

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 28 March 2018, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room, Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Councillors

F De Molfetta (Chairman)  
L Beavers  
D Coleman  
F Jackson  
T Martin  
D O'Toole  
D Stansfield  
M Tomlinson (for N Hennessy)  
G Wilkins  
T Williams

Officers

C Kenny, Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)  
J Johnston, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)  
K Mattinson, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS)  
B Warren, Director of People and Development (LFRS)  
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)

In attendance

S Holgate

55/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from County Councillor Nikki Hennessy.

56/17 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

57/17 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 21 March 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

At the previous meeting it was agreed that this extraordinary meeting be called to discuss this item in more detail (resolution 47/17 refers).

The Equality Act (2010) (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 came into force on 31 March 2017. These regulations imposed a legal obligation for employees with 250 or more employees to publish gender pay details by 30 March 2018 and to highlight the difference in gross pay and bonus payments made to female as compared with male employees.

The Service had and was making improvements in gender breakdown difference, with the latest recruitment processes for whole-time recruitment showing clear progress. The Service had also had for many years clear pay structure arrangements (as outlined in the Pay Settlement) which provided for equal pay for both men and women across the roles throughout the organisation. Members had previously endorsed the single status approach for “green book” employees utilising the local authority job evaluation methodology and had adopted the living wage principles. It therefore did not have a direct equal pay issue within the Service. (Men and women who carried out the same jobs or similar jobs or work of equal value were paid the same).

It was recognised, however, that like all fire and rescue services the Authority had an unbalanced spread of male and female employees in the different occupational staff groups and at different levels and roles. A significant factor was the different construction of Terms and Conditions and remuneration between the “Grey” and “Green” book roles. These factors reflected the diversity and differences in activity and requirements. These were two significant reasons for the gender pay gap outcomes.

In addition the mean gender pay gap was significantly affected by the inclusion of certain groups and the official methodology utilised to calculate the position. The guidelines for the Gender Pay Gap calculation were to enable comparisons to be made across employers. In LFRS this provided an unexpected outcome, if dual contract and Retained Duty System (RDS) employees were included in the total calculation (as highlighted in the report). This outcome was a positive female differential in the mean as opposed to the median calculation. Although any national formula was likely to have unexpected outcomes, this was considered by the Executive to be a distortion due to the makeup of these two particular groups. A truer reflection would be to report the figure without inclusion of the RDS element in the headline figure. If these two groups of staff were excluded then a negative pay gap would be the outcome, which was more in line with the expectation and the national position, as well as other fire services.

The Director of People and Development confirmed he was confident of the figures presented. It was noted that the majority of companies (60%) had not submitted a return yet.

The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that LFRS did not have different pay scales for men and women for the same role. The gender pay gap report was concerned with the distribution of genders throughout different roles. It was noted that LFRS was one of

a few fire and rescue services in the country that had a salary system for Retained Duty (RDS) staff and LFRS significant numbers of dual contracted staff.

Members acknowledged that the RDS and dual contract elements distorted the figures. It was also noted that the changes to RDS pay would affect the figures when the exercise was calculated in future years.

The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the Service was trying to address the gender balance within the organisation through ensuring there were no barriers for females to progress. It was noted that firefighters stayed in the service for 30-35 years and any change to the profile in order to narrow the pay gap would take some time, particularly as there had been a recruitment freeze during the majority of 2003-2016. He was however pleased to report that the last recruitment intake included 20% female and 10% BME.

Following discussion Members agreed that it was better for transparency to publicise the report acknowledging the RDS and dual-contract staff skewed the figures. The Director of People and Development would provide feedback to the government on its online service to improve future reporting which enabled explanatory information / comments to be given.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- i) Approved the inclusion of the RDS related detail in the Gender Pay Gap mean calculation;
- ii) Authorised the publication of the Gender Pay Gap Report.

#### 59/17 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday 21 May 2018 at 1000 hours in the Main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Further meeting dates were noted for 26 September 2018, 28 November 2019 and 27 March 2019.

#### 60/17 URGENT BUSINESS - THE KERSLAKE REPORT

The Chief Fire Officer advised that following the publication of the Kerlake report the previous day, he had written to all staff advising that the report was a reminder to everyone in the emergency services that we must review and learn from every incident to ensure public safety. He confirmed that when he became Chief his messages to staff stressed the need for risk awareness; assessing and balancing risk and taking risk in a measured way.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) advised that after any major incident the Service was not complacent and we looked for ways to learn and assure ourselves.

He advised the joint emergency services interoperability programme was a joint operational model that helped to bring together available information, reconcile objectives and make effective decisions when Police, Fire and Ambulance Services responded together at major incidents.

He confirmed that LFRS National Interagency Liaison Officer (NILO) group worked closely with the Police. NILOs were security cleared and they gained access to really good situational awareness at an early stage of an incident. As reported to a recent Audit Committee meeting LFRS was in the process of providing these officers with ballistic protection to avoid the non-wearing of a certain type of PPE to be a barrier to accessing and receiving information on the incident ground. LFRS was absolutely clear of the expectation that staff attend a multi-agency rendezvous point to adjust planning assumptions from there.

In response to a question raised by Councillor Williams the Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the Police were in charge if there was a threat to life, the Fire Service if there was a fire and the Ambulance Service if there was a medical emergency.

M NOLAN  
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ  
Fulwood