

# Norfolk County Council

## Pay Policy Statement 2024 to 2025

Approved by County Council on 26 March 2024

### 1. Introduction and Scope

1.1. Norfolk County Council is committed to accountability, transparency, equity and fairness in pay, reward, and remuneration. This Pay Policy Statement outlines the Council's pay and reward policies for 2024-2025. These ensure that pay and reward policies are appropriate for the Council's aims, are appropriate to attract and retain key skills, and are consistently and equitably applied.

1.2. The Pay Policy Statement fulfils the Council's statutory requirements under Chapter 8 of the Localism Act 2011 and will be updated annually.

1.3. The policies referred to in this Statement are relevant to Council employees generally, including Chief Officers. However, the scope of this Statement does not include all pay policies relating to certain categories of employees whose pay arrangements are determined nationally, including:

1.3.1. Firefighters (covered by the National Conditions for Local Authorities' Fire Brigades), except where additional terms and conditions have been set locally, as permitted under the national frameworks.

1.3.2. Teachers (covered by statutory School Teachers' Pay and Conditions).

1.3.3. Employees paid on national pay rates determined by the Soulbury Committee covering Education Improvement Professionals and Educational Psychologists.

1.3.4. Employees in Public Health on NHS conditions of employment.

1.4. Maintained schools are not covered by this policy but are separately required to produce an annual pay policy setting out the terms on which the remuneration of their workforce is based.

1.5 Employees covered by nationally set pay arrangements will have access to locally set relevant policies, schemes and benefits where the national terms and conditions permit this. The overall pay and reward strategy principles will also apply.

### 2. Definitions

2.1. The Council defines the total employment package as consisting of both tangible and intangible elements. The pay policy statement focuses on the tangible pay and reward and recognition elements, including salary, allowances, benefits in kind, pension enhancement and payments relating to the ceasing of employment.

2.2. The Council defines "lowest paid employees" as those paid on the first salary point of the County Council's pay grades for National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services, as this is the lowest pay rate generally applied to NCC roles.

2.3. Apprentices are generally paid according to the rate for the job as described in section 6.1, but the Council may in exceptional circumstances employ some apprentices under the national Apprenticeship framework, and people on similar learning programmes who are paid at less than the Council's minimum salary point, in line with the National Minimum Wage (NMW). For instance, if stepping in to host an apprentice when the host business closes until a new provider is located, we would continue the existing rate of pay which could be NMW, or for schemes designed to give people work experience and funded at NMW rate. The rates from April 2024 are from £6.40 to £11.44 per hour depending on age, (equivalent to £12,347 to £22,071 per annum for a 37 hour week).

### **3. The Council's Pay and Rewards Strategy**

3.1. The Council's overall approach to pay and reward is set out in its Pay and Rewards Strategy. The objectives set out in that document are to:

- Attract and retain people with the skills and talent the County Council needs to deliver excellent services in Norfolk.
- Encourage and reward high levels of contribution, flexibility, innovative ways of working, and relevant skills acquisition through experience and development, by employees at all levels.
- Provide a fair system of reward and recognition for employees.
- Enable the organisation to quickly adapt to changes in priority and deploy resources where they are most needed.

3.2. The Council's pay policies are designed to achieve those objectives within the Principles and Core Standards set out in the strategy. Pay policies, and strategy, are kept under review and updated from time to time as necessary.

### **4. Governance Arrangements**

4.1. The Pay Policy is approved by council and the Officer Employment Procedure Rules provides the delivery mechanism.

4.2. The Officer Employment Procedure Rules of the Council's Constitution provide for designated Senior Officers to take certain delegated decisions in relation to employment matters, within the policy framework approved by Council.

### **5. Publication of and access to information relating to pay**

5.1. The Council publishes information about pay in accordance with statutory requirements, and the guidance of the Information Commissioner's Office and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. Information is published on the Council's website and in the Council's Statement of Accounts.

### **6. Basic Pay Determination**

Pay levels for all employees are determined by the following:

6.1. The Council uses the Korn Ferry Job Evaluation Scheme to establish the relative "sizes" of jobs within the organisation. The job evaluation ('JE') process is applied to all jobs in the Council unless the salary rates are determined nationally (e.g., firefighters, teachers and Soulbury Officers). An evaluation results in an overall

job evaluation score, which is used to rank jobs within the organisation. The overall job evaluation score for a job is used to allocate that job to the appropriate pay grade of the Council's grade structure.

The design and standardisation of job descriptions by a “professional” group supports consistency across professions and the organisation. For new or changed roles which would attract Grade P or above, external evaluation specialists may be commissioned to independently review and validate the job evaluation rationale, and this will be signed off by the Director for People and aligned to the organisational design across senior posts of the Council. Roles which are defined in Part 10 – Officers Norfolk County Council Constitution are also subject to general oversight by the Employment Committee.

## **6.2. Appointment**

The incremental point an individual will be appointed to within the grade will normally be the minimum of the scale. However, an appointment may be at a higher point within the scale where necessary to appoint the best candidate. In the case of the defined Chief Officers listed within the Constitution, views of Members of the Appointments Panel will inform the decision.

## **6.3. Pay awards and progression**

6.4 The chief executive post is paid a spot salary. The Council applies the pay award agreed by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives – national Salary Framework and Conditions of Service Handbook.

6.5 For employees covered by national Fire, Teacher (Centrally Employed), Soulbury and NHS terms and conditions, pay awards and pay progression is based on national standards or terms and conditions.

Decisions taken locally are detailed below:

6.6 Employees paid on Norfolk grades are eligible to receive annual incremental increases within the grade structure until they reach the top increment of the grade. There is no further base pay progression once the employee reaches the maximum salary point, or maximum of the grade range, for the role. Incremental progression may be withheld from an individual who has an action plan under the Council's policy for dealing with unsatisfactory performance. New starters must complete a satisfactory 6-month period before becoming eligible for incremental increases.

6.7. The Council's pay scale values are subject to annual review. For Norfolk grades from Scale A to Scale S, the Council applies the annual pay award agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (Green Book).

6.8 For Scales P and above, (deemed Senior Officers) the Council may exceptionally, in addition, review pay levels locally from time to time, having regard to national settlements covering local government and local affordability.

6.9 Under National terms, Brigade Manager roles are subject to a two-track approach for determining levels of pay. In addition to nationally determined pay awards, the Council's Employment Committee will undertake a further review of salary where this is deemed necessary in order to maintain adequate differentials

between Brigade Manager pay and the pay of other Fire and Rescue Service roles, and/or to make sure the County Council can attract to and retain people in senior fire roles. The Employment Committee review will also include a review of the Director of Fire (Chief Fire Officer) pay level.

6.10. General Review Pay levels are set with reference to a number of internal and external factors and market forces. Where a need is identified to review the levels of basic pay at all or some pay grades (for example in the light of sustained recruitment and retention difficulties), the Council will commission research into market levels. Any decision on changes as a result of this research would be considered by the Employment Committee, taking account of affordability.

## **7. Additional Pay Determination**

7.1. In addition to basic pay, the Council's reward package may include additional pay elements.

7.2. The Council will consider the payment of salary supplements in the event of external market pressures for recruitment and retention. Payments must be based on genuine objective grounds and driven by business requirements and not individual circumstances. Payments must be applied consistently based on sound, recognised and robust pay data in accordance with Equal Pay legislation and the Equalities in Employment Policy. Market supplements are applied, reviewed, and withdrawn in accordance with the Council's Market Pay Supplement policy.

7.3. There will be occasions where, due to the service needs, employees will temporarily be required to undertake work or perform beyond the normal remit of their substantive role (for example, working to a higher-level role or undertaking additional responsibilities). Payment for these extra duties will be made in accordance with the Recognition Payments Policy. All payments are regularly monitored and reviewed as outlined in the policy.

7.4. The County Council's recognition payment scheme, which allows a flat rate payment up to a maximum amount agreed by the Employment Committee,4) in recognition of an exceptional "one-off" contribution or a substantially increased workload, or up to two accelerated increments where the exceptional contribution is sustained, applies to all employees. The decision to award a recognition payment to a Senior Manager paid at Scale P or above would be taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Director for People or designated deputy. Employees on nationally set terms and conditions of employment are not covered by this recognition payment scheme but are covered by any national scheme that form part of their terms and conditions.

7.5. The County Council does not operate a performance pay or bonus scheme outside the incremental grading structure that determines basic pay and, therefore, there are no performance payments paid to employees of the Council.

7.6. Employees that are redeployed, due to redundancy or disability, to a post at a lower grade may be eligible for a redeployment compensation payment in accordance with the Redeployment Policy.

7.7. The Council employs the use of a number of additional allowances and enhancements to reflect and recompense for additional responsibilities, duties and working patterns. The eligibility to these enhancements varies depending upon the nature of the allowance or enhancement. The applicable principles, scope, eligibility, process and rates are detailed in the respective policy documents. These are kept under review and changes, or additional policies would be approved by the Chief Executive and Director for People.

