

**Committee:** FINANCE AND RESOURCES

**Date:** 24 MAY 2022

**Report:** ANNUAL HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

### **Purpose of report**

1. To provide Members with information on the following during the year 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022:

- recruitment activity and equal opportunities;
- gender pay gap;
- training and development; and
- turnover and retention data.

### **Recommendation**

2. That the report be noted.

### **Strategic Planning Framework**

3. The information and recommendation contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic planning framework, and specifically Corporate Action Plan Objective 35, to "Plan and manage the Authority's work so as to make the most effective use of its resources."

### **Recruitment Activity**

4. In the year from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, 53 posts were advertised. This is significantly higher than in 2020/21 when only 11 posts were advertised.

5. Recruitment costs (see table, below) for 2021/22 were higher than the previous year. This is predominately due to the increase in vacancies advertised. The annual licence for the Webrecruit Application Tracking System (ATS) is £1,500 and previously 'difficult to recruit to' roles (Principal and Senior Planning Officers and IT Officers) incurred additional costs due to wider advertising.

Year	Recruitment Costs
2016/2017	£6,048
2017/2018	£11,610
2018/2019	£3,585
2019/2020	£12,721
2020/2021	£7,775
2021/2022	£9,982

## **Webrecruit**

6. In 2019/20, Webrecruit became the preferred supplier of recruitment advertising for all National Park Authorities, following a tendering process run through the national 'Working Together' project.

7. Webrecruit provides the authority with the ATS which enables candidates to apply online, managers to access the applications using the ATS platform and invitations to interviews to be sent using the software.

8. Webrecruit also provides a recruitment agency service whereby they can suggest advert wording and will place adverts on behalf of the Authority using appropriate and relevant jobsites at a significant reduced cost.

## **Equal Opportunities Monitoring**

9. The monitoring of applications for the purpose of equal opportunities is a practice recommended by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. This is an important tool to enable the Authority to ascertain at an early stage whether or not there appear to be any areas of its work from which particular groups are excluded. This monitoring provides evidence as to whether current recruitment practices are reaching the full spectrum of possible candidates (so that we can attract the best people) and helps us to avoid possible future problems of allegations of discriminatory practices.

10. Completion of monitoring forms is not compulsory, and non-completion does not invalidate an application. Therefore, not all applicants complete the form fully, or at all. The evaluation of these forms does, however, provide an insight into the demographic of candidates applying to work for the Authority and the methods they use to find jobs.

11. Using the information shared by candidates the following statistics are available:

### Age

	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
Under 18 years	1%	0%	4%
18 – 25 years	27%	21%	17%
26 – 34 years	32%	22%	21%
35 – 44 years	15%	20%	18%
45 – 54 years	13%	25%	29%
55 – 64 years	11%	10%	10%
65 years and above	1%	2%	1%

### Disability

	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
Disability declared	7%	6.5%	8%

12. The Authority has a policy, which is consistent with Equality law, that all applicants who declare a disability will be shortlisted *if* they meet the essential criteria for a particular job.

#### Gender

	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
Female	44.5%	60%	60%
Male	53.8%	40%	40%
Other	0.1%		
Prefer not to say	1.6%		

#### Ethnic Origin

	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
White	91.4%	91%	96%
Black	1.7%	0.5%	1%
Asian	2.4%	4.5%	2%
Mixed	1.8%	3%	1%
Gypsy or Traveller	0.4%		
Prefer not to say	2.3%	1%	

#### Sexual Orientation

	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
Heterosexual/straight	83.4%		
Gay man	1.4%		
Gay woman/lesbian	3%		
Bisexual	5%		
Other	0.8%		
Prefer not to say	6.4%		

13. We introduced the monitoring of the protected characteristic 'sexual orientation' during 2021/22.

#### Marital Status

	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
Single	53.2%	45%	50%
Married or civil partnership	28%	39%	32%
Co-habiting	3.1%		
Divorced	1.1%		
Widowed	0.4%		
Separated	0.3%		
Other	9.6%	15%	18%
Prefer not to say	4.3%	1%	

14. We currently don't request or monitor the protected characteristic of 'religion or belief'.

15. During 2020/21 we included the following statement in all job adverts, with the intention of increasing the ethnic diversity of applications:  
*Our recruitment process treats all job applications equally, regardless of age, disability, gender identity, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation or any other equality characteristic. That said, we particularly encourage applications from people from Black, Asian and other minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, as this group are currently under-represented throughout the Authority.*

16. Whilst we've requested and monitored candidate diversity for a significant period, the monitoring and reporting of employee diversity was identified as an area needing development. During March 2022 all staff were invited to undertake a workforce data questionnaire, with the opportunity to opt out of sharing their personal information. This data will be reviewed and reported within the Annual Equality Statement later in the year.

### **Gender Pay Gap**

17. The gender pay gap is a calculation of the difference between average hourly earnings of men and women as a proportion of men's average hourly earnings.

18. The gender pay gap is generally held to have four main contributory factors: occupational segregation, pay discrimination, the fact that women still bear the main responsibility for looking after children, and the undervaluing of women's work.

19. For those working full-time, the gender pay gap is down mainly to industry and personal characteristics; for those working part-time, occupational segregation and the undervaluing of women's work make significant contributions.

20. Paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work has been unlawful for decades. Although it does still happen, it is not considered a major factor in explaining the gender pay gap, and an employer that has completely eliminated unequal pay may still have a wide gender pay gap.

21. The gap can be measured in various ways, so it's important to understand how, in any specific context, the gap is being measured. A gender pay gap can be expressed as:

- a positive measure, for example, a gap of 13.9% – this indicates the extent to which women earn, on average, less per hour than their male counterparts
- a negative measure, for example, a gap of -9.2% – this indicates the extent to which women earn, on average, more per hour than their male counterparts.

22. There are Regulations in place which apply to all private sector and voluntary sector employers with 250 or more employees, and require them to publish details of the gender pay gap for their organisation. The Authority is not currently required to publish details of its gender pay gap.

23. There are a number of different ways in which the pay gap is measured. For the purposes of this report, the mean gender pay gap has been calculated across all employees, both full-time and part-time.

24. The Authority's mean gender pay gap for full and part-time employees was **4.1%** for 2021/22. This is a dramatic and reassuring reduction from 12.3% for 2020/21. This has been as a result of the average hourly rate of pay reducing for male employees and increasing for female employees.

25. For comparison, in 2021 the UK's mean gender pay gap for all employees, full- and part-time, was 15.4%, which was up from 14.9% in 2020.

## **Training and Development**

26. Training and Development continues to be important to the Authority and its staff. Training plans were determined for each directorate following the annual appraisals which were mostly completed by May 2021.

27. It is the responsibility of the manager and staff member to agree their training and development needs for the forthcoming year, in line with role requirements and budget limitations.

28. The training budget for 2021/2022 was £60.1k, broken down as follows:

- 'Topslice', £36k allocated to pay for corporate training
- Health and Safety, £5k
- £19.1k allocated between the three directorates (proportionate to the number of staff in each directorate) for specific training relating to the work of that directorate and the individual officers.

29. In 2021/22 HR facilitated and co-ordinated corporate training courses including: Strategic Leadership, Mental Health Awareness, First Aid (Emergency and Outdoor), Mental Health First Aid, Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) Managing Safely, Emerging Managers, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), De-escalation, Working at Height, Managing Mental Health, Managing at a Distance, Leading Hybrid Teams, Time Management and Managing Multiple Priorities, Planning for Retirement, Engagement & Promoting Understanding, Dealing with Difficult People, Customer Care Skills, Suicide Awareness, Fire Warden responsibilities and Microsoft Outlook, Excel and Word.

30. The Authority has access to a shared e-learning portal for all UK National Parks (ELMS). All 15 National Park Authorities are now using this system and the accessibility and availability of courses via this platform will be developed further during 2022/23.

## **Staff Turnover**

31. Some degree of employee turnover is inevitable. It is also desirable. The influx of new people can generate new ideas and fresh ways of thinking. Turnover also gives the Authority the room to develop career progression of existing staff, either through promotion or through a sideways move. No organisation wants to stagnate.

32. However, if labour turnover is too high or the most valued employees are leaving, this can damage organisational performance in a number of ways, including the financial cost of replacing leavers and the loss of corporate knowledge and skills.

33. There is no universally-recognised point at which labour turnover starts to have a negative impact on an organisation, although it has been suggested that a turnover level of between 5% and 10% is a healthy and realistic rate for most organisations.

34. Using the latest findings, and dubbed 'The Great Resignation', experts believe that the pandemic has induced workers to re-evaluate what they want from work.

Some people are quitting their jobs while others are quitting work entirely. More recently, this trend has been re-dubbed 'The Great Regret', as some people who made lifestyle changes based on circumstances operating during the pandemic are discovering that the results don't always live up to their expectations.

35. During the period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, 27 employees left the Authority for the reasons detailed below:

<b>Reason for Leaving</b>	<b>No. of Employees</b>	<b>% of Leavers</b>
Voluntary resignation	21	77.8%
End of Fixed Term Contract/Apprenticeship	5	18.5%
Dismissal (due to ill health)	1	3.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100%</b>

36. The turnover rate for 2021/22 was 15.3% which was an increase from 8% for 2020/21. This current rate is in line with the UK average employee turnover rate of approximately 15% a year.

### **Employee Retention**

37. The length of service of the 27 people who left the Authority in 2020/2021 is shown below:

<b>Length of Service</b>	<b>Number of leavers</b>
<1 year	5
>1 year but < 2 years	1
>2 years but < 3 years	3
>3 years but < 4 years	2
>4 years but < 5 years	3
>5 years	13

### **Feedback from Leavers**

38. Exit interviews are only requested when the employee has voluntarily resigned, and are not compulsory.

39. Of the 21 officers who resigned voluntarily, 8 provided feedback. The feedback was in general positive about working for the Authority and has not resulted in any actions.

### **Recommendation**

40. That the report be noted.

**Vikki Thomas**  
**Head of HR**

20 April 2022