

Equal Pay Audit

Gender and Diversity Pay
Gap Reporting



2022

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1.0 Introduction

Flintshire County Council supports the principle of equal pay for equal work of equal value and recognises that there should be a pay and grading structure which is free from bias and based on objective criteria. The Council's principal terms and conditions for staff were harmonised under the Single Status Agreement of 1997, which was implemented in June 2014, following a full job evaluation exercise across the Council. Job evaluation is a systematic way of determining the value/worth of a job compared to other jobs within an organisation. All (Green Book) jobs were evaluated using the GLPC (Greater London Provincial Committee) Job Evaluation Scheme.

This is the fifth equal pay audit that Flintshire County Council has undertaken since the implementation of the Single Status Agreement and it is part of our commitment to be a fair and equitable employer; an employer that ensures its employees are not subjected to unfair discrimination.

A data extract from the Council's payroll system iTrent was taken on 31st March 2022 and this audit has focused on an analysis of **all** employees within the organisation across the full range of terms and conditions.

2.0 Background

The Equality Act gives a right to equal pay for equal work. Employers are responsible for providing equal pay and for ensuring that the pay systems are transparent. The Equality and Human Rights Commission code of practice recommends equal pay reviews as the most appropriate method of ensuring that a pay system delivers equal pay free from discrimination.

3.0 What does the audit cover?

The report contains the following:

3.1 A Gender Pay Audit

This is a broad analysis of how pay rates are distributed by gender across Flintshire County Council. The gender pay gap is defined as the difference between the average male and female pay rates.

This analysis does not look at whether there are differences in pay for men and women in equivalent posts and so the results will be affected by differences in the gender composition across our various professional groups and job levels. Gender pay reporting does not take into consideration the difference in size of roles either. Reporting the total gender pay gap of an organisation reveals the difference in the level of roles performed by men and women. A gender pay gap may be indicative of talent management and diversity issues, reflecting higher proportions of female employees in more junior roles and/or employed in roles which are valued lower in the market.

3.2 Equal Pay Audit

An Equal Pay Audit involves the specific comparison of the pay of male and female colleagues, investigating the causes of any pay gaps by gender, ethnicity, disability or working pattern and planning to close any gaps that cannot be justified on grounds other than one of those characteristics.

There are a number of benefits of conducting an equal pay audit:

- Identifying, explaining and, where justifiable, eliminating pay inequalities.
- Supporting rational, fair and transparent pay arrangements.
- Demonstrating to employees a commitment to equality.
- Demonstrating the Council's values to external stakeholders.
- Helping to meet the public sector equality duty.

3.3 The Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap refers to the difference between men's pay and women's pay as a percentage of men's pay. If the gender pay gap is 15% then women, on average, earn 15% less than men. Gender pay gaps can be either positive or negative, with a negative gender pay gap indicating that women earn, on average more than men. Gender pay gaps are an important element in analysing and monitoring progress on equal pay both nationally and within organisations.

The Gender pay Gap is different to equal pay. Equal pay is the equal payment of men and women for undertaking the same work. Within Flintshire County Council, men and women are paid equally for doing equivalent roles, as decided by our job evaluation scheme.

The current gender pay gap in the UK, based on median hourly earnings, excluding overtime for full time workers is 7.9%. This was 7.0% in April 2020 and 9.0% in April 2019. The gap for all employees (full and part time) is 15.4% in 2021 from 15% in 2020 and 17.4% in 2019. This data is from the ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2021).

4.0 Methodology and Data Collection

The Equality and Human Rights Commission guidelines for undertaking equal pay audits has been followed and the data has been analysed using the definitions and methodologies advocated in national guidelines.

The data was extracted from the Council's HR and Payroll system "iTrent" on 31st March 2022,. Data was analysed for all employees irrespective of their terms and conditions to provide an overall gender pay gap, with further analysis focusing on certain groups of employees.

Analysis of this data has been undertaken to consider the following:

- Workforce composition including male, female, BME (black minority ethnic) and disability.
- Average male/female pay gap across pay grades.
- Distribution of males/females across pay grades.
- Distribution of full and part time workers across pay grades.
- Gender profile of full and part workers.

