



Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí  
Offaly County Council

2022

# GENDER PAY GAP

## REPORT



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# 1. Introduction

I welcome the opportunity to publish the first Gender Pay Gap report for Offaly County Council.

Offaly County Council is at the forefront of service delivery to the citizens of County Offaly and we endeavour to do so in a manner that focuses on the core values of equality, diversity and inclusivity in the way services are provided and as set out in the objectives in our Corporate Plan.

Offaly County Council is led by a management team that values diversity, inclusivity and understands that equality, diversity and inclusivity delivers real benefits in the efficient and effective delivery of public services. People are at the core of our organisation. We continue to strive to promote and sustain an inclusive organisational culture which provides equality of opportunity and where every employee feels valued.

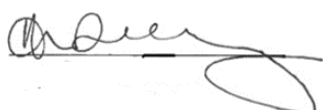
The Gender Pay Gap calculates the percentage difference between the average earnings of males and females irrespective of their role. The Gender Pay Gap is not the same as equal pay.

The issue of gender pay differences is an important one, not only to the workplace but to wider society. Offaly County Council is a place where all employees have equal opportunities for recognition and career development and where all work related activities are covered by appropriate workplace policies. We continue to be committed to addressing workplace barriers to equality, supporting diversity and creating an open and inclusive workplace community.

Many equality, diversity, inclusion initiatives and supports are already in place, and we will continue to assess and implement new initiatives on an ongoing basis.

Offaly County Council will examine what the gender pay gap figures can tell us about our organisation and this will help inform our future action plans. We will continue to liaise with and work with our colleagues across the sector to share best practice. We will also continue to monitor these trends over time.

Offaly County Council is committed to embedding the core values of equality, diversity and inclusivity in all that we strive to achieve.



**Chief Executive, Offaly County Council**

## 2. About Us

### Local Government in Ireland

There are 31 local authorities and 3 regional assemblies in Ireland. Local authorities are the closest and most accessible form of government to citizens. They have responsibility for the delivery of a wide range of services in their local area, with a focus on making cities, towns, villages and the countryside attractive places in which to live, work and invest.

Local authority services make a significant contribution to the physical, cultural, social and environmental development of communities and include housing, planning, infrastructure, environmental protection and the provision of amenities and recreation and community infrastructure.

Local authorities play a key role in promoting social inclusion and quality of life and supporting economic development and enterprise at a local level. Local authorities take the lead role in shaping the strategic vision of the county or city. They also work in partnership with other state, public and private bodies in the delivery of critical infrastructure and shared services.

Local authorities deliver hundreds of services and implement policy across a range of areas including:

- Arts and culture
- Climate action
- Community services
- Economic development
- Environment
- Housing
- Libraries
- Parks and open spaces
- Planning
- Roads and transport

- Tourism

Local authority employees come from a wide range of backgrounds with diverse skill sets, qualifications and experience. Roles in the sector include:

- Accountants
- Administrators
- Apprenticeships
- Archaeologists
- Architects
- Archivists
- Conservation officers
- Engineers
- Fire services
- General service and tradespeople
- Graduates
- Health and Safety
- Information technology
- Library services
- Planners
- Senior management roles
- Technicians

