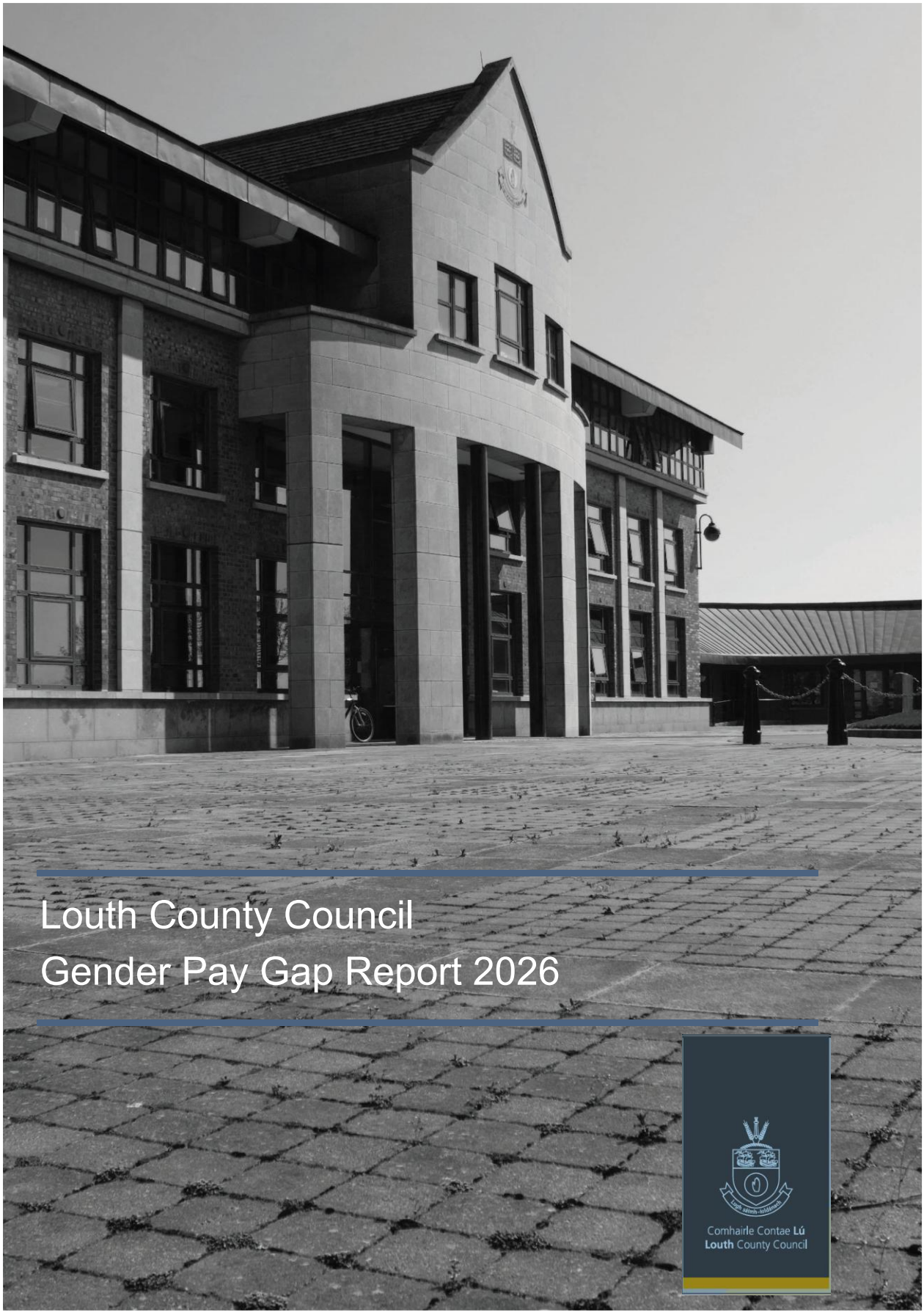

Louth County Council
Gender Pay Gap Report 2026

Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

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1. Introduction

The vision and mission of Louth County Council is to lead the way in sustainability, inclusivity, and quality of life for its citizens while creating a vibrant County, fostering economic growth and enhancing quality of life, through active engagement, civic leadership, and delivery of effective public services.

A diverse workforce is essential to achieving this. By bringing together employees with different backgrounds, experiences, perspectives and skills, the Council is better equipped to understand and respond to the needs of the diverse communities it serves. Louth County Council recognises that gender equality is fundamental to its mission of creating a vibrant and sustainable county and enhancing quality of life for all. Monitoring and addressing the gender pay gap supports this commitment by promoting equal opportunities, encouraging balanced representation at all levels of the organisation and ensuring that the Council continues to reflect the diverse communities it serves. A diverse and inclusive workforce contributes to better decision-making, increased innovation and improved public service delivery.

The data contained in this report highlights the benefits of the strong equality, diversity and inclusion framework that exists within Louth County Council. However, we recognise that creating an increasingly inclusive workplace is an ongoing journey. We are committed to regularly reviewing our progress, monitoring emerging trends, and working collaboratively with colleagues across the local government sector to identify, share and adopt best practices that support positive outcomes for all employees.

I look forward to the continued development of Louth County Council as an employer of choice attracting and developing an inclusive and diverse workforce.



Mr David Conway
Chief Executive

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 Louth County Council gives our employees the opportunity to gain experience at the heart of local government and to make a real difference for County Louth County Council. Everything we do in Louth

County Council is geared towards making County Louth a great place to live and work and our employees play a vital role in that ambition.

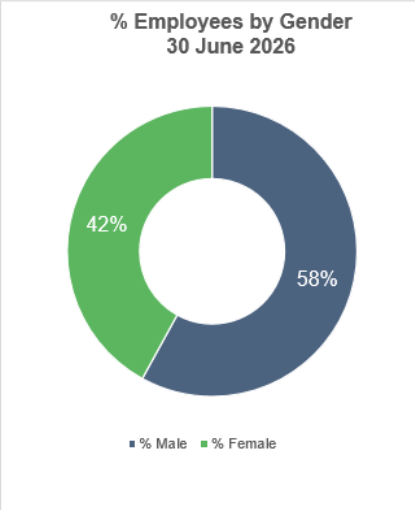
Louth County Council

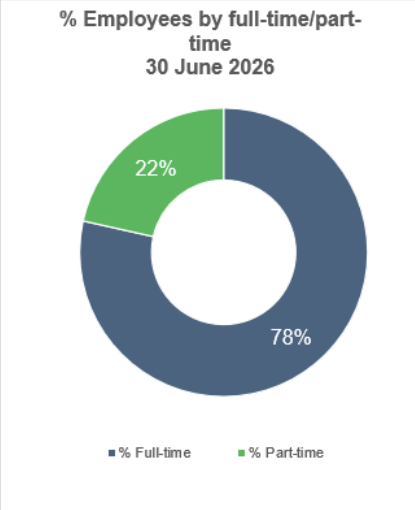
Louth County Council is the authority responsible for local government in Louth. The Council provides a diverse range of services across a large geographic area. Louth County Council seeks to enhance the county's attraction as a place in which to invest, work, and live, and takes the lead role in shaping the strategic vision of the county.

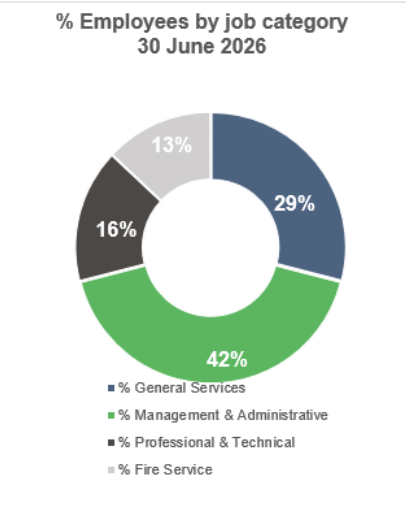
Key service areas include housing delivery, community services and facilities, encouraging economic development through foreign direct investment, the Local Enterprise Office supporting business start-ups, emergency services, infrastructural upgrades and projects (road improvements, public realm).

Committed to public service excellence, Louth County Council seeks to foster a workplace culture that values equality, diversity and inclusion, recognising that a diverse workforce strengthens decision-making, innovation and service delivery for the communities it serves.

Louth County Council employs a workforce of approximately 800 employees. We offer excellent career opportunities across administrative, professional, technical and general services roles. Our employees work in a dynamic and progressive local authority which promotes training and development of our employees who are our most valuable resource. Find out more about the varied roles on offer and job vacancies on our website www.louthcoco.ie







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3. Gender Pay Gap Reporting

Gender pay gap reporting 2026

The Gender Pay Gap Information Act, 2021 requires organisations with over 50 employees to report on their Gender Pay Gap. 2026 is the fifth 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. For local authorities, the snapshot date is 30 June 2026. Organisations have five months to prepare their calculations, before reporting five months later during November 2026. 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. From 2026, organisations are also required to publish their figures on the government Gender Pay Gap Portal www.genderpaygapireland.gov.ie

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

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

This shows the % difference between the
average hourly rate of pay for males
and
average hourly rate of pay for females

$$\frac{\text{(average male hourly rate) – (average female hourly rate)}}{\text{average male hourly rate}} \times 100$$

MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP

This shows the % difference between the
median hourly rate of pay for males
and
median hourly rate of pay for females

$$\frac{\text{(median of male hourly rates) – (median of female hourly rates)}}{\text{median of male hourly rates}} \times 100$$

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 in June.

