

Blackpool Council - Pay Policy Statement

Summary Statement

Blackpool Council is committed to paying all its employees appropriately and fairly using recognised job evaluation schemes that have been tested to ensure that they are free of gender and any other bias. The pay scales for employees at all levels are in the public domain and the Council complies with requirements to publish data on senior salaries and its entire pay scale in the interests of transparency.

In determining the pay and remuneration of all its employees, the Council will comply with all relevant employment legislation. This includes legislation such as the Equality Act 2010; Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000; and where relevant, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Earnings) Regulations.

As far as possible, all Council policies that relate to employment benefits are universally applied unless there is a specific contractual or business reason why they should be limited to a certain group of employees.

Basic Pay

All employees including Chief Officers basic pay is based on job evaluation processes that use the NJC scheme for posts graded at G and below and the Hay scheme for posts graded H1 and above.

Both of these schemes have been tested to ensure that they are free from gender and any other bias and the use of these schemes has been agreed with the relevant recognised trade unions.

Job evaluation panels made up of trade union and management representatives sit on a regular basis to evaluate posts, which in turn produces a score and a grade. At the cross over of the two schemes, there is a protocol for assessing whether the post should be dealt with under the Hay or the NJC scheme. Periodically, the Council uses the services of experts in the two schemes to assist with the evaluation of posts, provide training for staff and monitor the appropriateness of the senior pay line relative to the market.

The Council adopts the national pay bargaining arrangements in respect of the establishment and revision of the national pay spine, for example, through any agreed annual pay increases negotiated with joint trade unions.

Real Living Wage

As an accredited employer to the Living Wage Foundation and in order to support the lowest paid workers in the Council, the Real Living Wage supplement is applied for Council employees whose total hourly rate is currently less than £8.25. (£8.45 from 1 April 2017).

The normal job evaluation processes will continue to determine the grade of posts in the Council. This will not include employees in maintained schools, where pay is a matter for the relevant Governing Body.

Apprentices

Apprentices aged under 25 are paid at the National Minimum Wage during their apprenticeship period. Apprentices aged 25 and over are paid the National Living Wage.

Market Forces Supplements

Market forces supplements are only paid to employees including chief officers in exceptional circumstances and in accordance with the strict controls in the Council's Market Forces Policy. Any such payments are reviewed annually to ensure they remain valid.

Incremental Progression

Progression through the grade for permanent and temporary employees is only possible upon completion of satisfactory service and in line with the NJC Terms and Conditions as described in the Green Book. Chief Officers are required to demonstrate that they have achieved or exceeded their objectives in order to progress through the grade and a scheme is in place to monitor that.

New Appointments

Appointment to new posts are usually made at the bottom of the grade except in exceptional circumstances where the most suitable candidate can evidence that such an offer would not reasonably be acceptable to them and the Council is satisfied that market conditions require the appointment to take place at a higher point than the minimum.

All Chief Officer appointments are dealt with by the Chief Officer Employment Committee, using the normal recruitment procedures. Posts with a remuneration package of more than £100,000 must be ratified by full Council.

Overtime and Additional Hours Payments and Premium Payments

In the absence of any agreement to the contrary, the following applies:

Contractual overtime and additional hours are paid in accordance with the NJC Terms and Conditions as described in the Green Book.

Non contractual, voluntary overtime, additional hours payments are paid in accordance with the Council's Pay Review Booklet.

To meet specific operational requirements it may be necessary for an individual to temporarily take on additional duties to their identified role. The Council's arrangements for authorising any additional remuneration, e.g. honoraria, ex-gratia, 'acting up', relating to temporary additional duties are set out in the Council's Pay Review Booklet

Chief Officers are not paid overtime, additional hours payments or premium payments.

All other pay related allowances are the subject of either nationally or locally negotiated rates, having being determined from time to time in accordance with collective bargaining machinery or through contractual changes.

Honoraria Payments

Subject to certain conditions, employees, with the exception of the Chief Executive and Chief Officers, who are temporarily required to undertake some or all of the duties of a higher graded post are eligible to be paid an honorarium. Details of the scheme can be found in the Council's Honoraria Procedure.

Bonus Payments and Earn Back Schemes

No employees, including Chief Officers in the Council are in receipt of bonus payments or subject to earn back schemes where employees give up some salary to earn it back upon completion of agreed targets.