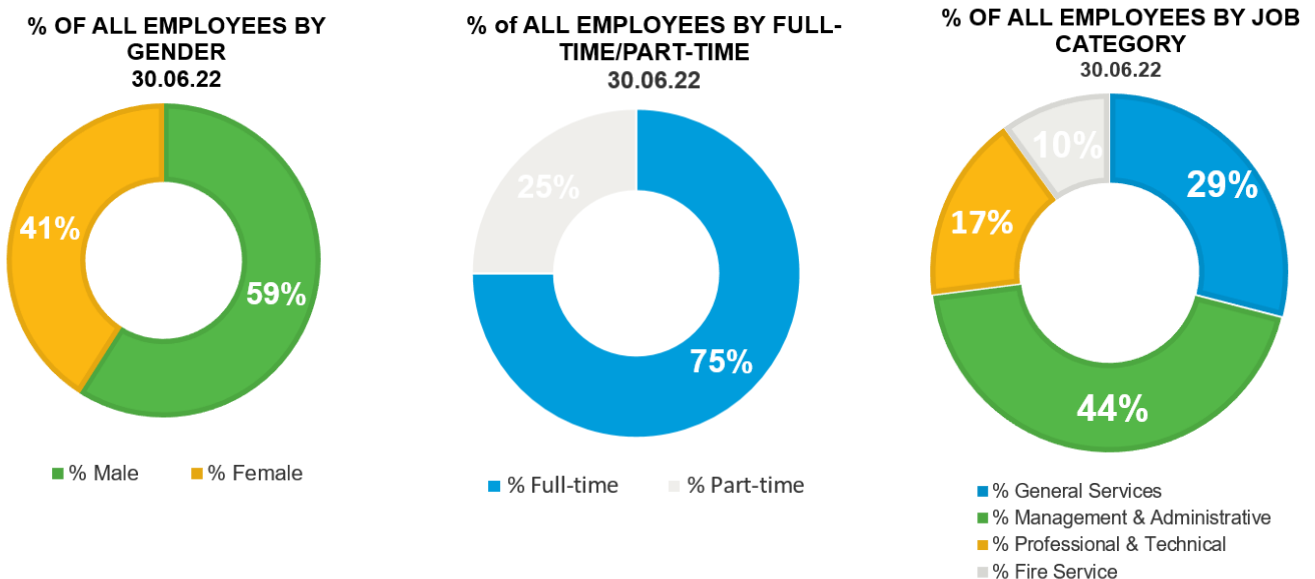
Working for Offaly County Council gives our employees the opportunity to gain experience at the heart of local government and to make a real difference to the lives of citizens in County Offaly. Everything we do in Offaly County Council is geared towards making County Offaly a great place to live and work and our employees play a vital role in that ambition.

## Offaly County Council

County Offaly is located in the centre of Ireland in the province of Leinster and is one of twelve local authorities comprising the Eastern and Midlands Region. With principal towns of Tullamore, Edenderry, Birr, Clara and Portarlinton, Offaly shares a border with seven other counties. The county is bordered by the River Shannon in the west and the Slieve Bloom Mountains to the south, both of which play a key role in the economic and tourism development of the county. Offaly County Council employs a workforce of over 500 employees. As an organisation, Offaly County Council seeks to enhance the county's attraction as a place in which to invest, work, and live, and takes the lead role in shaping the strategic vision of the county. We provide a diverse, multi-layered and evolving range of services to both citizens and visitors to County Offaly which include the provision of housing, planning, development, environmental, roads and traffic, leisure and community services.

Our employees work in a dynamic and progressive local authority which promotes training and development of our employees who are our most valuable resource.

The following is a summary of all employees within Offaly County Council on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022, illustrating the gender make up, the proportion of full time and part time employees and the categories in which they are employed.



# 3. Gender Pay Gap Reporting

## Gender Pay Gap Reporting 2022

The Gender Pay Gap Information Act, 2021 requires organisations with over 250 employees to report on their Gender Pay Gap. 2022 is the first year that organisations will have to report on their Gender Pay Gap.

Organisations are asked to select a 'snapshot' date in the month of June. The reporting period is the 12 month period immediately preceding and including the snapshot date, which for local authorities, is 30th June 2022. Organisations have six months to prepare their calculations, before reporting six months later during December 2022. The information must be published on the employer's website or in some other way that is accessible to all its employees and to the public.

### Who is included?

All persons employed by the employer on the snapshot date, including employees not rostered to work on that date and employees on leave. The mean and median figures must also be given separately for part-time and temporary employees.