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

Figures must also be provided for bonus payments or benefit-in-kind payments if these apply. 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.

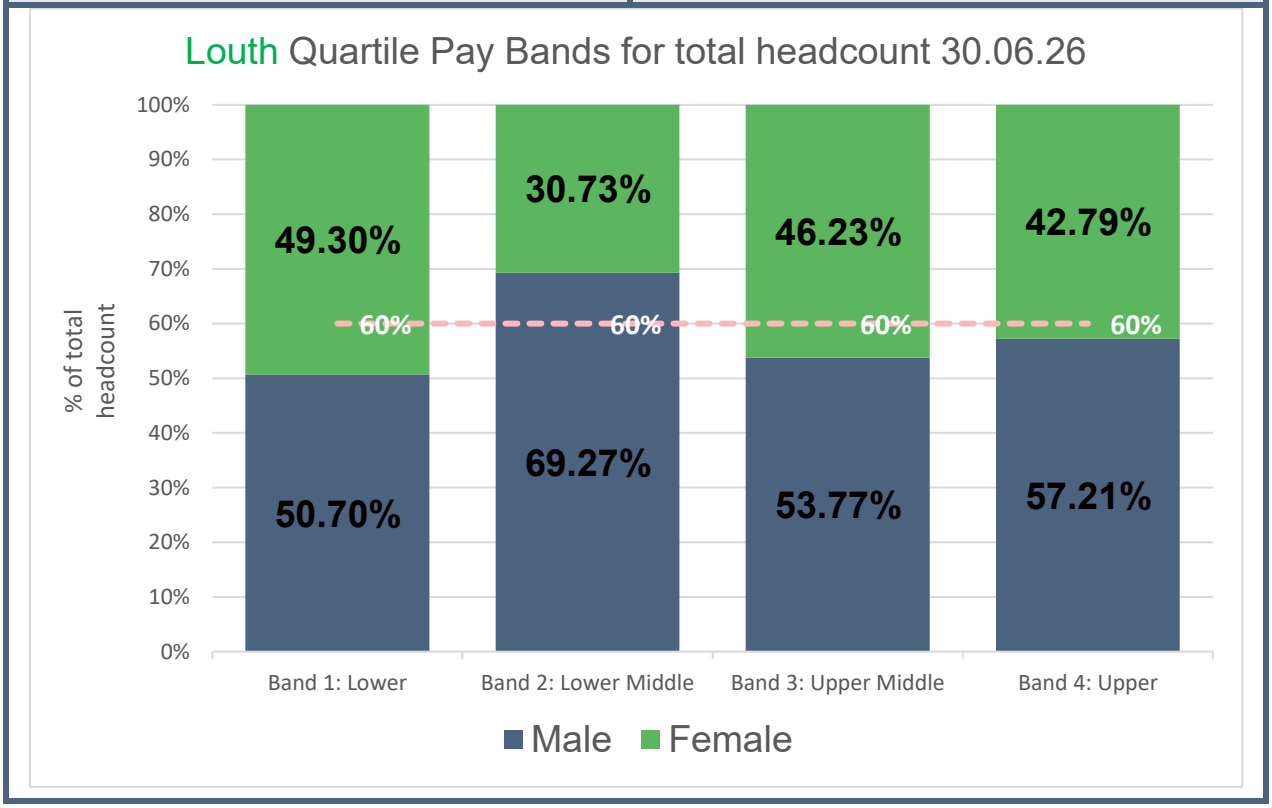
The larger the positive or negative pay gap is, the more marked the differences in hourly rates of pay will be and the more males or females proportionally working in either higher or lower paid roles within the organisation.

4. Our Figures

Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap - all employees

Louth County Council Gender pay gap 2026
All employees for the reporting period to 30 June 2026

MEAN GENDER PAY GAP	MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP
2.76%	-1.23%



Note: 58%:42% (male:female) is the gender breakdown of all employees on 30 June 2026. The target is shown in the dotted line above. It is notable that Louth County Council has surpassed this target in three out of the four quartiles.

The Mean Gender Pay Gap shows that on average, males are paid 2.76% more than females. The Median Gender Pay Gap shows that the median rate of pay for females is 1.23% higher than the median rate of pay for males.

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, 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 58% male and 42% female. For there to be no Gender Pay Gap you would expect to see the workforce demographics reflected more closely in each quartile. Based on the quartile distribution shown in the chart, **Louth County Council has a relatively balanced gender representation across all pay quartiles**, with female representation exceeding 40% in three of the four pay bands and reaching near parity in the lower quartile. This distribution helps explain the Council's relatively low mean gender pay gap of **2.76%** and negative median gender pay gap of **-1.23%**, indicating that female employees are well represented throughout the organisation, including at higher-paid levels.

