



COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL



GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2024

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Introduction | 1 |
| 2. About us | 2 |
| Local government in Ireland | 2 |
| Clare County Council..... | 4 |
| 3. Gender Pay Gap Reporting | 6 |
| Gender pay gap reporting 2024 | 6 |
| Who is included? | 6 |
| What do we mean by the gender pay gap? | 6 |
| Mean and median gender pay gap | 7 |
| Quartile pay bands | 8 |
| Bonus and benefit-in-kind | 8 |
| Factors that can have an impact on the gender pay gap..... | 9 |
| 4. Our figures | 10 |
| Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap and Pay Band Quartiles– all employees..... | 10 |
| Mean and median gender pay gap – part-time employees..... | 12 |
| Mean and median gender pay gap – temporary employees..... | 12 |
| Benefit in kind & bonus payment | 13 |
| 5. How we are supporting Gender Equality | 13 |
| Fair and transparent recruitment practices | 13 |
| Work life balance | 14 |
| Blended working | 14 |
| Learning and development | 14 |
| Health and wellbeing | 14 |
| Dignity at work..... | 15 |
| Equality, diversity and inclusion..... | 15 |
| Public sector duty | 15 |
| Women in leadership | 16 |
| Apprenticeships & work placements | 16 |
| Clare County Council Initiatives..... | 17 |
| 6.Summary | 19 |
| Data collection and evidence-based policy development | 19 |
| Conclusion..... | 19 |

Introduction

We welcome the opportunity to launch Clare County Council's Gender Pay Gap Report for the third year of reporting. The issue of gender pay differences is an important one, not only to the workplace but to wider society.

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. Clare County Council respects equality and human rights in accordance with Public Sector Duty principles and the relevant equality legislation.

Local authorities are at the forefront of delivering services to our citizens. We are committed to the principles of equality of access, participation and outcome for all in relation to service delivery. Our organisation is a place where all employees have the same opportunities for recognition and career development and are treated fairly and equitably at work. We continue to be committed to addressing workplace barriers to equality, supporting diversity and creating an open and inclusive workplace community. Clare County Council remains committed to the recruitment, development and training of our staff.

Many equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives and supports are already in place, and we will continue to work in this area – but improvement is always possible. It is our intention to work with our colleagues across the sector to share best practices.

We will examine what the gender pay gap figures can tell us about our organisation and this will help inform our action plans. We will continue to monitor these trends over time.



Pat Dowling
Chief Executive



Cllr. Alan O'Callaghan
Cathaoirleach

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

Clare County Council

Clare County Council/ Comhairle Contae an Chláir is the authority responsible for Local Government in County Clare. The corporate headquarters are located at Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis and there are four Municipal Districts (Ennis, Shannon, Killaloe, and West Clare) which are supported through area offices in Ennis, Scarriff, Shannon, Ennistymon and Kilrush. There are 28 elected members in Clare County Council and an annual operating budget of €186 million for 2024.

With a unique location, landscape and heritage, Clare County Council operates across urban and rural communities providing a range of services across a large geographic area. Services include planning, economic and community development, transportation, environment, emergency services, housing, libraries, sports and amenities. These operations are supported by internal services which include ICT, corporate, finance and human resource functions.

There is a diverse demographic in County Clare with tourism bringing seasonal changes in population and activity in the county. The Shannon Estuary, Shannon Airport, industrial zones, and geographic location between larger urban areas, coupled with the unique landscape and heritage add to the diversity of activity in the county. Local democracy is strengthened through the Municipal Districts and changes in legislation and regulation have placed greater emphasis on the role of the Local authority in driving economic activity, ensuring accountability, accessibility and innovation while placing the customer and the community to the fore of service delivery.

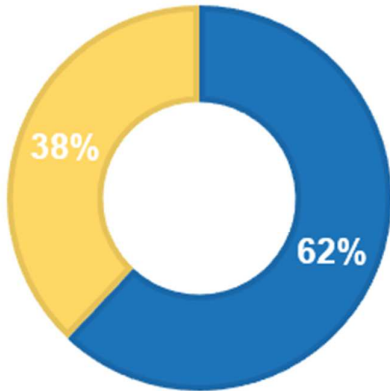
We have a focus on economic activity, ensuring accountability, accessibility and innovation, placing the customer and the community at the heart of what we do. We offer excellent career opportunities in a wide range of administrative, professional, creative, technical and general services roles.

