

SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL PAY POLICY STATEMENT - 2020/21

This document sets out Somerset County Council's Pay Policy Statement (PPS) for 2020/21 which is revised and published at least annually following approval at Full Council.

1. Background

Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires English and Welsh local authorities to produce a PPS for each financial year.

The Act:

1. Requires the PPS to include the Council's policy on the following:
 - The remuneration of its chief officers
 - The remuneration of its lowest paid employees.
 - The relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and other officers.
 - Other specific aspects of chief officer remuneration such as levels and elements of such remuneration, remuneration on recruitment, increases and additions to remuneration, termination payments and transparency.
2. Requires that the PPS:
 - Must be approved formally by Full Council.
 - Must be approved by the end of March every year for the following financial year.
 - Must be published on the local Council's website as soon as it is approved by the Council.
 - Must be complied with for all decisions on pay and reward for Chief Officers.
3. Makes provision for Full Council to make in year amendments to the PPS at any time and this function cannot be delegated.

2. Definitions

The Act (Section 43) defines remuneration widely as:

- Pay.
- Charges.
- Fees.
- Allowances.
- Benefits in kind.
- Increases/enhancement of pension entitlement.
- Termination payments.

The Act (Section 43) defines Chief Officers as:

- The head of the paid service designated under section 4(1) of the Local

Government and Housing Act 1989;

- The monitoring officer designated under section 5(1) of that Act;
- A statutory chief officer mentioned in section 2(6) of that Act;
- A non-statutory chief officer mentioned in section 2(7) of that Act;
- A deputy chief officer mentioned in section 2(8) of that Act.

For the purposes of this statement all of the Council's senior officers on Grades 1 to 3 fit the above definition. These are collectively referred to as the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) throughout this Statement. In addition, the post of Monitoring Officer (Grade 5) and a number of posts at Grades 4 and 5 fall within the legal definition of 'deputy chief officer'.

3. Pay Data

The Council complies with Data Protection Act obligations and will only publish information about an individual officer's pay where it is required to do so by law.

In accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 and the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, the Council publishes pay information about individual posts for the Chief Executive and SLT on its website and in the Annual Statement of Accounts. The current list of posts and salaries is accessible via the following link.

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/organisation/senior-salaries-and-pay-policy>

In relation to other senior officers of the Council, including the Monitoring Officer, pay information is published on the Council's website relating to:

- Salaries of £50,000 or more by reference to total numbers within bands (grouped in bands of £5,000);
- Details of remuneration and job titles of certain senior employees whose salary is at least £50,000 and a list of responsibilities (for example, the services and functions they are responsible for, budget held and number of staff) and details of bonuses and 'benefits in kind', for all employees whose salary exceeds £50,000.

4. Principles

The key principles underpinning this pay policy statement are:

Affordability – ensuring remuneration policies represent value-for-money for the taxpayer

Fairness – ensuring remuneration policies are fair to all staff, ranging from the most senior post to the most junior post

Meet legislative requirements – ensuring remuneration policies comply with all legal obligations, such as the Equal Pay Act

Market facing – ensuring due regard is taken of the market, both nationally and locally in the South West, and that this policy is in-line with councils of a similar size and / or in a similar labour market.

Tax Avoidance – ensuring that all remuneration arrangements comply fully with HMRC regulations.

5. Determination of Grade

The Council's Grading structure accords with the National Single Status and Green Book agreements. The Grading structure reflects the need to continue to modernise, facilitate new ways of working and ensure equal pay for work of equal value in a large and diverse organisation.

The grading structure treats all groups of staff the same. It uses two schemes to evaluate jobs, covering virtually all employees, except teachers and Soulbury staff, which are subject to national grading schemes.

The Hay Scheme is used for the more senior posts, including the Chief Executive, SLT officers, and Strategic and Service Managers.

The New Somerset Scheme, based on the Greater London Provincial Council scheme (formerly GLEA), is used for all other posts. Some posts cross between the borders of both schemes.

