

Blackpool Council - Pay Policy Statement

Summary Statement

Blackpool Council is committed to paying all its employees appropriately and fairly using recognised job evaluation schemes that have been tested to ensure that they are free of gender and any other bias.

The pay scales for employees at all levels are in the public domain and the Council complies with requirements to publish data on senior salaries together with its entire pay scale in the interests of transparency.

In determining the pay and remuneration of all its employees, the Council will comply with all relevant employment legislation. This includes the Equality Act 2010, Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000, The Agency Workers Regulations 2010 and where relevant, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Earnings) Regulations.

As far as possible all Council policies that relate to employment benefits are universally applied unless there is a specific contractual or business reason why they should be limited to a certain group of employees.

Basic Pay

All employees including Chief Officers basic pay is based on job evaluation processes that use the NJC scheme for posts graded at G and below and the Hay scheme for posts graded H1 and above.

Both of these schemes have been tested to ensure that they are free from gender and any other bias and the use of these schemes has been agreed with the relevant recognised trade unions.

Job evaluation panels which include Trade Union representatives sit on a regular basis to evaluate posts which in turn produces a score and a grade. At the cross over point of the two schemes there is a protocol for assessing whether the post should be dealt with under the Hay or the NJC scheme. Periodically, the Council uses the services of experts in the two schemes to assist with the evaluation of posts, provide training for staff and monitor the appropriateness of the senior pay line relative to the market.

The Council adopts the national pay bargaining arrangements in respect of the establishment and revision of the national pay spine, for example, through any agreed annual pay increases negotiated with joint Trade Unions.

Scope

This Pay Policy Statement applies to all Council employees. Employees whose terms and conditions of employment have been retained following a TUPE transfer (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment) and are subject to the TUPE Regulations may be excluded from this policy.

Review

The pay policy statement will be kept under review and developments considered in the light of external best practice and legislation. The Council will ensure the pay policy statement is updated on an annual basis in line with the requirement of the Localism Act 2011. The annual pay policy statement will be submitted to Chief Officers Employment Committee and then full Council by 31st March of each year.

Real Living Wage

As an accredited employer to the Living Wage Foundation and in order to support the lowest paid workers in the Council, the Real Living Wage supplement is applied for Council employees whose total hourly rate is currently less than £10.90 (£12.00 from 1st April 2024).

The normal job evaluation processes will continue to determine the grade of posts in the Council. This will not include employees in maintained schools as Government legislation allows schools to determine their own pay arrangements for staff.

Market Forces Supplements

Market forces supplements are only paid to employees including Chief Officers in exceptional circumstances and in accordance with the strict controls in the Council's Market Forces Policy. Any such payments are reviewed annually to ensure they remain valid.

Incremental Progression

Progression through the grade for permanent and temporary employees is only possible upon completion of satisfactory service and in line with the NJC Terms and Conditions as described in the Green Book. Chief Officers are required to demonstrate that they have achieved or exceeded their objectives in order to progress through the grade and a scheme is in place to monitor that.

New Appointments

Appointment to new posts are usually made at the bottom of the grade except in exceptional circumstances where the most suitable candidate can evidence that such an offer would not reasonably be acceptable to them and the Council is satisfied that market conditions require the appointment to take placed at a higher point than the minimum.

All Chief Officer appointments are dealt with by the Chief Officer Employment Committee, using the normal recruitment procedures. Posts with a remuneration package of more than £100,000 must be ratified by Full Council.

Overtime and Additional Hours Payments and Premium Payments

In the absence of any agreement to the contrary, the following applies:

Contractual overtime and additional hours are paid in accordance with the NJC Terms and Conditions as described in the Green Book.

Non contractual, voluntary overtime and additional hours payments are paid in accordance with the Council's Pay Review Booklet.

To meet specific operational requirements it may be necessary for an individual to temporarily take on additional duties to their identified role. The Council's arrangements for authorising any additional remuneration, e.g. honoraria, ex-gratia, 'acting up', relating to temporary additional duties are set out in the Council's Pay Review Booklet.

Chief Officers are not paid overtime, additional hours payments or premium payments.

All other pay related allowances are the subject of either nationally or locally negotiated rates, having being determined from time to time in accordance with collective bargaining machinery or through contractual changes.

Honoraria Payments

Subject to certain conditions, employees, with the exception of the Chief Executive and Chief Officers, who are temporarily required to undertake some or all of the duties of a higher graded post are eligible to be paid an honorarium. Details of the scheme can be found in the Council's Honoraria Procedure.

Bonus Payments and Earn Back Schemes

No employees, including Chief Officers in the Council are in receipt of bonus payments or subject to earn back schemes where employees give up some salary to earn it back upon completion of agreed targets.

Relationship between the Highest and the Lowest Paid

The Council is committed to paying employees based on the recognised job evaluation schemes detailed above. It is the application of these schemes that creates the salary differentials. Pay rates for each grade are published on the Council's website.

