



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Policy and Strategy Committee

PRINCIPAL OFFICER PAY REVIEW

Report of the Clerk and Treasurer to the Fire and
Rescue Authority

Date: 13 November 2015

Purpose of Report:

To present the outcomes of the Principal Officer pay review which is undertaken on two yearly basis, and seek a recommendation to the Combined Fire Authority.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name : Neil Timms, Treasurer to the Fire Authority
Malcolm Townroe, Clerk to the Fire Authority

Tel : 0115 967 0880

Email : neil.timms@notts-fire.gov.uk
malcolm.townroe@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

**Media Enquiries
Contact :** Bridget Aherne
(0115) 967 0880 bridget.aherne@notts-fire.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The conditions of service for Principal Officers within Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service are largely determined by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services. The NJC seeks to reach agreement on a national framework of pay and conditions for Brigade Managers for local application throughout the Fire and Rescue Services in the UK. Collectively the agreements are contained within the “Gold Book”.

1.2 The Gold Book makes the following statements with regard to salary and also gives advice and guidance to Authorities on pay determination, as attached as Appendix A of this report:

“The NJC will publish annually recommended minimum levels of salary applicable to Chief Fire Officers employed by Local Authority Fire and Rescue Authorities.

There is a two-track approach for determining pay for Brigade Manager roles:

- (i) at a national level the NJC shall review annually the level of pay to all of those covered by this agreement;
- (ii) all other decisions about the level of pay and remuneration to be awarded to individual Brigade Manager roles will be taken by the Fire Authority locally who will annually review those salary levels” – advice on other considerations when setting salary levels has also been provided by the NJC and is included within Appendix A.

1.3 At its meeting on 31 January 2014, the Policy and Strategy Committee agreed revised benchmarking arrangements as part of its local review of Chief Officer pay. The comparator group comprises of 18 Fire and Rescue Services who form the “Family Group” of authorities who are similar to the Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service in terms of population size, deprivation levels, risk area and total fire calls. In determining its decision on an appropriate pay level, it was agreed that consideration would be given to the median average salary of this review group. Those Fire and Rescue Authorities who make up the Family Group are set out at Appendix B.

2. REPORT

2.1 In accordance with the Authority’s published Pay Policy, Principal Officer salary levels are reviewed in line with national pay agreements on an annual basis, and are subject to local review every two years.

2.2 The salaries applied to Principal Officers below the level of Chief Fire Officer are based upon a % of the Chief Officer salary, as follows:

- Deputy Chief Fire Officer – 82.5%
- Assistant Chief Fire Officer – 75%

- 2.3 In setting the Chief Fire Officer's pay, the Authority has consistently applied the same methodology for a number of years. This methodology determined that the Chief Fire Officer's salary from 1st January 2015 should be £147,368 per annum and this salary was applied.
- 2.4 As part of this process, Members requested that the methodology used in future should be changed to take account of a broader range of comparator Fire Authorities. It was decided to use the Audit Commission "family group" which is supposed to group together Authorities with similar characteristics and a benchmarking review has been undertaken using the salary data from this group. The outcome of this review is attached as Appendix C.
- 2.5 The median salary within this group is £143,552 per annum, although the range is from £113,120 to £152,256. The maximum salary applied to the Chief Fire Officer pay band is currently £147,368 per annum, as set out in paragraph 2.3.
- 2.6 There is nothing, therefore, that would suggest that the pay of the Chief Fire Officer in Nottinghamshire is significantly out of line with some of the other Chief Officers within the comparator group. This would indicate that the pay of the Chief Fire Officer is currently set at the appropriate level.
- 2.7 Members may wish to note that recent reductions in Principal Officer posts which have resulted in the deletion of an Assistant Chief Fire Officer post (August 2013) and Director of Finance and Resources post (1st October 2015) have led to additional responsibilities being undertaken by the remaining Principal Officers without any adjustment to pay. It is also worthy of note that the Sir Ken Knight report ("Facing the Future", 2013), which pre-empted these post deletions, showed that Nottinghamshire FRS had the leanest management structure in the review.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The budget for Principal Officer's pay is based on the incremental point in the three point scale which is appropriate for each of the Officers. At this point in time all three Principal Officers are paid at 95% of the current maximum salary for each role.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 A local two yearly review of Principal Officer pay levels forms a contractual provision for the roles of Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Officer.
- 4.2 Any change in the way that Principal Officer pay is undertaken by the Authority would need to be reflected in the published Pay Policy.

- 4.3 Any proposal to reduce the pay of the Chief Fire Officer to the level of the family group median salary may need to involve some level of pay protection.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

As there are no implications for existing policy or to service provision, no equality impact assessment has been undertaken.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 In line with the requirements of the Localism Act, any decisions relating to pay in excess of £100k per annum must be discussed and agreed by the full Fire Authority at a public meeting.
- 7.2 The Authority is required to publish its pay policy which includes the way in which Principal Officer pay is determined.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

A robust and auditable methodology for setting Principal Officer salary levels is essential if the Service is going to stand up to external and internal scrutiny in respect of this matter. Additionally the Service needs to ensure that it is able to recruit and retain quality officers to ensure that NFRS meets the expectations of the Service and the community.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members consider the information contained within the report and take a recommendation to the Combined Fire Authority regarding Principal Officer pay levels from 1 January 2016.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

Neil Timms
TREASURER TO THE AUTHORITY

Malcolm R. Townroe
CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY

NJC Guidance and Salary Structures

1. When determining the appropriate level of salaries for all Brigade Managers, the FRA should refer to the relevant minimum salary of the CFO and the most relevant benchmark data.
2. Normally the FRA will wish to begin by determining appropriate salary for their most senior manager.
3. When deciding how these posts should be remunerated, the following factors are to be considered:
 - (a) The CFO's salary and that of any service staff not covered by the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Gold Book).
 - (b) The relationship of current salary to the appropriate illustrative national benchmark
 - (c) Any special market considerations.
 - (d) Any substantial local factors not common to FRA's of a similar type and size e.g. London weighting, complex local regional or national responsibilities which bring added value.
 - (e) Comparative information to be supplied on request by the Joint Sec's on salaries in similar Authorities.
 - (f) Top management structures and size of management team compared to those other Fire & Rescue Authorities of similar type and size; and
 - (g) The relative job size of each post, as objectively assessed through an appropriate Job Evaluation process or otherwise, and
 - (h) Incident command responsibility and the requirement to provide operational cover with the employing authority and beyond.

The process for setting salary levels should include consideration of the following criteria:

- Minimum salary levels for CO's in relevant sized local authorities.
- Market rates of pay for service managers in a range of private and public sector organisations; and
- Evidence of recruitment and / or retention difficulties with existing minimum rates.

APPENDIX B

Family Group

Avon*
Cheshire*
Cleveland*
Derbyshire*
Essex*
Hampshire*
Hereford and Worcester*
Hertfordshire
Humberside*
Kent*
Lancashire*
Leicestershire*
Lincolnshire
Nottinghamshire*
Northern Ireland
Staffordshire*
South Wales
Surrey

* Combined Fire Authorities

COMPARATOR SALARY LEVELS (in ascending order)

(Please note that this information has been provided on the basis that it does not identify participant authorities.)

113,120
121,784
123,400
128,548
132,000
138,147
140,000
142,018
143,420
Median point - £143,552
143,684
144,800
145,864
147,368
148,353
150,344
150,683
151,500
152,256