



Pay Policy Statement 2026/2027

1. Introduction, Overview and Purpose

Under Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, the council has the “power to appoint officers on such reasonable terms and conditions as the authority thinks fit”. This pay policy statement (the ‘statement’) sets out the council’s approach to pay in accordance with the requirements of Section 38-43 of the Localism Act 2011. It has been drafted with due regard to the associated statutory guidance, including the supplementary statutory guidance issued in February 2013, the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, and the statutory guidance on special severance payments issued in May 2022 under section 26 of the Local Government Act 1999.

One of the council’s strategic priorities is to be an employer of choice. Whilst recognising the financial constraints that the council operates within, it aims to ensure that its approach to pay and reward reflects that.

The council recognises that its employees are motivated differently. It places importance upon taking a holistic view to remuneration to ensure that employees are rewarded fairly and with individuality in mind. The council monitors its total reward packages rather than focussing on a single component such as basic pay.

The purpose of this statement is to provide transparency regarding the council’s approach to setting the pay of its employees. It details the methods by which salaries for all roles are determined, and it will be published on the council’s website and intranet and also be made available in other formats on request.

Procedural and approval requirements set down in the council’s Constitution will be applied as required.

2. Pay Policy Principles

In determining the remuneration of its employees, the council places importance on balancing its strategic priority of being an employer of choice, committed to recruiting and retaining a high performing workforce, with the need to ensure value for money, and accountability in respect of public expenditure.

The council also has due regard to the need for its pay arrangements to be:

- Open and transparent
- Fair, consistent, and underpinned by equality
- In line with the council’s financial policies, affordability, and accountability requirements.

This pay policy statement is effective from 1 April 2026 superseding the 2025/26 statement and will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis, or more regularly should the need arise. The statement refers to substantive roles only and excludes interim roles.

3. Definitions

To support the transparency of the pay policy statement, definitions for common words / phrases used throughout this statement are described below.

Remuneration

For the purposes of this statement remuneration includes three elements – basic salary, pension, and all other allowances arising from employment.

Chief Officers

The definition of Chief Officers is defined as the officer designated as the Head of the Authority's Paid Service; A statutory Chief Officer under section 2(6) the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (the 1989 Act) means Director of Children's Services, Director of Adult Social Services, Director of Public Health, Chief Fire Officer and Director of Community Safety, Section 151 Officer (overseeing the council's financial probity), and Monitoring Officer (overseeing the council's legal and governance arrangements and decision making).

The definition of a non-statutory Chief Officer under section 2(7) of the 1989 Act means direct reports of the Head of Paid Service (HoPS). This includes a person for whom the HoPS is directly responsible, a person who, because of the duties of their post, is required to report directly or is directly accountable to the HoPS; and any person who, as respects all or most of the duties of their post, is required to report directly to or is directly accountable to the local authority themselves or any committee or sub-committee of the authority also falls within the definition of a non-statutory Chief Officer.

In the case of the council Chief Officer posts are:

- Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)

Statutory Chief Officers

- Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer)
- Chief Fire Officer and Director of Community Safety
- Director of Adult Social Services
- Director of Children's Services
- Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
- Director of Public Health and Communities

Non-Statutory Chief Officers

- Director of Environment and Highways
- Director of Economy and Place

Lowest paid employees

The lowest paid individuals employed under Green Book terms and conditions of employment with the council are employed on full time [37 hour] equivalent salaries in accordance with the minimum spinal column point currently in use within the council's grading structure.

In line with the pay scales, the lowest pay that Green Book employees receive is equivalent to Grade 2, spinal column point 2. This salary is currently payable to employees carrying out cleaning operative roles. As of 1 April 2025, the salary is £24,413 per annum which equates to £12.65 per hour.

Minimum pay arrangements may vary for employees who are working under TUPE terms and conditions of employment.

National Living Wage, The Real Living Wage, and Oxford Living Wage

The National Living Wage was set at £12.21 per hour with effect from 1 April 2025. The council pays above the National Living Wage at £12.65 per hour.

The UK Real Living Wage for 2025/2026 is £12.60 per hour. It is paid voluntarily by organisations.

The Oxford Living Wage is currently £13.16 per hour. The Oxford Living Wage is a voluntary higher minimum wage that organisations in Oxfordshire can adopt to reflect the real cost of living and working in Oxford.

