

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23



Introduction

This statement describes the council's policies that relate to the remuneration of its workforce outside of schools, excluding any centrally employed Teachers who are on teaching 'burgundy book' terms and conditions.

The statement is intended to provide clear and transparent information about North Somerset Council's pay policies to enable local taxpayers to reach an informed view about local decisions on all aspects of remuneration for the council's non-school employees. The statement also meets the council's obligations under the Localism Act 2011 and the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency.

General Principles

North Somerset Council recognises that, in the context of scarce public resources, remuneration, at all levels, needs to be adequate to recruit and retain employees with the skills and motivation to deliver high quality services, and at the same time needs to demonstrate value for money and avoid unnecessary costs.

The council is committed to transparent, fair and equitable pay and grading arrangements. All employees are treated on an equal basis and senior officers are not differentiated from other employees in terms of the approach taken for appointments, remuneration, promotion or termination.

Pay Structure – Overview

The pay grade for all roles, including the council's Chief Executive and Directors are determined through job evaluation using the Hay Job Evaluation Scheme, with the exception of a small number of staff who are subject to national salary scales which determine the pay for jobs and where our evaluation scheme does not apply.

Levels of pay for senior officers have been determined by reference to benchmarking data, provided by Hay, which compares the salaries of comparable roles in a wide range of public sector organisations including other local authorities, health bodies and not for profit organisations.

The pay and grading for senior officers is the responsibility of the council's Employment Committee and an element of pay for senior officers is dependent on the postholder consistently meeting overall expectations of the job and meeting agreed targets. North Somerset Council reserves the right to reduce the level of remuneration if it determines that an individual's performance has been unsatisfactory.

Salaries for other officer roles within the council are based on median pay levels using Hay pay data and are broadly comparable with other similar local authorities.

Any cost of living pay award is determined through national pay bargaining arrangements, except for the Chief Executive, Directors and Assistant Directors where the pay award is locally determined but generally follows the nationally negotiated pay award relevant to these staff.

The Government has recommended that authorities publish the ratio of the pay of the council's top earner to that of its median earner to support the principles of fair pay and transparency. The council's current ratio in this respect is 3:1.

Gender Pay Gap

Recent legislation requires employers of more than 250 people to measure and publish their gender pay gap. The gender pay gap calculation is any difference between the average earnings of men and women within an organisation. The mean gender pay gap 2021/22 was 11.95% and the median gender pay gap was 12.9% for North Somerset Council. This information is published in accordance with legislative requirements and recalculated on an annual basis, however the publication of gender pay gap data has been suspended by the Government during the coronavirus pandemic.

Pay Structure - Details

The council's pay structure currently consists of 20 grades (excluding Apprentices). Every job is evaluated using the Hay Job Evaluation Scheme which establishes the relative size of each role and the points awarded determine the appropriate grade for the job.

The council's lowest paid employees receive a salary equivalent to Grade 1 on the council's pay structure.

Starting Salaries

Employees are usually appointed to the minimum point of the grade for the role. If an employee applies for an internal job that is the same grade as their substantive role they will be permitted to move across on the same point.

For hard to fill jobs, such as Social Workers, Planners, Engineers and Occupational Therapists, it may be necessary to appoint suitably qualified and experienced applicants to a salary point within the overall grade for the role.

Relocation

Where it is appropriate to do so, newly appointed employees who need to relocate to take up an appointment may receive a contribution towards their relocation expenses.

Pay Progression

Any pay progression is based on increments. Progression up to the maximum of the grade through incremental salary points normally takes effect from the anniversary of the start date of the employee.

Increments may be withheld following an assessment of an employee's performance.

Honorarium and Acting-up Payments

Honorarium and acting-up payments are calculated using the bottom point of the grade for the post they will be covering.

Any honoraria or acting-up payments for senior officers requires authorisation as set out in the Council's Constitution.

Secondments

Secondment appointments are subject to incremental progression. The starting salary will be the bottom salary point of the grade and progression will take effect from the anniversary of the start date of the secondment.

Market Supplements

The council does not normally pay market supplements in addition to salary, unless, exceptionally, it is in the council's overall interests to do so.

In service areas where it has proven difficult to recruit appropriately experienced or qualified individuals a market supplement may be considered, providing that there is evidence that paying a market supplement will help attract suitable candidates for hard to fill roles.

During the financial year 2021/22 no market supplements were agreed or paid.

Premium Payments

Employees paid up to spinal point 24 who are required to work evenings, weekends and bank holidays are currently paid additional payments to reflect their work patterns as follows:

Non-contractual overtime	Basic pay
Saturday working	Basic pay
Sunday working	Basic pay plus 25%
Bank Holiday working	Basic pay plus 50%
Evening work (8pm to 10pm)	Basic pay
Night work (10pm to 6am)	Basic pay plus 33%

Fees

The council makes a contribution of up to £45 per annum towards the membership of a professional body to support the continuous professional development of an employee.

Returning Officer fees are paid for statutory duties that are not part of the post holder's substantive role.

Pension Contributions

All staff who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme make individual contributions to the scheme. The level of contribution is linked to salary levels and ranges from 5.5% to 12.5% of salary.

The council also makes employer contributions to the scheme and these amounts are determined externally by the pension scheme actuary.

The council's policy is not to grant augmented pension benefits to any employee under the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Pay Protection

The council has a pay protection policy where employment on less favourable terms is offered to an employee as an alternative to redundancy. In such circumstances an employee's pay is frozen at their current level for up to three years.

Pay protection may also apply in cases of re-deployment due to ill-health.

Redundancy Payments

The method of calculating redundancy payments is based on the statutory redundancy scheme as set out in the Employment Rights Act 1996 (ERA) x 2. The council has also introduced a cap on the amount of pay used to calculate redundancy payments at twice the statutory weekly earnings ceiling. The cost of redundancy should normally be recovered within an 18-month period through salary savings.

Redundancy payments may be affected by the newly introduced 'exit cap' regulations which the council is required to work within as a public sector body.

Settlement Agreements

It is the council's policy not to enter into settlement agreements, unless, exceptionally, it is in the council's overall interests to do so.

TUPE Transfers

A small number of staff remain on terms and conditions that differ from this policy due the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Undertakings) legislation that protects those individuals who transfer (for example those on NHS terms). Where there is turnover new appointments are made on council terms and conditions.

Pay Policy Review

The Council's Pay Policy will be kept under regular review and the pay policy statement will be refreshed and considered by full Council each year.

February 2022