

Council Report

Report of Head of Corporate Services

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To: Council

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Pay policy statement 2023/24

Recommendation

That Council approve the attached statement of pay policy for 2023/24.

Purpose of Report

1. This Pay Policy Statement is provided in accordance with Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and is updated annually from April each year. This pay policy statement sets out South Oxfordshire District Council's policies relating to the pay of its workforce for the financial year 2023/24, in particular:
 - a) the remuneration of its Chief Officers
 - b) the remuneration of its "lowest paid employees"
 - c) the relationship between
 - the remuneration of its Chief Officers and
 - the remuneration of its employees who are not Chief Officers

Strategic Objectives

2. It is a statutory requirement to publish this information annually. This report also supports the council's Corporate Plan goal of 'Openness and accountability'. This report helps meet our ambition to apply good governance and transparency in all our working and decision making.

Background

3. The purpose of the pay policy statement is to promote transparency on public sector pay, particularly in relation to remuneration of senior officers. Comparisons are also made with the remuneration of the lowest paid employees and with average salaries.
4. The pay policy statement must be approved by 31 March each year, by a meeting of Full Council. The pay policy statement may be amended during the year by further resolution of the Council.
5. Once approved, the pay policy statement must be published on the council's website and by any other means that the council sees fit.
6. Officers of each council (South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse) are placed at the disposal of the other and their costs are shared, as such, the pay policy statement attached has been drafted jointly between the councils.

Climate and ecological impact implications

7. This report is a statutory requirement and does not have any climate or ecological implications.

Financial Implications

8. The impact of pay negotiations for 2023/24 have been included in the budget proposed for the council. As this report is for information purposes only there are no additional financial implications.

Legal Implications

9. This report is a statutory requirement as required by the Localism Act 2011.

Risks

10. None identified

Other Implications

11. None identified

Recommendation

12. Council is asked to approve the council's pay policy statement for 2023/24.

Background Papers

13. None

Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24

Introduction

1. This is a joint statement of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.
2. The Localism Act 2011 requires each council to produce and publish annually a pay policy statement. The statement which relates to the forthcoming financial year, must be approved by 31 March each year by a meeting of the Full Council, and must then be published on the council's website. The pay policy statement may be amended during the year by further resolution of the council.
3. The pay policy statement must as a minimum include details of the council's policy on:
 - the remuneration of its chief officers
 - the remuneration of its lowest-paid employees
 - the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and other officers.
4. For the purposes of the Localism Act 2011 and this statement, the term "Chief Officers" is defined by Section 2 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. For the councils, the term "chief officers" refers to the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), Deputy Chief Executives, Heads of Service, Service Managers, the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance (S151) Officer.
5. Chief Officers may be employed by either council and are placed at the disposal of the other by means of an agreement made under Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972.
6. "Lowest paid employees" refers to those staff employed within grade 1 of the councils' pay framework as this is the lowest grade on the councils' pay framework.

Organisation Structure

7. There have been no significant organisational changes during 2022/2023. Recruitment for vacant positions will continue in 2023/24.

Remuneration of Chief Officers

8. Chief officers are paid a spot salary. The spot salaries which apply for 2023/24 are as follows:
 - Chief executive: £178,767
 - Deputy Chief Executives £131,060
 - Heads of Service: £107,806

Service Managers will be paid on the joint councils' pay scale at grade 11.

- service managers salaries range between £67,397 to £71,928.

9. All figures in this statement reflect the agreed pay award for 2023/24 which is 5.5%.

10. Chief Officers do not receive any performance-related pay or bonuses.

11. The Chief Executive has been designated as the councils' Head of Paid Service. No additional remuneration is payable for that designation.

12. The Head of Finance has been designated as the councils' Chief Finance (section 151) Officer. No additional remuneration is payable for that designation.

13. The Head of Legal and Democratic has been designated as the councils' Monitoring Officer. No additional remuneration is payable for that designation.

14. The Chief Executive has been appointed as the councils' Returning Officer. In this role they receive additional remuneration, which varies from year to year. They may also employ other officers to support them in their work. Fees payable for district and parish council elections are agreed by each council. Fees for other types of election are agreed and payable by the government or other bodies such as Oxfordshire County Council.

15. Chief Officers do not receive overtime, on-call, or stand-by payments, and do not receive additional payment for attendance at evening meetings. The Chief Executive, at their discretion, may make additional responsibility payments as required.

16. On recruitment of a new Head of Service within the current management structure, the gross base salary on recruitment will be the spot salary stated in paragraph 8, though this may be varied if an interim appointment is made.

17. On recruitment of a new Chief Executive, the gross base salary will be determined by the Joint Staff Committee.

18. In the event of a Chief Officer's post becoming redundant, any severance payment will be made on the same basis as to any other employee, according to the councils' organisational change policy. Other than any pension to which they are contractually and / or statutorily entitled, no other payments will be made to Chief

Officers on their ceasing to be employees of the council unless in settlement of any dispute.

19. Chief Officers' contributions to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) are determined by their salary and by the rules of the scheme. For those who are members of the LGPS and paying contributions on the whole of their salary, Deputy Chief Executives contribute 11.4 per cent; Heads of Service currently pay 10.5 per cent; while the Chief Executive pays 12.5 per cent. Service Managers who earn less than £67,900 contribute 8.5 per cent, those who earn above £67,901 contribute 9.9 per cent.
20. No enhancements will normally be paid to Chief Officers' pensions other than in the event of a Chief Officer being offered early retirement on efficiency grounds, and only then with the approval of the Joint Audit and Governance Committee.
21. The councils will not usually re-employ a Chief Officer who has left their employment and is now drawing a local government pension unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any decision to re-employ a Chief Officer already drawing a pension is at the discretion of the Chief Executive.

Lowest paid employees

22. The councils are committed to paying the real living wage, the lowest-paid employees (including apprentices) are employed on full time 37 hours equivalent salaries in accordance with the minimum spinal column point currently in use within the councils' grading structure. From 1 April 2023, the 3 lowest paid members of staff (0.5% of headcount) will receive £20,974 per annum. The Chief Executive's Salary is thus 8.5 times the salary of the lowest-paid member of staff.

Remuneration of Chief Officers compared with other officers

23. Employees who are not Chief Officers are paid according to locally agreed pay scales, with annual increments paid subject to performance until the employee reaches the top of the scale.
24. Pay for all employees is determined by negotiation between UNISON and the senior management team.
25. Pay scales for 2023/24 have been agreed following negotiation. Both the councils and UNISON recognise the financial pressures that all staff are feeling as part of the cost of living crisis and wanted to reach an agreement that was affordable recognising the pressure the councils' budgets are under.
26. Salaries will be subject to a 5.5 per cent increase from 1 April 2023.

27. In addition, it has been agreed that a top up will be applied where the calculated pay increase is less than £1,800 per annum (pro rata) for 2023/2024. 62 staff will benefit from the agreed top up and the associated costs have been budgeted for.

28. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published in February 2015 a code of recommended practice for local authorities on data transparency. This code of practice recommends publishing the “pay multiple”, that is the ratio between the highest paid salary and the median average salary of the whole of the authority’s workforce. For our councils the median salary during 2023/24 will be £41,955 including the 5.5% pay award. The pay multiple defined above is thus 4.3.

29. The remuneration of Chief Officers will be published on the data hub on the councils website at <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/data-hub/transparency-model-publication-scheme/>