

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	31 MARCH 2021
SUBJECT	GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2020
LEAD OFFICER	BECCI JEFFERIES, HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES & LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT
LEAD MEMBER	N/A
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR NOTE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 introduced a requirement for the Authority to publish statutory calculations every year showing how large the pay gap is between their male and female employees, as per the calculations detailed on the UK government website (gov.uk). Information must normally be published on the Authority's website before 31 March each year and uploaded onto the Government's Gender Pay Gap Reporting Service.
- 1.2 Enforcement for the reporting year 2019/20 was suspended in March 2020 at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. On 23 February 2021 the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) announced that due to the continued effects of the COVID-19, enforcement action against employers failing to report their gender pay gap would not start until 5 October 2021. However the EHRC has encouraged employers to submit their data for 2020/2021 before October 2021 where possible.
- 1.3 The calculations are complex and prescriptive and include set pay elements on which to base the comparison between male and female pay. The complexities of Retained Duty System (On-Call) pay and working patterns increases the difficulties in reporting for RBFRS.
- 1.4 The pay elements included in the calculation are: hourly rate; allowances; on call rates; salary sacrifice deductions; shift premiums and holiday pay and excludes overtime
- 1.5 This Gender Pay Gap Report is based on the hourly pay rates as at 31 March 2020 (the 'snapshot' date for the public sector).

- 1.6 Our findings for 31 March 2020 identify a median Gender Pay Gap of 1.51% (last year's national median average was 17.3%) The median rate is used because it removes the effect of outliers which can skew the figures.
- 1.7 A Gender Pay Gap Action plan has been developed which covers our findings from 2019 (see Appendix B).

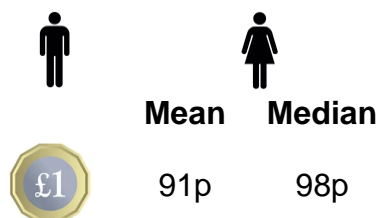
2. RECOMMENDATION

The Audit and Governance Committee is invited to:









- 2.1 **NOTE** the details of the Gender Pay Gap Report shown in Appendix A and agree it is published on the RBFRS website; and
- 2.2 **NOTE** the Action Plan in Appendix B.

3. REPORT

- 3.1 Appendix A shows the findings from the calculations used to report the Gender Pay Gap for RBFRS. The method of calculation is set by the Government Gender Pay Gap service and is complex and is made more so by the complex Retained Duty System (On-Call) work patterns and pay structures.
- 3.2 The Gender Pay Gap Report is based on data as at 31 March 2020 at which point Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) employed 657 staff with 509 (77%) being male and 148 (23%) being female.
- 3.3 The mean gender pay gap is calculated by adding up the hourly rate of all male/female employees and dividing that figure by the total number of male/female employees.
- 3.4 The median gender pay gap is calculated by listing all hourly rates of each gender and finding the central rate. The median rate is considered to be a better measure as it 'discounts' very high or very low rates which can skew the figures.
- 3.5 A positive pay gap indicated men are paid more than women. A negative pay gap indicates women are paid more than men.
- 3.6 Our findings have identified overall the mean gender pay gap is 9.17% (i.e. men are paid slightly more than woman) and the median is 1.51% (i.e. the median pay for men is more than that of women)
- 3.7 In simple terms for each £1 earned by men, at RBFRS, women earn:



- 3.8 At RBFRS the median gender pay gap is considerably better than the available national figures (2019). The national median gender pay gap for 2019 was 17.3%. Figures due to be reported before 31 March 2020 are not available as gender pay gap reporting deadlines for this year were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3.9 As part of our reporting we are required to identify the mean and median pay gap for the four quartiles which are shown below.

Quartile	Mean Pay Gap	Increase/Decrease since last year	Median Pay Gap	Increase/Decrease since last year
Lower	-3.09%		-4.94%	
Lower Middle	1.29%		1.90%	
Upper Middle	4.51%		-4.81%	
Upper	-12.69%		4.10%	

- 3.10 A review of the quartiles shows a decrease in the pay gap from last year in the Lower quartiles. The Lower Middle showed an increase in the pay gap from last year whereas the Upper Middle showed an increase in the mean gender pay gap but a decrease in the median. The Upper quartile showed a significant decrease from last year. The 2019 figures are contained in the Gender Pay Gap Report.
- 3.11 Due to the various elements which make up pay in the fire service including allowances, detachment payments and uniform allowances, the quartiles can be very fluid and therefore pay gaps in this area can appear to be more than the pay gap as a whole. For example, the conclusion of the Remotely Managed Stations/Flexible Duty Officer project saw an increase in development Station Managers, who fall into the Upper Middle quartile, and a reduction in Flexible Duty Officers which previously sat in the Upper quartile. This also increased the proportion of females in the Upper quartile which impacted the mean and medial gender pay gap.
- 3.12 It is recognised that women are still significantly underrepresented in the operational workforce accounting for 6.2% of this group, which represents a decrease from 7.4% in 2019. The service continues to work hard to attract a more diverse workforce through a positive action plan and recruitment opportunities. Recruitment documentation has been reviewed to take out unconscious bias by using gender neutral and gender positive language in adverts and job profiles and volunteer employee ambassadors recruited to publicise the organisation.
- 3.13 RBFRS is confident that it is paying the same salary to roles of equivalent value to all staff. An equal pay audit was completed and presented to has been completed and was presented to the Committee on 4 November 2019. .

- 3.14 The overall mean pay gap is 9.17%.
- 3.15 The overall median pay gap is 1.51%.
- 3.16 In line with government guidance issued by the Government Equalities Office an action plan was developed in response to the 2019 findings and has been updated accordingly (Appendix B).
- 3.17 The Report and its action plan will be published on our website and the gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk site in accordance with the requirements of The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Commitment 5 – We will ensure that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service provides good value for money.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 RBFRS is required to publish its gender pay gap figures for 2020 before 31 March 2021. A failure to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty or the specific duties can be investigated and enforced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission or alternatively challenged by way of judicial review.
- 6.2 On 23 February 2021 the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) announced that due to the continued effects of the COVID-19, enforcement action against employers failing to report their gender pay gap would not start until 5 October 2021.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The report identifies that a gender pay gap does exist in RBFRS, reflecting that overall males are paid more than females on average. This can be attributed to the different terms and conditions. The Gender Pay Gap Report (Appendix A) and the Gender Pay Gap Action Plan (Appendix B) outlines the measures being taken to tackle this issue across the Service.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Failure to publish gender pay information annually before 31 March each year would be a breach of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. However, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, this reporting deadline for this year has been extended to 4 October 2021.

- 8.2 An equal pay audit was completed based on data as at February 2019 and did not highlight any issues of pay inequality at RBFRS. This report was presented to the Audit and Governance Committee meeting on 4 November 2019.

9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

- 9.1 N/A.

10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

- 10.1 Monitoring Officer
10.2 Head of Finance and Procurement
10.3 Chief Fire Officer

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Not included on the report but available on request;

- 11.1 The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
11.2 RBFRS Positive Action Plan
11.3 RBFRS Equality Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan
11.4 Managing Gender Pay Reporting Guidance (issued by ACAS in conjunction with the Government Equalities Office) February 2019
11.5 Equal Pay Audit reported to Audit and Governance Committee 4 November 2019

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 Appendix A – RBFRS Gender Pay Gap Report 2020
12.3 Appendix B – Gender Pay Gap Action Plan

13. CONTACT DETAILS

- 13.1 Lucy Greenway, HR Adviser 0118 938 4676