

COUNCIL
10 February 2026

Pay Policy Statement 2026-27

Report of the Director of Human Resources and Cultural Change

RECOMMENDATION

Council is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) Approve and adopt the 2026/27 pay policy statement and agree to its publication on the council website and intranet, as required by The Localism Act 2011 (the Act) and the Code of Practice on Data Transparency.

Executive summary

1. 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".
2. The pay policy statement as set out in Appendix One (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.
3. The pay policy statement was considered by the Remuneration Committee at its meeting on 22 January 2026 and agreed to recommend to Council that it approve and adopt the statement and agree to its publication.
4. The council uses job evaluation as a tool to determine the size and responsibilities 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 and associated pay grades. In agreement with the recognised trade unions the council has adopted two job evaluation schemes:
 - a. Korn Ferry Hay – for senior leadership roles (including Executive Directors, Directors, Deputy Directors, Assistant Directors, and Heads of Service)
 - b. National Joint Council for Local Government Services (Green Book) for all applicable officer roles employed under those conditions of service.

5. The lowest paid employees (Green Book terms and conditions) as of April 2025 are paid at £24,413 per annum which equates to £12.65 per hour. 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](#) for 2025/2026 is currently £13.16 per hour. Minimum pay arrangements may vary for employees who are working under TUPE terms and conditions of employment.
6. The council is required to report on the pay multiples between its lowest and highest paid employees.
7. In 2025, the pay multiple between the lowest paid and the highest paid has decreased by 0.32 from 1:10.41 in 2024 to 1:10.09 in 2025. 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.
8. In 2025, the pay multiple between the median salary and the highest paid/chief executive has increased by 0.18 from 1:6.43 in 2024 to 1:6.61 in 2025. This ratio compares the median salary to the highest-paid / Chief Executive salary. This means that the highest-paid employee earns 6.61 times more than the median salary.
9. In 2025, the pay multiple between the lowest paid and the average salary of Chief Officers has decreased by 0.30 from 1:7.33 to 1:7.03. This means that the average Chief Officer earns 7.03 times more than the lowest paid.
10. In 2025, the pay multiple between the median salary and the average salary of Chief Officers has increased from by 0.08 from 1:4.52 in 2024 to 1:4.60 in 2025. This means the average Chief Officer earns 4.60 times that of the median employee salary.
11. Table one below shows the ratio between the lowest paid and the highest paid role and the ratio between the median salary of the workforce and the highest paid.
12. Table two below shows the pay multiples using the average salary of chief officers, rather than the highest paid/chief executive salary

Table 1: Pay multiples using the highest paid/Chief Executive salary

Pay Multiples	1 st 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

Table 2: 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

Financial implications

13. There are no financial implications arising from the report.

Comments checked by:

Lorna Baxter, Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer)
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Legal Implications

14. In the interests of accountability, transparency and fairness in the setting of local pay, the Localism Act 2011, section 38(1) requires local authorities to prepare an annual policy pay statement. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 also require local authorities to publish the number of employees in the year paid over £50,000 in bands of £10,000 and this information must be provided by job title except for persons who earn in excess of £150,000, in which case they must be identified by name. It is a legal requirement that the statement explicitly sets out a local authority's policies on the renumeration of the lowest paid employees, and also how renumeration of chief officers relates to the renumeration of non-chief officers.

15. In submitting this report to the Remuneration Committee and on its recommendation subsequently to Full Council, the council will meet its statutory obligation to annually produce and publish its pay policy statement (by 31 March 2026).

Comments checked by:

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Staff Implications

16. The council recognises that its employees are motivated differently. It places importance on 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.

17. The purpose of the pay policy statement is to provide transparency regarding the council's approach to setting the pay of its employees. The statement details the methods by which salaries for all roles are determined. It will be published on the council's website and intranet and made available in other formats on request. Procedural and approval requirements set down in the council's Constitution will be applied as required.

Annexes: Annex 1 Pay Policy Statement

Cherie Cuthbertson Director of Human Resources and Cultural Change

Contact Officer: Ellie Harriss, Pay and Reward Manager, October 2025