The lowest paid posts in the Council which include posts of Cleaner, Domestic Assistant, Distribution Assistant and General Kitchen Assistant, are paid on Grade 17 (national spinal point 6: £17364 as at 1st April 2019).

The relationship between pay at the lowest and highest levels is therefore controlled by job evaluation.

6. Pay and Grading Structure

The Somerset Pay and Grading structure incorporates National Pay Points up to spinal column point 44 and locally determined pay points above. The current pay and grading structure can be accessed via the following link.

<http://extranet.somerset.gov.uk/EasysiteWeb/getresource.axd?AssetID=95547&type=full&servicetype=Attachment>

The Council operates a 17 grade pay structure. Each grade from 17 up to 9 contains a number of pay increments. On Grades 8 and upwards, there is a single pay point per grade.

The Council does not operate a performance-related pay scheme for any staff, but does have a performance related appraisal scheme, including behaviours and competency assessment. The Council does not pay a bonus to any Council employee and no additional payments are made for election duties.

NJC for Local Government Services (Green Book) pay, terms and conditions apply to posts on Grades 17 to 4 inclusive. Annual pay awards are determined by national agreement.

With the exception of the Monitoring Officer, posts on grades 17 to 4 are officer appointments.

Post holders on Grades 17 – 9 are, subject to satisfactory performance, eligible for annual incremental increases up the pay scale until they reach the top of their grade.

Post holders on Grades 4 – 8 (Strategic and Service Managers) have some localised terms and conditions. Each Grade (4 – 8) has a fixed, spot salary and there is no incremental progression.

7. Chief Executive and SLT Officers Pay

The Chief Executive and other SLT Officers are paid on Grades 1 – 3. All SLT posts on Grades 1 to 3 and the Monitoring Officer are appointed by the Appointments Committee of the Council with the exception of the Chief Executive whose appointment has to be agreed by the Council.

Each of the Grades 1 – 3 has a spot salary and no incremental progression.

Annual Salaries for Chief Executive and SLT posts as at January 2020 range between £92,019 and £162,384, as follows:

Grade 1 Post:
Chief Executive

The salary for Grade 1 Post is £162,384.

Grade 2 Posts:
Director of Childrens Services (DCS)
Director of Finance
Director of Adult Social Services (DASS)
Public Health Director
Lead Commissioner Economic and Community Infrastructure

The salaries for Grade 2 Posts are within the range £108,255 to £140,720 .

Grade 3 Posts:

Director of Corporate Affairs

Economic and Community Infrastructure Operations Director

Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning Director

Adults and Health Operations Director

Deputy Director Children and Families

Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development

Managing Director – Somerset Waste Partnership

The salaries for Grade 3 posts are within the range £92,019 to £108,254.

The default position in the event of a vacancy in any of the above posts is that the salary paid to the person appointed to fill the vacancy will be at the lowest point in the range (which represents the 'spot' to be applied within the grade) unless otherwise agreed by the Chief Executive (or Full Council in the case of the post of Chief Executive) in accordance with the requirements of the PPS.

8. Governance Arrangements (as detailed in the Constitution)

All actions, responsibilities and delegations outlined below must be exercised in accordance with the requirements of this Statement.

Appointments Panel

An Appointments Panel of the Council reviews the terms and conditions of any SLT post that becomes vacant (and, in addition, the post of Monitoring Officer) and where appropriate makes recommendations to the Chief Executive for any changes; decides the appointments process or other course of action; and appoints the Appointments Committee to undertake the appointments process.