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

Clare County Council: Staff Demographic

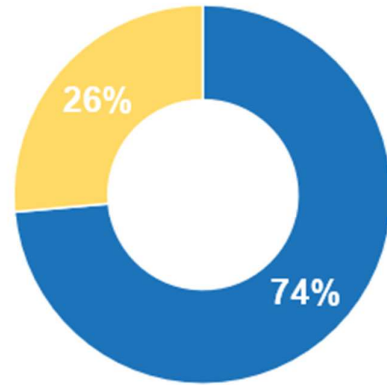
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL
% OF ALL EMPLOYEES BY GENDER
30TH JUNE 2024

■ % Male ■ % Female



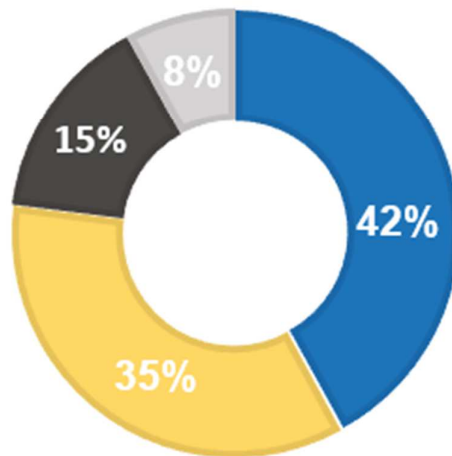
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL
% of ALL EMPLOYEES BY FULL-TIME/PART-TIME
30TH JUNE 2024

■ % Full-time ■ % Part-time



CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL
% OF ALL EMPLOYEES BY JOB CATEGORY
30TH JUNE 2024

■ % General Service
■ % Management & Administrative
■ % Professional & Technical
■ % Fire Service



3. Gender Pay Gap Reporting

Gender Pay Gap Reporting 2024

The Gender Pay Gap Information Act, 2021 requires organisations with over 150 employees to report on their Gender Pay Gap. 2024 is the third 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, the snapshot date is 30th June 2024. Organisations have six months to prepare their calculations, before reporting six months later during December 2024. 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 are also 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 <u>(average male hourly rate) – (average female hourly rate)</u> x 100 average male hourly rate |
| 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 <u>(median of male hourly rates) – (median of female hourly rates)</u> x 100 <u>median of male hourly rates</u> |

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 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

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

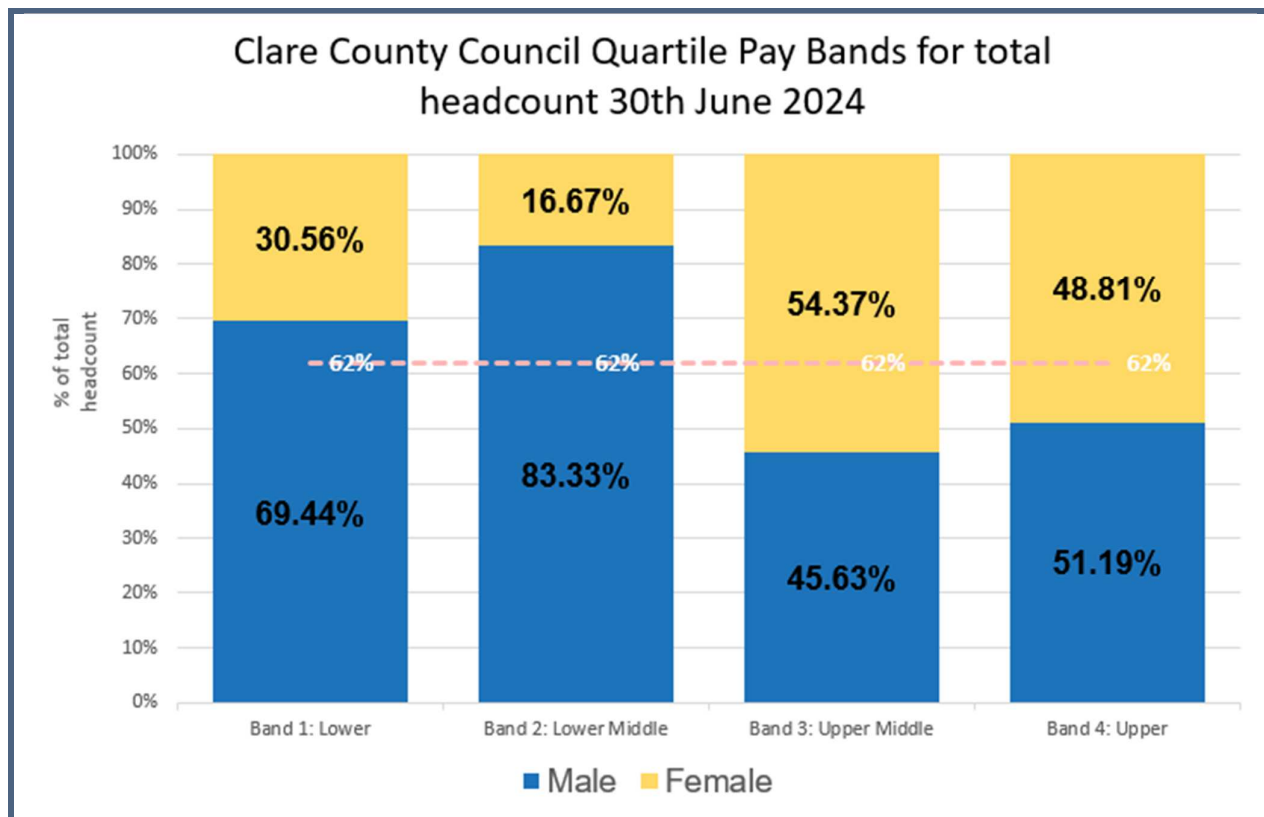
Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap and Pay Band Quartiles– all employees

