



Report to:	FINANCE, RESOURCES, AND CORPORATE COMMITTEE
Date:	18 th January 2024
Subject:	Workforce Development and Publication of Pay Gap Reports
Director:	Alan Reiss, Chief Operating Officer
Author:	Joanne Grigg, Head of Human Resources

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide an update on data relating to the Combined Authority's workforce.
- 1.2 To provide the gender and ethnicity pay gap reports for 2022-23 to the Committee.
- 1.3 To note the Combined Authority's application to become a Living Wage Foundation employer.
- 1.4 To highlight recent progress with workforce related projects, illustrate trends in our workforce and highlight actions the Combined Authority is taking on recruitment, progression and learning and development.

2. Information

2.1 HR Management Information

- 2.2 The attached HR Management Information (MI) reports at Appendix A provides detail and analysis concerning employee sickness, turnover and workforce stability measures, the EDI profile of the organisation and information relating to the fulfilment of vacancies. This report reflects Quarter 2 (Q2) 2023/24, July to September 2023, which is the latest report available at time of publication. This document is produced for internal management purposes and shared with the committee to help inform this report.

- 2.3 The report builds upon the MI provided for Q1 and provides some comparison, including an indication of trends. It is anticipated that this will be built upon for subsequent quarters for a year-on-year comparison.
- 2.4 The information shows that the time lost to sickness is currently (and continues to be) low in comparison to figures seen regionally and in the wider local government sector. Whilst there are some examples of higher sickness absence, in general, these are in isolated areas.
- 2.5 Staff turnover and stability rates are also seen as broadly positive. Overall, the Combined Authority is able to retain its experienced staff. However low rates of turnover do have some associated challenges, for example it limits the pace at which we can improve the diversity of our workforce overall, to ensure it is representative of the population of West Yorkshire.
- 2.6 Our staff profile for EDI measures is showing signs of improvement, with notable steps towards being more representative seen in staff recruited in the past 12 months. There is still more work to do to ensure this is reflected across all teams and levels of the organisation, and a particular need to increase ethnic diversity at more senior grades.
- 2.7 Recruitment and induction activity has been significant over the past 6 months. In terms of vacancy fulfilment there is a 50/50 split between external recruitment and existing internal resources fulfilling the need. This is positive, as it means that the organisation is both bringing in new talent and supporting internal development and promotion.

Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gaps 2023

- 2.8 The Gender pay gap report for 2023 is attached at Appendix B, and the Ethnicity Pay Gap at Appendix C.
- 2.9 The analysis within the reports is used to support the formulation of strategies and actions to enable delivery of our vision to become a national leader in EDI.
- 2.10 When considering the data from 2017 to 2023, there is a broad trend of closing gaps for both gender and ethnicity, which is positive and shows some level of success. However, the pace of change is not currently sufficient to meet the goal of removing the gaps by 2028 (as set out in our EDI plan). Therefore, we are building on our existing interventions and redoubling our efforts through a range of measures to accelerate the pace. Current trends would suggest for ethnicity by 2028 the gap would be around 4%, and this would not close to zero until the early 2030s. A similar analysis for gender indicates this gap is closing more quickly, but that current momentum still needs to quicken to meet a 2028 target.
- 2.11 Additionally, when combining information from the ethnicity and gender pay gaps and applying an intersectional approach to analysis, it can be seen that the disparities experienced by people from an ethnic minority are even greater for female colleagues. For example, while 9% of employees in the upper pay quartile have an ethnic minority background this drops to less than 5% for women from an ethnic minority.

- 2.12 Interventions to improve the position need to be managed over a multi-year period, and include actions already outlined in recruitment plans, the EDI Plan and existing gender and ethnicity pay gap action plans.
- 2.13 A range of further actions are being created in consultation with staff network groups, including:
- Improving the use of inclusive recruitment practices across the organisation
 - Enforcing completion of mandatory EDI training, including on unconscious bias.
 - Using the evidence available to target learning and development programmes at under-represented groups (e.g. the SOLACE Amplify Programme, which is aimed at supporting the leadership development of people from ethnic minority backgrounds who have the potential to reach Head of Service level and beyond).
 - Continued collection and use of diversity data in targeting other learning and development programmes e.g. Emerging Leaders.
- 2.14 The pay gaps reports are attached to this paper and will be published on the Combined Authority website. The Government portal will also be updated with the information with regards to the gender pay gap as required.
- 2.15 The pay gaps for 2024 will be calculated for employees in post on 31st March 2024. The majority of the factors that will impact these calculations have therefore already occurred, particularly recruitment between April and December 2023.

