper end of the earnings distribution is dominated by men.

Suffolk County Council (excluding maintained schools) as at 31 March 2018

Composition of workforceⁱ



Mean gender pay gap

SCC	SCC last year	Difference	National average (17/18) ⁱⁱ
14.4%	14.8%	-0.4%	14.3%

Median gender pay gap

SCC	SCC last year	Difference	National average (17/18)
16.1%	18.6%	-2.5%	11.8%

Mean bonus gap

SCC does not pay any form of bonus payments to employees.

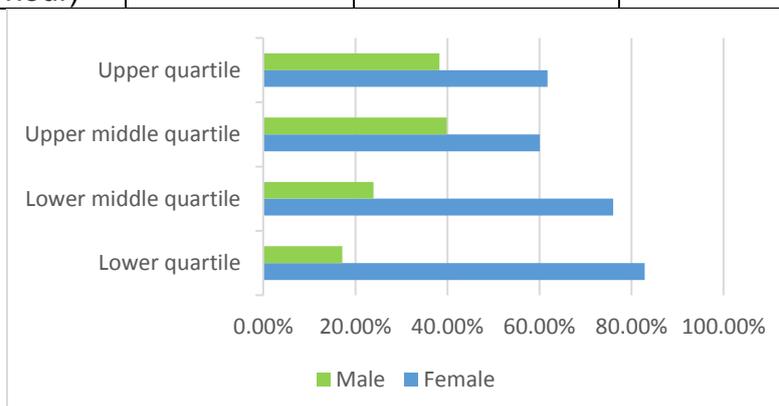
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Bonus proportions

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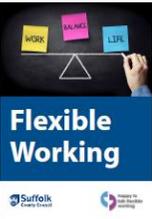
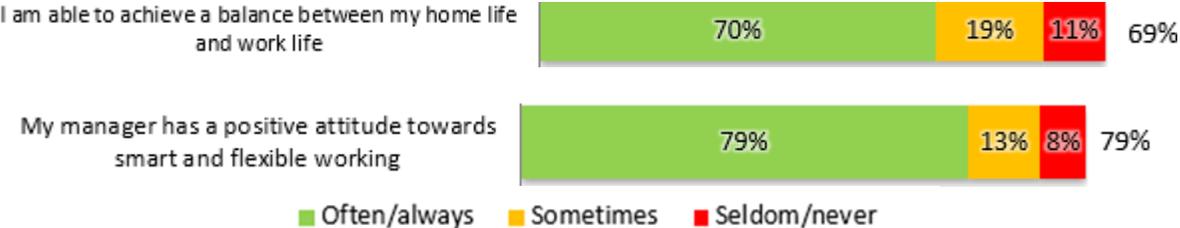
Quartile pay bands	Male (31/03/2018)	Female (31/03/18)	Male (31/03/17)	Female (31/03/17)
Upper quartile (£16.76 + per hour)	38.3%	61.7%	37.7%	62.3%
Upper middle quartile (£12.93 - £16.71 per hour)	39.9%	60.1%	41.5%	58.5%
Lower middle quartile (£10.06 - £12.93 per hour)	24.0%	76.0%	24.1%	75.9%
Lower quartile (£0.00 - £10.06 per hour)	17.1%	82.9%	16.1%	83.9%



Progress on actions from last year's report

This shows the progress on the list of commitments made last year:

What we said we would do in 2018-2019:	What we have done:
<p>We will remove barriers for those seeking to work part-time and / or flexibly, through using “flexible matching”, “agile hiring” and displaying the “Happy to talk flexible working” logo and ensure managers proactively consider and communicate the potential flexibility of roles</p>	 <p>The “Happy to talk flexible working” logo features prominently on all job and personal profiles (JPPs) for roles we’re recruiting.</p> <p>“Flexible matching” and “agile hiring” have been incorporated into the “Organisational Change Management Policy” and are actively discussed during restructures.</p> <p>“Flexible matching” and “Agile hiring” have been incorporated into all recruitment activities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An attachment on all jobs explaining agile hiring and flexible matching • All online adverts include flexible working information • JPPs have been updated with flexible working options • The Recruitment Team actively challenge recruiting manager to be specific about the types of flexible working they could offer • Agile hiring and flexible matching will feature in the new SCC Recruitment brochure currently being developed.
<p>We will use the apprenticeship reforms to develop more career pathways and staff development and actively encourage existing staff to benefit from these opportunities</p>	<p>The organisation is actively using the apprenticeship reforms to develop existing staff as part of career progression. 61% of apprenticeships within the organisation are being undertaken by existing staff.</p>
<p>We will make our recruitment process fully anonymised up to the point of interview</p>	<p>Our recruitment process is now fully anonymised up to the point of interview.</p>
<p>We will train our Advertising team to identify and challenge any unconscious bias in recruitment advertising</p>	<p>Suffolk Advertising have completed a development programme in relation to identifying and challenging unconscious bias in recruitment advertising, as well as using new software which identifies gender biased language.</p>
<p>We will seek opportunities to target recruitment advertising in settings where there is both male and female under representation, using the learning from previous campaigns; such as men working in a care setting</p>	<p>The recruitment team and Suffolk Advertising are actively using social media to target specific audiences for campaigns, including underrepresented groups.</p> <p>The Recruitment Team are also reviewing the language of adverts to be more appealing to underrepresented groups on specific campaigns.</p>

<p>We will create and promote some case studies of women and men who work part-time / flexibly in different setting, talking honestly about how it works for them, to demonstrate good practice and the benefits to individuals and the organisation</p>	<p>In 2018/19 there has been a targeted campaign to increase awareness of flexible working, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a brochure detailing case studies of male and female senior officers who work flexibly; home working, part-time, job shares and talked openly and honestly about the benefits of flexible working and some of the obstacles and barriers to flexible working • a poster campaign in all our main buildings • A number of featured articles in “insideSCC” our weekly e-newsletter • Videos from our chief executive and head of HR supporting the campaign <p>Feedback in relation to the campaign has been very positive.</p>															
<p>We will identify successful job sharers to understand what contributes to their success and how we can promote the use more widely in senior roles</p>																
<p>We will add gender to the details of the pay information we publish as part of the Transparency agenda</p>	<p>Gender will be included in all future transparency data published in respect of senior officer salaries.</p>															
<p>We will invest in the Springboard development course for women</p>	<p>A Springboard programme has been organised and will run during 2019.</p>															
<p>We will offer bespoke support to individuals returning from more than three months’ parental leave to support their integration back into the workplace and support their future development, through specific training for coaches and mentors</p>	<p>Suffolk Coaching and Mentoring Partnership (SCMP) has been approached, and is happy to support returning parents and is looking at ways of making coaching more accessible generally. Promotional material now includes returning parents as a target group and this has been shared with coaches across the partnership. We are working on developing case studies to further highlight this as an area of specific support the SCMP can offer.</p>															
<p>We will monitor our flexible working culture through the staff survey to gauge how supportive managers are toward flexible working and to identify specific areas of good and poor practice</p>	<p>An analysis of the staff survey results was undertaken. The staff survey results in relation to flexible working remained positive, with score either being maintained or slightly improving:</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Statement</th> <th>Often/always</th> <th>Sometimes</th> <th>Seldom/never</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>I am able to achieve a balance between my home life and work life</td> <td>70%</td> <td>19%</td> <td>11%</td> <td>69%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>My manager has a positive attitude towards smart and flexible working</td> <td>79%</td> <td>13%</td> <td>8%</td> <td>79%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Statement	Often/always	Sometimes	Seldom/never	Total	I am able to achieve a balance between my home life and work life	70%	19%	11%	69%	My manager has a positive attitude towards smart and flexible working	79%	13%	8%	79%
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	Specific areas where scores were lower or significantly different have been fed into the overall directorate staff survey action plans, and further actions to improve on this have been included in the 2019-20 gender pay gap action plan
We will take part in “Working Families” benchmark assessment, to assess our flexible culture against others and to gain external advice of further areas we can develop to reduce our gender pay gap	<p>In 2018 we took part in the Top Employers for Working Families benchmark, which highlighted a number of areas of strength and also made suggestions for improvement. Areas of strength for Suffolk County Council included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits for employees • Policies inclusive of adoption and foster carers • Flexible recruitment • Lots of types of flexible working offered • Top marks for measures to support wellbeing, with every measure being ticked • Support for mothers, fathers, carers (coaching/ counselling/ mentoring) offered as a day one right • Recruitment of part-time and flexible workers is high and above average • Women in senior positions is higher than the benchmark average • High staff satisfaction levels for work/life balance <p>Suggested areas of improvement have fed into the new action plan for the forthcoming year.</p>
We will analyse performance ratings by gender and working hours to ensure there is no emerging trend of unconscious bias towards these groups	<p>A thorough analysis of performance rating by gender and working hours identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not a significant variation in PDR ratings by gender alone • People who work part-time are less likely to be assigned the higher PDR ratings <p>Actions to improve in this respect have been included in the new action plan for the forthcoming year.</p>
We will analyse promotions / salary increases by gender and working hours to ensure there is no emerging trend of unconscious bias towards these groups	<p>Promotions / salary increase data now features in our Workforce Equality Report which is produced each year:</p> <p>https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/council-and-democracy/our-aims-and-transformation-programmes/Workforce-Equality-Report-2018.pdf</p>
We will undertake an audit to inform our future position of full pay transparency, identifying other organisations who have done this and the resulting impact.	<p>Research was undertaken into organisations who have moved to full pay transparency and the resulting impact on employee relations and engagement, increases in the pay bill and the impact on recruitment and retention. We have taken the decision not to move to full pay transparency, however we will take forward a number of actions in relation to pay transparency in 2019/2020.</p>

Gender Pay Gap Action Plan 2018/19

1. **Recruitment:** *We want to ensure that our jobs at all levels are open, attractive and accessible to people of any gender. We seek for representation in terms of all equality groups in different roles to be reflective of the wider community as much as possible, and for representation at different levels within the organisation to be reflective of our wider staff population – although we will always appoint the best person for the role.*
 - a. We will promote our work to implement flexible recruitment by taking part in Working Families' 'Best Practice in Flexible Recruitment Award'
 - b. We will ensure agile hiring is embedded into our processes by monitoring Job and Person Profiles and recruitment adverts on an ongoing basis to ensure flexible options are included
 - c. We will train our Recruitment Advisors to spot unconscious bias in the wording of job vacancies or descriptions and use a 'gender decoder' tool to assess any unconscious bias in the wording of our recruitment advertising
 - d. We will continue to target jobs to under-represented groups through our social media platforms. We will review the success of particular campaigns and promote this learning within the HR service.

2. **Training, Development and Progression:** *We want to ensure we develop women to retain and make best use of their skills within the organisation.*
 - a. We will roll out an e-learning module on unconscious bias corporately
 - b. We will develop a tailored development programme for women in more senior roles
 - c. We will continue to promote and consider how we can make best use of the apprenticeship scheme to help develop our female staff.

3. **Performance Management:** *We want to ensure that performance management is fair, robust and does not discriminate on the basis of gender, part-time or flexible working. We want to ensure that managers know how to manage an increasingly flexible workforce.*
 - a. We will create more guidance in relation to the performance descriptors, to show how they could apply to lower graded roles
 - b. We update the PDR guidance to specifically refer to applying performance management outcomes consistently to part-time employees.