The gender pay gap is calculated using the mean and median salaries of female employees expressed as a percentage of the mean and median salaries of male employees doing work of equal value. 'Salary' is the full time equivalent salary.

4.1 Definitions of Mean and Median

Mean – a measure of the average which is derived by summing values for a given sample, and then dividing the sum by the number of observations in the sample. In earnings, the mean can be disproportionately influenced by a relatively small number of high paying jobs.

Median – the value below which 50% of all jobs fall. This is less affected by a small number of very high earners. This therefore gives a better indication of typical pay than the mean.

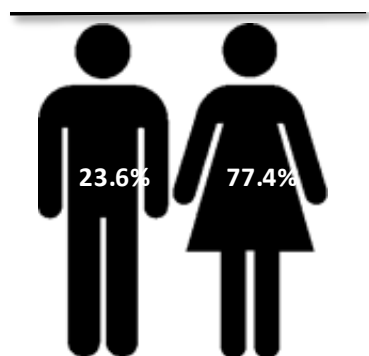
5.0 Workforce Composition

From the data extract taken on 31st March 2022, the Council has 6849 (occupied positions). This is not a head count number as a significant proportion of our employees hold multiple positions across the organisation. This is an increase of 72 (occupied positions) from the 2021 audit.

Table 1: Workforce Composition

Females	% Females	Males	% Males
5307	77.4%	1542	22.6 %

Total Workforce Demographic



We have seen an increase in occupied positions this year with an overall increase of 72 employees. There is a minor increase in female occupied positions compared to a minor decrease in male occupied positions.

5.1 Pay Scales

As the data used in this report is as of 31 March 2022, the applicable pay scales are the 2021-2022 pay scales, which came into effect on 1st April 2021 with the pay award. It should be noted that as the bands within the pay scales are relatively short and, designed as such to minimise the likelihood of pay discrimination occurring. All pay information provided is per annum unless otherwise specified.

6.0 Gender Pay Gap Analysis – All employees on all terms and conditions

There are **6849** permanent occupied positions (staff records) for employees of Flintshire County Council across the full range of terms and conditions of employment. This is not a head count number as a significant number of our employees hold multiple positions across the organisation.

The table below provides a breakdown of all terms and conditions, gender numbers and the average salaries for each group.

Table 2: Average Salary for Males and Females on different terms and conditions

Payment Table	Female Count	Female Average Salary	Male Count	Male Average Salary	Total Count	Total Average Salary	Gender Pay Gap
Chief Officers/Chief Executive	2	£94,837.00	4	£108,771.25	6	£104,126.50	12.81%
Head Teachers	118	£59,841.03	80	£62,919.21	198	£61,084.74	4.89%
Local Rates			2	£2,467.00	2	£2,467.00	100.00%
Members			1	£1,200.00	1	£1,200.00	100.00%
National Trainees	11	£16,291.54	19	£17,179.94	30	£16,873.59	5.17%
NJC Pay Table 2019	4097	£22,964.61	1128	£27,167.51	5225	£23,871.96	15.47%
Occupational Health Nurses(New)	2	£46,123.00	0	£0.00	2	£46,123.00	N/A
Single Status Pay Scale (2014)	0	£0.00	1	£0.00	1	£0.00	N/A
Soulbury/Y&C Officers/Ed. Psychos	19	£51,913.00	3	£53,441.00	22	£52,121.36	2.86%
Teachers- Basic Scale	990	£38,923.49	280	£38,864.76	1270	£38,910.54	-0.15%
Teachers- Unqualified (Assimilated)	11	£25,914.55	6	£24,220.33	17	£25,316.59	-6.99%
Unison Pay Structure	1	£22,025.00	0	£0.00	1	£22,025.00	N/A
Youth Workers	43	£25,465.56	17	£25,144.41	60	£25,374.57	-1.28%
Occupational Health Nurses	2	£38,973.50	0	£0.00	2	£38,973.50	N/A
(blank)	11	£0.00	1	£0.00	12	£0.00	N/A
Grand Total	5307	£26,929.70	1542	£31,208.67	6849	£27,893.80	13.71%

Overall the average salary for women across all grades and terms and conditions is **£26,929.70** and the average salary for men across all grades and terms and conditions is **£31,208.67** giving an **overall** Gender Pay Gap of **13.71%**. This is using the **mean** method of calculating average pay. This is a slight reduction on last year (2021) which was 13.75%

Using the **median method**, the average salary for men across all Grades and terms and conditions is **£26,900** and the average salary for females across all grades and terms and conditions is **£20,861** giving an overall gender pay gap of **22.45%**. This is a slight

increase in the median pay gap from 2021 (21.12%) this is likely to be attributable to slight increase in average salary for male employees.

