



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Executive Committee, 23 March 2022

Report title: Gender Pay Gap 2021

Lead Member: Councillor Steven Lambert; People, Equality and Diversity and Assurance

Report sponsor: Mick Osborne; Chief Operating Officer / Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Author and contact: Faye Mansfield; HR Advisory and Development Manager

Action: Noting

Recommendations:

The content of the Gender Pay Gap Report 2021 is noted and approved for submission to the Governments website (gov.uk) as per reporting requirements.

Executive summary:

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 that came into effect in 2017 requires public sector organisations employing over 250 staff to carry out gender pay gap reporting. In accordance with the Regulations, the Authority is required to annually publish six pieces of prescribed data about the pay and bonuses of male and female workers within the organisation:

1. Mean gender pay gap in hourly pay
2. Median gender pay gap in hourly pay
3. Mean bonus gender pay gap
4. Median bonus gender pay gap
5. Proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment
6. Proportion of males and females in each pay quartile

This data must be published 'within the period of 12 months beginning with the snapshot date' (Regulation 2(2)). The snapshot date for public sector employers is 31 March each year.

The gender pay gap report, as detailed in Appendix One, details the Authority's gender pay gap as at 31 March 2021. Both the mean (average) and median (mid-point) gender pay gaps have decreased in 2021, which is positive, and takes the Authority's gender pay gap data below the UK national average for 2021. For 2021, the mean gender pay gap is 13.8 per cent and the median gender pay gap is 9.0 per cent. In comparison to 2020, the mean gender pay gap was 18.8 per cent and the median gender pay gap 15.3 per cent.

The gender pay gap is the difference between what males typically earn within the workplace, compared to what females earn, irrespective of role or seniority. It examines the difference in the average pay gap, expressed as a percentage of male earnings. A gender pay gap is not unlawful, it is essentially a reflection of a workforce profile.

In comparison, equal pay is a legal obligation and about unequal rewards for male and females carrying out the same job, similar job or work of equal value, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. Organisations can have a gender pay gap without breaching equal pay provisions, and the Authority's gender pay gap is not as a result of any equal pay issues. There is a gender-neutral approach to pay across all levels and roles within the Authority.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Risk management:

The Authority will comply with the Regulations requiring public sector employers with over 250 staff to publish their gender pay gap data before 30 March each year.

The six pieces of prescribed data within the report will be published on the Government's website (gov.uk) and the full report published on the Authority's external website for a period of three years. Annually publishing the data in line with the Regulations will help the Authority monitor the effectiveness of the actions in reducing the gender pay gap over time.

To mitigate the risk associated with publishing improbable data, our data undergoes internal scrutiny and by providing contextual narrative, it supports the information provided within the report and highlights the activities we are engaging in to address gender imbalance.

Legal implications:

Publishing the annual gender pay gap report ensures compliance with The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

Whilst the Regulations do not contain any provisions imposing a penalty for non-compliance, failure to disclose this data could result in enforcement action by the Equality and Human Rights Commission or challenge by way of judicial review.

Privacy and security implications:

The report does not include any personally identifiable information.

Duty to collaborate:

Each Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Service has a requirement to report their gender pay gap data. Collaborative actions to reduce the gender pay gap will be considered as part of existing Thames Valley collaboration work.

Health and safety implications:

There are no health and safety implications arising from this report.

Environmental implications:

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications

Whilst both gender pay and equal pay deal with the disparity of pay within the workplace, it is important to note that gender pay is different from equal pay. The presence of a gender pay gap does not mean the Authority is discriminating against groups of individuals. The Authority is confident this gap does not stem from paying male and female employees differently for the same or equivalent work, i.e. an equal pay issue.

The report has identified the Authority continues to have a gender pay gap, however figures are not expected to reduce significantly within the short to medium term, as the issues driving gender pay gaps require a longer-term commitment.

The Authority strives to increase gender diversity in all areas of the organisation. A particular continuing priority is attracting and retaining a more diverse workforce and having better representation of males and females at all levels across the organisation.

Consultation and communication

Additional to the Fire Authority, other employers, job applicants, trade unions, media and the public will continue to pay close attention to annually published gender pay gap data. Due to the high-profile nature of gender pay, it is important that employees are made aware of the gender pay gap report for this organisation before 30 March 2022. Following approval for publication, the gender pay gap report will be communicated to employees in accordance with usual practice.

Engaging with stakeholders is essential to ensure progress is made against the initiatives to lower the gender pay gap. We will increase engagement and buy-in to what we are trying to achieve and will ensure interventions are evaluated as appropriate.

Annual gender pay gap reports will be presented to the Strategic Management Board and Executive Committee.

Background papers:

Report to Fire Authority held 17 February 2021; BMKFA Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2021/22:

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2021/02/item-9-pay-policy.pdf/>

Link to Fire Authority approved Gender Pay Gap reports for 2020, 2019, 2018 and 2017:

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/?s=gender+pay+gap&submit=>

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2017/9780111153277/schedule/1>

Office of National Statistics. Gender pay gap in the UK 2021:

[Gender pay gap in the UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/gender-pay-gap)

Report your gender pay gap data(gov.uk):

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-your-gender-pay-gap-data>

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	Gender Pay Gap Report 2021	