



Meeting	Performance & Resources Board	Agenda Item	14
Meeting Date	30 October 2020	Report Number	
Report Author:	Inclusion & Diversity Lead		
Presented By	Director of Corporate Services		
Subject	Gender Pay Gap		
Type of Report:	Information		

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Performance and Resources Board consider and note the content of this report for information.

BACKGROUND

Our employees are our most valuable asset and in order to continue to deliver an excellent emergency service to our communities, we recognise that a Fair, Kind and Inclusive culture is imperative.

Being Inclusive is one of our Service priorities and we constantly strive to create an environment and a culture where all our people are able to thrive and achieve their full potential. In order to attract and retain great people who can make an impact, we also work hard to attract and retain a workforce that is reflective of our communities. This helps us establish strong relationships and enables us to engage positively with all of our community groups and ensure that we help to keep the people that live, work and travel in Essex safe.

The causes of our gender pay gap are varied and overlapping, some stemming from outside the workplace, such as stereotypical representations of men and women from an early age which have resulted in the much-reported dominance of males within the broader Fire Sector. Other influences include different terms and conditions of service for our On-Call Firefighters, Wholetime Firefighters and Support colleagues as well as the impact that length of service has, given the loyalty that many of our colleagues give to our Service.

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

This year's calculations are based on a total of 1317 full pay relevant employees. The breakdown of our employees is detailed in the following tables:

Total Number of Men	Total number of women	Total
1100	217	1317

	Number of men	Number of women	Total	% of workforce
Wholetime Firefighters	567	37	604	46%
On Call Firefighters	397	4	401	30%
Control	5	29	34	3%
Support	131	147	278	21%

This profile clearly demonstrates that there is a higher proportion of men overall employed by ECFRS than women. Male staff currently make up 84% of the workforce at ECFRS, rising to 93% when operational staff are considered exclusively.

With more men in the workforce at all levels, combined with the low numbers of women in our Firefighter roles and in the middle and upper pay quartiles, it is inevitable that we have a gender pay gap. This imbalance will continue until there are more women in operational roles across the Service and in middle and senior management roles in operational and non-operational departments. There is no quick fix for this but ECFRS is committed to taking positive action in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate barriers for the attraction and progression of women to achieve greater gender balance in our Service.

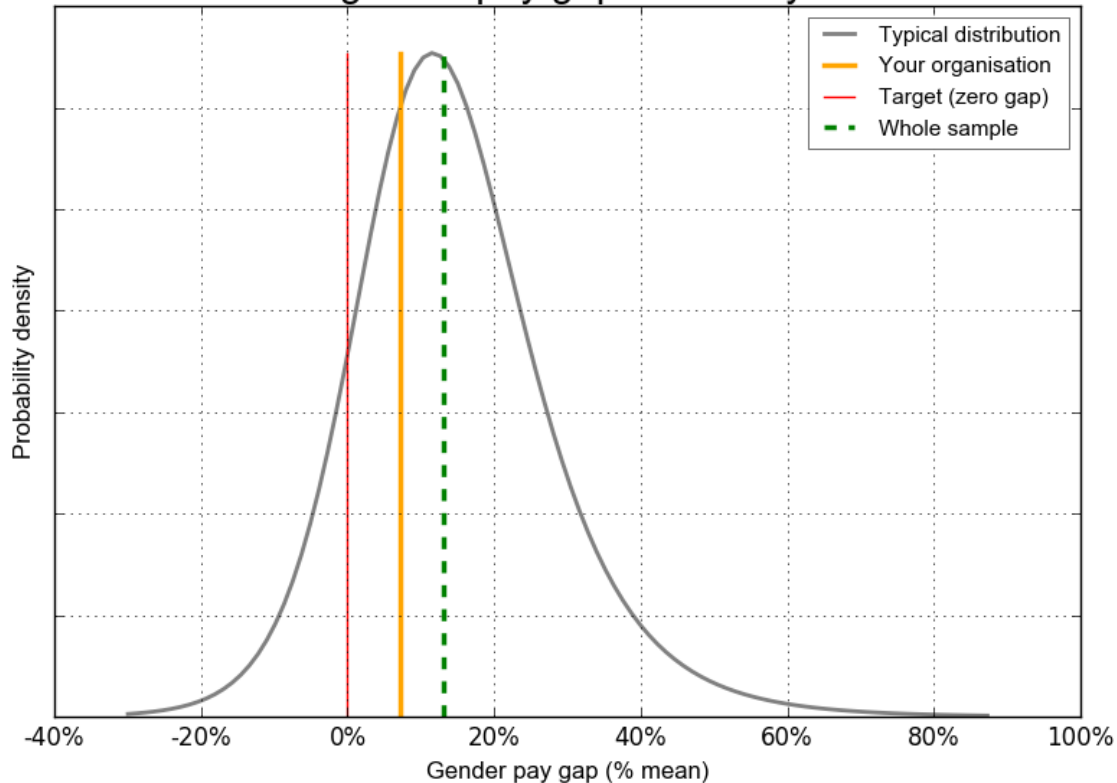
Based on a snapshot of data available as at 31st March 2019 in relation to earnings of all staff, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's (ECFRS) calculations for the purposes of gender pay gap reporting are as follows:

The mean gender pay gap for ECFRS is **7.3%**.

The monetary amounts behind this figure are:

- A mean male hourly rate of £17.41
- A mean female hourly rate of £16.15
- Or an absolute difference of £1.26 per hour

Mean gender pay gap: summary chart



The median gender pay gap for ECFRS is **10.6%**.

The monetary amounts behind this figure are:

- A median male hourly rate of £16.20
- A median female hourly rate of £14.48
- Or an absolute difference of £1.72 per hour

The Mean Gender Pay Gap is below the national average, despite having increased slightly from 7.1% last year. The Median gap is slightly higher and has increased from 8.8% last year. The male median hourly rate increased by 6% over the past year, the female hourly median rate of pay increased by 4%. This is due to there being more males in operational roles and therefore attracting pay allowances in line with the terms and conditions. It also includes the agreed annual pay increase in line with the relevant terms of conditions for all roles.

The differences in conditions of service between Green and Grey Book staff also has an impact as typically Grey Book operational staff have access to more allowances and opportunities to work overtime.

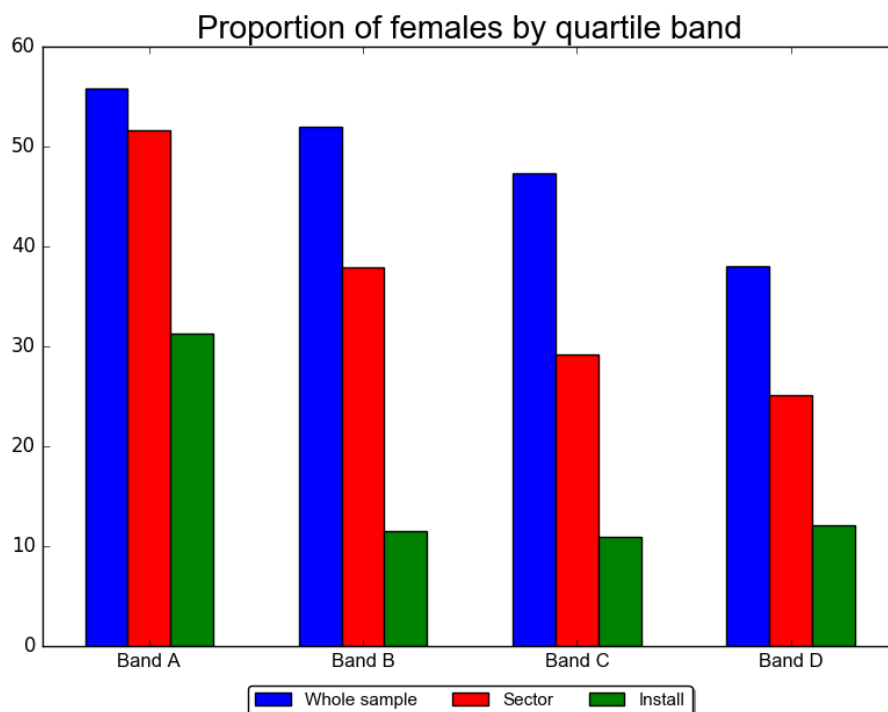
The Authority's pay policy is based on a nationally negotiated pay scheme which applies to local government employees. For uniform staff on Grey Book Terms there are 6 progressive role levels. Within the scales for support staff, there are between 4 and 5 different spinal column points or increments.

The Service follows directives from the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, which determines when Services have the budgetary remit to increase employees' salary.

It is important to note, that as staff in different types of roles are employed on different terms and conditions it is difficult to make like for like comparisons.

Quartiles

Band	Description	Males	Females
A	Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them at or below the lower quartile	68.7% (226)	31.3% (103)
B	Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them above the lower quartile but at or below the median	88.4% (291)	11.6% (38)
C	Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them above the median but at or below the upper quartile	89.1% (293)	10.9% (36)
D	Includes all employees whose standard rate places them above the upper quartile	87.9% (290)	12.1% (40)
All Bands	All employees	83.5% (1100)	16.5% (217)



These quartile graphs show that the lower quartile which is made up of lower pay rates, is heavily populated by women but that representation level changes significantly in the middle and upper quartiles where the pay rates are higher.

More men than women occupy senior roles and typically, men have longer service which means they are paid more due to annual pay progression which is linked to length of service.

Closing the gender pay gap

We are committed to positive action to achieve a more diverse workforce and improve the gender balance in our Service so that we can reduce our gender pay gap.

We will seek to close the gap through achievement of our [Public Sector Equality Duty objectives](#) and the following specific actions:

Attracting and retaining a more diverse workforce

- We will continue with a programme of positive action work which will be underpinned by a bold communications campaign that showcases the Service's commitment to achieving a workforce that is more reflective of our communities
- We will continue to engage with and support community groups, local sports teams, schools and colleges to showcase careers within the service
- We will use social media to demonstrate that we are an Inclusive employer that values diversity
- We will continue to ensure that our policies are family friendly and that the Service makes continual improvement to be an inclusive employer
- We will continue to offer a range of apprenticeships to bring new talent into our Service
- We will introduce internships
- We will promote our vacancies to the widest possible audience in accordance with our positive action approach.

Tackling the barriers to progression

- We will continue to work with our staff networks and forums to gain feedback and understand how we can bring about positive change based on feedback from colleagues
- We will continue to develop and expand our Women's Forum so that it can continue to empower our colleagues and support professional and personal development via a range of learning and development opportunities, coaching and mentoring
- We will continue to work in collaboration with Essex Police and East of England Ambulance Service to host an annual event for International Women's Day
- We will introduce an Inclusion & Diversity development plan that will include suggestions made by our networks and forums
- We will develop a diverse range of interview assessors to minimise the risk of unconscious bias
- We will have representation from our Women's Forum in our Inclusion & Diversity Action Group with other Networks and Forums to inform the strategic direction of our People Strategy and supporting Inclusion and Diversity activity to consider intersectionality and support women in a range of ways
- We will continue to explore collaborative opportunities with partners in our County and Region that will enable us to achieve our aim for gender balance, equality of opportunity and to improve our gender pay gap.

Supporting Fair, Kind and Inclusive culture

- We will embed our Service values in our policies and processes
- We will ensure a gender mix on all 'Your Voice' groups to shape and develop new ideas
- We will increase emphasis on reward and recognition via our internal awards programme to recognise exceptional performance from all parts of the Service
- We will continue to deliver Dignity in our Workplace training to promote a fair, kind and inclusive culture
- We will introduce a new People Impact Assessment approach to consider differential impact in our policies and projects to enable evidence-based decision making.
- We will provide dedicated Inclusion and Diversity awareness for new colleagues in their induction and for all colleagues via regular communication utilising all of our internal channels.

BENEFITS AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

As noted above.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None specific to this report.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

None specific to this report.

WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

None specific to this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None specific to this report.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None specific to this report.