### What do we mean by the gender pay gap?

**The Gender Pay Gap calculates the percentage difference between the average earnings of males and females irrespective of their role. The Gender Pay Gap is not the same as equal pay.**

Employment Equality legislation provides for equal pay for like work. All male and female employees in the local government sector are paid equally for work that is the same or similar or for work of equal value, therefore this report does not examine equal pay. Rates of pay within the sector are agreed through national wage agreements negotiated regularly between employers and staff representatives. Most employees are paid according to an incremental salary scale and the salary ranges for various roles are available on the local government jobs website at [www.localgovernmentjobs.ie](http://www.localgovernmentjobs.ie)

## Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap

The Gender Pay Gap calculates the percentage difference between the average earnings of males and females irrespective of their role, using the following measures:

MEAN GENDER PAY GAP
<p>This shows the % difference between the</p> <p>average hourly rate of pay for males and average hourly rate of pay for females (calculated by the formula below)</p> $\frac{(\text{average male hourly rate}) - (\text{average female hourly rate})}{\text{average male hourly rate}} \times 100$
MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP
<p>This shows the % difference between the</p> <p>median hourly rate of pay for males and median hourly rate of pay for females (calculated by the formula below)</p> $\frac{(\text{median of male hourly rates}) - (\text{median of female hourly rates})}{\text{median of male hourly rates}} \times 100$

The **mean** is the average. It is calculated by getting the difference between the average hourly rate of pay for males and the average hourly rate of pay for females (male hourly rate minus female hourly rate), expressed as a percentage of the male hourly rate. If this figure is negative, the average hourly rate of females is higher than the average hourly rate of males on the snapshot date. If this figure is positive, the average hourly rate of males is higher than the average hourly rate of females on the snapshot date



The **median** is the figure that falls in the middle of a range where the salary of all relevant employees is listed, from the lowest to the highest. This can provide a more accurate representation of the 'typical' differences in pay.

It is useful to look at both the mean and median figures, as each one can tell us something different about the underlying factors affecting the pay gap.

For example, a small number of higher paid employees can impact the mean figure and if this is the case, the median figure may be more representative of difference between what a male and a female is paid.

**If there is a significant difference between an organisation's mean and median pay gap, this may indicate that the data is impacted either by the presence of very low earners (making the mean lower than the median) or by a group of higher earners (making the mean higher than the median).**

It is also important to remember that this report uses data on a snapshot date at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022. Gender pay gaps can fluctuate from month to month and across quartile pay bands, depending on changes to headcount. However, headline figures will give a good indication of the differences between average earning between males and females.

## Quartile Pay Bands

Dividing employees into four more-or-less equal groups (or quartiles) with pay graded from lowest to highest helps us to examine pay across different levels of the organisation.

Organisations must report on the percentage of employees who fall within the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile hourly pay bands.

In order to group employees into these Quartile Pay Bands, the organisation lists all employees from lowest to highest, based on their hourly rates. The employees are then divided into four equal groups or Quartiles based on this - lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper. The employer then shows the proportion of male and female employees in each quartile as a percentage e.g. percentage of male employees in the lower quartile and percentage of female employees in the lower quartile (and so on).

## Bonus and benefit-in-kind

Bonus payments do not apply within the local government sector. Benefit in Kind may arise in certain circumstances, such as where some professional fees are paid by the employer.

## Factors that can have an impact on the gender pay gap

As mentioned, this report does not look at equal pay. Every employee, regardless of gender is paid equally for work that is the same or similar or for work of equal value. However, differences between what employees are paid can be impacted by a number of complex factors including:

- Occupational segregation – some job categories or occupations may have traditionally attracted more females than males or vice versa.
- Working patterns – full-time and part-time work. It may be that more females than males seek part-time work or career breaks and although this does not impact on their hourly rate of pay, it may impact on choices around career progression.

- Length of service – incremental pay increases may mean that new joiners are paid less than more experienced employees.
- Time of year – temporary or seasonal workers may be recruited for different roles which may attract a different rate of pay.
- Gender breakdown of senior roles at higher salaries – a small number of higher paid employees can affect the average figures.
- Gender breakdown of lower paid roles – a large number of lower paid employees can affect the average figures.

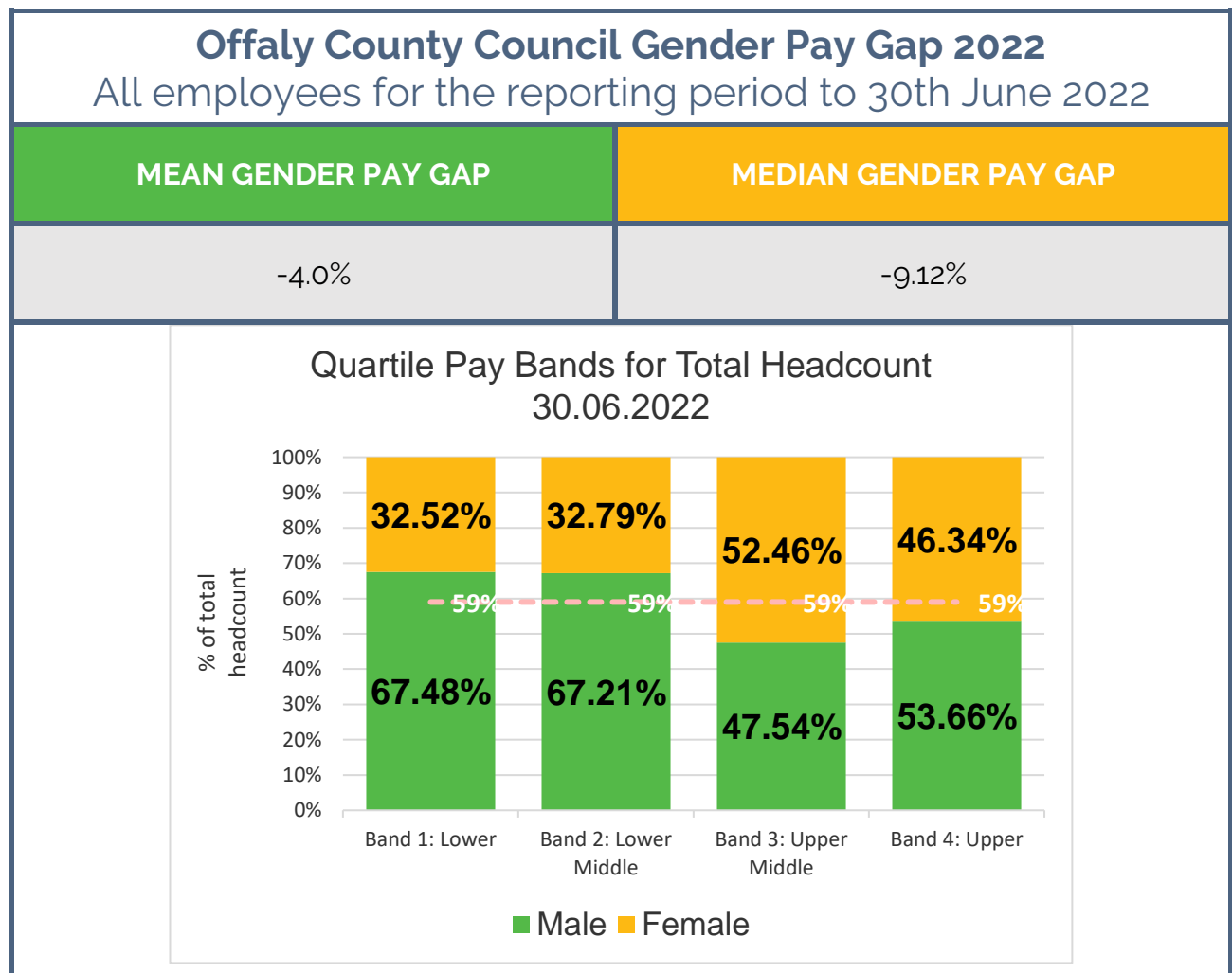
If an organisation reports a **positive gender pay gap**, it does not mean that females are paid less than males for doing the same job, but it does show that, on average, males occupy higher paid roles than females.

If an organisation reports a **negative gender pay gap**, it does not mean that males are paid less than females for doing the same job, but it does indicate that, on average, females occupy higher paid roles than males.

The larger the positive or negative pay gap is, the more marked the differences in hourly rates of pay will be and the more males or females proportionally working in either higher or lower paid roles within the organisation.

# 4. Our Figures

## Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap and Pay Band Quartiles – All employees



**Note: 59% Male / 41% Female** is the gender breakdown of all employees at 30th June 2022. This is shown in the dotted line above.

On 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022, the workforce in Offaly County Council was made up of 59% males and 41% females. The overall mean gender pay gap was -4%. This figure reflects that there were proportionally more females in higher paid roles than males. The mean figure also reflects that there were proportionally more males employed within the lower quartile which are generally found in the General Services Sector. The Mean Gender Pay Gap shows that on average, females were paid 4% more than males. The

Median Gender Pay Gap shows that the median rate of pay for females was 9% higher than the median rate of pay for males on this date.

Looking at the distribution of employees across the four **Quartile Pay Bands** helps us examine pay at different levels of the organisation.

These Quartile Pay Bands show the distribution of male and female employees by Pay Band across the organisation. (The organisation lists all employees from lowest to highest, based on their hourly rates, and then divides this into four equal Pay Bands or Quartiles - lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper. The employer then shows the proportion of male and female employees in each quartile).

The split for each of the 4 quartiles shown above is broadly in line with our workforce demographics of 59% male and 41% female. For there to be no Gender Pay Gap you would expect to see the workforce demographics reflected more closely in *each* quartile.

There was a higher proportion of males in Bands 1 and 2, reflecting that there were proportionately more males at lower grades. There was a higher proportion of females in Band 3 and slightly higher proportion of males in Band 4. However a 54% Male / 46% Female gender breakdown in senior grades is to be welcomed and reflects progress on gender balance in senior roles. Both more males at the lower grades and fewer females at the higher grades can affect the mean and median pay gaps.

## Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap – Part-Time employees

Offaly Gender Pay Gap 2022 Part-time employees for the reporting period to 30th June 2022	
MEAN GENDER PAY GAP	MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP
-9.25%	-9.00%

On 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022, 75% of employees in Offaly County Council were employed full time and 25% employed part-time (Part-time employees included those availing of family friendly schemes such as work-sharing). Of this 25% working part-time, 50% were male and 50% were female. The Mean Gender Pay Gap shows that on average, females were paid 9.25% more than males who were working part-time. The Median Gender Pay Gap shows that the median rate of pay for females was 9% higher than the median rate of pay for males working part-time.

Factors influencing the pattern of part-time employees across the organisation include a range of family friendly options for part-time work / work-sharing, which, while available to all employees, have a greater take-up of in administrative and clerical job categories.

Another factor is job categories where part-time work is an occupational feature of the role, including the fire service, library service, school wardens and caretakers for burial grounds.

## Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap – Temporary Employees

Offaly County Council Gender Pay Gap 2022	
Temporary employees for the reporting period to 30th June 2022	
MEAN GENDER PAY GAP	MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP
-7.49%	-1.44%

On 30th June 2022, 2% of our employees were employed on temporary contracts. This 2% was made up of 45% males and 55% females. These contracts included temporary employees such as students and those participating on the Local Government Graduate Programme.

The Mean Gender Pay Gap shows that on average, females were paid 7.49% more than males who were employed on temporary contracts. The Median Gender Pay Gap shows that the median rate of pay for females was 1.44% higher than the median rate of pay for males employed on temporary contracts.

# 5. Other Payments

## **Benefit in Kind**

On 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 no Benefit in Kind payment was made to either male or female employees.

## **Bonus payment**

Bonus payments do not feature as part of pay in the local government sector.



# 6. How we are supporting Gender Equality

In line with the Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021, 2022 is the first year that Offaly County Council has reported on the gender pay gap, but equality, diversity and inclusion continues to be part of the way we work.

## Fair and transparent recruitment practices

- As an equal opportunities employer, we work to promote a culture of equality and we strive to embrace genuine equality of opportunity through our recruitment and selection processes which are open to all.
- We provide appropriate assistance and accommodation throughout our recruitment and selection processes, including providing easily accessible interview facilities, agreeing an appropriately timed interviews, and supplying or arranging appropriate equipment.
- Our Interview Boards are gender balanced and all efforts are made to employ Interview Boards that have appropriate training.
- Recruitment websites highlight family friendly and flexible working options, and our job descriptions and job advertisements are gender neutral.
- We provide training and support, open to all employees to help them prepare for job applications and interviews.
- Employees are paid according to an incremental salary scale, and we offer strong career progression opportunities which are open to all employees.

## Work life balance

- We offer a wide range of flexible working and leave options which are available to all employees, including carer's leave, career breaks, paid maternity and adoptive leave, paid paternity leave, parent's leave, parental leave, shorter working year schemes, and work-sharing.

## Blended working

- Blended working is being introduced as part of our flexible working policies with flexible options to combine office and home/hub working.

## Learning and development

- We are committed to providing ongoing learning and development opportunities so that all employees can develop to their full potential. All employees are actively encouraged to pursue education opportunities through the Educational Assistance Scheme, with study and examination leave also available.

## Health and Wellbeing

- The health and wellbeing of all employees is paramount and a healthy work-life balance is important to us in Offaly County Council. We offer comprehensive employee occupational health and wellbeing programmes including an Employee Assistance Programme, and wellbeing webinars etc.
- Regular communications issue to all employees to promote wellbeing initiatives.

## Dignity at Work

- We promote and support a culture of dignity, respect and equality. We have a Dignity at Work Policy and all employees and managers have received training and support in the implementation of the policy. A new updated policy will issue shortly to all employees and appropriate training and support will be provided in this regard.

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- Offaly County Council is continually developing as an employer of choice to attract, develop and promote an inclusive and diverse employee population.
- Offaly Council continues to design and provide responsive services and customer care that meet the needs of an increasingly diverse customer base.
- Offaly Council is making efforts to progressively embed the Public Sector Duty in its current management, policy development and service delivery processes
- An assessment is being planned on equality and human rights across all Council functions and services and the Council will develop an action plan on equality and human rights based on the results of this assessment.
- A human rights and equality statement will then be incorporated into the Council's corporate plans and strategic plans

## Public Sector Duty

- The Public Sector Duty is set out in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act, 2014. Section 42 requires a public body, in the performance of its functions, to have regard to the need to eliminate

discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and treatment of its staff and the persons to whom it provides services. Also to have regard to and protect the human rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides services.

- Offaly Council is making efforts to progressively embed the Public Sector Duty in its current management, policy development and service delivery processes, as an aid to achieving objectives set out in our Corporate Plan.
- Public bodies are required to set out in their strategic plans, an assessment of the human rights and equality issues it believes to be relevant to its functions and purpose. Public bodies are also required to set out the existing or proposed policies, plans and actions to address those issues. Furthermore, public bodies are required to report annually on developments and achievements in that regard in their annual report. All of the above must be carried out in a manner that is accessible to the public through appropriate communication mediums.
- Offaly County Council acknowledges the commonality of purpose stated in both the “Public Service Duty” and Gender Pay Gap reporting requirements and the publication of this report serves to underline and support the three-step approach advocated by the IHREC i.e., Assess, Address and Report.

## Women in leadership

- Our Management Team comprises the following gender balance - 60% Male and 40% Female. We will continue to promote Women in Leadership programmes for our employees to ensure that appropriate gender balance is maintained.

## Apprenticeships

- As part our inclusive approach to recruitment, Offaly County Council is examining a number of apprenticeship programmes as part of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Innovation and Science's Action Plan for Apprenticeship 2021 – 2022 which aims to increase the number of apprenticeships within the Public Service. This includes new apprenticeship programmes linked to areas of work within local authorities, including IT and finance as well as more traditional apprenticeship areas.

## Looking ahead: Data collection and evidence-based policy development

- We welcome the opportunity to report on our gender pay gap and have worked collaboratively across the sector to provide a standard and consistent approach

to reporting. We will work with the LGMA and our colleagues in other local authorities to share learnings and best practice.