There are a marked higher proportion of males in Band 2, this suggests that traditionally male-dominated operational, technical or outdoor roles may be concentrated within this pay band.

There are also a slightly higher proportion of males in the Band 4, reflecting that there are proportionately more males in higher grades, however it is less than the 60:40 target, and tracks to Louth County Councils 58:42 gender balance showing that females occupy senior grades proportionally to how they are represented in the Organisation. This is a positive indicator of career progression opportunities for women within the organisation. This is to be welcomed and reflects progress on gender balance in senior roles.

The distribution of employees across the pay quartiles demonstrates a broadly balanced workforce, particularly in the lower and higher pay bands. This distribution supports the Council's relatively small gender pay gap and reflects the positive impact of ongoing efforts to promote equality, diversity and inclusion across all grades and functions.

Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap - Part-time employees

Louth County Council Gender pay gap 2026 Part-time employees for the reporting period to 30 June 2026	
MEAN GENDER PAY GAP	**MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP**
-4.08%	**-0.90%**

Approximately 21.5% of all our employees on 30 June were working part-time. Of these, 44% are male and 54% are female. Factors influencing the pattern of part-time employees across the organisation include a range of flexible work options for part-time work, 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, community wardens and caretakers for burial grounds.

Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap - Temporary employees

Louth County Council Gender pay gap 2026 Temporary employees for the reporting period to 30 June 2026

MEAN GENDER PAY GAP	MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP
0.23%	1.36%

On 30 June 2026, 6% of our employees on were employed on temporary contracts. Of these, the majority, 54%, are male and 46% are female. These contracts include temporary/seasonal employees such as lifeguards, community wardens and general operatives, as well as graduate engineers, veterinary inspectors, technicians and drivers/machinery operators.

Benefit in kind

On 30 June 2026 0.0% of male employees received a Benefit in Kind payment and 0.0% of females received a Benefit in Kind payment.

Bonus payment

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

5. How we are supporting Gender Equality

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 process which are open to all and are based on merit, fairness and transparency.

We provide appropriate assistance and accommodation throughout our recruitment and selection process, including providing easily accessible interview facilities, agreeing an appropriately timed interview, and supplying or arranging appropriate equipment.

All our Interview Board are gender balanced and all Interview Boards receive training, including unconscious bias 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, ensuring all employees have equal access to opportunities for career development and progression.

Employees are paid according to an incremental salary scale, and we offer strong career progression opportunities which are open to all employees.

Louth County Council are recognised as national leaders in the WAM programme and are committed to their continued participation.

Work life balance

Flexible working arrangements, family-friendly leave provisions, training and development opportunities, dignity at work policies, and supports for work-life balance help create an inclusive workplace where employees can reach their full potential regardless of gender. The Council continues to foster a culture of respect, inclusion and equal opportunity, recognising that a diverse workforce strengthens decision-making, service delivery and organisational performance.

Blended working

Blended working is now a part of our flexible working policies with flexible options to combine office and home/hub working.

We provide access to the Cycle to Work Scheme and the Tax Saver Scheme, to reduce commuting costs.

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 Education 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. We offer a comprehensive employee occupational health and wellbeing programmes including an Employee Assistance Programme, health screening, health and nutrition advice and wellbeing webinars etc.

We have developed an inclusive all employee app to ensure that all our employees can be communicated with regularly and 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.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Louth County Council is continually developing as an employer of choice to attract, develop and promote an inclusive and diverse employee population.

We continue to design and provide responsive services and customer care that meet the needs of an increasingly diverse customer base.

Public Sector Duty

Louth County Council progressively embeds the Public Sector Duty in its current management, policy development and service delivery processes.

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 and protect human rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides services.

Public bodies are required to set out in a manner that is accessible to the public in its strategic plan an assessment of the human rights and equality issues it believes to be relevant to its functions and purpose and 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 its annual report in a manner that is accessible to the public.

Louth County Council acknowledges the commonality of purpose stated in both the “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 - Assess, Address and Report.

Women in leadership

Our Senior Management Team comprises the following gender balance 58% Male and 42% Female which accurately reflects the gender balance of the organisation. We continue to promote and maintain an equal gender balance in senior roles and participate in Women in Leadership programmes.

Apprenticeships

As part our inclusive approach to recruitment, Louth County Council are committed to expanding the provision of apprenticeship opportunities. This includes new apprenticeship programmes linked to areas of work within local authorities, including IT and finance as well as more traditional apprenticeship areas. Louth County Council are also engaged in departmental accredited work-based study programmes and have established a strategic alliance with DkIT to facilitate student work placements.

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.