



## Council

### Pay Policy Statement

**Date:** 5 July 2023

**Key decision:** Yes

**Class:** Part 1

**Ward(s) affected:** All wards

**Contributors:**

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#### Outline and recommendations

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to the Council's annual pay policy statement 2023/24 as required by Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011.

The Localism Act requires each local authority to publish an annual pay policy statement which identifies the Council's approach to pay. Once it is in place, the Council may only make payments in accordance with the agreed policy.

Council is recommended to:

- Agree the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 as attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

## **Timeline of engagement and decision-making**

The Pay Policy Statement will be published on the Council's website following approval by Full Council.

### **1. Summary**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to the Council's annual pay policy statement for 2023/34 as required by Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011. The Localism Act requires each local authority to publish an annual pay policy statement which identifies the Council's approach to pay. Once it is in place, the Council may only make payments in accordance with the agreed policy.
- 1.2. The statement may be amended at any time by further resolution of Full Council.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. Full Council are recommended to:
  - Approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 as attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

### **3. Policy Context**

- 3.1. The Council have a legal duty to ensure it provides a public annual Pay Policy Statement that meets the various requirements of Section 38 to 43 of the Localism Act 2011. The statement attached has been drawn up to meet those requirements.
- 3.2. The Act's intention is to bring together the strands of increasing accountability in transparency and fairness, with regards to pay.

### **4. Background**

- 4.1. The Council published its first pay policy statement in 2012/13, with subsequent statements agreed and published each year in accordance with the requirements of section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011.
- 4.2. The pay policy statement must set out the Council's approach in relation to the pay and remuneration of its employees. It must include:
  - The level and elements of remuneration for each Chief Officer
  - The remuneration of its lowest paid employees (together with a definition of 'lowest paid employees' and its reason for adopting that definition)
  - The relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and other officers.

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- Other specific aspects of remuneration for its chief officers e.g. salary on appointment; increases and additions to remuneration; any bonuses or PRP and termination payments.
- 4.3. Additionally, the Council must have regard to other statutory guidance or recommendations e.g., relating to the pay multiples. It should be noted that each authority has autonomy to take its own decisions on pay and pay policies.
  - 4.4. Guidance under the Act also sets out an expectation that Full Council will have regard to any proposal that the Mayor may have before the statement is considered. The Mayor has been given a copy of the proposed pay policy statement appearing at Appendix 1 and has not made any further proposal in respect of it.
  - 4.5. Once agreed by Full Council, the Pay Policy Statement will form the basis on which the Council remunerates chief officers and employees.

## 5. Summary of changes since 2022/2023

- 5.1. The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 (in force from 31 March 2017) require public sector employers operating in England to provide gender pay reports by 30 March 2018 (and annually thereafter) covering mean gender pay gap in hourly pay for year in the previous year (included in Section 18 of Appendix 1). This data is also required to be published on the Government website. The headline statistic within the Gender Pay Gap Information, of mean hourly rate, shows a positive picture in favour of women of 9.1% in line with last year's figure of 8.4%.
- 5.2. The 2022/23 pay deal for the majority of Council workers (NJC terms and conditions) was an increase of £2,355 for all NJC staff. Chief Officers under NJC terms and conditions also received a pay award of £1,925 in 2022/23. The 2022/23 pay was implemented in December 2022 and backdated to 1 April 2022 in accordance with the respective terms and conditions.
- 5.3. The 2023/24 pay deal is not yet known and is still under negotiation at a national level.

## 6. Legal Implications

- 6.1. Attention is drawn to the legal implications set out in the body of the report.
- 6.2. The Pay Policy Statement attached to this report complies with the requirements of Section 38 Localism Act 2011 which requires all local authorities to prepare an annual Pay Policy Statement. Chapter 8 of the Localism Act 2011 sets out the information which a pay policy statement must contain and the proposed statement appearing at Appendix 1 is compliant with those requirements. Section 40 of the Act also requires the Council to have regard to any guidance issued or approved by the Secretary of State. Guidance under Section 40 was issued in February 2012 and the attached pay policy statement takes account

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of this guidance.

- 6.3. Additional guidance under Section 40 of the Localism Act was issued in February 2013. As with the earlier guidance, the Council is required under Section 40 to have regard to this guidance when preparing its Pay Policy Statement. This later guidance introduced two further requirements. The first requirement is for local authorities with directly elected mayors. The guidance sets out an expectation that the Council would involve the directly elected mayor and have regard to any proposals that the mayor may have before the statement is considered and approved. The second requirement is that the pay policy statement should include a requirement that full Council is required to vote in relation to any severance packages of over £100,000 (including redundancy pay, holiday pay and pension entitlements).
- 6.4. There are likely to be several difficulties with this requirement. First, a number of the elements of the “severance package” are likely to be contractual and/or statutory entitlements, such as redundancy compensation, pension entitlements and holiday pay. If the Council decided not to approve payments of this type then this is likely to result in the Council being in breach of contract and/or statute. It is feasible that a member of staff’s pension and redundancy compensation alone could take them above the £100,000 threshold without any further payments being made to them. Second, the requirement to hold a vote at full Council could delay the making of any payments. Again, this has the potential of placing the Council in a position where it may be in breach of contract and/or legislation. A delay could also fetter the Council’s ability to effectively settle any potential claims against the authority, particularly in situations where a timely settlement may be the most cost-effective resolution. Third, where the Council enters into settlement of potential claims, it is often a term of any settlement agreement that the settlement remains confidential. This can be of benefit to the Council as well as to the employee. If a vote at full Council was required, then it may be difficult for the Council to provide the confidentiality required by these agreements. If the confidentiality requirement of an agreement was breached this could lead to further claims against the Council and it may be difficult for the Council to provide evidence that confidentiality had definitely not been breached when details of the potential settlement had been distributed to full Council.
- 6.5. As set out above, the Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to have regard to the guidance. This does not require the Council to follow the guidance in circumstances where it has considered the requirements of the guidance but where the Council considers that it has good reasons for not following it.
- 6.6. The draft Pay Policy Statement attached to this report does not include a requirement that full Council is required to vote before large severance packages are provided to staff leaving the organisation. This is consistent with the position set out in the previous years’ Pay Policy Statements. This report recommends that the Council approve the draft pay policy statement in this respect for the reasons set out above.
- 6.7. A Pay Policy Statement must be approved by a resolution of the Council before it comes into force.

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- 6.8. Once a Pay Policy Statement is in force, any decision of the authority made after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 and relating to remuneration or other terms and conditions must comply with the Pay Policy Statement in force at the time, subject to any legislative changes which may subsequently be in force. An authority may amend its pay policy statement by resolution.
- 6.9. In the event that the Council wished to adopt a pay policy that does not reflect the current contractual arrangements in place for the employment of officers, then this may give rise to employment law implications.

## **7. Financial implications**

- 7.1. There are no specific financial implications resulting from this report. The report and its attachment outline current arrangements with regards to the Council's pay arrangements for chief officers and other staff.

## **8. Equalities implications**

- 8.1. The Statement covers all paid staff within the Council and is a matter of fact. There are no specific equalities implications to note.

## **9. Climate change and environmental implications**

- 9.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from this report.

## **10. Crime and Disorder Implications**

- 10.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## **11. Health and wellbeing implications**

- 11.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

### **Report author and contact**

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Legal implications-Legal Services for Director of Law

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