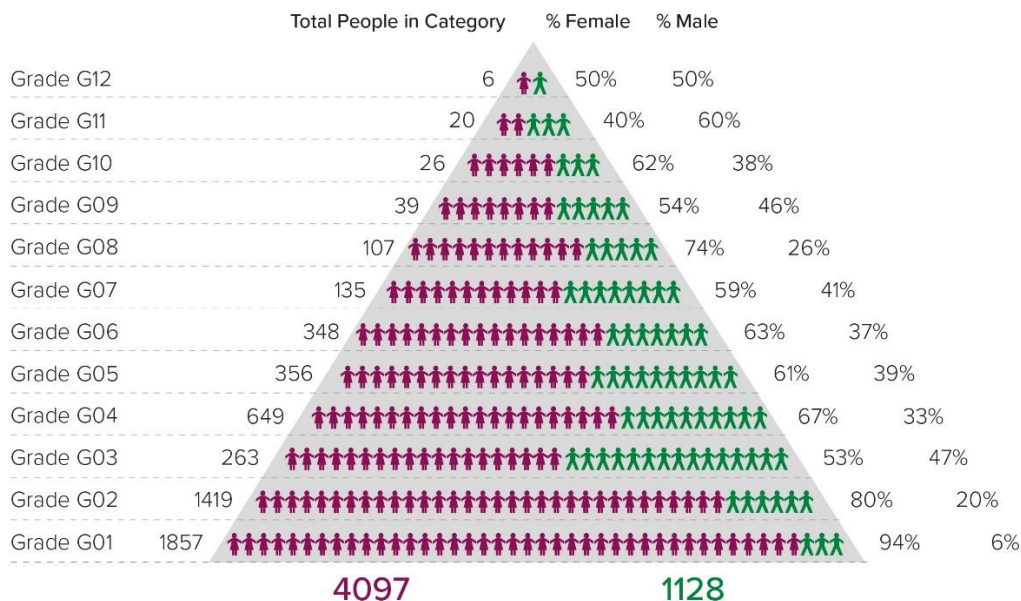
As you can see from the data in the table, the biggest gender pay gaps remain in Chief Officers and NJC Pay Table (Green Book). The Chief Officer pay gap has increased from 2021 and there is a slight increase in the NJC Pay Table pay gap from 13.75% to 15.47%. This gender pay gap is attributable to the unequal distribution of males and females within the group. This report will therefore analyse data from these areas in more detail.

6.1 Gender Pay Gap Analysis - Chief Officer Terms and conditions

The data confirms a pay gap of 12.81%, within this area, a significant increase from 6.35% in 2021. There are two females within this group compared to 4 males. The pay gap is attributable to the fact that both the females are relatively new into post, whereas the male comparators have been in post a while and have progressed to the top of the Chief Officer pay scale. This will equalise in time.

6.2 Gender Pay Gap Analysis – Green Book terms and conditions – NJC Pay Tables

The majority of our employees, are working under Green Book terms and conditions (NJC pay table) and their roles have been evaluated using the GLPC method of Job Evaluation (5225 records).



Using the mean method of calculation, the average salary for females across all NJC grades (grade 01 to grade 12) is **£22,964** and the average salary for males across all grades is **£27,167** giving an overall gender pay gap of **15.47%** which has slightly increased from 15.37% in 2021.