Workforce Development

- 2.16 As the Combined Authority continues to grow and evolve, this brings with it a number of challenges and opportunities with regards to workforce issues. These include –
- Recruitment and retention
 - Workforce planning, particularly with regards to growing at scale and pace
 - Sourcing specialist and technical skills
 - The diversity profile of our workforce
 - Learning and development
 - Accreditations and charters
- 2.17 In order to make progress in these areas the following actions are being taken, and a workforce strategy is in development which will be published in March 2024.

Recruitment and retention

- 2.18 A dedicated HR Advisor for recruitment and diversity was employed to specifically focus on our attractiveness as an employer in the region within a very competitive recruitment market. This includes promoting our image to candidates and increasing knowledge about the Combined Authority, what it does, and the types of roles to apply for. This has included seeking out and attendance at recruitment fairs, advertising roles on a much broader basis, focusing on where to attract diverse applicants, briefing managers on how to recruit and how to avoid unconscious bias in the process, amending the recruitment toolkit, supporting recruitment campaigns and visibility of roles, providing guidance to candidates on how to apply, focusing on roles that have been historically hard to recruit to and exploring why, removing barriers etc.
- 2.19 Attraction to roles and candidate applications have increased and the diversity of those applying across all the protected characteristics have increased leading to an incremental positive change to the workforce profile. For example, 19% of employees joining in the past 12 months are from an ethnic minority background – this matches the percentage of working age adults from an ethnic minority group in West Yorkshire.
- 2.20 Efforts continue to be made to become an employer of choice and recognised as a good employer in the region where people want to come and work. The profile of the mayor has definitely improved the profile and is a factor in the increase in applications received. As set out later in the report, we are also signed up, or committed to, a range of charters and accreditations including the Fair Work Charter, the Living Wage Foundation, Disability Confident Level 2, and the UNISON Anti-Racism Charter.

Workforce planning

- 2.21 There is a need to introduce a more structured approach to workforce planning across the organisation. Support in this area is being provided by the Local Government Association through the Combined Authority HR network. Planning is also taking place to design the operating model and develop structures for mass transit and other areas where further growth is anticipated.
- 2.22 This builds on the previous work done through the organisation evolution programme to design and develop the operating model for the organisation and moving to outcome focussed directorates and a focus on broader objectives and place.

Sourcing specialist and technical skills

- 2.23 As we move towards the major programmes increasing capacity and capability, including mass transit, there is a need to source specialist and technical skills and at pace and scale. Options are being considered to have alternative staffing models in place to engage with a broader set of employment options including directly employed, consultancy, agency etc as well as where to source the skills from and build talent pipelines internally.

The diversity profile of our workforce

- 2.24 The Combined Authority aims to be an inclusive employer, where people across the full range of protected characteristics want to come and work, and where our workforce is fully representative of the West Yorkshire community and demographic.
- 2.25 As set out above and in the pay gap reports, the recent data produced shows that positive steps are being made to the diversity profile of the workforce. The actions taken with regards to recruitment and attraction are showing results and the new joiners to the organisation tend to be younger and more diverse. The new starters joining the organisation are more reflective of the West Yorkshire population – the proportion of people declaring a disability has increased by 3% and those joining in the past 12 months are also more likely to provide information about their sexual orientation, this suggests we are improving the representation of staff who identify as LGBTQIA+ as these groups have increased as a percentage of the organisation. This is outlined in more detail in the attached HR management information for quarter 2.

Accreditations and charters

- 2.26 The Combined Authority is an early adopter of the Fair Work Charter. A report providing a self-assessment summary against the criteria was considered by the Combined Authority in December, and work is underway to address areas where improvement is required (such as leadership and management training).
- 2.27 The Combined Authority is committed to becoming accredited to the Living Wage Foundation. It now meets the necessary criteria, having ensured that our internal pay scales minimum rate is above the LWF rate. The necessary discussions have taken place with the Living Wage Foundation and an application to become a Living Wage Foundation Employer will have been submitted by the date of the meeting.
- 2.28 An application was recently submitted to increase the level of accreditation to the disability confident scheme and level 2 has been awarded. Consideration is now being given to the steps that need to be taken in order to progress to level 3.
- 2.29 The UNISON Anti racism charter has now been adopted and signed by the Mayor and the Chief Executive. A gap analysis has been completed to inform the actions necessary to ensure the organisation is fully compliant within 12 months.

Learning and development

- 2.30 The recent recruitment of a learning and development partner has allowed a greater focus to be given to learning and development activity and brought additional expertise in the field to take forward our L&D offer. Current activity in this area is set out below.

Learning and development policy and delivery

- 2.31 The L&D Policy is written in draft. This Policy will support the vision of being a learning organisation and creating an organisational learning culture. An L&D workplan has been agreed by the senior management team which sets out initial priority areas of focus to support the implementation of the L&D policy. These areas are –
- L&D strategy and policy
 - Provision of EDI and EQIA training
 - Change management
 - Apprenticeships
 - Talent and succession module in CiAnywhere
 - Supporting directorate training plans
 - Coaching/mentoring/shadowing
 - Graduate programme
- 2.32 The data and evidence relating to the workforce as set out in management information and the pay gap reports will be used to target all of the learning and development interventions set out.
- 2.33 Running parallel to this workplan is also a specific workplan for the Transport Operations and Passenger Experience Directorate, particularly aimed at reaching out to the Customer Service Advisors to raise compliance of mandatory training and service specialist subjects delivered by subject matter experts such as West Yorkshire Police. The programme is fully funded and has embedded a nationally recognised Multiply Programme. [Multiply - Skills for Life](#)
- 2.34 Equality and diversity training has been delivered in support of our EDI objectives as a priority. We have also successfully commissioned an EqIA training provider with this training due to be delivered during February – March 2024 delivery for members of Senior Management Team.

Apprenticeship Strategy

- 2.35 The apprenticeship strategy and programme is an integral part of the combined authority's approach to address current and future skills needs. By embedding apprenticeships in our people strategies, talent management and career pathways, we can ensure they provide a modern employment offer and viable route into and up through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority for both new and existing staff.
- 2.36 Linking the Apprenticeship Strategy to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority EDI Plan presents opportunities for developing an apprenticeship culture at all levels improving the diversity profile of the workforce and supporting the use of positive action.
- 2.37 Providing opportunities for staff to undertake apprenticeships and will help raise skills within the workforce and support wider workforce planning priorities around improving the diversity of the workforce by attracting seldom heard into apprenticeships.

Emerging Leaders programme

- 2.38 The emerging leaders programme prepares talented individuals and groups for leadership positions. It is aimed at eligible individuals across Councils who are, or aspire to be, middle managers and who have a long-term career aspiration, linking to talent and succession workstreams across the Combined Authority. To date six employees have completed this qualification and seven are on the programme.

Graduate programme

- 2.39 Discussions have taken place with the Local Government Association to discuss the national graduate development programme for local government (NGDP) 'offer'.
- 2.40 It is the only national graduate programme for local government. It offers a unique opportunity for organisations to grow their own local government leaders. The intention is for the Combined Authority to introduce this in 2024.

Amplify programme

- 2.41 We have recently commissioned the SOLACE AMPlify course which is a leadership development programme aimed at increasing the diversity of leadership in local government. ([Amplify Programme - Solace](#)).
- 2.42 Two employees have been successful at gaining a place on the November 2023 intake and we are aiming for three places in the March 2024 cohort, in addition to being in discussions with SOLACE with regards to a regional course in Summer. For every place, there is also training for the colleague's line manager, who attends modules on inclusive leadership.

Women into leadership

- 2.43 We are also enrolling employees on the Women in Leadership course, run by "raise the bar". This course utilises the levy. Programme intent is to ignite female talent and unlock the female higher potential. The programme also gives participants the unique opportunity to be mentored by experienced senior leaders from a large organisation.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 There are no climate emergency implications directly arising from this report.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 As a public sector employer in the region, we contribute to the region's economy and through our employment practices and pay, and the considerations of pay gap

implications, actions should play a part in closing the gap in economic growth and a productive workforce across the region.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 The Combined Authority is committed to becoming an employer of choice and a leader in EDI. The actions being taken and outlined above are having a positive impact on our workforce profile and improvements being made to representation. The opportunities being explored with regards to internal progression and development opportunities will also assist to address the internal movement of staff to improve representation where there are currently gaps.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The gender pay gap report will be published on the Government portal as required by legislation.

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1 This report summarises the current projects underway to enable HR to inform workforce planning and the recruitment strategy for the Combined Authority.

9. External Consultees

- 9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 That the information provided is considered and noted.
- 10.2 That agreement is provided that the pay gap reports are published via the Combined Authority website and Government portal.

11 Appendices

Appendix 1 – HR Management Information Q2 23/24

Appendix 2 – Gender Pay Gap report 2023.

Appendix 3 – Ethnicity Pay Gap report 2023.