The **Mean Gender Pay Gap** shows that on average, females are paid 10.29% per hour more than males. The **Median Gender Pay Gap** shows that the median rate of pay for females is 18.61% per hour higher than the median rate of pay for males.

| Clare County Council Gender Pay Gap 2024 All employees for the reporting period to 30 th June 2024 | |
|--|-----------------------|
| MEAN GENDER PAY GAP | MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP |
| -10.29% | -18.61% |

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

Note: Clare County Councils full staff complement includes 62% male and 38% females as of 30th June 2024. This is shown in the dotted line below.



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 62% male and 38% female. For there to be no Gender Pay Gap you would expect to see the workforce demographics reflected more closely in each quartile.

There is a higher proportion of males in Band 1 and 2, reflecting that there are proportionately more males at lower grades. In pay bands 3 and 4, there are significantly more females than in the lower bands. This reflects a strong representation of women in senior roles.

More males in lower grades as well as fewer females at higher grades can affect the mean and median pay gaps.

Mean and median gender pay gap – part-time employees

| Clare County Council Gender Pay Gap 2024 | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Part-time employees for the reporting period to 30 th June 2024 | |
| MEAN GENDER PAY GAP | MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP |
| -11.28% | -9.73% |

Approximately 26% of all our employees on 30th June 2024 were working part-time. Of these, 54% are male and 46% are female. These roles include permanent part-time roles.

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, leisure centre workers, general operatives, school wardens and caretakers for burial grounds.

Mean and median gender pay gap – temporary employees

| Clare County Council Gender Pay Gap 2024 | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Temporary employees for the reporting period to 30 th June 2024 | |
| MEAN GENDER PAY GAP | MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP |
| -3.14% | 7.18% |

On 30th June 2024, 10% of our employees were employed on temporary contracts. Of these, the majority, 62%, are male and 38% are female. These contracts include temporary/seasonal employees such as lifeguards, community wardens, harbour controller and general operatives, as well as students, veterinary inspectors, and drivers/machinery operators.

Benefit in kind & bonus payment

In 2024, 0.9% of male employees and 1% of females received a benefit in kind payment in the form of professional membership fees. This occurs whereby professional membership is a requirement for a particular role e.g. chartered accountants, engineers and architects. Bonus payments do not feature as part of pay in the local government sector.

5. How we are supporting Gender Equality

In line with the Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021, 2024 is the third year that Clare 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 process which are open to all.

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 or online supports. Our interview boards are gender balanced and all interview boards receive training, including unconscious bias training as part of our competency-based interviewer training. Our candidate information booklet issued with all recruitment opportunities highlights 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.

Clare County Council has three employees recruited in conjunction with Employability Clare: an employment support service for people with a disability, health condition or additional support need.

