

North Herts District Council - Pay Policy Statement 2020/21

• INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Local Authorities are required by section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 (the Act) to prepare a pay policy statement and view it alongside the Local Government Transparency Code 2015. This statement outlines our current policy and matters required by the Act and the Transparency Codes relating to the pay of staff particularly senior staff and the lowest paid employees.
- 1.2 This is the ninth annual statement and covers the financial year 2020/21. The statement will be updated and approved annually by full Council. This statement is published on the Council's Website. This version of the statement was updated in September 2020 to reflect changes to pay following a national local government pay increase of 2.75% and changes to the senior structure of the Council.

BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Under the 1997 National Joint Committee (NJC) Single Status Agreement, Councils were required to harmonise pay and conditions for comparable posts; a requirement that affected 1.5 million public sector employees. NHDC completed its pay review in 2004, adopting Hay Job Evaluation and other elements of remuneration. The Hay method of evaluation is widely used by both public and private sector organisations. The Hay method works across the board, all posts from the Chief Executive post down are evaluated by the Hay Job Evaluation Scheme using the same criteria.
- 2.2 The Council's pay and benefits package was given approval by Cabinet in February 2004.
- 2.3 Following a senior management reorganisation in 2009, another Job Evaluation was carried out by Hay on Senior Posts and included an update of market data at that time. Hay also carried out the job evaluations for the new Deputy Chief Executive post introduced in 2017 and the new Service Director posts introduced in 2018.
- 2.4 The People Strategy 2015 - 2020 identified considerable recruitment and retention issues ahead for the Council. During 2016 Hay consultants were asked to compare the job evaluation outcomes with market rates both nationally and in London and the South East, an exercise that was first carried out when the new pay scales were introduced for single status in 2004. It identified the Council's pay rates to be 6.17% to 8.75% below the comparators. This carries some risk and is set out in the medium term financial strategy.
- 2.5 For most staff, the pay deal for 2018/19 and 2019/20 was a two year pay agreement of 2% for most staff and another bottom loaded increase for the lowest paid to keep pace with the rising National Living Wage.
- 2.6 The Trade Union (Unison) Pay Claim for 2020/21 was positioned by the Trade Unions as a "bold" pay claim after the pay freezes and low increases in recent years. The pay claim calls for pay deal of 10% or £10 per hour, whichever is greater.
- 2.7 After a long period of national pay bargaining, it was announced on 24 August that the Local Government Employers final offer of 2.75% was agreed, including Chief

Officers and Chief Executives. Pay increases and arrears to April 2020 were paid in September salaries.

GRADING

- 3.1 Our pay scales contain 16 pay bands which each contain 6 incremental points with the exception of Grade 16 which contains 5 incremental pay points. Grade 1 is the lowest and Grade 16 is the highest of these pay grades. Posts are allocated to a pay band through Hay job evaluation. Incremental progression through the pay points is annual, based on satisfactory performance. The Council does not operate performance related pay or a bonus system.
- 3.2 The lowest grade is Grade 1. Following the 2020/21 pay increase, the bottom of the Grade 1 pay band is £18,024, the top is £19,200 and the median £18,672.
- 3.3 The Enterprise Act 2016 regulations introduced a Levy for Apprenticeship training set at a rate of 0.5% of an employer's pay bill. The Enterprise Act 2016 also set out that public sector bodies should employ apprentices and may be set targets to increase Apprenticeships and the Levy is now used for the Apprenticeship training.
- 3.4 The Council has since 2013, employed a number of temporary Apprentices in support of helping young people and others gain paid meaningful work experience and to help them go on and find permanent employment. Those doing a Business Administration Apprenticeship will be paid at the bottom of Grade 1, £18,024. The period of employment will be 18 months which is the course timescale for this Apprenticeship. Those doing a higher Apprenticeship may be paid more and the posts will be evaluated, these are likely to take longer than 18 months.
- 3.5 There are 17 managers at Grade 12 earning £46,896 to £55,164. These are typically professional /senior technical officers or service managers.
- 3.6 The table below shows the current positions for Chief Officers on Grades 14 to 16.

Position	Grade	Bottom of Pay Scale £	Top of Pay Scale £
Service Director Commercial	14	65,556	77,100
Service Director Customers	14	65,556	77,100
Service Director Legal & Community	14	65,556	77,100
Service Director Place	14	65,556	77,100
Service Director Regulatory (Plus allowance of 10% for deputising for the Managing Director)	14	65,556	77,100
Service Director Resources	14	65,556	77,100
Temporary part time Service Director Transformation	14	Pro-rata of 65,556	Pro Rata of 77,100
Managing Director	16	112,236	123,480

- 3.7 The values of the pay points within these pay grades are up rated by the pay awards notified from time to time by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. For the Managing Director the up-rate is usually determined via the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives of Local Authorities and for Service

Director grades usually up-rated by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities, as the JNC conditions of service apply to these posts.