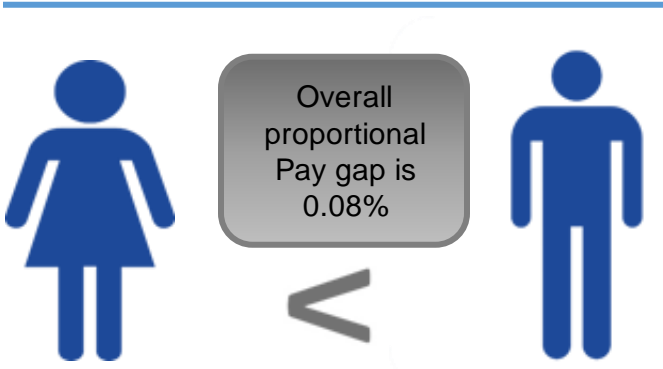
Using the median method of calculation, the average salary for women across all NJC grades (grade 01 to Grade 12) is **£20,861** and the average salary for males across all grades is **£23,953**, giving an overall gender pay gap of **16.32%** (*which is a decrease from 19.57% in 2021*)

There has been a slight increase in average salaries for female employees in 2022 and an overall decrease in the male average salary, which is likely to be attributable to incremental progression for female new starters over the past few years.

Table 3: Distribution of Male and Females employees by grade including average basic salary

Grade	Female Count	Female Average Salary	Male Count	Male Average Salary	Total Count	Total Average Salary	Gender Pay Gap
G01	1739	£18,976.77	118	£18,906.84	1857	£18,972.33	-0.37%
G02	1141	£20,474.75	278	£20,490.42	1419	£20,477.82	0.08%
G03	139	£22,209.58	124	£22,243.89	263	£22,225.75	0.15%
G04	435	£25,816.95	214	£25,696.49	649	£25,777.23	-0.47%
G05	217	£31,164.21	139	£31,052.99	356	£31,120.79	-0.36%
G06	219	£34,791.89	129	£34,605.93	348	£34,722.96	-0.54%
G07	80	£38,997.56	55	£39,439.98	135	£39,177.81	1.12%
G08	79	£42,731.30	28	£42,932.57	107	£42,783.97	0.47%
G09	21	£46,749.38	18	£46,877.17	39	£46,808.36	0.27%
G10	16	£52,816.38	10	£52,781.80	26	£52,803.08	-0.07%
G11	8	£59,994.75	12	£59,737.92	20	£59,840.65	-0.43%
G12	3	£73,941.00	3	£73,337.33	6	£73,639.17	-0.82%
Grand Total	4097	£22,964.61	1128	£27,167.51	5225	£23,871.96	15.47%

Overall Proportional Pay Gap



This is a typical gender profile for a large county council that comprises large groups of female dominant roles. A number of observations can be made about the data presented in the table. There is a large proportion of employees in Grade G01 and G02 at the bottom of the pay table which you would expect to see in a large organisation.

The mean salaries for male and female are relatively similar within each grade. The mean male salary within grades G02, G03, G07, G08 and G09 are slightly higher, by less than 0.50% except for Grade 7 where the mean average salary for males is higher by 1.12%.

Mean female salaries are slightly higher in some grades (Grade G01, G04, G05, G06, G10, G11 and G12).

The highest pay gap is 1.12% in Grade G7, which is likely to be due to the timescales at which the males and females were appointed into the role and thus have move up the incremental scale.

The proportional pay gap between the NJC grades is 0.08% which has reduced from 0.25% in 2021, 0.29% in 2020 and 0.35% in 2019. This is the average pay gap between male and female salaries across all the grades.

This data provides reassurance that the Council's NJC Pay Model is robust and has improved the gender pay gap overall and within each grade.

The clustering of male employees on higher grades and female employees on lower and middle grades has a significant impact on the gender pay gap.

There is no evidence that the gender pay gap is attributable to direct or indirect unfair discrimination in our processes or decision making. Possible reasons for the pay gap could be:-

- The labour market experience of women; length and breaks in employment.
- Female self-selection for part time work.
- Elements of occupational segregation.

Common causes of occupational segregation, including vertical segregation, are gender stereotyping (attitudes which stereotype roles which males and females should have in society), inflexible working (women with children struggle to find work commensurate with their skills, abilities and aspirations, that they can balance with childcare and other caring responsibilities) and recruitment practices (the way jobs are advertised and recruitment processes).

Types of Occupational Segregation

Occupational segregation by gender, refers to the unequal distribution of women and men across different types and levels of work. This can perpetuate gender inequality in the workplace and contribute to the gender pay gap.

Horizontal segregation occurs where there are clusters of one gender in a role. For example, caring roles are typically carried out by females and construction roles are typically carried out by males.