Relationship between the Highest and the Lowest Paid

The Council is committed to paying employees based on the recognised job evaluation schemes detailed above. It is the application of these schemes that creates the salary differentials. Pay rates for each grade are published on the Council's website.

Relationship between the Highest Paid Employee and the Median Salary

The relationship between the highest paid employee and the median salary will be calculated on an annual basis and published on the Council's website alongside the information provided regarding senior managers salaries.

As part of its overall and ongoing monitoring of alignment with external pay markets, both within and outside the sector, the Council will use available benchmark information as appropriate, for example Epaycheck. In addition, upon the annual review of this statement, the Council will monitor any changes in the relevant 'pay multiples' and benchmark against other comparable local authorities.

Charges, Fees and Allowances

The Travelling, Subsistence and Related Expenses Policy apply to all employees including Chief Officers.

The reimbursement of professional fees for certain occupational groups is covered by the Personnel Code and applies to all relevant employees regardless of grade.

All other allowances paid to employees regardless of grade are detailed in the Council's Pay Review Booklet.

Chief Officers do not receive additional allowance payments.

Pension

Where employees have exercised their statutory right to become members of the Local Government Pension Scheme, the Council is required to make a contribution to the scheme representing a percentage of the pensionable remuneration due under the contract of employment of that employee. The rate of contribution is set by Actuaries advising the Lancashire Pension Fund and reviewed on a triennial basis in order to ensure the scheme is appropriately funded. The employer contribution rates are set by statute and are available from the Payroll Team.

Flexible Retirement

The Council's LGPS Employee Discretions Policy provides the ability for an employee to have their pension benefits released subject to the current policy and relevant approvals.

Electoral Fees

The Chief Executive is the Council's appointed Returning Officer and is personally (not corporately) liable for the management of elections and referendums. The fee payable to the Returning Officer for European, UK Parliamentary, Police and Crime Commissioner and any other election or referendum organised nationally and paid for from Central Government. The fee payable to the Returning Officer for a local election, (which is held every four years) is the same as the fee set nationally for an equivalent election/ referendum, which is run on the local authority boundary.

For a local by-election the Returning Officer's fee is 10% of the fee for a full local election. Other fees paid to employees appointed by the Returning Officer for a local election are paid by the returning Officer, against fees set by the Council.

Redundancy Payments, Severance Payments and Retirement

All employees including Chief Officers are entitled to redundancy payments and pension release in accordance with the Council's Redundancy and Retirement Procedure. Where the proposed severance payment, including salary paid in lieu, redundancy compensation, pension entitlement, holiday pay and any other fees or allowances paid to an employee, is more than £100,000, the decision will be ratified by full Council.

Termination Payments

In exceptional circumstances, the Council may make a termination payment to an individual under a settlement agreement. Such agreements protect the Council where there is a risk of high financial impact and/ or damage to the Council's business or reputation. Payments are authorised by the Chief Executive or his delegated Officers. In the event a settlement agreement involving the Chief Executive or a Chief Officer, where the payment exceeds £100,000, the decision would be made by the Council based on a recommendation from the Chief Officers Employment Committee.

Re-employment/Re-engagement of Former Employees

The Council has an obligation to ensure that it is managing public monies responsibly. It will not re-engage (into the same or a very similar role) ex-employees who have left their prime employment with the Council on the grounds of voluntary or compulsory redundancy, efficiency release or employer consent retirement (where there is a cost to the Council) for a period of 12 months with effect from the date of leaving. This does not cover those employees who access their pension via the Council's Flexible Retirement Scheme.

In addition any proposal to re-engage an ex-employee, who was Graded H3 or above (or equivalent salary) will require the agreement of the Chief Executive following consultation with relevant chief officers.

Scope

This Pay Policy Statement applies to all Council employees. Employees whose terms and conditions of employment have been retained following a TUPE transfer (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment) and are subject to the TUPE Regulations may be excluded from this policy.

Review

The pay policy statement will be kept under review and developments considered in the light of external best practice and legislation. The Council will ensure the pay policy statement is updated on an annual basis in line with the requirement of the Localism Act 2011. The annual pay policy statement will be submitted to Chief Officers Employment Committee and then full Council by March of each year.