



Human Resources
Goireasan Daonna

Equal Pay Statement 2023

Aithris Pàighidh Co-ionann



This statement, taken together with our Equality in Employment Policy, sets out The Highland Council's commitment to ensuring that our pay systems are fair and equitable for all our employees

It is in the interest of the Council to ensure that it has equitable pay, grading and benefits structures which do not discriminate unlawfully across any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.

By having a fair and transparent pay system that aims to identify and eliminate any potential pay discrimination, we believe that the Council sends a positive message to its employees and the Highland community. This not only helps demonstrate our role as a fair employer, but it also makes good business sense and helps the Council to manage costs.

It is important that our employees have confidence in the Council's pay structures and the Council is committed to achieving this through consultation with employees and the recognised trade unions.

The Council recognises that occupational segregation in the workforce may have a negative effect on equal pay gaps. The Council is committed to monitoring and analysing areas of occupational segregation and implementing actions to address these. Information on our employee data in relating to workforce segregation can be found in our [Equalities in Employment Monitoring Report \(link once approved\)](#).

Previous analysis of pay data suggests that the greater availability of part time work in senior grades could have a positive impact on pay gaps. The Council is committed to taking action to achieve this.

The Council's objectives are to:

- Monitor the application of its pay and grading systems. This includes monitoring gender pay gaps, occupational segregation (both vertical and horizontal segregation) and the availability of part time and flexible working arrangements at all levels in the organisation.
- Identify and take appropriate remedial action to eliminate any unfair, unjust or unlawful practices that impact on pay
- Promote equality of opportunity and the principles of equal pay throughout the workforce



The Council will:

- Operate a pay strategy for Scottish Joint Council (SJC) employees that ensures equal pay for work of equal value and single status terms and conditions of employment for renumeration. Former craft workforce are renumerated under SCJ rates and conditions.
- Apply the agreed job sizing arrangements for the grades and pay of teachers and incorporate SNCT agreements locally through LNCT bargaining process.
- Operate a Flexible Working Policy that opens opportunities to all employees across the pay grades.
- Appoint on merit, properly assessing the abilities of candidates for recruitment and promotion.
- Take positive action to support employees within underrepresented groups where occupational segregation exists.
- Provide training and development to support employees to develop their careers where barriers may exist.
- Develop a culture that supports employees to achieve their full potential.
- Review and plan actions to provide equal pay with recognised trade unions in line with Engagement and Partnership Framework.
- Fully integrate the Real Living Wage in line with recent government guidance for Public Sector which has resulted in a revised pay and grading model (effective April 2021).
- Provide appropriate training and guidance on equal pay for those involved in determining pay and grading matters in terms of job evaluation, new appointments, progression, grievances and providing advice.
- Ensure employees understand how their pay is determined through effective communication and the administration of fair and transparent pay systems.

- In consultation with relevant trade unions, conduct regular equal pay reviews within the council and thereby:
 - identify and understand the reasons for any differences in pay within and between employee groups.
 - take action to eliminate pay gaps/ differences that cannot satisfactorily be explained on grounds other than those relating to a protected characteristic.

Complaints

We will respond to grievances on equal pay in accordance with the Council's Grievance Policy.

Monitoring and Review

The Council will review, and where necessary revise, this Equal Pay statement and actions at least every 4 years and in accordance with the publication requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

The next statement review will be due in 2027.

Every two years, the Council will publish data on its pay gap information, occupational segregation, and employee equality data as part of the council's Equality Mainstreaming Report

On behalf of the Executive Leadership team, the Council's Head of People is responsible for the implementation and review of all policy related to pay and benefits.