Relationship between the Highest Paid Employee and the Median Salary

The relationship between the highest paid employee and the median salary will be calculated on an annual basis and published on the Council's website alongside the information provided regarding senior managers salaries.

Charges, Fees and Allowances

The Travelling, Subsistence and Related Expenses Policy applies to all employees including Chief Officers.

The reimbursement of professional fees for certain occupational groups is covered by the Personnel Code and applies to all relevant employees regardless of grade.

All other allowances paid to employees regardless of grade are detailed in the Council's Pay Review Booklet. Chief Officers do not receive additional allowance payments.

Pension

When employees become members of the Local Government Pension Scheme, the Council is required to make a contribution to the scheme representing a percentage of the pensionable remuneration due under the contract of employment of that employee. The rate of contribution is set by Actuaries advising the Lancashire Pension Fund and reviewed on a triennial basis in order to ensure the scheme is appropriately funded. The employer contribution rates are set by statute and are available from the Payroll Team.

Flexible Retirement

The Council's LGPS Employee Discretions Policy provides the ability for an employee to have their pension benefits released subject to the current policy and relevant approvals.

Electoral Fees

The Chief Executive is the Council's appointed 'Returning Officer' for Elections, 'Counting Officer' for Referendums and 'Petitions Officer' for Recall of Members of Parliament (MP) Petitions. He is personally (not corporately) liable for the management of Elections, Referendums and Recall Petitions. The fee payable to the Acting / Local / Returning Officer for UK Parliamentary, Police and Crime Commissioner and any other nationally based election is determined and paid for from Central Government. The same applies in his capacity as Counting Officer for a nationally organised Referendum and Petitions Officer for a Recall Petition for a Member of Parliament (where he would be the (Acting) Returning Officer, if an election was held for that constituency).

The fee payable to the Returning Officer for a local Council all-out election, (which is held every four years) is the same as the fee set nationally for an equivalent election/ referendum, which is run on the local authority boundary.

For a local by-election the Returning Officer's fee is 10% of the fee for a full local election, with a higher fee applied should there be four or more by-elections taking place at the same time, as set out in the fees agreed by the Council. Other fees paid to employees appointed by the Returning Officer for a local election are delegated to the Returning Officer to make.

Redundancy Payments, Severance Payments and Retirement

All employees including Chief Officers are entitled to redundancy payments and pension release in accordance with the Council's Redundancy and Retirement Procedure.

Where the proposed severance package is more than £100,000, the decision will be ratified by full Council.

Termination Payments

In exceptional circumstances the Council may make a termination payment to an individual under a Settlement Agreement. Such agreements protect the Council where there is a risk of high financial impact and/or damage to the Council's business or reputation. Payments are authorised in accordance with the Statutory Guidance on Special Severance Payments.

Re-employment/Re-engagement of Former Employees

The Council has an obligation to ensure that it is managing public monies responsibly. It will not re-engage (into the same or a very similar role) ex-employees who have left their prime employment with the Council on the grounds of voluntary or compulsory redundancy, efficiency release or employer consent retirement (where there is a cost to the Council) for a period of 12 months with effect from the date of leaving. This does not cover those employees who access their pension via the Council's Flexible Retirement Scheme.

In addition any proposal to re-engage an ex-employee, who was Graded H3 or above (or equivalent salary) will require the agreement of the Chief Executive following consultation with relevant chief officers.

Gender Pay Gap Information

In accordance with regulations introduced in 2017, the Council will publish gender pay gap information alongside all other pay policy related data on its website and update this on an annual basis. Please see below

Gender Pay Gap Report - 2023

1.0 Introduction

From April 2017, all organisations that employ over 250 employees are required to report annually their gender pay gap. The gender pay gap is defined as the differences in the average earnings of men and women over a standard period of time, regardless of their role seniority.

A positive pay gap indicates that men are paid on average a greater hourly rate; **a negative pay gap** indicates that women are on average a greater hourly rate.

2.0 Context

Blackpool Council is a unitary authority, which provides around 150 services to 142,000 Blackpool residents.

All Blackpool Council employees are remunerated according to set pay scales; posts are regularly reviewed and agreed by employee representatives through a formal job evaluation system. As at 31st March 2023, 2679 employees were in scope for the Gender pay gap of which 70.59% were female.

Blackpool Council is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging equality and diversity in our workforce. This approach is summarised in our Council Plan, which outlines 4 key equality objectives.

These include a specific commitment to workforce equality as follows:

We will ensure that the workforce is representative of the community the Council serves and equality and diversity is embedded in our staff culture.

In the year ahead we will be establishing a network of staff equality forums which are intended to deepen our engagement and strengthen dialogue here.