Vertical segregation occurs when the jobs that are predominantly carried out by one gender results in an uneven distribution of employees in the pay and grading structure, that is not representative of the overall gender workforce profile.

Research to date has uncovered a range of important issues that contribute or are related to the gender pay gap. A significant review of the gender pay gap by UK Government Equalities Office concludes that the most important factor influencing the gender pay gap is the effects of interruptions to employment and the lack of ‘good’ part time work. These findings are supported by numerous studies.

Despite significant initiatives in local government and the health sector, there has been little progress in closing the gender pay gap in the public sector, which currently stands at 15.4%¹. Part of the lack of progress in the gender pay gap in the public sector is explained by the lack of representation of females in senior management roles in the sector. Women represent 53% of all employees in the civil service but occupy only 33% of senior management roles.

Table 4: Mean Gender Pay Gap

	Gender Pay Gap UK
All employees	15.4%
Full Time	7.9%
Part Time	-2.7%
Public Sector	18%
Private Sector	19.6%
Non-profit body or mutual association	20.8%

Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2021

Women are considerably more likely to be in health and social work and education sectors than men, who are more likely to be in manufacturing, construction and transport (horizontal segregation). Traditionally, health, social work and education tends to be delivered by the public sector. Accordingly, women are significantly more likely to work for a public sector employer. According to the EHRC, 40% of women work in the public sector compared to only 15% of men. This is quite significant for Flintshire County Council, with the gender distribution of the workforce being 77% female.

7.0 Full and Part time Staff

¹ Source ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2020

Table 5: Distribution of Male and Female by Basis

Basis	Female Numbers	Average Salary	Male Numbers	Average Salary	Total	Total Average Salary	Gender Pay Gap
Full Time	1841	£34,475.37	1259	£32,919.47	3100	£33,841.82	-4.73%
Full Time Term Time	118	£25,124.33	15	£26,937.20	133	£25,328.79	6.73%
No Basis	2	£19,650.00	1	£1,200.00	3	£10,425.00	-1537.50%
Part Time	1265	£27,717.79	147	£26,261.27	1412	£27,566.16	-5.55%
Part Time Term Time	2081	£19,920.95	120	£20,132.72	2201	£19,932.49	1.05%
Grand Total	5307	£26,929.70	1542	£31,208.67	6849	£27,893.80	13.71%

A comparison between the earnings of full-time employees and part-time employees has been calculated across all terms and conditions within the Council.

The pay gap between a full time males salary (average £32,919) against a part time females salary (average £27,717) is 15.80%, which is a decrease from 16.82% in 2021. There is a positive gender pay gap between full time females and full time males of 4.73% meaning full time females earn on average 4.73% more than full time males.

The proportion of females in part time work and the quality of part time work available in the UK are closely associated with its relatively high gender pay gap in comparison to international standards. Around 1 in 5 jobs in the UK is part time but 4 in 10 females work in part time employment. These proportions have remained constant since the early 1990's.

While opportunities for part time work in the UK has increased rapidly, there are concerns about the quality of these jobs, particularly pay, career progression, training and other conditions of employment.

In shifting to part time work, women are also likely to downgrade their occupational status due to lack of suitable part time opportunities that fit their skill set. Research has found that a third of female corporate managers move to a lower skill occupation after having a child with two thirds of these moving into clerical work.

Table 6: Full and Part Time analysis – Percentage of Male and Female by Basis and Grade (NJC Pay Tables)

Grade	Female												Male										Grand Total	
	Full Time		Full Time Term Time		No Basis		Part Time		Part Time Term Time		Total		Full Time		Full Time Term Time		Part Time		Part Time Term Time		Total			
G01	16	0.31%	23	0.44%	0	0.00%	209	4.00%	1491	28.54%	1739	33.28%	6	0.11%	1	0.02%	34	0.65%	77	1.47%	118	2.26%	1857	35.54%
G02	273	5.22%	27	0.52%	1	0.02%	428	8.19%	412	7.89%	1141	21.84%	228	4.36%	3	0.06%	23	0.44%	24	0.46%	278	5.32%	1419	27.16%
G03	75	1.44%	1	0.02%	0	0.00%	62	1.19%	1	0.02%	139	2.66%	94	1.80%	0	0.00%	28	0.54%	2	0.04%	124	2.37%	263	5.03%
G04	179	3.43%	37	0.71%	0	0.00%	82	1.57%	137	2.62%	435	8.33%	194	3.71%	5	0.10%	8	0.15%	7	0.13%	214	4.10%	649	12.42%
G05	140	2.68%	20	0.38%	0	0.00%	45	0.86%	12	0.23%	217	4.15%	124	2.37%	4	0.08%	10	0.19%	1	0.02%	139	2.66%	356	6.81%
G06	168	3.22%	4	0.08%	0	0.00%	43	0.82%	4	0.08%	219	4.19%	122	2.33%	2	0.04%	5	0.10%	0	0.00%	129	2.47%	348	6.66%
G07	62	1.19%	1	0.02%	0	0.00%	15	0.29%	2	0.04%	80	1.53%	51	0.98%	0	0.00%	4	0.08%	0	0.00%	55	1.05%	135	2.58%
G08	66	1.26%	4	0.08%	0	0.00%	8	0.15%	1	0.02%	79	1.51%	28	0.54%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	28	0.54%	107	2.05%
G09	19	0.36%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	0.04%	0	0.00%	21	0.40%	18	0.34%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	18	0.34%	39	0.75%
G10	13	0.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	0.06%	0	0.00%	16	0.31%	9	0.17%	0	0.00%	1	0.02%	0	0.00%	10	0.19%	26	0.50%
G11	8	0.15%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	8	0.15%	12	0.23%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	12	0.23%	20	0.38%
G12	3	0.06%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	0.06%	3	0.06%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	0.06%	6	0.11%
Grand Total	1022	19.56%	117	2.24%	1	0.02%	897	17.17%	2060	39.43%	4097	78.41%	889	17.01%	15	0.29%	113	2.16%	0	0.00%	1128	21.59%	5225	100.00%

This table demonstrates vertical and horizontal segregation between males and females across the grades within the County Council. Out of all the employees (male and female) on Green Book terms and conditions, the highest percentage of employees are female who work part time, term time, within Grade G01 (**28.54%**) which will be attributable to schools support staff, school escorts and passenger assistants. The majority of our employees are within Grade **G01** and **G02**, which is as expected. This also reflects our OD principles with a flatter structure and less layers and levels.

8.0 Disability Analysis

Table 7: Disability analysis of all employees

Disabled	Number	Percentage	Average Salary
No	4316	63.02%	£28,135.96
Not Known	475	6.94%	£29,864.79
Yes	179	2.61%	£26,256.44
(blank)	1879	27.43%	£26,993.98
Grand Total	6849	100.00%	£27,893.80

** Note: It has not been possible to produce a meaningful view of a grade-by-grade comparison and of occupational segregation due to low numbers, as noted above.*

There are a significant number of employees who have not declared their disability status or for whom this status is not known and this makes it difficult to undertake a robust analysis of pay by disability status. Out of the 6849 records across all County Council employees, 179 (**2.61%**) have disclosed a disability, 4316 (**63.02%**) have declared themselves as not disabled and 2058 (**30.04%**) have not disclosed any information in relation to a disability. The data has improved since the 2021 audit (35.75% hadn't disclosed) with a decrease in the numbers of employees who have not disclosed their disability status. However there is still **30.04%** of the workforce who have not declared.

There is a 6.68% mean pay gap between all employees across the County Council with a registered disability and those who have declared themselves as not disabled. This means the average salary of a disabled person is on average 6.68% lower than a non-disabled person. This data however, is not considered to be robust due to the high proportion (30.04%) of employees who have not declared information on disability.

All employees are encouraged to utilise the employee self-service on the HR system to disclose information in relation to protected characteristics. On-going work within this area will continue.

9.0 Ethnicity Analysis

Table 8: Ethnicity Pay Gap

Ethnic Origin	Number	Percentage	Average Salary
White	4552	66.46%	£28,604.76
BME	48	0.70%	£36,209.67
Blank/Prefer not to say	2249	32.84%	£26,422.06

There are significant number of staff who have chosen not to disclose their ethnicity or who have not provided any information on their ethnic origin (32.84%). This has slightly improved from 2021, where the figure was 33.98% but, this makes it difficult to undertake a robust analysis of pay by ethnicity.

