

# NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

## Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority

### Pay Policy statement 2014-15

#### Introduction

1. The Authority recognises that the fire sector remains in a period of financial constraint, with budgets decreasing, and that there is a need to spend resources available in the best possible way to have the maximum impact on delivering the Authority's aims. Pay is a significant element of the budget and it is important that pay is maintained at levels that are affordable and sustainable and which deliver value for money for local taxpayers.
2. The Authority also recognises that there is a legitimate public interest in, and a degree of scrutiny of, the pay and rewards within the fire service, and in particular, the rewards of senior officers.
3. The Fire Authority is required to deliver statutory services under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and under the Fire Services Act 2004 it is required to provide the following :
  - a. trained personnel, services and equipment necessary to meet all normal requirements of a fire and rescue service
  - b. Arrangements to deal with calls for help and for summoning personnel and to provide crews with safety information
  - c. provision to promote fire safety in its area
  - d. provision to extinguish fire, protect life and property and limit damage in the event of fires in its area
  - e. provision to rescue people in the event of road traffic collisions in its area
  - f. arrangements to respond to emergencies where one or more individuals die, are injured or become ill or there is the likelihood of harm to the environment (including the life and health of animals and plants).
4. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and his senior officers are responsible and accountable for the implementation of agreed strategy and policies and for developing and running the above services.
5. This pay policy covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, and was approved by the meeting of the full Fire Authority on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2014. Future pay policies will be produced on an annual basis, for each financial year, and will be brought to Fire Authority meetings for approval.
6. This pay policy details a number of position statements relating to pay, in particular regarding pay relationships between different staff groupings.

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### **Definitions**

7. The definition of senior officers in this pay policy statement covers the following members of staff – Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive; Deputy Chief Fire Officer; Assistant Chief Fire Officer; Treasurer & Brigade Manager – Governance & Assurance; Brigade Manager – People & Development; Clerk to the Authority; Area Manager Service Delivery; Area Manager – Programmes; Area Manager – Community Safety & Partnerships; Area Manager – Projects; and Head of Learning & Development where not contracted out.
8. The definition of ‘lowest paid’ employees relates to staff who are on the lowest pay grade of the corporate staff grading structure. The decision to utilise this rate rather than the average pay for ‘on call’ competent firefighters has been made because the current variable nature of on call payments means that earnings vary year on year depending on the level of activity. A pilot salary scheme for On Call staff has been introduced for a 12 month period at 8 stations within the Service – this will be reviewed both during and at the end of the 12 month pilot period in order to decide whether it can be implemented across all ‘on call’ sections. The current pay multiple between the highest paid post and the median average salary using full time equivalents although excluding ‘on call’ due to the variable nature of their pay, is 4.1.

### **Policy Aims**

9. The aims of this remuneration policy are to ensure that the Authority is able to recruit and retain the talented people needed to maintain or improve the performance of the Service, and to lead the Service through the challenging changes being faced.
10. The amount paid should reflect the local market for comparable jobs and skills.
11. To continue to work towards making sure that pay is fair and non-discriminatory.

### **Pay reviews**

12. Some elements of pay and a number of core conditions of service are determined by national negotiation and consultation between Local Government Employers and respective trade unions or representative bodies as follows:
  - a. Uniformed Brigade Managers are covered by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Brigade Managers (Gold Book);
  - b. all other uniformed roles, including on call roles, are covered by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Authorities’ Fire Brigades (Grey Book);
  - c. Corporate staff are covered by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services (Green Book).
13. There are significant benefits for the Authority in using the national negotiating machinery on these elements as it is more cost effective to negotiate nationally than as a series of local negotiations. Although there are national grades for uniformed roles as mentioned in (b) it is the Authority’s decision on how the grading structure is used, whereas for the other two groups (a) and (c) the Authority has the power to determine scales and grading structures to

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meet its own requirements. The pay elements negotiated nationally relate to the cost of living increase and there remain sound reasons for this process to continue.

14. The Authority intends to maintain this position.
15. The Gold Book National Joint Council states that there is a two-track approach to determining levels of pay for Brigade Manager roles which are:
  - a. The NJC annually reviews the level of pay increase via consideration of affordability, other relevant pay deals and the rate of inflation at the appropriate date; and
  - b. All other decisions about the level of pay and remuneration to be awarded to individual Brigade Manager roles is taken by the local Fire & Rescue Authority who will review the salary levels on an annual basis.
16. The HR Advisor to the Fire Authority undertakes this local review, where comparative national data for brigade managers and local and regional senior local government pay data is analysed, which is then considered by the Staffing Committee.
17. There have been no nationally agreed pay rises for staff covered by Gold Book terms and conditions i.e. uniformed Brigade Managers, since 2009.
18. During 2013 there was a nationally agreed pay rise of 1% for staff covered by Grey and Green book terms and conditions.
19. Pay points for Gold and Grey Book staff are 'spot' rates, which relate to operational practice, but pay for Green book staff utilises incremental grades. The latter grades were introduced in 2011 following negotiation with Unison, and were as a result of moving to the Greater London Provincial Council job evaluation scheme to work towards equal pay. Internal relativities are developed using the job evaluation process and the senior staff within this group are then co-ordinated with the uniformed group in line with the Authority's practice of some uniformed officers line managing corporate staff. An incremental system was continued with as this enables the Authority to take account of the developing nature of jobs for this particular group and the pay arrangements are considered to reflect how the group operates. Continuing to use incremental grades enabled a more cost effective transition and minimised the financial effects for the more equality based arrangements.
20. The Authority do not intend to pay bonuses or performance related pay to staff during the period 2014-15 and are not intending to introduce a system of 'earn back' pay during this period. The Authority is not aware of any Authorities that have introduced these systems.
21. By following national arrangements, the Authority do not utilise terms of remuneration that could be perceived as seeking to minimise tax payments. The Authority does not intend to introduce any terms of remuneration that could be perceived as avoiding these payments in 2014-15.
22. Pay scales for Grey and Green book staff are available on the Service website.

