

Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee – 16 March 2026

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Report Summary	
Report Title	Gender Pay Gap Report – March 2026
Purpose of Report	To appraise the committee of the current position at NSDC in relation to the gender pay gap.
Recommendations	That the committee notes the content of the report in relation to the positive position of our gender pay gap.
Reason for Recommendation	The Council’s position in relation to the gender pay gap is positive. It is impacted in a small way by several different factors as opposed to there being a particular area of concern.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Gender Pay Gap (GPG) legislation which was introduced in April 2017 requires private and public sector employers with more than 250 employees to report the following information on an annual basis:
- The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay for male and female employees expressed as a percentage of men’s mean pay.
 - The difference between the median hourly rate of pay for male and female employees expressed as a percentage of men’s median pay.
 - The proportion of men and women in each quartile of the pay bands.
 - The gender pay gap for any bonuses paid out during the year. (This is not relevant for this report as NSDC do not pay bonuses).

The GPG looks at the average earnings for both males and females across all roles in an organisation to see whether there is a disparity. This is based on a snapshot of data for the previous March so, in this case, the data is as of 31 March 2025.

Calculations are based on ordinary pay which includes basic pay and allowances such as market supplements, shift pay, on-call and stand-by. Payments that are excluded are: payments for overtime, redundancy payments, and sums relating to termination of employment. Also excluded are employees on reduced pay due to family or sick leave.

A positive number in relation to the GPG, mean or median, reflects that men are, on average being paid more than women. A negative number reflects that women are being paid, on average, more than men.

The pay quartiles lists all hourly rate data, for in scope employees, in order smallest to largest and split the data into 4 equal sections: Lower quartile (Q1), lower middle quartile (Q2), upper middle quartile (Q3), and upper quartile (Q4).

The GPG is not the same as equal pay. Equal pay refers to the fact that, by law, men and women must get equal pay for 'equal work'. At NSDC a recognised and tested job evaluation scheme (Greater London Provincial Councils) is used to allocate grades to roles, along with national pay awards, to ensure that grades are allocated in a fair, transparent, and consistent manner.

2.0 Current position

2.1 The GPG at NSDC is:

Mean	3.41%	<p>The mean is calculated by adding up the total salary for each gender (as outlined in the reporting regulations) and then dividing the result by the number of employees of that gender. The difference between these two figures is then reported as a percentage of men's mean pay.</p> <p>At present, men are paid, on average, £0.61 pence per hour more than women when looking at the mean.</p>
Median	-6.77%	<p>The median is calculated by producing a list of salaries in numerical order for each gender. The median is determined by identifying the middle number for each gender. The difference between those two figures is then reported as a percentage of men's median pay.</p> <p>At present, men are paid, on average, £1.02 pence per hour less than women when looking at the median.</p>

2.12 Our mean GPG is currently narrower than at any point since 2018. The mean can, however, be skewed by particularly high or low outliers and, as a result, the median is considered a better indicator of average earning.

Our median GPG has been reducing / narrowing steadily since 2020 and is currently lower than we have reported at any point.

That our median is lower than our mean suggests that the mean is skewed by a small number of higher earners.

2.13 The ONS is currently predicting a median GPG across all industries of 6.9% with men being paid, on average, £1.40 per hour more than women. In comparison, our median GPG of -6.77% has women being paid more per hour, on average, than men.

Results have not yet been published for other Local Authorities in our area but, in relation to last year's reporting, we also compare favourably as the average median reported was 0.4% which, whilst small, still has men being paid, on average, more than women per hour.

2.14 Statutory reporting only requires for us to publish data in relation to the whole organisation but, given that our GPG is relatively narrow (in relation to the mean), and positive in favour of women (in relation to the median) a more detailed

analysis of the data has been carried out in order to understand what might be driving this positive position.

This has identified the following:

- Median - that at Officer level and Business Manager level, we have parity (business manager) and a negative GPG in favour of women (officer).
- Mean – that at Officer level and Business Manager level, the mean GPG is narrower than for the whole Council.
- That we have almost equal numbers of men and women at Director level but that the small data set skews the figures in relation to that specific category of employees, and our overall GPG.
- That when looking at full-time employees only, both the mean and median are smaller than for the whole Council reflecting a more positive situation for women.

This suggests that, when the small number of higher earners are taken out of the data, men and women earn, on average, very similar amounts.

In addition, whilst the data is slightly skewed by being such a small sample, the number of men and women at Director / Chief Executive Level, at the snapshot date, was almost a 50/50 split.

Taken together, this suggests that there are no inherent blockers for women when progressing through the organisation, or when joining the Council at a range of levels.

Aside from the small number of high earners which have impacted our mean GPG, it is also impacted by the data in relation to part-time workers. When looking at part-time employees only, the GPG, for both measures is higher than for the whole Council but this is skewed by the fact that there are a relatively small number of men working part-time compared to women.

2.2 In relation to pay quartiles:

Quartile	Men	Women	Total	% Men	% Women
Lower Quartile	87	65	152	57%	43%
Middle Quartile	61	91	152	40%	60%
Upper Middle Quartile	57	95	152	38%	62%
Upper Quartile	75	76	151	50%	50%

The upper and lower quartiles have remained relatively stable between 2024 and 2025. There has been more change in the middle quartiles with the gap between the proportion of women and men in Q2 reducing and more women falling into quartile 3. This change within the mid quartiles is likely to have supported the reduction in our GPG.

3.0 Recommendations

- 3.1 The purpose of gender pay gap reporting is to create transparency and accountability in the workplace and to ensure that there is a focus on addressing any disparity in pay between men and women.