7.8. The Council operates a range of salary sacrifice schemes including an ultra-low emission vehicle car lease scheme.

## **8. Termination of Employment**

8.1. The Council's policy on redundancy is contained within the Staffing Adjustment Policy, which details the conditions under which redundancy payments can be made. Where an employee is made redundant, severance benefits will be based on the number of weeks in the statutory Redundancy Pay Table based on actual weekly earnings. Where full time weekly earnings are less than the statutory cap, employees will receive a rate equivalent to the statutory cap per week, pro rata for part time workers.

8.2. Membership of a pension scheme is determined by the relevant conditions of service and is subject to the rules of the specific scheme. The Council operates the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for most employees within the scope of this statement. Some employees may be members of other schemes where national terms and conditions deem them eligible.

8.3. The Council's practice for early termination of Local Government Pension Scheme members' employment arrangements (for reasons other than redundancy) are detailed in the Retirement policy and procedure; and any additional discretions under the pensions regulations for the LGPS are detailed in the "Local Government Pension Scheme - NCC's discretion policy".

8.4. Only in very exceptional circumstances and where the business case supports it might the Council agree to any arrangements in relation to termination of employment outside those referred to above, to avoid or settle a legal claim and reduce risk of costs. In these exceptional circumstances, the Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer), Director of Strategic Finance and Director for People will sign off any arrangements.

8.5. The Council's policy on the re-employment of former employees retired on redundancy grounds from Norfolk County Council, or on ill-health or efficiency grounds from any local authority employment, is that any such case must show clear organisational and financial benefits to the Authority. Each case must be considered by the Director for People in accordance with the policy. The remuneration on employment would be determined in the same way as for any other appointment.

8.6 Decisions on discretionary elements of the FPS are made by the Scheme Manager (Director of Norfolk Fire and Rescue), including those relating to initiated early retirement.

8.6. Where severance payments costing the County Council £100,000 or more are due, (including pension strain costs) these will be approved by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and the Employment Committee will be advised. In addition, any statutory requirements for additional levels of authorisation will be followed.

## **9. Remuneration of people on a Contract for Services**

9.1. In common with any large organisation in the public or private sector, from time to time and on a temporary basis the Council needs to use interim workers who are not directly employed. In such cases, the Council would not incur the costs of pension contributions, annual leave or sick pay.

9.2. This happens where we have a short-term need for particular skills or where we are experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties. When we use interim workers, they are usually sourced through specialist agencies.

9.3. In line with the Agency Workers Directive, the Council will aim to pay people on a Contract for Services at a rate consistent with the pay and reward of the Council's directly employed workforce performing a role of comparable responsibility. However, as with the employed workforce, the Council retains the discretion to consider market factors in determining the appropriate pay level, whilst demonstrating value for money for the remuneration offered.

9.4. The Council's guidance on temporary and agency workers outlines the actions required when there is a requirement for interims or consultants. This confirms the threshold at which a business case will need to be submitted for Chief Officer approval and Member endorsement, prior to any contractual commitment.

9.5. Workers employed directly by the Council will be assessed to establish whether they fall within scope of the IR35 legislation using the HMRC employment status tool. Workers that fall within scope will have Income Tax and National Insurance contributions deducted and paid over to HMRC.

## **10. Fairness in pay**

10.1. As already stated, the Council recognises the importance of fairness in pay and utilises the following approaches to maintain this:

10.1.1. the Council's pay and reward policies are applied equally to all employees, except where there are good reasons reflecting genuine factors which apply only to certain employee categories.

10.1.2. the Council's Employment Committee is responsible for setting any locally determined pay and conditions policies of all employees within the scope of this statement.

10.1.3. the Council involves the workforce and recognised trades unions in any proposals to change pay and rewards policies and practices. Regular consultation and negotiation take place on all employment matters, including pay and reward; Local collective agreements are in place which set out locally determined arrangements which differ to the nationally negotiated National

Joint Council for Local Government Services “Green Book,” or other nationally negotiated arrangements.

10.1.4. all categories of employees are covered by recognised trade unions.

10.1.5. the Council's approach to publishing information on pay is set out in paragraph 5.1 to ensure that pay policies are open to scrutiny.

10.2. The council publishes information on ratios between its highest paid Officer's pay and the pay of other officers in the organisation as set out in paragraph 5.1. The council's gender pay gap is also published on its website annually.

## **11. Review**

The statement for 2024-2025 was submitted to Full Council for approval in March 2024.

Policies and procedures referred to in this document are available on request. For queries contact [hrstrategy@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:hrstrategy@norfolk.gov.uk)