

# Council bosses admit more needs to be done to narrow the gender pay gap

DUDLEY Council bosses have admitted that while the authority's gender pay gap is smaller than the national average, there is still work to be done.

All employers with more than 250 staff are now required to publish information regarding the pay gap between their male and fe-

male employees.

Whereas the UK's national mean gender pay gap stands at 18.1 per cent, Dudley's comes in at 11 per cent – with women earning an average of £12.51 per hour and men pocketing £14.11.

The council has a median gender pay gap of 18 per cent, compared to 23 per

cent nationally, with men receiving an average of £13.35 per hour while women take home £10.91.

The findings showed that the 65 per cent of the authority's workforce were female and despite women making up a majority of the lower paid roles – such as catering, cleaning and

caring – they also made up more than 50 per cent of employees in the upper end of the council's pay scales.

Sarah Norman, the council's chief executive, said: "These findings reflect positively on the council and show that we are beating the national average in closing the pay gap.

"It also shows what an accommodating employer we are in terms of flexible and part time working, with many of our roles fitting in around family life."

She added: "We recognise there is still a gap, which is why we have signed up to the regional benchmarking exercise and we are looking

at ways of closing the gap and will be looking at our recruitment practices to encourage a wider range of people to apply for posts."

Rebecca Dalton from Unison said while the council was "performing better than the public sector", it was not "something to be congratulated".

# Gornal mum is living the dream

A GORNAL woman who ditched her 9-5 job to follow her dreams is now running a successful business, working with the likes of Floyd Mayweather and Cardi B.

Corinne Wells' modelling career took a back seat when she gave birth to her son Jaiden in 2008 and began working as a receptionist.

But last January she took the plunge, quit her job and started her own modelling agency, MerriMaidModels.

"Because I used to model, I had quite a lot of contacts within the industry and I was still getting people come to me with jobs. I wasn't always available, so I wanted to do something to pass on my opportunities to others.

"When I started the agen-

cy, I had five girls and for the first few months, no one really took any notice."

However Corinne's luck changed when the undefeated boxing legend Floyd Mayweather celebrated his 40th birthday in Birmingham and booked some models to help host the event.

"He had them on stage with him, holding up auction products, bring out his birthday cake and mingling with guests," the 30-year-old said.

"He was really nice, very inspiring and gave me lots of advice.

"He really liked the brand. "After that, we worked with Cardi B when she needed four backing dancers for her UK tour."

The American rap artist was so impressed with the



Corinne Wells



Corinne with Mayweather



Corinne with Cardi B

booking, that she contacted Corinne again when she came back to the UK for the MOBO Awards.

"I'm proud to have created something from nothing,"

she said.

"When I started, I had five girls, now there are 45 – three are based in the USA and the others are all around the UK in London,

Sheffield, Wolverhampton and Birmingham.

"It's crazy what you can do when you put your mind to something.

"It's also about female em-

powerment and bringing these women together and giving them the opportunities they have dreamed of."

As well as having a booming business with A-list clients, Corinne has also just landed a cameo in the upcoming Brit flick Are We Dead Yet?

"It was really nice to be discovered and to have people recognise my achievements and hard work," she said.

The entrepreneur has encouraged others to follow their dreams, adding: "You have to go with what you believe in and what makes you feel alive. Never forget who you are. People will hate along the way but you can't let their opinions bother you. You have to believe in yourself."

## 40% OFF

Doors & Drawer Fronts Before 30th April 2018

## 10% OFF

All New Kitchens, Bedrooms, Bathrooms OFFERS CANNOT BE COMBINED

## Quality Kitchen Makeovers Ltd

### UNBEATABLE QUALITY AND VALUE FROM THE BESPOKE SPECIALISTS

What our customers say...

"Wonderful kitchen, I have already recommended you and would not hesitate to recommend QKM to anyone."  
"Can't believe the transformation from start to finish, totally professional."

Appliances: Neff, Bosch, Rangemaster, Belling, Hotpoint, Stoves and many more  
Franke Sinks 50 Year Guarantee

Don't Settle for Less

- Kitchens ● Bedrooms
- Bathrooms ● Extensions
- Loft Conversions
- Home Offices

From a door or worktop replacement to an extension

At QKM

We are dedicated to offering our customers the finest service within the home improvement market

THE GUILD OF MASTER CRAFTSMEN

Membership No A120074

"We have customers who would be more than happy to show you the excellent standard of work"

HOMEOWNERS...

Looking to Sell? Enhance the prospects of selling your property - stunning results for a minimum outlay

Just Moved In? Let us help to transform your property into a dream home

Decided to Stay? Fall in love again with your home - Revamp your kitchen, bedroom or bathroom and allow us to show your home's true potential

Bring us your dream pictures and we will bring them to life

WE ARE NOW PROUD MEMBERS OF

Where reputation matters

All types of Flooring supplied and Wet Wall Solutions for Bathrooms

Range of Kitchens, Bedrooms and Bathrooms to suit all budgets

Did you know 80% of our customers are retired?  
60% plus of all our appointments are referrals or existing customers requiring further work.  
Find out why we are trusted for yourself  
**BOOK YOUR NO OBLIGATION QUOTE TODAY ON 01384 232413**

Head Office & Showroom

Cinder Bank, Netherton, Dudley, DY2 9BL

01299 877718 | 01384 232413 | 0121 550 4821

Open Mon - Fri 9am - 5.30pm, Thursdays 9am - 7pm  
Saturdays 10am - 4pm

Customer satisfaction guaranteed.

WE WILL NOT LET YOU DOWN

ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

www.qualitykitchenmakeoversltd.co.uk FIVE MINUTES FROM MERRY HILL