3.8 4.4 (aa) of the Council's constitution states that Council will agree any award that exceeds the financial limits set out in this Pay Policy Statement. A salary package includes salary and fees or allowances routinely payable to the appointee and any benefits in kind to which the officer is entitled as a result of their employment. It is proposed that that the limit is retained at £100,000, and therefore will apply to the Managing Director post only, as no other posts are expected to reach this threshold.

3.9 The same limit (£100,000) is currently applied to discretionary severance compensation payment award, which includes:

- Salary paid in Lieu of Notice
- Outstanding Holiday Pay
- Redundancy/Compensation under the Discretionary Compensation Regulations 2006
- Pension strain costs to the Employer

This limit could apply to a much greater range of people, as for pension strain it will depend on length of service, current and recent salary amounts and time until standard retirement date.

3.10 The Public Sector and Recovery Regulations were expected to come in force from October 2016. The proposals included placing a cap on exit payments of £95,000, introducing greater consistency to the basis of calculation of exit pay in the Public Sector. It was intended they apply to both voluntary and compulsory exits and where a number of payments are made, they would be aggregated together to be measured against the £95,000 cap. It was expected to include: -

- Redundancy
- Pay in lieu of notice
- Settlement Agreement payments
- Costs arising from early pension access
- Other voluntary exits with compensation packages
- Ex gratia payments and special severance payments
- Other benefits granted as part of the exit process that are not payments in relation to employment
- Payments relating to the cashing up of outstanding entitlements

An update received in November 2016 stated there had been some slippage in the timetable and following this another consultation opened on 10 April 2019 and closed on 3 July 2019 The Council Contributed to the consultation through EELGA. For a very long while there was no response to the Consultation until an announcement during 2020 that the government intend to proceed with the Exit Payment cap, it will require an amendment to the Local Government Pension Scheme and a further update will be in the 2021/2022 Pay Policy Statement.

3.11 Returning Officer/counting officer fees are paid by the parish, North Herts District Council or the Government and are payable to the Returning Officer in respect of Elections and referendums. In setting a scale of fees and charges for local elections (district, town and parish elections) the Council is complying with The Representation of The People Act 1983, (section 36). These fees will be approved by Full Council.

4. FUTURE APPOINTMENTS AND INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 If the need arises to provide agency or interim cover the policy is to seek to cap the cost of that appointment at no more than that of the permanent appointment taking into account additional employment costs, pension contributions, national insurance, paid leave etc. However, where necessary a higher “market rate” will be paid to secure a suitable individual and market rate will be established by reference to soft market testing, external independent advice and dialogue with peer authorities.
- 4.2 Engaging senior people on a temporary basis as a self-employed worker, a consultant or via an agency occurs in isolated instances only. This form of employment is a last resort when it is in the economic or operational interests of the Council.
- 4.3 The use of severance agreements and “off payroll” arrangements was the subject of Guidance issued for local authorities in March 2015, IR35. From 6 April 2017, responsibility for assessing IR35 status and for deducting and accounting for Pay as You Earn (PAYE) and National Insurance Contributions (NIC) became the responsibility of the public sector body engaging them. The HMRC have developed an on-line tool to assess whether IR35 applies. HR and Accounts worked together on the processes to implement these changes.

5 PAY MULTIPLES

- 5.1 In the Hutton Report of March 2011, concern was expressed about multiples in the order of 20 or higher between the lowest and the highest paid employees in local authorities. The Council is not required to publish details of these pay multiples but has decided to do so in the interests of transparency. The Council is satisfied that the multiples shown in Table 2 below are justifiable and equitable as these rates are set out in the Job Evaluation scheme which applies to all the Council’s posts.
- 5.2 Under the Local Government Transparency Codes 2014 and 2015, the Council must publish the ratio between the highest paid salary and the median salary of the whole of the Authority’s workforce. The highest paid salary including allowances is £127,480. The median salary of the whole of the Local Authority’s workforce is £27,636 and the multiple is 4.61.
- 5.3 The multiple of the median of the lowest paid compared to the highest paid has reduced from 7.94 in 2012/13 to 4.61 in 2020/21.

Position /Grade	Pay Range	Median	
Grade 1	£18,024 - £19,200	£18,672	
Position /Grade	Pay Range	Median Inc Car allowance	Multiple of Grade1 Median
Managing Director - Grade 16	£112,236 – £123,480	£121,852	6.52

Service Directors - Grade 14	£65,556 - £77,100	£71,316	3.81
Service Managers - Grade 12	£46,896 - £55,156	£51,024	2.73

The Council is satisfied that the multiples shown in 5.2 and 5.3 are justifiable and equitable and our rates are set by our Job Evaluation scheme and apply to all the Council's posts.