Pay multiples

The pay multiple is the relationship between two different pay amounts, showing the number of times one value is contained within another value. The relationships will be shown between:

- the highest paid taxable earnings (including base salary, variable pay, bonuses, allowances, and cash value of any benefits in kind) and the lowest paid taxable earnings.
- the highest paid taxable earnings (including base salary, variable pay, bonuses, allowances, and the cash value of any benefits in kind) and the median earnings figure of the whole workforce.
- the average median salary of Chief Officers and the median earnings figure of the whole workforce.

4. Pay Strategy

The council adopts the national pay structures for all terms and conditions as part of its pay strategy, except in relation to its senior leadership roles. Section 7 provides details of the senior leadership pay arrangements.

5. Annual cost of living pay awards

The council participates in national pay bargaining. This means that it is subject to the annual cost of living pay reviews negotiated by the relevant joint negotiating body (which is made up of the national employers' representatives and national trade unions for the relevant employee group) as shown in section 6 below.

6. Pay Design

The council in agreement with trade unions has 8 pay schemes in operation. These are:

- Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives of Local Authorities
- Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers
- NJC for Local Government Services (known as the Green Book) (this applies to the majority of council employees)
- NJC Gold Book (National Joint Council for Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers)
- NJC Grey Book (Firefighters)
- NJC Blue Book (Soulbury Committee covering Educational Psychologists)
- NJC Burgundy Book (Teachers)
- Agenda for Change (NHS)

These are all implemented in line with nationally agreed, published pay scales and terms and conditions of employment, unless modified by local arrangements.

In addition, the council have agreed to align coroners pay to the judiciary pay scales in accordance with the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB) further to the Coroners' Society of England and Wales (CSEW) voting to withdraw from the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC), and opting instead to negotiate Coroner pay directly with local authorities commencing in April 2025.

7. Job evaluation

The council uses job evaluation as a tool to determine the size of a role and create an organisational hierarchy of all roles, from the smallest to the largest. This means the council can objectively justify how roles are sized and graded. The hierarchy of job roles is then translated onto the pay structure. Together they enable the development of a transparent and understandable structure around pay grades. In agreement with the recognised trade unions the council has adopted two job evaluation schemes:

- Korn Ferry Hay – for senior leadership roles (including Directors, Deputy Directors, Assistant Directors, and Heads of Service). This scheme was adopted through a Collective Agreement with UNISON in November 2024.
- National Joint Council for Local Government Services (Green Book) for all applicable officer roles employed under those conditions of service.

8. Statutory and non-statutory Chief Officer appointments

The Head of Paid Service has authority over the selection and appointment of any Deputy Chief Officer, subject to the procedure set out in the Constitution. The Remuneration Committee is the appointing body for substantive statutory and non-statutory Chief Officer appointments as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: statutory and non-statutory chief officer appointments

Post	Regulatory Description	Appointment under Constitution
Chief Executive	Head of Paid Service	Remuneration Committee with recommendation to Full Council
Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer)	Statutory Chief Officer	Remuneration Committee with recommendation to Full Council
Director of Children's Services	Statutory Chief Officer	Remuneration Committee
Director of Adult Social Care	Statutory Chief Officer	Remuneration Committee
Director of Public Health and Communities	Statutory Chief Officer	Remuneration Committee
Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer	Statutory Chief Officer	Remuneration Committee with recommendation to Council
Chief Fire Officer and Director of Community Safety	Statutory Chief Officer	Remuneration Committee
Director of Environment and Highways	Non-statutory Chief Officer	Remuneration Committee
Director of Economy and Place	Non-statutory Chief Officer	Remuneration Committee

The Cabinet consultation procedure is used as required by regulations for appointment to Chief and Deputy Chief Officer posts. The Officer Employment Procedure Rules set out the detail relating to this in the [Council constitution](#).

Any proposed pay or grading changes for Chief Officers are reviewed by Remuneration Committee and if supported, are recommended for approval by Council.

Salary packages for proposed new posts with recommended salaries of more than £100,000 per annum are reviewed by Remuneration Committee and if supported, recommended for approval by Council.

9. Pay Structures

The council applies the nationally negotiated pay structures to its senior leadership roles. Section 6 provides the details of the pay schemes that are applicable.

