



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

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

PRINCIPAL OFFICER PAY REVIEW

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

Date: 8 November 2019

Purpose:

To consider the outcomes from the Principal Officer pay review which is undertaken on a two-yearly basis, and seeks a recommendation to the Combined Fire Authority in line with the Authority's Pay Policy.

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The conditions of service for Principal Officers within Nottinghamshire Fire and 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 and 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 Additionally, appointments to new Principal Officer roles are applied as follows:

Year One: 90% of full pay
Year Two: 95% of full pay
Year Three: 100% of full pay

Approval for progression between the pay points are subject to confirmation of satisfactory performance in role and are confirmed by the Chair of the Fire Authority (Chief Fire Officer) or by the Chief Fire Officer (Deputy and Assistant roles).

2.4 The last salary review took place in 2017 and was considered by the Policy and Strategy Committee on 10th November. This review did not support a local increase in Principal Officer pay for the period commencing January 2018.

2.5 However, the pay of the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy and Assistant Chief Fire Officer has increased in line with the application of incremental and national pay awards since this time, in line with their agreed contractual terms. This saw an increase of 2% from 1st January 2018 and 2% from 1st January 2019.

2.6 In the interim period, recruitment has taken place to the post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer and a temporary appointment made to the post of Assistant Chief Officer from 25th February 2019. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer was appointed at 95% of full DCFO pay and the Assistant Chief Officer at 90% of full ACFO pay. The Chief Fire Officer is remunerated at the full pay rate to reflect his tenure in role.

2.7 It should be noted that the starting salary for the DCFO role reflects the fact that successful applicant was already in receipt of the full ACFO pay rate at the time of appointment, which is higher than the lowest (90%) DCFO pay rate, and was therefore appointed at the 95% DCFO rate to mitigate against a reduction in starting salary.

2.8 The Chief Fire Officer pay rate is currently £156,404 per annum, which includes the application of the national 2% pay award agreed from 1 January 2019.

2.9 A benchmarking review has been undertaken using the salary data from the “family group” of eighteen fire authorities. The outcome of this review is attached as Appendix C.

2.10 The median salary within this group is £148,574 per annum, although the range is from £119,748 to £164,020. The maximum salary applied to the

Chief Fire Officer pay band is £140,763-£156,404 per annum, with the current incumbent being paid at the top of the scale as set out in Paragraph 2.8.

- 2.11 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.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The budget for Principal Officer 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 the following salaries are applied:

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Chief Fire Officer - | £156,404 (100%) |
| Deputy Chief Fire Officer - | £122,581 (95%) |
| Assistant Chief Fire Officer - | £105,573 (90%) |

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 and Assistant Chief Fire 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. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

As this is a local pay review, determined by the Fire Authority, there are no collaboration implications.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members consider the information contained within the report and take a recommendation to the full Fire Authority regarding Principal Officer pay levels from 1 January 2020.

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

None.

Charlotte Radford
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 and 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

APPENDIX C

COMPARATOR SALARY LEVELS (in ascending order)

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

119,748

125,748

132,416

132,663

133,668

134,594

135,252

146,616

147,770

Median point - £148,574

149,379

152,214

152,493

154,808

155,997

156,404

161,517

162,088

164,020