



Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority

Decision Report

Please ensure all sections below are completed

Report reference number: 030-22
Government security classification:
Title of report: Equality Report
Area of county / stakeholders affected: Service wide
Report by: Colette Black, Director of People Services
Date of report: 7 June 2022
Enquiries to: Colette Black

1. Purpose of the report

To provide information about:

- a) Action taken during 2021 to progress our objectives against the Public Sector Equality Duty Objectives which are published in-line with The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010 (appendix A).
- b) The outcome of our Gender Pay Gap reporting (appendix B).
- c) Progress against the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework (appendix C).

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the commissioner accepts the updates provided in the appendices and the publication of Appendices A (progress against 2021 Public Sector Equality Duty Objectives) and B (Gender Pay Gap).

3. Benefits of the proposal

Appendix A demonstrates how we are fulfilling the legal obligation to progress our objectives against the Public Sector Equality Duty Objectives. Appendix B evidences the outcome of our Gender Pay Gap reporting and fulfils the legal obligation to publish this information. Appendix C demonstrates progress against the Fire and Rescue Service equality framework.

4. Background and proposal

We initially adopted our PSED objectives on 1 March 2018. They were approved by the Inclusion and Diversity Steering Group and are in place until 28 February 2022. We last reviewed these as part of creating our People Strategy 2020-24, approved by the Strategic Board on 17 March 2020. The objectives are reflected in the section of our Strategy and associated plan called 'Fair, Kind and Inclusive' and are reported on extensively in appendix A.

Employers of more than 250 employees are required to calculate and publish their organisation's gender pay gap information (Equality Act 2010). We have been publishing this since 2017. The gender pay gap shows the difference between the average earnings of men and women. As a concept it is different from "equal pay," which deals with any pay differences between men and women who carry out the same or similar jobs or jobs of equal value. Appendix B reflects our submission for 2021.

The Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework is intended to be used as a toolkit for improvement. It sets out five priority areas for improvement underpinned by a range of actions and guidance that help Services to plan, implement and delivery real equality outcomes for employees and the community. Appendix C reflects progress against the framework

Regular reporting on our progress against PSED objectives is through the People Strategy Action Plan. The narrative report attached (Appendix A) is intended to give a greater level of insight into 2021 activity and outcomes. In line with our obligation, will review our PSED objectives from March 2022 onwards. Amongst other inputs, these will be informed by feedback from our Inclusive Employers submission and HMICFRS feedback.

Our gender pay gap continues to be comparatively low; the mean gender pay gap for ECFRS is 3.1% compared to 2.4% in 2020. This is based on a snapshot of data available on 31st March 2021, in relation to earnings of all employees.

We remain 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. Appendix B gives more detail about the cause of the gap and the continued action required to address this.

There has been significant progress against the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework (Appendix C). There are 21 areas that have moved from amber to green.

5. Alternative options considered and rejected

The alternative option is that do not publish an update against the Public Sector Duty objectives and the gender pay gap; this option was rejected as it would be a breach of our legal responsibilities. We could choose not to update the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework but, in the interests of transparency and progression, have chosen to do so.

6. Strategic priorities

This action is linked to the Fire and Rescue Plan action priority 'promoting a positive culture in the workplace' and ensuring that the Service is effectively staffed.

7. Operational implications

None directly.

8. Financial implications

All financial implications are provided for within budget.

9. Legal implications

Publication of our public sector duty objectives and the gender pay gap are legal obligations.

10. Staffing implications

No direct implications

11. Equality and Diversity implications

We have considered whether individuals with protected characteristics will be disadvantaged because of the actions being taken. Due regard has also been given to whether there is impact on each of the following protected groups as defined within the Equality Act 2010:

Race	x	Religion or belief	x
Sex	x	Gender reassignment	x
Age	x	Pregnancy & maternity	x
Disability	x	Marriage and Civil Partnership	x
Sexual orientation	x		

The Core Code of Ethics Fire Standard has been fully considered and incorporated into the proposals outlined in this paper.

The publication of these documents is an important aspect of the Service's compliance with the Equality Act and provides important transparency on the actions and progress the service has made in building understanding and cooperation between different groups and ensuring the service treats people equitably.

12. Risks

This reporting is a control measure for SRR150019:

'There is a risk that the Service fails to provide a safe and inclusive culture which ensures the well-being of staff and contributes to attracting a diverse workforce.'

13. Governance Boards

The papers attached were presented at Strategic Board on 9th March 2022.

14. Background papers

- Appendix A – Equality report
- Appendix B – Gender Pay Gap reporting
- Appendix C - Progress against the LGA Equality Framework
- Appendix D – Strategic Board cover paper

Decision Process 030-22

Step 1A - Chief Fire Officer Comments

(The Chief Fire Officer is asked in their capacity as the Head of Paid Service to comment on the proposal.)

.....I support this recommendation.....



Sign:

.....

Date:.....14/6/22.....

Step 1B – Consultation with representative bodies

(The Chief Fire Officer is to set out the consultation that has been undertaken with the representative bodies)

This is not a matter that requires consultation- legal requirement to publish.

Step 2 - Statutory Officer Review

The report will be reviewed by the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority’s (“the Commissioner’s”) Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer prior to review and sign off by the Commissioner or their Deputy.

Monitoring Officer

Sign: 

Print: Darren Horsman - Deputy MO

Date: 23/6/2022

Chief Finance Officer

Sign: 

Print:Neil Cross.....

Date: ... 14/6/22

Step 3 - Publication

Is the report for publication? **YES**

If 'NO,' please give reasons for non-publication (Where relevant, cite the security classification of the document(s). State 'none' if applicable)

Step 4 - Redaction

If the report is for publication, is redaction required:

- 1 Of Decision Sheet **NO**
- 2 Of Appendix **NO**

If 'YES,' please provide details of required redaction:

.....

Date redaction carried out:

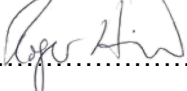
If redaction is required, the Chief Finance Officer or the Monitoring Officer are to sign off that redaction has been completed.

Sign: Print:

Date signed:

Step 5 - Decision by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner or Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

I agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign:  (PFCC)

Print: Roger Hirst Date signed: 24 June 2022

I do not agree the recommendations to this report:

Sign: (PFCC / DPFCC)

Print: Date signed: