



Pay Policy Statement 2024/25

1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with sections 38 to 43 of Chapter 8 of the Localism Act 2011 this Pay Policy Statement outlines the Fire Authority's policies relating to:

- Remuneration of its Chief Officers,
- Remuneration of its lowest paid employees,
- The relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and the remuneration of those employees who are not Chief Officers.

This will ensure that there is the appropriate accountability and transparency of salaries and in particular the salaries of senior staff. The Fire Authority will publish the statement on its website and update it on an annual basis or at such times as it is amended.

In applying its policy, the Fire Authority will work to eliminate any elements which may, directly or indirectly, discriminate unfairly on the grounds of sex, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, age, marital status, having dependants, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, trade union activity, disability or any other factors. Part-time workers receive the same pay and remuneration as full-time workers undertaking the same job role on a pro-rata basis.

Decisions on the pay and conditions of employment of Chief Officers are made by Members at a meeting of the Fire Authority itself.

2. REMUNERATION OF CHIEF OFFICERS

The Fire Authority is responsible for establishing the pay policy for all employees and reviewing the pay level of the Chief Fire Officer.

The Pay Negotiating Body for Chief Fire Officers is the National Joint Council (NJC) for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services. The NJC annually reviews the level of pay increase applicable to all those covered by the national agreement and determines any pay settlement. The Fire Authority applies the annual negotiated pay settlements. All other decisions about pay levels and remuneration for individual Brigade Managers are taken locally by the Fire Authority.

The annual NJC pay award for Brigade Managers applies retrospectively from 1st January each year. The annual NJC pay award of 3% on basic salary from 1st January 2024 was announced on 25 January 2024.

The salary structure for the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive (CFO/CEO), other Principal Officers and the Statutory Officers is determined by the Fire Authority and is subject to future salary reviews in accordance with the Constitution and Scheme of Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services, known as the 'Gold Book'.

The Fire Authority undertakes negotiations with its recognised representative bodies on local agreements which affects the terms and conditions of its employees, and which may include agreement of local allowances. The Representative Bodies recognised for negotiating purposes for Chief Fire Officers is the Fire Leaders' Association, which is a branch of the Prospect Union.

3. REMUNERATION OF OTHER UNIFORMED/OPERATIONAL STAFF

The CFO/CEO has delegated responsibility to ensure pay arrangements for all other employees of the Fire Authority comply with the nationally agreed Grey or Green Book terms and conditions of employment.

This includes Wholetime, Retained Duty staff and Control Room staff. The remuneration levels for these staff are subject to national negotiation as contained in the Scheme of Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire & Rescue Services which is known as the 'Grey Book'.

The NJC announce an annual award from 1st July each year. On 6 March 2023 a 2-year pay award was announced: 7% effective from 1 July 2022 and 5% effective from 1 July 2023. No pay award has yet been announced for 1 July 2024.

4. REMUNERATION OF CORPORATE SERVICES STAFF

The Scheme of Conditions of Service for these staff are set out within the National Joint Council for Local Government Services known as the 'Green Book'.

The National Joint Council negotiates the level of any annual pay increases applicable to all 'Green Book' staff. The Hay Job Evaluation Scheme is used to determine the grading and pay for corporate staff. This approach was approved by the Fire Authority. It is recognised that an analytical job evaluation scheme such as Hay serves to ensure a fair and consistent grading structure which is free from bias.

The NJC announce an annual award from 1st April each year. Pay rates for 1 April 2023 were announced on 1 November 2023, backdated to 1 April 2023. The pay award was an increase of £1,925 for all spinal pay points. For pay points that fall outside of the maximum spinal point (anything over the middle of H3), the uplift was 3.88%; allowances were also increased by 3.88%.

Negotiations relating to the 1st of April 2024 pay award are ongoing.

The representative bodies recognised for negotiating purposes are UNISON and UNITE.

5. REMUNERATION OF THE LOWEST PAID EMPLOYEES

This statement must state the definition of “lowest-paid employees” adopted by the authority for the purposes of the statement, and the authority’s reasons for adopting that definition.

Avon Fire Authority is a ‘real living wage’ employer, which goes beyond the government’s national living wage. The national living wage is the minimum hourly rate which adult workers in the UK, aged over 23, must be paid. The Government has announced that the national living wage will increase from 1 April 2024 to £11.44 per hour for workers over 21.

The real living wage is a voluntary scheme for employers and is calculated to reflect the real cost of living. The living wage rates were announced on 24 October 2023 as £12.00 per hour across the UK (£13.15 in London).

6. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE REMUNERATION OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS AND THOSE EMPLOYEES WHO ARE NOT CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS

The Localism Act 2011 requires the Fire Authority to set out the relationship between the remuneration of Chief Officers and the remuneration of those who are not Chief Officers.

6.1 Establishing the Pay of the Chief Fire Officer

This statement must include the authority’s policies relating to:

- a) the level and elements of remuneration for each Chief Officer
- b) remuneration of Chief Officers on recruitment
- c) increases and additions to remuneration for each Chief Officer
- d) the use of performance-related pay for Chief Officers
- e) the use of bonuses for Chief Officers
- f) the approach to the payment of Chief Officers on their ceasing to hold office under or to be employed by the authority and
- g) the publication of and access to information relating to remuneration of Chief Officers.

Post	New Appointments
CFO/CEO	£164,351*
*This figure includes the NJC pay award of 3% from 1st January 2024 (announced 25 January 2024).	

6.1.1 Bonuses Payable/Performance Related Pay

The Fire Authority does not operate a bonus scheme or a Performance Related Pay Policy for Chief Officers.

6.1.2 Charges, Fees or Allowances Payable

Payment of charges, fees and allowances for Chief Officers, is in accordance with the provisions of the Gold Book and Section 4 of the Grey Book.

6.1.3 Vehicles

A taxable leasing contribution is provided to Chief Officers. Officers can claim reimbursement for business mileage in accordance with the conditions of that scheme. Officers who do not take advantage of the Fire Authority's car leasing scheme may claim reimbursement for the use of their private motor vehicle for business purposes, in accordance with the NJC Mileage rates and the provisions of the Essential User Scheme.

6.1.4 Travelling and Subsistence Expenses

In accordance with NJC Conditions of Service, Chief Officers who are absent from their usual place of duty, and who necessarily incur additional expenses in obtaining food, may claim subsistence allowances in accordance with the Fire Authority's published rates.

6.1.5 Expenses

Chief Officers may claim reimbursement for out of pocket expenses incurred in the course of carrying out their duties. The Fire Authority also permits Chief Officers to utilise corporate procurement/credit cards in accordance with the terms of the scheme.

6.1.6 Professional Memberships

Fire Authority will reimburse Chief Officers for the cost of joining or maintaining membership of professional bodies essential to the duties of their role.

6.1.7 Benefit in Kind

Chief Officers may elect to be provided with a lease vehicle under the car lease scheme which may produce a taxable benefit in kind. Chief Officers may use the Fire Authority's medical intervention fund which could incur a taxable benefit in kind if the treatment is related to a non-work injury.

6.1.8 Re-engagement/Re-employment

Re-engagement (operational employee retires and returns to the same or similar role undertaken prior to retirement) will not be considered or approved for Area Managers and above unless it is exceptional in the interests of public safety. Any such appointment shall:



- a) be made only by the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive;
- b) on presentation of a business case justifying the request; and,
- c) on a fixed term contract for a maximum period of 6 months with no extension.

The published minute of the decision shall set out why the re-engagement was necessary in the interests of public safety and alternative approaches were not deemed appropriate.

Re-employment (operational employee retires and returns to a substantially different role) is permissible via open external recruitment.

In both cases abatement of pension will apply.

The Fire Authority operates a Flexible Retirement Policy for employees in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) which allows staff to take their pension benefits and be re-employed on reduced hours or at a lower grade without abatement of pension. This complies with the provisions of the LGPS.

6.1.9 Redundancy

There is no provision within either the firefighters pension schemes to enable Fire and Rescue Authorities to provide enhanced redundancy payments above those payable by virtue of enactment.

Officers within the LGPS are entitled to enhanced redundancy payments in accordance with the provision of the scheme and the Fire Authority's policies.

6.1.10 Termination by mutual agreement

The Fire Authority reserves the right to negotiate a compensatory payment for termination of employment by mutual consent. Such payments may only be made if the Fire Authority is satisfied that it is in the best interests of both the Fire Authority and the public interest.

6.1.11 Payment in lieu of Notice

The Fire Authority reserves the right to make payment in lieu of notice in exceptional circumstances, where this is deemed to be in the best interests of both the Fire Authority and public interest.

6.1.12 Payment for untaken annual leave

The Fire Authority reserves the right to pay in lieu of untaken annual leave, where the employee has been unable to take their leave entitlement due to the contingencies of the Service.

6.1.13 Pension Arrangements

The pension schemes applied by the Fire Authority for the various staff groups are:

- The Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992
- The Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2006
- The Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015
- The Local Government Pension Scheme 2014

The Fire Authority implements guidance in relation to these schemes as amended from time to time by the responsible government department.

6.2 Internal Pay Comparators

The comparison with the median earnings of the whole workforce using the basic pay for full-time equivalents based on:

- The CFO/CEO's salary being £164,351.
- The lowest pay point being £23,152.
- The median basic pay of the Fire Authority's whole workforce FTE (excluding on-call staff, auxiliary staff and community safety & staff engagement casuals) being £36,226.

are as follows:

- The current ratio between the CFO/CEO and median basic pay is 4.5:1 (2022/23 – 4.6:1).
- The current ratio between the CFO/CEO and a competent fire-fighter is 4.5:1 (2022/23 - 4.6:1).
- The current ratio between the CFO/CEO and lowest paid employee is 7.1:1 (2022/23 – 7.8:1).

6.3 Gender Pay Gap Information

In accordance with the requirements set out in The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017, Avon Fire Authority publishes pay gap information after the 'Snapshot date' of 31 March each year (and within 12 months of that snapshot date). This information is presented separately to the Policy and Resources Committee and published on Avon Fire Authority website.