4552 have disclosed their ethnicity as “white” (66.46%) and 48 employees have disclosed their ethnicity as BME (Black or Minority Ethnic) (0.70 %.) Please note the ethnic profile of Flintshire County is 98.5% white (2011 census – office for national statistics). The Ethnicity pay gap is -26.59% which shows that BME employees earn on average 26.59% more than those who have disclosed their ethnicity as White. However due to high number of employees who have not stated their ethnicity or we do not have the information this is not considered to be robust enough for meaningful data.

10.0 Religion

Table 9 Religion Pay Gap

Religion	Count	%	Average Salary
Christian	2251	32.87%	£28,290.39
None	1402	20.47%	£26,623.97
Prefer Not To Say/Blank	3077	44.93%	£28,002.84
Non- Christian	119	1.74%	£26,332.46
Grand Total	6849	100.00%	£27,893.80

The proportion of the total population of employees who have declared their religion or belief as Christian is 32.87% and 1.74 % have declared another religion or belief (such as Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh or other), with 20.47% declaring no religion. For 44.93% religion or belief is unknown. However due to high number of employees who have not stated their Religion or we do not have the information this is not considered to be robust enough for meaningful data.

11.0 Working to close the gap

To date we have already made significant progress to tackle some of the challenges, for example:

- Introduction of a new pay and grading structure in April 2019 including the introduction of Senior Management grades to reduce the pay gap between the Chief Officers and other employees.
- Ongoing maintenance of job evaluation scores to stop grade drift and ensure a consistency of approach in the application of the job evaluation scheme.
- Comprehensive work/life balance policies to encourage a more flexible workforce.

Flintshire County Council is committed to reducing the gender pay gap and intends to continue addressing the following areas:

12.1 Gender monitoring

The Council will continue to have effective gender monitoring with our data being refreshed and republished annually and this data will remain on our website for comparison purposes.

12.2 Focus on marketing Family Friendly policies and procedures

We will continue to monitor our family friendly policies and actively encourage employees to utilise the schemes that are on offer. These can include simple steps such as encouraging male employees to consider taking shared parental leave and marketing the family friendly schemes that the Council offers. The introduction of a new hybrid working policy is also aimed to support employees balance home life and work life.

12.3 Review the provision of flexible and alternative ways of working

Flexible working has proved to be very beneficial to both employer and employee, with clear business benefits. Since the start of lockdown as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic a significant proportion of our workforce has been able to work from home. We have supported employees and maintained essential services by providing even greater flexibility in terms of patterns of work to help balance work and family commitments, facilitate learning at home and caring responsibilities. Flintshire County Council therefore commits to ensure, as far as reasonably possible, all promotions can successfully function with flexible working arrangements in place, including those at senior levels, demonstrated by two chief officers working flexibly and leading by example.

12.4 Minimise any negative impacts from pay and grading structures

The organisation is still committed to reviewing our pay and grading structure in 2022/2023 to ensure as an organisation our pay and grading structure is modern, equitable and fit for purpose. As part of this exercise we are also reviewing and updating our school support staff role profiles to ensure they are relevant and fit for purpose.

12.5 Policy to practice Training

It is good practice to ensure all managers are aware of any policy changes and in particular have received appropriate training on what is required of them and how their role can support equality and diversity within the workplace. Following a successful year of policy to practice training in 2021/2022 with over 300 managers trained, we will continue to work closely with the OD team to deliver training and provide briefing sessions to managers on Council people related policies and procedures.

12.6 Apprenticeships

We are working hard to advance equality of opportunity for young people We continue to expand the variety of apprenticeships offered ensuring young people are developing skills in areas of growth and demand which enhances employability. Recent additions have been within digital marketing with a focus on improving and expanding our social media presence, marketing our apprentice scheme to a wider audience of young people as well as working on marketing general vacancies across the Council.

12.7 Data gaps

We continue to have gaps in our data and will continue to encourage employees to update their diversity data when commencing new roles or through the self-serve iTrent portal.

12.0 The bigger picture

The gender pay gap measurement can never tell the whole story of our organisation as an employer committed to equality and equal treatment of our staff.

- We have an equality proofed pay and grading system that undergoes an annual Equal Pay Audit.
- We recognise and work in joint partnership with the recognised trade unions to negotiate pay and conditions, ensuring parity of pay on behalf of those who work for us.
- We do not pay bonuses or performance related pay.
- We support women having children by offering enhanced maternity leave and flexible working policies.
- We provide a wide range of flexible working opportunities as a means to support, develop and retain employees at work. We will continue to promote these initiatives going forward and hopefully encourage more females to take up more senior roles within the County Council
- We are disability confident employer (level 2)
- We have received a gold award under the MOD Employers Recognition Scheme (ERS)

13. 0 Conclusion

Over the last five years our gender pay gap improved year on year, however we have seen a very marginal increase this year.

Table 10 Gender pay gap by year

Gender Pay Gap	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Overall	16.96%	13.65%	13.40%	13.11%	13.75%	13.71%
NJC/Green Book	18.60%	16.22%	15.45%	15.00%	15.37%	15.47%

Like many other large, diverse employers, our biggest challenge remains Occupational segregation. When we look across the County Council as a whole, women are more heavily concentrated in lower paid roles and in particular kinds of roles.

Occupational segregation is one of the barriers which prevents women and men fulfilling their potential in the labour market and consequently contributes to the pay gap. Women tend to be concentrated in lower paid jobs and the lower grades within the organisation.

We need to ensure that the pool of talent and skills available to employers is not inhibited by stereotypical perceptions of what women and men do and that everyone’s skills are being utilised to the maximum potential.

The Audit provides reassurance that the County Councils job evaluation scheme and the processes within which it operates are robust and meet equality requirements.

Flintshire County Council is committed to delivering equal treatment of its employees regardless of their gender or other protected characteristics. The Equality and Diversity Infonet pages provide further information about the equality initiatives the County Council is currently engaged with.

As we monitor the sizes of our gender pay gaps within Flintshire County Council, we will seek to continue to ensure that our HR policies and practices help to improve awareness across the organisation and help close the gender pay gap.

14.0 Action Plan/Priorities

Action Point 1:

Over the next few years, we will focus on encouraging more staff to complete the optional equality data questionnaire in order to increase the amount of data we have on our workforce.

This will allow us to set a baseline, identify gaps in our workforce and to undertake audits based on other protected characteristics. We will employ various methods of doing this including an advertising campaign and raising the awareness of staff members who are new to the self-service system.

We will continue to encourage staff to complete the questionnaire over the next year through various means such as:

- sharing a message twice a year to remind people that the information can be changed, e.g. in a situation where a member of staff has got married or has had a long-term illness
- reminding anyone who has not completed it of the need to do so
- discussing with individual Service Manager to discover the best methods of reaching their workforce

Action 2.

In employment we have and will continue to support flexible working as a mechanism to support women and other workers with caring, home schooling or other commitments.

We will encourage uptake of shared parental leave. The gender pay gap widens after women have children, but this could be reduced if women and men were to share childcare more equally.

We will continue to review and improve our support for staff experiencing disability as a result of a mental health condition. Particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of poor mental health may be experienced more acutely, and we want to ensure that staff remain able to develop and progress in these circumstances.

We will review our pre-employment medical checks, to encourage better discussions with staff from the start of their employment regarding disability/underlying health conditions, to help reduce stigma/concern around reporting disability, and better enable us to identify and make reasonable adjustments.

We will work with existing staff regarding recognition of what disability in the workplace means to improve our reporting levels and understanding of our disability representation, and better enable us to support their progression / make reasonable adjustments.

Action 3.

Upon the roll out of a new integrated HR and Payroll System, we will improve our HR reporting and people information, enabling better quality of information to be reported, and potential gender imbalances to be identified and addressed as appropriate, for example:

- Reviewing the numbers of male and female applicants for specific roles.
- Evaluation of the number of female and male employees accessing maternity, paternity, and shared parental leave entitlements, and the proportion still in post 12 months after returning.
- Evaluation of the number of female and male employees employed at each pay grade.
- Reviewing our exit interview information to better understand if one gender is leaving for specific reasons compared to the other

Action 4.

As part of our new People and Organisational Development strategy, we will look to develop a plan to encourage applicants for underrepresented and occupationally segregated roles (both male and female).