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, antenatal leave, breastfeeding leave, paid paternity leave, parent's leave, parental leave, compassionate leave, shorter working year schemes, work-sharing, domestic violence leave, menopause leave, force-majeure and flexi-time.

Blended working

Blended working is now a part of our flexible working policies with hybrid options to combine office and home working. In June 2024, 26% of all staff were availing of blended 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 educational opportunities through the Continuing Education 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. We offer a comprehensive employee occupational health and wellbeing programmes including an Employee Assistance Programme, health screening, financial wellbeing courses, health and nutrition advice and wellbeing webinars etc. In 2022, Clare County Council hosted a menopause information session for employees which was very well attended and received. In 2023, individual menopause appointments were organised for staff with a local medical clinic. In 2024, Clare County Council co-hosted a Menopause event at Glór theatre. Men's Health Week was celebrated in June offering literature and webinars.

In November 2023 Clare County Council's launched a new Wellbeing Platform for Staff, offering Wellbeing resources and events covering all aspects of life. The Learning & Development section in the council offers regular Health and Wellbeing learning opportunities and information sessions including topics such as parenting supports, yoga, mental health, physical health, financial supports etc.

The council buildings now offer free period products for staff following the Healthy Ireland Period Poverty Campaign and they advertise as breastfeeding friendly spaces. Staff are also entitled to avail of breastfeeding leave.

In 2023, Clare County Council received a CIPD award for 'Embracing a Culture of Workplace Wellbeing'. In 2024, the council was announced as winner of the 'Embracing New Ways of Working' award with CIPD.

Also in 2024, Clare County Council became the first Local Authority in Ireland to achieve Platinum certification against Excellence through People with the National Standards Authority of Ireland.

Dignity at work

We promote and support a culture of dignity, respect and equality. We have a Dignity at Work Policy, which was revised in November 2024 and all employees and managers will receive training and support in the implementation of the policy.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

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

Clare County Council continues to design and provide responsive services and customer care that meet the needs of an increasingly diverse customer base.

We have established an internal Equality & Human Rights working group. An assessment has been conducted in 2024 and an action plan will be delivered in 2025. Human rights and equality statement has been incorporated into the Council's corporate plans and strategic plans.

Public sector duty

Clare 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.

Clare County Council acknowledges the commonality of purpose stated in both the Public Sector 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

At June 30th 2024, our senior management team comprised of the following gender balance 57% males and 43% females and we aim to work on developing Women in Leadership programmes. In 2024, six nominees from Clare County Council are completing the Cross Border Women's Leadership Programme hosted by Co-operation Ireland.

Apprenticeships & work placements

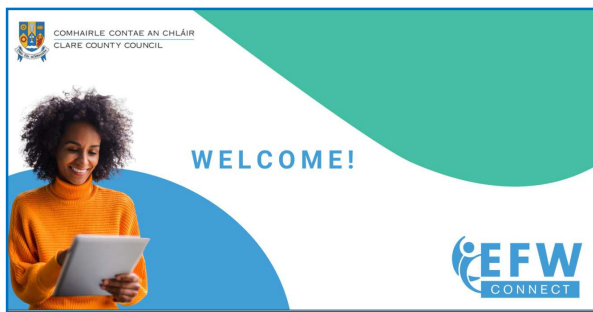
As part of our inclusive approach to recruitment, Clare County Council offers several apprenticeship and graduate programmes. The apprenticeships on offer in Clare County Council include the Accounting Technician Apprenticeship and Heavy Vehicle Mechanic Apprenticeship. The Council has also recruited five graduates under the National Recruitment Programme.

Clare County Council provides paid work placement opportunities for 3rd level students and for Employability Clare participants.

Clare County Council Initiatives



Launch of the Staff Wellbeing Hub 2023



Employee Financial Wellness Portal launched 2024



CIPD Awards 2023 & 2024





Excellence Through People, Platinum Accreditation



Corporate membership with Sunflower HD



Intercultural Awareness Training 2024



Clare Pride 2024

6. Summary

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.



Conclusion

Many equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives and supports are already in place in Clare County Council, and we will continue to work in this area. We are continually progressing, and we are committed to monitoring and improving the gender pay gap. It is our intention to work with our colleagues across the sector to share best practice.

We will examine what the gender pay gap figures can tell us and monitor the trends over time. This will help inform our future actions.