6. CAR ALLOWANCES

- 6.1 Employees who need to use their cars on a frequent basis for work related travel get a frequent car user allowance of £1,239. For all low and frequent car users the mileage is paid at of 45p per mile (up to 10,000 miles per year). If passengers are carried and extra 5p can be claimed per mile. The rates changed during 2019/20 and no longer vary with engine size.
- 6.2 In setting car allowances for senior managers it was agreed that lease cars or the cash equivalent would be provided to Grades 11 and above as part of the overall reward package to attract and retain staff at the time. This was agreed at the meeting of Council on 12 February 2004.
- 6.3 A review of the benefit was carried out in 2011 and it was decided to phase out the provision of lease cars but maintain the car allowance which has not been increased since 2004.

Car Allowance

Grade 11 -12 £3,000 p.a.
Grade 13 -14 £3,500 p.a.
Grade 15 -16 £4,000 p.a.

The Car Allowance Mileage Rate is 12.3p per mile.

7. OTHER PAYMENTS

- 7.1 Section 38 (4) of the Act specifies that in addition to senior salaries, authorities must also make clear what approach they take to the award of other elements of senior remuneration, including bonuses, performance related pay as well as severance payments. The Council does not use either performance related pay or bonuses. Any other payments such as payments for taking on additional responsibility or covering absences or vacancies are calculated using the same formulas regardless of grade, current pay rates are set out in the Employee Handbook.
- 7.2 Any severance payments should be made in accordance with the Council's Early Severance Policy and prevailing legislative requirements. The only other severance payments would be those set out in a severance settlement agreement or to settle an employment dispute to prevent, resolve or settle an Employment Tribunal Claim. In agreeing the terms for such cases due regard will be given to ensuring the cost is justifiable in relation to the circumstances and that the proposed outcome is in the best interests of the Council and represents a proper use of public funds.

8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME CONTRIBUTIONS (LGPS)

- 8.1 The Local Government Pension Scheme is one of the largest public sector pension schemes in the UK. The LGPS is a nationwide scheme and is a valuable part of the pay and reward package for employees working in local government. The LGPS differs from many other public sector pension schemes in that it is a funded scheme i.e. it has assets to pay its pensions. For North Herts District Council, the scheme is administered by Hertfordshire County Council via a contract with the South East fund, the London Pensions Partnership.
- 8.2 The current Employer contribution rate is 18.6% for all grades. This increased from 15.5% following the 2016 triennial valuation. Another triennial valuation carried out in 2019 has seen the current rate stay at 18.6%. This latest valuation did increase the amount that the Council will pay towards past service costs i.e. benefits that have been accrued by employees in the past that were not fully funded at the time.
- 8.3 There has been a significant number of changes to the scheme that have gradually reduced benefits and increased employee contribution rates. This is due to the need to maintain the affordability of the scheme, with people living longer and drawing their pension for longer periods. The last significant change to the scheme was in April 2014. The table below shows the Career Average Revaluated Earnings (CARE) scheme which came into effect from 1 April 2014. The Employee Contribution bands for 2019/20 are set out in the table below. Further reforms to the LGPS are expected due to the Public Sector Exit Payment Cap.

LGPS 2014	
Basis of Pension	Career average revaluated earnings CARE
Revaluation Rate	Based on CPI
Accrual Rate	1/49 th
Pensionable Pay	Pay including non contractual overtime and additional hours for part time staff
Employee Contribution Rates	Up to £14,600 5.5% £14,601 £22,800 5.8% £22,801 £37,100 6.5% £37,101 £46,900 6.8% £46,901 £65,600 8.5% £65,601 £93,000 9.9% £93,001 £109,500 10.5% £109,500 £164,200 11.4%

- 8.4 The Single Tier State Pension ended the previous contracting out of NI arrangements from April 2016. As a result, LGPS members pay an additional 1.4% of their earnings between £5,564 and £40,004. Employer NI contributions have also risen.

Flexible Retirement Pension Discretion

- 8.5 The Council allows flexible retirement under its pension discretions. This is where an employee draws their pension and carries on working at a lower grade and/or on reduced hours. It is available to LGPS members who are aged 55 or over, and who,

with the Council's consent, permanently significantly reduce their hours and/or reduce their grade. The employee's pension is actuarially reduced if paid before age 65. This policy applies to all grades, but applications would be at the Council's discretion giving due regard to the business implications and succession planning.

9. PUBLICATION

- 9.1 This is the ninth annual statement and applies to the financial year, beginning 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. This statement was approved by a meeting of full Council on 6 February 2020. The statement will be updated and approved annually by full Council. This version was created in October 2020 to update pay rates following the 2020/2021 Pay agreement and the changes to the senior structure that took place between July and September 2020.
- 9.2 In addition to this statement, the Council is required to publish the details of Chief Officer pay in the annual Statement of Accounts. The draft and final Accounts are published on the Council's website.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- Local Government Transparency Code 2015
- Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015
- (Draft) The Repayment of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations 2015
- Enterprise Act 2016
- The use of Severance Agreements and off payroll arrangements - Guidance for Local Authorities March 2015
- Annual Statement of Accounts
- Employee Handbook
- Early Severance Policy
- Market Forces Policy
- NHDC Pension Discretions
- Retirement Policy
- Additional Responsibility Pay Policy