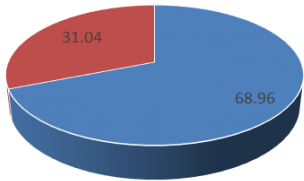
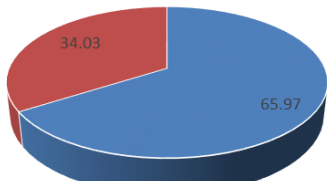
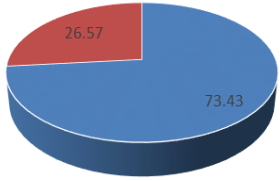
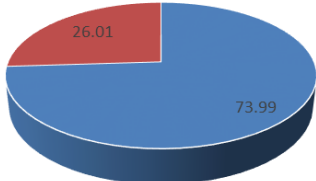
What are we required to report?

Mean gender pay gap	The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees
Median gender pay gap	The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees
Mean Bonus Gap	The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees
Median Bonus Gap	The difference between the median bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees
Quartile pay bands	The proportions of male and female full-pay relevant employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands

The overall gender pay gap is defined as the difference between the median (actual midpoint) or mean (average) basic annual earnings of men and women expressed as a percentage of the median or mean basic annual earnings of men.

3.0 Data

Blackpool's Gender Pay Gap - Based on a snap shot date of 31st March 2023.

1	Mean Pay Gap	-0.43 %
2	Median Pay Gap	-5.72 %
3	Mean bonus gender pay gap	Blackpool Council does not operate any bonus scheme and therefore has no bonus gender pay gap.
4	Median bonus gender pay gap	
5	Proportion of males /females receiving a bonus payment	
6	Proportion of males and females in each quartile pay band	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Quarter 1 - Lowest</p>  <p>■ Female ■ Male</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Quarter 2</p>  <p>■ Female ■ Male</p> </div> </div>		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Quarter 3</p>  <p>■ Female ■ Male</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Quarter 4- Highest</p>  <p>■ Female ■ Male</p> </div> </div>		

4.0 Findings

You will see in **Figure 1** below that the Mean Gender Pay Gap data of - **0.43%** and the Median Gender Pay Gap **-5.72%** are generally consistent over the last 4 reporting years.

Figure 1

	To March 2017	To March 2018	To March 2019	To March 2020	To March 2021	To March 2022	To March 2023 This year
<i>Published by</i>	April 18	April 19	April 20	April 21	April 22	April 23	April 24
Mean	0.7 %	-1.0%	-0.94%	-0.77%	-0.94	1.15	-0.43
Median	-6.0 %	-5.8%	-6.69%	-5.40%	-6.12	-2.04	-5.72

These figures fair favourably with the national picture. [Gender pay gap in the UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/gender-pay-gap) which shows in 2023, the gap among full-time employees is 7.7%. Among all employees, the gender pay gap is 14.3% in 2023.

Although these figures are favourable for the Council, we are not complacent and will continue to monitor our performance, along with delivering/maintaining initiatives that we have in place which have contributed to these results such as:

- Family friendly
 - ✓ Actively supporting parents returning to work from maternity leave, shared parental leave or adoption leave by offering job share, career break or part time opportunities.
 - ✓ Carers support leave to support employee with caring responsibilities
 - ✓ Flexible working (Flexitime) in many locations including the opportunity for hybrid working in many Council roles
 - ✓ Voluntary Reduced Hours, Job Share and Career Break Schemes.
 - ✓ Signposting to Childcare Information.
 - ✓ Compassionate/Special Leave arrangements including the introduction of Parental Bereavement leave above the statutory minimum level

- Learning and Development
 - ✓ Annual and interim appraisals for all staff to allow the opportunity to discuss key work objectives and learning and development needs.
 - ✓ Mandatory Equalities learning for all.
 - ✓ 360-degree feedback process for managers is available.
 - ✓ Development of Coaching and mentoring programmes.
 - ✓ Annual staff conference and awards ceremony.
 - ✓ Menopause – staff support group established, development of a managers training package and related managers guidance introduced
 - ✓ Manbassador – staff support group established, development of a managers training package and related managers guidance introduced

- Leadership
 - ✓ Head of Equality and Diversity is a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
 - ✓ Strategic Equality steering group with senior officers
 - ✓ Staff Equality groups Chaired by Head of Equality and Diversity are being established
 - ✓ Directorate Equality self-assessment process
 - ✓ Development programmes for aspiring managers.
 - ✓ Leadership Charter
 - ✓ Attendees on current and past Leadership courses evidences good participation from both genders which is generally in line with the workforce gender split.

- Recruitment and retention
 - ✓ An established on line jobs portal, where all jobs are advertised.
 - ✓ The use of a variety of selection methods in the recruitment process
 - ✓ Establishment and maintenance of a job evaluation system using nationally recognised NJC and Hay schemes.
 - ✓ Salary Scales clearly showing incremental progression and related criteria.
 - ✓ Established Real living wage.
 - ✓ Monitoring of recruitment data as part of workforce equality monitoring.

5.0 Agreement

I confirm that Blackpool Council is committed to the principle of gender pay equality and has prepared its 2023 gender pay gap results in line with mandatory requirements.

Signed:



Neil Jack Chief Executive

Publication Date :