The Panel comprises of 3 elected members appointed in accordance with the Constitution and can convene virtually or meet as required. If a Panel decides that no changes to terms and conditions are necessary when it reviews a vacant post (and that the salary will be advertised at the bottom of the range [the 'spot' for the grade] for posts on grades 1 to 3) then the Panel has authority to progress the recruitment without the need to seek further approvals. If a Panel wishes to make changes to the terms and conditions of a vacant post (other than the post of Chief Executive) then these are subject to the approval of the Chief Executive having obtained the agreement of the Leader of the Council. This includes where a Panel wishes to advertise a salary for a post (other than the post of Chief Executive) above the 'spot' at the bottom of the range. This must be the subject of a Panel recommendation to the Chief Executive for decision. If the Panel's recommendations for changes to terms and conditions relate to the post of Chief Executive then Full Council must agree these changes.

Note: The Full Council approval of this Statement meets the provisions of the statutory guidance in relation to senior officer appointments which requires all

posts where the total remuneration package is in excess of £100,000 pa to be approved by Full Council.

Appointments Committee

The Appointments Committee of the Council is responsible for all SLT appointments (and the appointment of the Monitoring Officer) with the exception of the appointment of a Chief Executive which is subject to the approval of Full Council on the recommendation of the Committee. The Committee comprises up to 5 elected members for each individual appointment process and the membership is politically proportioned according to the political membership of the Council. The detailed provisions for the Committee's membership are detailed in the Constitution. If the Committee during the course of an appointment process wishes to vary the terms and conditions or the salary already agreed for a specific post, then such a proposal is subject to the approval of the Chief Executive having obtained the agreement of the Leader of the Council. The exception to this is where the Committee's recommendations relate to the appointment of the Chief Executive where any changes must be agreed by Full Council.

HR Policy Committee

The Committee comprises 6 elected members and the membership is politically proportioned according to the political membership of the Council. This Committee has responsibility for:

- deciding and implementing annual pay awards for the Chief Executive and SLT and, where it is agreed that an award is made, the revised scales will be included for information in the next annual review of the PPS on at least an annual basis the pay and grading structure of the Council (including Chief Officer grades and salaries) and making recommendations for any changes considered necessary to Full Council by way of a revised PPS.

In bringing forward recommendations on these issues, the Committee will take into account:

- the outcome of job evaluation,
- any data/advice/evidence or views collected from appropriate sources, including: the Council's HR function; National and/or Regional Employers' Organisations; independent external pay data
- the needs of the business to recruit and retain senior officers
- the requirements of the PPS and
- fluctuations in the local and national job market.

Special Members' Panel / Committee

The Constitution includes provision for the appointment of a Special Members' Panel to consider (and determine where appropriate) the following issues in relation to SLT Officers and the Monitoring Officer:

- (a) Where the dismissal of an SLT Officer (other than the Chief Executive or the Section 151 Officer) is proposed on disciplinary grounds, Council will determine the dismissal on the recommendation of the Panel;
- (b) Where a proposal is made to dismiss an officer holding a statutory post of Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer, the Panel shall decide whether there is any justification to the proposed dismissal and therefore whether it needs to be investigated. If the decision is that an investigation is necessary, the Panel will appoint an investigator. If the investigation confirms a potential dismissal, the Panel will refer the matter to the Independent Persons' Panel for consideration and report to Council. If the investigation recommends disciplinary action, then the Special Members' Panel shall consider and decide whether disciplinary action is justified and if so agree any action to be taken.
- (c) The Panel has authority to meet as a Committee of the Council to determine any question of disciplinary action in relation to an SLT Officer or the Monitoring Officer.
- (d) Except as otherwise provided for in (a) to (b) above, the Panel has authority from the Council to meet as a Committee of the Council to deal with any question of dismissal of an SLT Officer on the grounds of redundancy (including voluntary), permanent ill-health or infirmity of mind or body. The exception to this is where a proposed financial settlement for an officer leaving the Council exceeds £100,000. In these circumstances Full Council must agree the settlement.

The Special Members' Panel shall comprise of 6 Members appointed by the Leader of the Council (or his/her nominated representative) and comprising:-

- (a) The Leader of the Council (or his/her nominated representative)
- (b) The Leader of the largest opposition group (or his/her nominated representative)
- (c) 4 other Members of the Council selected by the Leader of the Council in consultation with the other Group Leaders and in accordance with the rules of political proportionality.