10. Pay Grades and Progression

Most jobs within the mainstream pay structure have a grade with at least four incremental points. Some grades have six incremental points. Employees are typically appointed at the first increment of the grade unless they have significant experience in a similar role.

Employee progress to the next incremental point is in accordance with the relevant terms and conditions of employment, except for Tier 1 – Tier 4 senior leadership roles. This recognises their increasing experience, and that performance progression continues until they reach the top of the grade.

High levels of performance are expected from all employees. Where standards are not satisfactory prompt managerial action will be taken to improve performance. This may include disciplinary / capability action in accordance with agreed procedures.

11. Cost of Living Pay Awards

Cost of living pay awards are implemented in line with national negotiations on an annual basis as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2: annual cost of living pay awards

Date	Staff group
1 April	NJC for Local Government Services / Green Book, JNC for Chief Executives, JNC for Chief Officers, Agenda for Change (NHS), Coroners
1 July	NJC (Fire and Rescue)
1 September	Soulbury, Teachers
1 January	Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers

12. Pay Supplements

From time to time, it may be necessary to pay special allowances or supplements to individual employees where specific circumstances require this and where it can be justified in accordance with council policies. The council uses the following range of different pay supplements:

Market supplements (Temporary)

These are applied to attract and retain employees with experience, skills, and capability when there are identified skills shortages locally or nationally that impact the council. Market supplements must be agreed by the Director of Human Resources and Cultural Change or their deputy, through delegation.

Market supplements are considered in line with a valid data sample of appropriate benchmarked roles from within and outside the Local Government sector. They are temporary, non-consolidated, additions to basic pay. They are reviewed annually and may be reduced or removed in line with the pay market.

Honoraria (Temporary)

Honoraria payments are temporary, non-consolidated, additions to basic pay. They may be paid where an employee has taken on temporary additional duties and responsibilities, usually for a period of up to six months, for example, covering a vacancy or taking on a special project. These payments are agreed and approved by the relevant Director.

Welcome and loyalty payments scheme (Children's Services)

One-off, non-consolidated, welcome and loyalty payments of up to £3,500 are used to encourage experienced children's social workers into the following teams: Family Support Plus, (FSP) Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Youth Justice and Exploitation Service (YJES) and Children We Care For (CWCF) and other Statutory Social Work appointments.

On-call allowances

On-call allowances are applied to compensate employees who are required to be available with limited notice. Rates are agreed on an individual role basis. On-call allowances do not apply to Chief Officers.

Shift and night shift allowances

Certain roles also attract shift allowances for working evenings, weekends and / or bank holidays.

Night shift premiums and allowances for waking nights also apply in certain roles. These allowances are in line with the national pay schemes applicable to the role.

The council will ensure that the requirement for an additional allowance or supplement is objectively justified by reference to clear and transparent evidence supported by a business case.

Pay supplements are subject to review as appropriate. The council does not pay bonuses.

13. Other Employment Related Arrangements

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

Subject to qualifying conditions, eligible employees have a right to enter the LGPS.

The employee contribution rates which are defined by statute, currently range between 5.5% and 12.5% of pensionable pay depending on actual salary levels. The employer contribution rates are set by actuaries and are reviewed every 3 years to ensure the scheme is appropriately funded. The contribution rate for the 2026/27 financial year will be 18.9% following the recent triennial valuation, reducing from 19.9% in the previous financial year.

The council will not at any time increase the pension or membership of employees nor award or fund additional pension to employees unless required to do so by the LGPS Regulations.

Fire Brigade Pension Schemes

Subject to qualifying conditions, eligible employees have a right to enter the Firefighters' Pension Scheme.

The employee contribution rates currently range between 11% and 14.5% of pensionable pay.

The employer contribution is currently a fixed rate of 28.8% and is under review.

14. Benefits Schemes

As part of its total reward strategy to recruit and retain talented employees, the council provides a wide range of benefits including:

Cycle to work scheme

This is a salary sacrifice scheme which allows employees to save money when purchasing a new bicycle and spread the cost over 12, 18, or 24 months.

Childcare vouchers (Limited access)

The availability of this scheme is limited to employees in post prior to 4 October 2018 as it has since been withdrawn by the Government.

Electric vehicle scheme

The council partners with Tusker to provide an electric vehicle salary sacrifice scheme to support a thriving local economy and the council's contribution to achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions.

Salary Finance

The council entered a partnership with Salary Finance in 2022. Salary Finance are a leading financial wellbeing provider in the UK. A key driver for this service is to support employees to develop good financial management habits and reduce the need and likelihood to access payday loans. It also represents part of the council's wellbeing strategy.

Salary Finance are fully regulated and have been accredited as an ethical lender.

Vivup

The council also partners with Vivup to extend its range of benefits and support its employees. Vivup provides access to hundreds of discounts from big brand supermarkets to broadband and utilities.

The Vivup benefits platform was launched in 2022 as part of the council's work to support employees during the cost-of-living crisis.

Pension Added Voluntary Contributions (AVC's)

The council promotes a Salary Sacrifice Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions Scheme (SSSCAVCs) for LGPS Pension Fund members.

This voluntary scheme was launched in February 2024 and is intended to support employees to enhance their pension savings for the future.

Expenses

Expenses are based on nationally agreed levels except car mileage which is based on the HM Revenue & Customs approved rates, as set out below:

HM Revenue & Customs all-car rate (includes all fuel types; petrol, diesel, and non-salary sacrifice electric) - Currently 45 pence per mile, reducing to 25 pence for miles travelled in excess of 10,000 each year.

HM Revenue & Customs EV salary sacrifice rate – 8 pence per mile (if charging from home and 14 pence per mile (if charging in a public location)).

Employees can also claim 20 pence per mile when using their own bicycle for business purposes.

15. Pay Arrangements for Senior Management

Pay scales and pay awards are reviewed annually by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives, Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers, National Joint Council for Local Government Services (Green Book), and the National Joint Council for Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers (as applicable). Changes to pay scales and pay awards usually take effect from 1 April (1 January for Chief Fire Officers).

The salary of the Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service is determined through a process of pay benchmarking conducted by externally commissioned experts. This typically takes place each time the role becomes vacant or on such occasion the council considers that it is necessary to check that the salary remains competitive within the appropriate pay market. Once the pay benchmarking has taken place it is supplemented by a nationally negotiated annual cost of living pay award. The Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service is currently paid a single point salary. As shown in Table 5 below, there is no pay range for this role.

As part of its modernisation programme, in November 2024, the council adopted a locally agreed pay structure for senior leadership roles (Executive Directors, Directors, Deputy Directors, Assistant Directors, and Heads of Service) through a collective agreement with UNISON. The senior leadership pay structure comprises 6 grades, each formed of 5 incremental point grades.

The council also reached a collective agreement with UNISON in November 2024 to replace automatic, time-served increments with increments linked to delivery of agreed objectives as part of its 12.3.2 performance management framework for its Directors, Deputy Directors, Assistant Directors, and Heads of Service. This is known as the Gateway Review. It was effective from 1 April 2025 for Executive Directors and Directors, and will be effective from 1 April 2026 for Deputy Directors, Assistant Directors, and Heads of Service.

The council does not pay bonuses to its senior leadership team.

16. Returning Officer / Election Fees

Where the Returning Officer or other officers receive election fees these are paid and shown separately to salary payments as they are separate appointments in addition to their substantive role of employment.

Election fees are set annually by the council's Audit and Governance Committee. Election fees are reviewed regularly by the same Committee in readiness for the County quadrennial elections.

17. Pay Multiples and Medians

The council is required to report on the pay multiples between its lowest and highest paid employees.

Table 3 below shows the ratio between the lowest and highest paid role and the ratio between the median salary of the workforce and the highest paid.

The median salary is the middle value of all the salaries when they are arranged in ascending or descending order. It represents the salary that separates the higher half from the lower half of the workforce. For example, the council's median salary is £37,280 per annum, which means that half of the employees earn more than £37,280 per annum and the other half earn less.

Table 3: ratios of pay between highest to lowest paid employees

Pay Multiples	1st April 2025
Highest Paid – Chief Executive	£246,336
Lowest Paid	£24,413
Pay Multiple between the lowest paid and the highest paid	1:10.09
Median Salary	£37,280
Pay Multiple between median and highest paid	1:6.61

18. Pay Multiple Between Lowest and Highest Paid

This ratio compares the highest paid / Chief Executive salary (£246,336 per annum) to the lowest paid employees. This means that the Chief Executive earns 10.09 times more than the lowest paid employees. Table 3 illustrates that the difference has reduced since the last pay policy statement.

19. Pay Multiple Between Median and Highest Paid

This ratio compares the median salary to the highest-paid / Chief Executive salary. This means that the highest-paid employee earns 6.94 times more than the median salary.

Table 3: ratios of pay between average salary of Chief Officers

Pay multiples using the average salary of Chief Officers	1st April 2025
Average salary of Chief Officers	£169,545
Lowest Paid	£24,413
Pay multiple between the lowest paid and the average salary of Chief Officers	1:6.94
Median Salary	£37,280
Pay multiple between median salary and average salary of Chief Officers	1:4.60

20. Payments on Termination of Employment

The council's approach to statutory and discretionary payments on termination of employment of Chief Officers prior to reaching normal retirement age is set out in its policy statement made in accordance with Regulations 5 and 6 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations 2006.

21. Redundancy

The council's Redundancy Scheme applies to all applicable employees and is currently one and half times statutory entitlement based on actual pay. It will apply where employment is terminated on redundancy grounds and redundancy payments are due.

All employees who receive a redundancy payment arising from the termination of their contracts of employment will be subject to the provisions of the Redundancy Modification Order and will be subject to Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Regulations or other pensions scheme regulations where applicable.

22. Severance payments

Severance payments for all employees will comply with the council's Pensions Discretions and Retirement Policy, where the circumstances in which severance takes place falls within the terms of the policy. This sets out that early retirement may be granted for employees aged 55 years and over with at least two years membership of the LGPS.

The council has regard to the statutory guidance dated 12 May 2022 on the making and disclosure of Special Severance Payments by local authorities in England, and earlier statutory guidance on severance payments published in February 2013. Special severance payments, which are payments exceeding an employee's statutory and contractual entitlements on termination of employment, are determined on a case-by-case basis e.g. settlement agreements, write-offs of any debt or loan, hardship payment consideration, and payments to employees for retraining.

Severance payments of £100,000 and above are subject to a formal decision made by Council unless there is a good reason for departing from the statutory guidance. Payments below £100,000 are subject to a formal decision of either:

- relevant elected members with delegated authority to approve such payments (currently the Remuneration Committee); or
- a suitably authorised officer.

23. Re-employment

The council takes its duty of accountability for the use of the public purse, and demonstrating value for money in everything it does seriously. This means that the council will not re-employ former employees who have left its employment with any form of severance pay for at least two years from the date of termination of

employment. The council reserves the right to extend this period in circumstances where it is in the best interest of the council.

24. Publication of Senior Salaries Statement

In accordance with publication requirements, the council publishes its (retrospective) annual statement of accounts on its website which includes:

- the number of employees earning above £50,000 per annum.
- the individual remuneration details for each senior employee, defined by regulations as the Chief Officers (as listed at page 2), whose salary is more than £50,000 per annum. All allowances and other payments are also shown.

Only those employees whose salary is above £150,000 per annum are disclosed by name, all remaining senior officers are disclosed by post title.

The current salaries for Chief Officers as of 1 April 2025 are shown in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Chief Officer salaries 2025 / 26

Chief Officer	Name (where applicable)	Salary range	Actual salary 2025/ 2026
Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service	Martin Reeves	£246,336	£246,336
Deputy Chief Executive (s151 Officer)	Lorna Baxter	£168,190- £197,809	£190,404
Chief Fire Officer and Director of Community Safety	Rob MacDougall	£153,295- £167,742	£167,742
Director of Children's Services	Lisa Lyons	£147,164 - £157,745	£155,100
Director of Adult Social Services	Karen Fuller	£147,164 - £157,745	£155,100
Director of Public Health and Communities	Ansaf Azhar	£147,164 - £157,745	£155,100
Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer	Anita Bradley	£147,164 - £157,745	£155,100
Director of Environment and Highways	Paul Fermer	£147,164 - £157,745	£149,811
Director of Economy and Place (Secondment)	Robin Rogers	£147,164 - £157,745	£149,811