

## EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

**Panel** Principal Officer Appointment Panel

**Date:** 18 March 2021

**Title of Report** Relocation Allowance Policy

**By** Hannah Scott-Youldon, Assistant Director People Services,

**Lead Officer** Hannah Scott-Youldon, Assistant Director People Services

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**Appendix** Appendix A – Draft amended Relocation Allowance Manual Note

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### Implications (please tick ✓ and attach to report)

CORPORATE RISK		LEGAL	
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	
FINANCIAL	✓	POLITICAL	
HEALTH & SAFETY		OTHER (please specify)	
HUMAN RESOURCES	✓	CORE BRIEF	

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**PURPOSE OF REPORT** To review the relocation allowance policy and make recommendations to Principal Officer Appointment Panel for consideration.

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**RECOMMENDATION** The Panel is recommended to:

- i) To consider the proposal and increase the relocation policy amount from £8,500 to £10,000 for Principal Officers to coincide with the recruitment of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer vacancy.
  - ii) To ask the Chief Fire Officer to exercise her powers in relation to benefits to approve the uplift in relocation amount for other staff using the delegated power as articulated in paragraph 1.7 to ensure there is one policy for all.
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### 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 At a Principal Officers Appointments Panel (POAP) in 2019 the Assistant Director – People Services was tasked to review the Relocation Policy. This was in recognition that ESFRS would be recruiting 2 new Principal Officers

(POs) in the course of the next 24 months. It had previously been cited by some potential candidates that the relocation policy was one factor that had put them off for applying for a post within the Service.

- 1.2 Recent analysis (see table 1 below) clearly identifies what our neighbouring Services and similar sized Services offer as well as our Local Authority neighbours in relation to relocation package.

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Relocation allowance</b>	<b>Comments</b>
ESFRS	£ 8,500.00	
Kent FRS		No policy - made in exceptional circumstances
Beds FRS	£ 15,000.00	
Northants	£ 8,000.00	
Hants FRS	£ 15,000.00	
West Sx CC	£ 10,000.00	
ESCC	£ 8,000.00	
BHCC	£ 10,000.00	
Lincolnshire		
CC	£ 8,000.00	
Surrey CC	£ 8,000.00	
<b>Average</b>	<b>£ 10,055.56</b>	

- 1.3 Whilst the current ESFRS Relocation policy is not an outlier in relation to what is paid, it is clear from the analysis above that it is one of the lowest and as stated above, has been identified by potential candidates as a blocker for applying for a Principal Officer role in ESFRS.
- 1.4 Further to that the Dec 2020 UK house price index report highlighted that the average home in the UK costs £251,500 but in the South East region it's £341,007.
- 1.5 Therefore, it is recommended that the relocation package be increased to £10,000 to reflect the average paid allowance across our local partners and Fire & Rescue Services. However, the tax free limit remains capped at £8000.
- 1.6 It should be highlighted at this juncture, that the Relocation policy is applicable to all staff across the Service and not just the Principal Officer posts.
- 1.7 POAP can only consider and approve terms and conditions of service for POs, but not other staff.
- 1.8 If an increase to £10K is approved for Principal Officers POAP could ask the Chief Fire Officer to exercise her powers in relation to benefits to approve it for other staff using the following delegated power:-

(viii) for all employees below Assistant Chief Fire Officer, to approve appointments, grading, remuneration and benefits, all categories of leave, training, secondments, engagement in other work, disciplinary matters and dismissals;

Thus ensuring equity of approach to those relocating to the Service and maintaining one policy/approach.