

# Pay Policy Statement 2024/25

## 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 2023 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 their 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 2023 the Authority employed 721 people (611 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, and technical staff working in specialist areas) or those support staff who provide corporate functions such as finance, information technology, governance, community safety 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 2023

Staff Group	Definition	Number of Staff in Group
Operational Staff	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 Fire Safety Operational Planning and Policy and Training Centre instructors.	349
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.	113
Corporate Support Staff	Support staff who provide corporate functions such as finance, information technology, governance, community safety and human resources.	146
Principal Officers/ Statutory Officers	Principal Officers comprise the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Treasurer.	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 (NJC). 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 Corporate Support); and the Gold Book (applies to the Principal Officers).

The Fire Authority has a specific policy which means that salary progression of principal officers is performance related.

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 believes that its pay and benefits policy and practices are being applied consistently, ensuring equal pay for work of equal value for men or women.

## **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.

The service has a pay protection policy method that should be used to protect pay for any variations to employment contracts.

Due to some challenging to fill vacancies, particularly in the area of our professional services, the service has a market supplement policy in place.

The Fire Authority will be informed of any national changes to the pay or terms and conditions of all other 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 operational 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. Movement 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, and then be successful through an appropriate selection process for a role at the higher level.

The pay structure is different for those support staff, the majority of whom do not wear a uniform. Employees are appointed to a post which has a specific job family assigned to it. Within each job family there are pay 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 job family 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 Corporate support staff working to Green Book terms and conditions were awarded increases based on a monetary value of £1925pa or 3.88% whichever was the higher value for 2023, effective from 1 April.

Those uniformed operational staff who work to the Grey book terms and conditions' annual pay awards for 2022/23 and 2023/24 were not agreed until March 2023. This 2 year agreement was for a 7% uplift from 1 July 2023 and a further 5% from the following 1 July.

Pay awards for Principal Officers for 2022 (4% uplift) and 2023 (3.5% uplift) were agreed in the summer of 2023 and backdated accordingly to 1 January of the respective years. This pay award for January 2024 is currently pending agreement by the NJC- Gold Book.

## **How are Grades and Roles Determined?**

When a post within the corporate support area 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 two occupational pension schemes.

For firefighters, they are auto-enrolled onto the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015. The employee contribution rates effective from 1 April 2015, determined by statute, currently range from 11% to 14.5%, depending on salary level. Employer contribution rate has been 28.8% of core pensionable pay from 1 April 2020 but will increase to 37.6% from 1 April 2024.

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 2023 no discretions have been awarded under the schemes.

Corporate support 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 19.45% for the year 2024/25.

The 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 2023, no discretions have been awarded under the new scheme.

Both live pension schemes are 'Career Average Revalued Earnings' (CARE) Schemes.

## 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. Information regarding those employees who influence the decisions of the Fire Authority as a whole i.e. those officers who are members of the Senior Leadership Team and the number of employees whose annual salary is £50,000 or more, is published on an annual basis in the Authority's Statement of Accounts.

Post	FTE Salary	Notes
Chief Fire Officer	£168,466	Car provided
Deputy Chief Fire Officer	£132,467	Car provided
Assistant Chief Fire Officer	£124,370	Car provided
Assistant Director – Resources/ Treasurer	£86,465	Eligible for lease car provision (not taken)
Assistant Director – Planning & Improvement	£69,787	Eligible for lease car provision (not taken)
Assistant Director – Operational Support & Resilience	£69,283	Response car provided plus 20% flexible duty system allowance
Assistant Director – Safer Communities	£69,283	Response car provided plus 20% flexible duty system allowance & CPD payment
Assistant Director – People Services	£69,283	Response car provided plus 20% flexible duty system allowance & CPD payment
Group Manager (Competent) (7 of)	£59,642	Plus 20% Flexible Duty System.
ITG Manager	£57,727	An additional allowance of £5,705pa is provided under the market supplement policy
Strategic Community Safety Manager	£57,727	
Strategic Health, Safety & Wellbeing Manager	£57,727	
Procurement Manager	£57,727	
Planning & Intelligence Manager	£57,727	
Payroll, Pensions & HR Assurance Manager	£57,727	

Human Resources/ Organisational Development Manager	£57,727	
Occupational Health Clinical Lead	£57,727	The funding of this role is shared with Sussex & Surrey Police as part of the occupational health collaboration
Communications & Marketing Manager	£54,529	
Finance Manager	£54,529	An additional allowance of £6,000pa is provided under the market supplement policy
Engineering Manager	£52,999	
Station Managers (23 of)	£51,125	Response car provided plus 20% flexible duty system allowance & CPD payment

### **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 have 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, unbalance 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 other employees. The information illustrates that the Chief Fire Officer's pay is 4.76 times more than the basic pay of a competent Firefighter role (£36,226pa) as at 31 December 2023. This differential is £130,717.

	December 2019	December 2020	December 2021	December 2022	December 2023
Chief Fire Officer	£147,074	£150,015	£152,266	£159,827	£166,943
Mean Salary	£31,144	£31,767	£32,244	£34,501	£36,226
Ratio	4.72	4.72	4.72	4.63	4.6

The approach to the payment of chief officers on their ceasing to hold office under or being employed by the authority will not vary from the approach of any other employee.

All Principal Officers follow a twin track approach to their salary progression.

In accordance with the Gold Book, the first part of this is the cost of living increment, as determined nationally.

Part two of the progression is performance related and moves along the current five point pay scale as below.

Rank	SCP1	SCP2	SCP3	SCP4	SCP5
Chief Fire Officer	162,377	163,899	165,421	166,943	168,466
Deputy Chief Fire Officer	131,237	132,467	133,698	134,928	136,158
Assistant Chief Fire Officer	122,081	123,225	124,370	125,515	126,659

## **The Authority's Definition of 'Lowest Paid' Employees**

The Authority regards its lowest paid employees to be those corporate support staff employed on Green Book terms and conditions of employment.

## **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.

The Services' Organisational Change policy was updated and re-issued in 2022. It addresses rehire of employees who have previously been made redundant.

Occasionally, due to the specialist nature of the Fire Service, specialists or experts may be called in under a contract for consultancy services.

## **Gender Pay Gap Reporting**

Fire and Rescue Services are required by the Equalities Office to submit annually for gender pay gap reporting. The measures are taken from a snapshot date, which for the public sector is the 31 March each year. Our submission deadline for the 2023 data is 31 March 2024.

At the February SLT meeting this report will be presented by People Services. The meeting will be asked to approve the publication of the gender pay gap report for 2023 on the ESFRS website.