4. **Support for Parents and Carers:** *We want to retain and make best use of the skills of our staff who are carers and parents, who are disproportionately likely to be women. We also want to contribute to the wider community by supporting people back into the workplace after extended career breaks, which are often linked to caring responsibilities.*
 - a. We will explore the implications, costs and practicalities of:
 - i. Introducing the option of income smoothing for temporary reductions in hours (up to 1 year)
 - ii. Introducing the option for staff to take a 'segmented career break': working part-time on a fixed-term basis only

- iii. Having an article in the staff newsletter with interviews with staff already balancing care and work, including at management level, to coincide with National Work Life Week in Oct 2019
 - b. We will explore “returnships” for people returning to the workplace after extended periods of unemployment, often linked to taking time out for caring responsibilities or childcare.
 - c. We will create a checklist for the end of maternity/adoption/shared parental leave, as a catalyst for discussion and prompt for employees and their managers
 - d. We will explore options for the Women’s Network to host a ‘buddy’ system, whereby new parents who sign up can be put in touch with each other for informal support
 - e. We will undertake analysis to track the retention rate after two years of employees returning from extended periods of parental leave

- 5. **Parental Benefits:** *We want to make our parental benefits as supportive as they can be, within our financial constraints. We want to provide the best support possible to working parents and retain their skills, and we want to enable working fathers to be able to take a greater share of childcare, if they want to.*
 - a. We will explore the implications, costs and practicalities of:
 - i. giving people on maternity, adoption or shared parental leave the option to apply income smoothing to their leave period to relieve fluctuations and dips in pay
 - ii. removing the service requirement for the occupational enhancements of pay for maternity, adoption and shared parental pay
 - iii. removing the requirement to repay occupational pay enhancements if the person does not return to work following the period of leave
 - iv. enhancing paternity pay so that all staff taking it would be eligible for two weeks with pay – the first week at 100%, and the second week at 90% pay
 - v. enhancing the current statutory offer of two unpaid antenatal appointments for fathers or partners to two paid half days (3.7 hours).

- 6. **Culture:** *We want to make our workforce culture supportive of all staff, whatever their gender. In particular, we want to remove any resistance or barriers to acceptance of flexible working, particularly for working fathers in achieving a work/life balance and being able to be involved in their children’s lives more, if they want to be.*
 - a. We will continue to track and monitor trends in staff responses to the flexible working questions in future staff surveys
 - b. We will create new guidance for managers in relation to supporting flexible or part-time working, including recording informal flexible working agreements, based on the TUC’s ‘disability passport’ model
 - c. We will continue to support SCC’s digital strategy and the associated benefits of flexible working associated with it

7. **Data and Transparency:** *We want to ensure the information we produce is as robust and relevant as it can be, to enable analysis, targeted actions, and for the sake of transparency.*
- a. We will produce guidance about for managers who are considering entering pay negotiations as to the elements that may enhance salary, and criteria for recruitment above the standard bottom of the salary band
 - b. Publishing more information about the job evaluation process and outcomes.

Statement from the Head of HR

This report illustrates that SCC's gender pay gap is related to the gender composition of our workforce; where we have a high population of women working in lower graded roles which, despite having a high population of women in senior and higher paid roles, adversely impacts on the average pay of women employed by the authority.

It is encouraging to see that both our mean and median gender pay gap have improved in the last year, even though the actions identified in the last report have not yet had a chance to influence these figures, as the data must be reported from the position at 31 March 2018.

SCC is committed to acting to reduce and/or eliminate its gender pay gap. I am confident that the measures detailed in this report will, over a number of years, encourage greater diversification in the workforce and create an inclusive culture where women and men choose to work in services which have previous been under represented by their gender.

I can confirm that data reported by Suffolk County Council is accurate and has been calculated according to the requirements and methodology set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 and using the standard reports provided by our HR Management Information system software supplier.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Bray'.

Jeanette Bray
Interim Head of HR

ⁱ SCC Workforce Equality Report (January 2019):
<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/council-and-democracy/our-aims-and-transformation-programmes/Workforce-Equality-Report-2018.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Gender pay gap service download data (2017-2018):
<https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/viewing/download>