

County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority

Pay Policy Statement 2023/24

1. Background

This document outlines the key principles of County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority's (the Authority's) pay policy for 2023/24 aimed at supporting the recruitment and remuneration of the workforce in a fair and transparent way. The policy complies with the Government guidance issued under the Localism Act 2011 (the Act) and sets out:

- the approach towards the remuneration of the posts covered by the terms and conditions of the National Joint Council (NJC) for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services (Gold Book).
- the remuneration of the lowest paid employees.
- the relationship between the remuneration of Brigade Managers and the remuneration of employees who are not Brigade Managers.

County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority is an equal opportunities employer and in setting the pay arrangements for the workforce seeks to pay salaries that are in accordance with the:

- NJC for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services, Constitution and scheme of conditions of service.
- national terms and conditions as set out in the NJC for Local Authorities' Fire and Rescue Services, Scheme of conditions of service for other uniformed members of staff.
- national pay scales and the job evaluation procedure for non-uniformed employees.

2. Posts covered by the NJC Terms and Conditions of Employment for Fire and Rescue Service Brigade Managers (posts defined within the Act as Chief Officers)

The following three posts are covered by the NJC Terms and Conditions of Employment for Fire and Rescue Service Brigade Managers:

Chief Fire Officer
Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Deputy Chief Executive

The Authority has responsibility for:

- appointing Brigade Managers.
- setting the level of pay for Brigade Managers.
- reviewing the pay of Brigade Managers.

Appointment of Brigade Managers

Decisions on the recruitment of Brigade Managers are taken by the Fire Authority. An Appointments Panel is established for the purposes of undertaking a robust recruitment process. Decisions on appointing Brigade Managers are made by the Fire Authority taking account of recommendations from the Appointments Panel.

Principles of Brigade Managers Pay

The principles for setting Brigade Managers pay are set out in the NJC Terms and Conditions of Employment for Fire and Rescue Service Brigade Managers.

The Salary Review Group makes recommendations to the Authority on the pay arrangements for Brigade Managers.

In doing so the Salary Review Group takes account of NJC Terms and Conditions of Employment for Fire and Rescue Service Brigade Managers and other factors including:

- The market in which the Authority operates.
- The Authority's short and long-term objectives.
- The Authority's relative size.
- The size of the senior team and responsibilities of individual posts.
- Required on-call arrangements as determined by the Executive Rota.
- The cost of the policy over the short, medium and longer term.
- The total remuneration package.
- The expectations of the community and stakeholders.
- Links with how the wider workforce is remunerated and national negotiating frameworks.

The Salary Review Group also has access to external independent advice on Brigade Managers pay which can be used to consider the context of pay decisions taking account of wider public and private sector pay levels.

3. Key Principles of the Brigade Manager Pay Policy

- (i) The Brigade Manager pay policy is designed to be clear and transparent to those within the roles and key stakeholders. The structure and level of the pay arrangements enable the Authority to attract, motivate and retain key senior talent.
- (ii) The policy is based on spot salaries with clear differentials between levels of work/job size. This policy is reviewed on an on-going basis to ensure it remains fit for purpose and in line with the terms and conditions of Brigade Managers.
- (iii) The Authority's pay policy does not currently include provision for performance related pay, bonuses or other additions to basic salary based on individual or organisational performance.
- (iv) In setting the pay policy for Brigade Managers, a market position has been reached that aims to attract and retain the best talent available at

a senior level. The qualifications, experience and calibre of the Brigade Managers employed are considered by the Authority to be amongst the best available in the country.