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23. Details of the salary and expenses for officers whose remuneration is in excess of £50,000 are published annually in the Statement of Accounts, which is available on the website.

### **Allowances**

24. Uniformed Brigade Managers are, due to the nature of their continuous duty with its call out provisions, provided with cars, for which they pay a contribution towards private mileage.
25. The Authority has started to introduce a provided car scheme for other staff members to replace the existing car lease scheme and essential users allowances.
26. Chief Fire Officers Association membership fees are paid for uniformed Brigade Managers, as it is expected that as members of CFOA they will undertake Regional or National roles to the benefit of Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority and the service nationally. No other professional fees are paid for Brigade Managers or other staff.
27. Uniformed officers at Area Manager level and below who work on the flexible duty system are paid a pensionable supplement in accordance with the Grey Book requirements.
28. The Authority do not provide benefits such as private health insurance.
29. Expenses are paid to all staff at relevant NJC negotiated levels for mileage and subsistence.

### **Pensions**

30. The Authority offers, as appropriate, uniformed members of staff membership of either the Firefighters Pension Scheme, the New Firefighters Pension Scheme or the Local Government Pension Scheme. Corporate members of staff are entitled to be members of the Local Government Pension Scheme. These schemes operate on a combination of employer and employee contributions, covered by legislation, the details of which are in the public domain. A new Local Government Pension Scheme is due to be introduced in April 2014.

### **Recruitment**

31. In line with the Localism Act, the full Authority will be offered the opportunity to vote before salary packages of £100,000 or more per annum are offered in respect of new appointments. It is proposed that the Staffing Committee will consider the salary package prior to recruitment, and the full Authority will vote on the salary package prior to appointment. During 2014-15 it is not expected that any appointments will be made at this level.
32. On occasion, the reward package for corporate staff determined by the pay and grading system may not be consistent with reward packages offered for comparable posts in the wider labour market, and this may lead to recruitment and retention difficulties. In such circumstances, where there is a clear business need supported by objective market data, and other approaches have proved ineffective, the Service will consider offering a market supplement payment in addition to the normal reward package for the post.

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33. It is the Authority's policy to pay market supplements only in exceptional circumstances and to follow a clear and consistent framework for the determination of any market supplement payment which:
- a. ensures Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service meets its obligations under equal pay legislation;
  - b. maintains the overall integrity of its pay and grading structure; and
  - c. allows market supplements to be considered only where a clear and demonstrable business need exists.

### **Severance payments**

34. Due to the terms of the firefighter pension schemes no collective agreement is in place for severance pay in excess of statutory terms for uniformed staff. Proposals were issued to the relevant representative body for consideration, but no agreement was reached. This topic is also under national consideration.
35. During 2012 an agreement was reached with Unison to continue the enhanced severance terms for corporate staff leaving on the grounds of voluntary redundancy until March 2015. This provides for a multiplier of 1.75 for the weeks paid, and for the use of actual salary. It is not the intention of the Authority to exercise discretion under the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 to pay up to 104 weeks pay.
36. For members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) the Authority will not exercise the discretions for augmentation of membership or additional pension as an alternative to augmentation under regulations 12 and 13 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007.
37. The Authority does not give blanket consent for staff in the LGPS aged between 50 and 59 years to flexibly retire and draw immediate payment of pension benefits. Requests will be referred to the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive and will be assessed on their merits taking into account such factors as cost & service delivery.
38. The Authority will not normally waive actuarial reduction on early retirement for LGPS members. Individual circumstances will be looked at on an exceptional basis according to the dictionary definition of compassion – 'inclined to pity or mercy'.
39. The full Authority will be given the opportunity to vote on severance payments over £100,000, and the information presented to the Authority will clearly set out the components such as salary paid in lieu, redundancy compensation, pension entitlements, holiday pay and any fees or allowances paid.

### **Employment after retirement/redundancy**

40. The Authority do not intend to engage any ex-employees as a chief or senior officer under a contract for services during 2014-15.

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41. The Authority apply pension or salary abatement to chief or senior officers who are employed or re-employed when they are in receipt of a Local Government Pension Scheme or Firefighters' Pension Scheme pension. The Authority will only re-employ a retired ex-employee of the Service as a chief or senior officer if there are exceptional circumstances where their specialist knowledge and expertise is required for a defined period of time.
  
42. The Authority will only re-employ an ex-employee of the Service who left with a severance or redundancy payment as a chief or senior officer if there are exceptional circumstances where their specialist knowledge and expertise is required for a defined period of time.

**Guidance that is not applicable to Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority**

43. Section 38 (4) of the Localism Act requires the pay policy to include any policy to award additional fees for chief officers for local election duties – no fees are paid to fire authority chief officers for this.

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