The outcome can be influenced by higher representation of men or women in particular roles, societal norms, or the impact of factors like maternity leave or caring responsibilities on careers.

- 3.2 Whilst our data continues to show a positive figure for our mean GPG, it has reduced and remains low, and our median GPG, a better indicator of average earnings, is - 6.77%.

When looking at potential reasons for the results, it is the case that several factors make a small difference and that this has a cumulative impact rather than there being any one area where there are significant concerns.

- 3.3 At NSDC, the data suggests that the key factors impacting our GPG may be:
- Higher representation of men than women in some roles
 - A higher number of women working on a part-time basis

Overall, however, the pay quartiles, and the breakdown of role levels, and of full-time employees reflects that there are no inherent blockers to progression through the organisation for women.

3.31 Higher representation of men than women in some roles:

There are certain roles, such as Surveyors, Grounds Maintenance Operatives, Waste Management Operatives, or Trades Operatives for example, which are predominantly filled by men. Whilst this is not due to a particular focus on recruiting men, these roles tend to attract a greater number of men. In addition, in relation to Surveyors and Trades Operatives for example, the pool of candidates tends to be small which means the Council struggles to recruit overall.

Having an element of 'role segregation' in this way, although not intentional, does impact the GPG and is, therefore, an area we can consider as part of our work to address this.

We already do have some women in these typically male dominated posts with 2 female Waste Management Operatives, 2 female Grounds Maintenance Operatives, 1 female LGV Driver, 2 female Street Cleansing Operatives, and 1 female Joiner.

We also have 1 female surveyor who began with us as an apprentice and is now one of the most senior surveyors within her team.

As a Council, we don't propose any element of positive discrimination but a more holistic approach which includes ensuring that any photographs we have that include our people ensure that women are shown in all of our roles. It is important that when we go to schools or careers fairs, for example, we can show women working in what might be seen as more male dominated roles such as ones related to construction, ICT, or more front-line operations roles. It is important that women and girls can see that they are not limited and there is no such thing as 'women's work' and 'men's work'. This also extends to our wider advertising materials outside of careers fairs – normalising seeing a woman in a trades operative role for example.

It is really important to note with this that this should not be done solely with the view of improving our GPG – as a Local Authority, we should be reflecting the demographic of our residents as much as possible and ensuring that men and women are in all roles, at all

levels of the Council, helps us to do this as well as supporting recruitment to what can be hard to fill roles.

In addition, where we do have hard to fill roles, it can be beneficial to look to 'grow our own'. In this case, the widest view possible should be taken in relation to transferrable skills ensuring that both men and women are supported to develop their careers within the Council.

3.32 A higher number of women working on a part-time basis:

This is a factor which certainly impacts our GPG as is shown by the results when looking at part-time workers only (both the mean and median outcomes are wider than when considering the whole Council).

The proportion of part-time workers that are women is significantly higher (81%) than men and women are represented more significantly in all quartiles when looking at part-time roles except for in the upper quartile where the split is much closer.

Societally, it is still more common for women to work part-time than men, so the figures above are unlikely to come as a surprise. The reason this impacts our GPG is because roles designed as part-time are more likely to be lower paid roles – this is demonstrated at NSDC in that only 17% of part-time roles fall within the upper quartile.

As an employer, the Council cannot impact societal factors such as it being more likely that women carry out the majority of caring responsibilities, for children and older parents, but what we can do is be proactive in supporting women to remain employed at a level which matches their skills and experiences even when they do wish to change to part-time so that they are not under-employed. Additionally, we can ensure that men, at all levels, are supported to work part-time, if they choose. In both cases, flexible working requests will always be considered against the operational impact.

During the financial year up to Q3, 17 requests for flexible working were made. 7 were from men and 10 were from women so the split is quite even. All request that were seen through were approved but 4 out of the 17 were withdrawn. 3 out of these 4 were ones made by men. What is more impactful in relation to our GPG however, is that, of the 17 requests, only 2 were from post holders earning in the upper quartile and one of those was for condensed hours as opposed to part-time working.

What is unknown is whether there are post holders within this quartile who would like to request part-time working but feel that they can't, or whether there are people who, due to a need to work part-time from the outset do not apply for those higher paying roles.

Looking at internal movements throughout the Council during this financial year, 55% of moves were made by women so again, as is shown by the GPG for officers, business managers, full-time workers, this suggests that there are no blockers to women progressing through the organisation.

What we can do, as an employer, is ensure that when looking to support progression within the organisation, we remain open to flexible ways of working and that, where possible, we promote roles at all levels as being open to flexible working where this is operationally feasible. The intention being that women will be encouraged, and feel able, to apply for roles which meet their skills level and not be restricted by a need to work part-time.

4.0 **Implications**

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Implications Considered			
Yes – relevant and included / NA – not applicable			
Financial	NA	Equality & Diversity	Yes
Human Resources	Yes	Human Rights	NA
Legal	NA	Data Protection	NA
Digital & Cyber Security	NA	Safeguarding	NA
Sustainability	NA	Crime & Disorder	NA
LGR	NA	Tenant Consultation	NA

HR and Equalities

- 3.1 The purpose of GPG reporting is to highlight areas to work on to reduce pay disparity between men and women. As a Council, we are confident that there are no barriers to progression for women within the organisation, but it is important to ensure that we support women and girls within our district to be open to the widest possible range of careers, and that we support women in our workforce to make full use of their skills, knowledge and experience.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None