Note: The membership of the Panel will not include any Member previously involved in an individual Officer's case.

Independent Persons' Panel

Any proposal to dismiss a statutory post-holder holding the position of Chief Executive, the Chief Finance Officer or the Monitoring Officer must be determined by the Council on the recommendation of the Independent Persons' (IPs) Panel comprising a minimum of 3 IPs in accordance with the Local Authority (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015. The IPs are selected from a joint Somerset Councils' Panel of IPs. The Panel is appointed by the Chief Executive (or the Director of HR where the Chief Executive is the subject of the proposed dismissal). The Panel shall be appointed a minimum of 20 days before the Council is due to meet to consider

the dismissal.

Note

This section summarises the detailed arrangements set out in Section 7 of Part 1 of the Constitution.

Chief Executive: Delegated Powers

The Chief Executive has been designated by the Council as the Head of the Paid Service and is therefore responsible for the Council's Senior Leadership Team and supporting officer structures of the Council. Any changes proposed by the Chief Executive to the staffing structure shall be subject to consultation with the Cabinet before the changes are agreed by way of an Officer Decision taken by the Chief Executive. Full Council will be informed of changes agreed at the next available opportunity.

The Chief Executive has authority:

- To appoint and dismiss all employees except where this function is specifically delegated to Members.
- To approve changes to the terms and conditions of all SLT posts and the post of Monitoring Officer on the recommendation of the Appointments Panel or the Appointments Committee or on his / her own initiative and having obtained the agreement of the Leader of the Council. The exception to this authority is the post of Chief Executive. All decisions taken by the Chief Executive on such matters will be the subject of a formal Officer Decision which will be published on the Council's website as soon as it is confirmed.
- After having sought the agreement of the Leader, and after appropriate consultations, to agree:
 - (a) acting up arrangements into SLT positions (other than that of Chief Executive) to cover periods of temporary absence either planned or unplanned
 - (b) emergency cover arrangements for the statutory chief officer roles (other than that of Chief Executive) where these positions become vacant between Full Council meetings. Any such agreement will be subject to review and confirmation at the next available Full Council meeting
 - (c) the recruitment of interims at SLT level in accordance with the requirements of section 11 of this Statement.

NB Only Full Council may approve acting up or temporary cover arrangements for the role of Chief Executive.

Before making decisions in relation to the staffing structure or individual posts, the Chief Executive is required to consider:-

- the views of the relevant Cabinet Member, the Chairman of the HR Policy Committee and the Opposition Spokesperson, and, as appropriate:-

- the outcome of job evaluation,
- any data/advice/evidence or views collected from appropriate sources, including: the Council's HR function; National and/or Regional Employers' Organisations; independent external pay data
- the needs of the business to recruit and retain senior officers;
- the performance of individual SLT Officers
- the requirements of the PPS and
- fluctuations in the local and national job market.

The Chief Executive has authorised other officers to appoint and dismiss staff Grades 4 and below (with the exception of the Monitoring Officer), in line with normal Council appointments processes.

SLT Officers are subject to the same terms and conditions as other employees in respect of termination of employment. The only exception is that SLT Officers and the Monitoring Officer are subject to modified disciplinary procedures as outlined in this Statement and in the Council's Constitution.

9. Chief Executive Remuneration relative to other Council employees

The recommendation of the Hutton Report into "Fair Pay in the Public Sector", as recognised by the Government in the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, was that the Council should publish the pay ratio of the salary of the Chief Executive compared to the median average salary in the organisation.

As at 1st January 2020, the ratio of the pay of the Council's median earner (£24,799) to that of its Chief Executive (£162,384) was 1: 6.55.

10. Pay Policy upon Appointment to posts below SLT level

Internally Appointed Candidates

On promotion an officer must be appointed to the spot pay point or the minimum point on the scale, whichever is applicable. If there are special circumstances where it is considered that an increase in excess of the minimum is merited, then it will be necessary to consult the Director of HR and OD (or their nominated representative) and this must be done before any formal offer is made to the candidate.

Externally Appointed Candidates

The starting salary of an externally appointed candidate would normally be the spot pay point or the minimum point on the scale, whichever is applicable. However, the Council could pay a point within the incremental scale if the candidate is already paid on a higher salary or where their experience is beneficial to the Council. Should there be any doubt about repercussions elsewhere, the Director of HR and OD (or their nominated representative) should be consulted.

Transferred Officers

Where employees move between operational areas on the same grade with an incremental scale, no increment is payable at the time of transfer. The service is regarded as continuous for the purpose of annual incremental advancement. Therefore, where an officer's salary on 1 April following appointment, promotion or re-grading would be less than one spinal column point of their old salary the officer shall be entitled to their first increment on 1 April.

Promotion or Re-grading

On promotion within the Council to a post on a grade with an incremental scale, and which carries a higher maximum salary than their previous grade, or on the re-grading of their existing post based on increased duties and responsibilities, the officer shall be paid a salary in accordance with the new grade which is at least one spinal column point in excess of the salary they would have received on the old grade on the day of appointment, promotion or re-grading.

11. Appointment of Agency Interims at SLT level

Where the Council is unable to permanently recruit officers at the most senior level, there could be a requirement for that substantive post to be covered by an interim appointment. Interims will be supplied to the Council through a supplier to deliver the required cover.

The Council has various supplier options to supply interims in adherence with Procurement and Financial Regulations.

An interim's term of employment and contract is direct with the supplier and not the Council. The interim shall be solely responsible for complying with

legal requirements including the payment and accounting of taxes. In addition, the supplier should make the relevant declaration and checks in order to satisfy themselves that the interim abides by the relevant UK tax law.

Having obtained the agreement of the Leader of Council, the Chief Executive will approve the recruitment of interims at SLT level on a case by case basis and based on a business case presented by the Appointments Panel which takes into account:

- value-for-money for the taxpayer
- the evaluated grade of the post to be covered
- the public profile of the post
- risks to the Council
- the labour market, both nationally and locally in the South West, for interims providing cover for similar posts in councils of a similar size

Interims will be supplied to the Council in accordance with its Contract Standing Orders, relevant Procurement, Legal and Financial Regulations.

The Appointments Committee will interview candidates for interim appointments at SLT level to assess their suitability for the role and will confirm appointments.

SLT level interim appointments will be subject to formal review by the Chief Executive at the end of six months and at six monthly intervals thereafter to assess whether there is a requirement to retain their services. The original Appointments Committee will be consulted where the Chief Executive proposes to extend the engagement of an interim. The final decision on the extension of an interim rests with the Chief Executive.

Appointment of Agency Interims below SLT level

All interim appointments below SLT level will be sourced by the relevant SLT Officer or the Chief Executive where an SLT Officer is unable to act.

If this interim is to be employed at a rate of over £500 per day:

- The appointment will be subject to a formal review process at the end of the first six months and six monthly thereafter; and
- Any decision to extend the engagement of such an interim will require the approval of the Chief Executive.

All other interim appointments will be subject to a formal review process at the end of the first six months and six monthly thereafter and the decision to extend the engagement of such appointments rests with the relevant SLT Officer.

12. Recruitment and Retention Allowances

External recruitment and internal retention problems are tackled by temporarily increasing the total pay awarded to a post, when it can be shown that the pay on the evaluated grade is significantly lower than competitors'

rates of pay.

The payment of an allowance is temporary and will not be renewed if a review finds evidence that demonstrates the payment of the allowance is no longer justified.

An allowance forms part of an employee's pay (all the salary, wages, fees and other payments paid to them for their own use in respect of their employment) and as such is pensionable. An allowance is expressed as a cash lump sum, pro-rata to the contracted hours, and is not subject to annual cost of living/inflation pay awards.