- (v) Roles at Brigade Manager level have been subject to an externally ratified job evaluation scheme that is transparent and auditable to ensure equality proofing of pay levels.
- (vi) Other terms and conditions for Brigade Managers are defined in the NJC Terms and Conditions of Employment for Fire and Rescue Service Brigade Managers. These terms and conditions set out the arrangements for national and local pay negotiations.
- (vii) On recruitment the Authority will consider and agree the conditions of employment and salary of the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Emergency Response and Director of Community Protection. Consideration will be given to market forces, national government policy, local indicators and NJC guidance.
- (viii) The current individual salaries of Brigade Managers are as follows:

	Annual Salary
Chief Fire Officer	£149,190
Deputy Chief Fire Officer	£119,352
Deputy Chief Executive	£64,746 (0.6 FTE)

- (ix) The statutory officer function of Treasurer to the Fire Authority is undertaken by the Deputy Chief Executive who reports to the Chief Fire Officer. The Deputy Chief Executive is employed for 22.5 hours per week (0.6 full time equivalent).
- (x) The statutory officer function of Clerk to the Fire Authority is provided by Durham County Council under a Service Level Agreement and the post is filled by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services. Details of the pay policy for this position are available in the Durham County Council pay policy.

4. The policy relationship between Brigade Managers pay, the lowest paid workers and the wider workforce

Employees that are conditioned to the “Grey Book” NJC for Local Authorities' Fire and Rescue Services, scheme of conditions of service) are paid in accordance with national terms and conditions.

Other employee groups have their pay scales based on a nationally agreed job evaluation system that has been in place since 2008. This arrangement allows for incremental progression in pay for the wider workforce, based on national spinal column points and linked to service in post. This approach towards pay for the wider workforce, and the use of established job evaluation schemes, ensures a planned approach towards pay policy that is accountable, transparent and fair. Pay grades for staff are published as part of the Authority's pay and grading information and are available from the website.

In line with the policy for senior staff, no performance related pay arrangements or bonuses are currently in place for the wider workforce.

Pay multiples for staff based on the pay policy are set out in the table below:

Firefighter multiple	£
Chief Fire Officer salary	149,190
Basic Firefighter salary	32,244
Pay multiple	4.6

Non-Firefighter multiple	£
Chief Fire Officer Salary	149,190
Basic Non-operational salary	20,441
Pay multiple	7.3

The ratio between the pay of the Chief Fire Officer and the lowest paid firefighter is 4.6:1 and against the lowest paid workers that are employed is 7.3:1. Figures published by Government set out an expectation that the pay multiple should be below a ratio of 20:1 in local government.

5. The Approach towards Payment for those Officers Ceasing to Hold Office Under or be Employed by the Authority

Termination of Employment

The Authority has an agreed redundancy policy in relation to officers whose employment is terminated via either voluntary or compulsory redundancy. This policy provides a clear, fair and consistent approach towards handling early retirements and redundancy.

Decisions on early retirements and redundancy are made by the Human Resources Committee. Where the value of a severance payment exceeds £100,000 the decision is made by the Authority.

In setting this policy, the Authority does currently retain its discretion to utilise the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales Regulations) 2006.

Policy towards Re-employment and Pension Abatement

The Authority will consider re-employment of retired employees in accordance with the relevant pension scheme regulations and governance arrangements. There is no automatic right to be re-employed. The decision will be strictly based on organisational need and will normally follow an open and fair selection process.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, published in May 2018, stated that Fire Authorities must not re-appoint principal fire officers (at Brigade Manager or Area Manager level or those with comparable responsibilities to those roles) after their retirement to their previous or similar role, save for in exceptional circumstances when such a decision is necessary in the interest of public safety. Any such appointment must be transparent, justifiable and time limited, with the reason for the decision published and the pension abated until the contract ends. Such a decision will be subject to prior approval at a meeting of the Fire Authority in open session.

Where an employee has taken their pension benefits (either as a former employee or employee from another public section organisation), and is then re-employed, an abatement check will be undertaken. Pension will be adjusted so the combination of pension and new salary does not exceed the individual's salary at the time of their retirement.

There is no age limit on abatement, and this continues for the full period of re-employment. When the re-employment ends, the pension will be reinstated to the full amount.

The Authority operates a flexible retirement process for employees in the Local Government Pension Scheme. This allows an employee to take their pension benefits and remain employed on reduced hours or at a lower grade without abatement of pension. This complies with the provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme.