

Pay Policy Statement 2017/18

Introduction

The Pay Policy Statement set out below has been compiled in accordance with Sections 38 to 43 of the Localism Act 2011. The Act requires East Sussex Fire Authority to publish a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year. The information contained in this Statement is based on the pay position of employees as at 31 December 2016, unless otherwise stated. The purpose of a Pay Policy Statement is to provide information to the public on the pay arrangements that apply to employees of the Authority, including the Chief Fire Officer and his direct reports. The Statement also includes information on how decisions to set or change pay are made.

Structure of the Workforce

As at 31 December 2016 the Authority employed 774 people (688 full-time equivalents or FTEs). These employees span various pay groups which perform a variety of roles and have different patterns of working to meet service delivery needs. In its simplest form these are employees who either have an operational role (firefighters working on fire stations, control operators and technical staff working in specialist areas) or those who provide administrative and corporate functions such as finance, information systems and human resources.

The Authority has a third group of employees, namely the Principal Officers (Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer).

Number of FTE Staff Employed by Category as at 31 December 2016:

Staff Group	Definition	Number of Staff in Group
Whole-time Firefighters	Firefighters who work 42 hours a week to crew stations 24 hours a day either as firefighters located at the station, or as firefighters located at the station during the day and responding from their own homes on an on-call basis at night, or who work in specialist areas such as Technical Fire Safety.	355
Sussex Control Centre	Staff who receive 999 calls.	53
On-Call Firefighters	A duty system where firefighters respond from their own homes or workplaces located near to the fire station on an on-call basis.	136
Support Staff	Staff who typically do not wear a uniform and work in administrative and professional support functions.	128
Community Support Front Line	Specialist staff who provide fire and road safety prevention advice and offer home safety services and specialist advice for those more at risk.	13
Principal Officers/ Statutory Officers	Principal Officers comprise the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, and Assistant Chief Fire Officer.	3

Pay Policy

The overarching framework for pay and conditions of service for staff employed by the Authority is governed by three National Joint Councils. These are the NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services, the NJC for Local Government Services and the NJC for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services. The principal role of each of these national bodies is to reach agreement on a national framework of pay and conditions of service for authorities to apply locally. Each NJC is made up of people who represent the employers and others who represent employees; the latter will typically be trade union representatives. The frameworks of pay and conditions set by each of these national bodies are locally referred to as the Grey Book (applies to uniformed staff); the Green Book (applies to staff who do not wear a uniform); and the Gold Book (applies to the Principal and Statutory Officers) respectively.

Each NJC acknowledges that its national framework of pay and conditions will need to be adjusted locally to reflect local needs. Where appropriate, this will be undertaken through local agreement, with recognised trade unions where they exist or, alternatively, through local decision-making processes.

The Equality Act 2010 gives women (and men) a right to equal pay for equal work. The Authority undertook an equal pay audit in 2011 to ensure that its pay and benefits policy and practice were not being applied inconsistently, resulting in unequal pay for work of equal value for men or women. There were no major areas of concern identified as a result of the audit, those areas which did need review have been catered for in the introduction of the new job evaluation scheme during 2016/2017.

Local Variations to Pay and Conditions of Service

The national pay agreements and the terms and conditions constitute a minimum standard but it is acknowledged that these can be modified through local negotiation to reflect local needs. There is a mechanism in place to agree such changes. However, any changes to the pay or conditions of service of the Principal Officers must be approved by the Authority's Principal Officers Appointments Panel. The Fire Authority will be informed of any national changes to the pay or terms and conditions of all employees.

Pay Structure

Each category of staff will be linked to a separate pay structure which is directly linked to a national pay agreement. When the pay agreement has been amended to reflect local needs, Members of the Authority will be updated accordingly.

The pay structure for uniformed staff is based on the national pay agreement which is negotiated and issued by the National Joint Council. The pay structure for uniformed staff is based upon six roles, each having a development or competent pay point. Move from one to the other is based on an individual completing a development programme which is then subject to independent verification. The annual salary within each role is a fixed point salary. This means that, unless the employee is promoted, or a national pay award is agreed, the salary will remain unchanged. Employees may move up the pay structure through promotion into a higher role. For an employee to do this they must be approved by their line manager as having demonstrated the type of behaviours and skills required of an employee operating at the higher level; potentially have attended an assessment centre; and then be successful through interview for a role at the higher level.

The pay structure is different for those staff the majority of whom do not wear a uniform. Employees are appointed to a post which has a specific pay grade assigned to it. Within each grade there are spinal column points. The experience and skills of the employee are evaluated against the requirements of the job which will then determine the pay point to which they are appointed. Progression to higher pay points within the grade is made on an annual basis.

Pay Awards

An annual pay increase is awarded based on the outcome of the relevant national pay negotiation process. Based upon the decisions taken at a national level by the NJCs relevant to this Authority, the Authority's Green Book staff received a pay award of 1%, applicable from 1 April 2016, and Grey Book Staff received a 1% award, effective from 1 July 2016. The pay award for the Principal Officers/Treasurer was a 1% increase and was awarded in January 2016.

How are Grades and Roles Determined?

When a post is created or has changed significantly it is evaluated in order that it can be matched against the appropriate grade for the role. A job evaluation process is used to determine the grade of a post. The process of job evaluation considers a range of factors relating to the demands of the job, including knowledge necessary to do the job; complexity; level of discretion in, and potential impact of, decision-making; accountabilities in relation to people, finance and physical resources such as equipment or property. The job evaluation process ensures that the principle of equal pay for work of equal value is met and that the demands required of the post are assessed as objectively as possible. The job evaluation process includes input from trained individuals from across the organisation, including union representatives.

Pension Arrangements

The Authority currently administers four occupational pension schemes. There are three schemes for firefighters: the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992 (FPS) (closed to new entrants from April 2006), the New Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2006 (NFPS) and the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015 for new entrants. The employee contribution rates effective from 1 April 2015, determined by statute, currently range from 11.0% to 17.0% for the FPS, 8.5% to 12.5% for the NFPS and 10% to 14.5% for FPS 2015, depending on salary level. Employer contribution rates are 21.7% (FPS), 11.9% (NFPS) and 14.3% of core pensionable pay.

The Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015 (FPS 2015), Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS) and New Firefighters' Pension Scheme (NFPS) are statutory schemes. The rules and regulations governing the schemes are laid down by the Government.

There are some provisions of the Schemes that are discretionary. Discretionary powers allow employers such as East Sussex Fire Authority to choose how, or if, they apply certain provisions.

Generally these discretions lead to enhanced benefits to scheme members, but result in an additional strain on the pension fund. As at 31 December 2016 no discretions have been awarded under the schemes.

Green Book staff are auto-enrolled onto the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The employee contribution rates for this scheme currently range from 5.5% to 12.5% depending on salary level. The employer contribution rate is 12.5%.

The new Local Government Pension Scheme 2014 came into effect on 1 April 2014. The Scheme is a 'Career Average Revalued Earnings' (CARE) Scheme, which is a move away from a final salary scheme.

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is a statutory scheme. The rules and regulations governing the schemes are laid down by the Government.

There are some provisions of the Scheme that are discretionary. Discretionary powers allow employers such as East Sussex Fire Authority to choose how, or if, they apply certain provisions.

Generally these discretions lead to enhanced benefits to scheme members, but result in additional costs which fall to the Authority and not to the pension scheme. As at 31 December 2016 no discretions have been awarded under the new scheme.

Senior Officers

The Authority is required to publish information relating to the pay of its most senior employees, which are defined as those employees whose annual salary is £50,000 or more. This information is published on an annual basis in the Authority's Statement of Accounts.

Post	FTE Salary	Notes
Chief Fire Officer	£138,663	Plus management allowance of 12% of salary
Deputy Chief Fire Officer	£111,133	Car provided
Assistant Chief Fire Officer	£104,253	Car provided
Assistant Director – Operational Support & Resilience	£56,685	Response car provided plus 20% flexible duty system allowance.
Assistant Director – Safer Communities	£51,677	Response car provided plus 20% flexible duty system allowance.
Assistant Director – Human Resources & Organisational Development	£58,843	Eligible for lease car provision (taken).
Assistant Director – Training & Assurance	£56,332	Eligible for lease car provision (not taken).
Assistant Director – Planning & Improvement	£55,119	Eligible for lease car provision (not taken).
Assistant Director – Resources / Treasurer	£78,424	Eligible for lease car provision (not taken).
ITG Manager	£66,976	
Strategic Engineering Manager	£55,119	Lease car provision (eligible due to mileage)
Estates Manager	£53,932	
ESMCP Regional Co-Ordinator	£56,685	Response car provided plus 20% flexible duty system allowance.
Finance Manager	£55,119	

Decisions made by the Fire Authority in relation to structure, establishment and posts

The Fire Authority agreed a new structure following a senior management review. The new structure commenced on 1 March 2016. Payments to redundant managers have been in accordance with legislation and Fire Authority procedures, including the 2016/17 pay policy.

Ratio between Highest Earner and Average Earnings of the Organisation and Definition of 'Lowest Paid'

The Authority is required to publish information which expresses as a ratio the difference between the pay of its highest paid employee and the average pay for all other employees.

The Authority is also required to publish its own definition of 'lowest paid' employees as it applies to the Authority's workforce.

The Authority has a range of staff employed on different conditions of service and this means that it has a range of salary levels. Some staff are employed on contracts which are regarded as secondary employment. This means that they are able to undertake their contract in addition to other full-time employment. Specifically, this relates to firefighters who work the 'On Call' duty system, providing on call availability from their home or place of work. These employees have full-time work outside the Authority.

The Authority also has a group of staff employed on annualised contracts. These are part-time contracts worked by staff that may have primary employment elsewhere. However, they could be staff who are already employed by the Authority but whose working pattern allows them to work some additional hours whilst still maintaining appropriate levels of rest. For the purposes of publishing information on the comparison of pay in relation to the Authority's highest earner when compared to the rest of the workforce and a definition of the 'lowest paid' in the context of the Authority, these groups of employees has not been included. This is because these posts constitute secondary employment and will typically be for a lower number of hours, which results in no true full-time equivalent salary. They would, therefore, skew the results of any comparison to full-time salaries.

The table below sets out the difference between the pay of the highest paid employee (the Chief Fire Officer) when compared to the average pay of all other employees. The information illustrates that the Chief Fire Officer's pay is (4.68) times more than the average pay of a competent Firefighter role as at 31 December 2016. This differential is £109,025.

The Chief Fire Officer and Principal Officers received a pay award in January 2016. This was in line with the NJC guidance in that all Principal Officers receive an increase of 1% of basic salary.

	December 2014	December 2015	December 2016
Chief Fire Officer	£135,931	£137,290	£138,663
Mean Salary	£29,054	£29,345	£29,638
Ratio	4.68	4.68	4.68

This ratio is calculated by dividing the Chief Fire Officer's pay by the average mean salary for a Firefighter (excluding secondary contracts). The number of other staff is the average FTE for the 12 months ending 31 December 2016.

The Authority's Definition of 'Lowest Paid' Employees

The Authority regards its lowest paid employees to be those employed on its Green Book conditions of employment. These are employees who do not wear a uniform and who work in administrative and corporate function areas.

Re-Engagement of Employees

The Authority does not have a policy on re-engagement. Former employees are entitled to apply for posts in accordance with a competitive process and, if employed, usual rules on pension arrangements (should the individual be in receipt of one) apply.

Occasionally, due to the specialist nature of the Fire Service, specialists or experts may be called in under a contract for consultancy services. Up to the end of December 2016, one such contract was let. This was to support the Accident Investigation Team following a serious injury to a fire fighter. The contract lasted from 1 July 2015 to 23 September 2015.