Approval of recruitment and retention allowances in respect of:

- SLT posts and the Monitoring Officer post (with the exception of the post of Chief Executive) shall be determined by the Chief Executive following consultation with the Leader of Council and on the recommendation of the appropriate Appointments Panel in relation to new appointments
- The post of Chief Executive will be agreed by Full Council
- All other posts shall be determined by the Director of HR and OD or nominated officer, following a business case presented by the manager and having consulted with a group of senior managers.

13. Travel and Subsistence

The Council's intention is that employees should not be financially disadvantaged in going about its business and that they are fairly compensated for expenditure incurred. However, managers and employees are expected to organise journeys in the most efficient and effective manner possible and, in submitting claims, to adopt a reasonable approach.

SLT Officers are subject to the same policies as all other staff. Expenses paid to SLT Officers are published in the Annual Statement of Accounts.

14. Reimbursement of Fees

The Council will meet the cost of:-

- Practising Certificate required by Solicitors employed by the Council.
- Annual cost of membership of ARCUK required by practising Architects employed by the Council.

The Council will not pay fees and subscriptions payable by the Chief Executive and other Officers, to professional qualification bodies and local government-based societies and associations.

Fees and subscriptions payable by the Chief Executive and SLT Officers to associations that are inter-Council networking organisations (as distinct from

subscriptions to professional bodies) should be reimbursed subject to individual cases being approved by the Chief Executive and Director of HR and OD in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member.

Where Committees consider that the Council may derive benefit by such officers attending meetings/working parties of local government-based societies/associations travelling and subsistence expenses incurred may be reimbursed subject to prior approval.

15. Additional Payments

Allowances are paid in line with NJC terms and conditions (Green Book), or by local agreements where relevant.

Any allowances paid to SLT Officers are disclosed in the Annual Statement of Accounts.

The Council has no policy for making benefits in kind.

16. Salary Protection for Redeployed Employees at Risk of Redundancy

This applies to all staff (excluding Officers on Grade 8 and above - please see below).

Protection will not apply to redeployed employees with less than two years local government service.

Salary protection arrangements will be for a period of three years during which annual cost of living pay increases and incremental progression will be awarded.

At the end of this period the substantive grade of the new post will be applicable.

It should be noted that salary protection is in place to ease the financial implications on those being redeployed and does not extend beyond salary.

As from 1st April 2014, Officers on Grades 8 and above receive one year's frozen pay protection.

17. Pension

All employees are eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (“LGPS”). The Redundancy & Efficiency Compensation Policies and Flexible Retirement Policy apply to all staff. The Council has determined and published policies around the discretions available under the LGPS. The Council makes no enhancements or increases to individual pension benefits.

The Council applies its discretion under the regulations of the LGPS to allow employees aged 55 and over who are members of the LGPS to request payment of early retirement benefits whilst remaining in the Council's employment on reduced hours/lower grade. This does not apply to employees who are receiving a redundancy payment and early pension benefits or who are taking early retirement in the interests of the efficiency of the service.

Re-engagement of employees who are in receipt of a Local Government Pension should be through Reed Recruitment.

The Council may re-employ employees who have been made redundant whether through voluntary, compulsory or early retirement.

Managers who are employing an employee in this category should ensure that the usual selection processes are applied.

Employees should be advised that the combined pension and salary of their new post should not exceed the salary of their previous post. Otherwise their pension will be abated.

A number of employees have transferred to the Council under a specific staff transfer arrangement which allowed them to continue membership of the NHS pension scheme. The Council makes contributions on their behalf and complies with Pension Legislation in respect of the NHS scheme.

18. Settlement Agreements

In exceptional circumstances to avoid or settle a claim or potential dispute, the Council may agree payment of a settlement sum on termination.

All cases must be supported by a business case and take account of all legal, financial, contractual and other responsibilities.

Aside from the provisions in section 8, all settlement payments on termination of the contract of a post require the approval of the relevant SLT Officer.