

# **Stafford Borough Council**

## **Pay Policy Statement 2026-27**

### **Introduction and Purpose**

Under section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, 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 Stafford Borough Council’s approach to pay policy in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 and associated guidance, and the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) Regulations 2015. The purpose of the statement is to provide transparency with regard to the Council’s approach to setting the pay of its employees in line with Chapter 8 of the Localism Act 2011 and the provisions of the guidance issued under s40 (i.e. ‘Openness and accountability in local pay’) by identifying:

- the methods by which salaries of all employees are determined.
- the detail and level of remuneration of its most senior staff i.e. ‘chief officers’, as defined by the relevant legislation.
- those responsible for ensuring the provisions set out in this statement are applied consistently throughout the Council and recommending any amendments to the full Council.

Once approved by full Council, this policy statement will come into immediate effect and will be subject to review on a minimum of an annual basis in accordance with the relevant legislation prevailing at that time.

### **Legislative Framework**

In determining the pay and remuneration of all its employees, the Council will comply with all relevant employment legislation. This includes:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- The Agency Workers Regulations 2010, and where relevant
- The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE).

With regard to the Equal Pay requirements contained within the Equality Act, the Council ensures there is no pay discrimination within its pay structures and that all pay differentials can be objectively justified.

## **Pay Structure**

The Authority concluded its Negotiations toward a Single Status Agreement during 2010. The details of the Agreement covering all employees within the scope of the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services ("Green Book") were agreed at Council on 28 September 2010. The Agreement introduced a harmonised set of terms and conditions for all Council employees with effect from 1 October 2010.

The minimum and maximum rates of pay of employees within scope of the Single Status Agreement are based on either the national pay spine and/or locally negotiated rates of pay or national minimum wage legislation including Apprentice rates of pay as appropriate dependent on age.

National pay awards to be effective from 1 April 2026 (NJC Green Book) remain under national negotiation between the employers and the trade unions and are unresolved at the time of writing. On this basis, the figures used in this statement are based on 1 April 2025 rates of pay.

From 1 April 2026 the Council will implement the Living Wage Foundation rate, currently £13.45 per hour. This rate of pay is calculated based on the real cost of living and is a higher rate than national minimum wage. Once implemented this rate will apply to all employees who earn less than that rate within the current national pay structure.

The Council remains committed to adherence with national pay bargaining in respect of the national pay spine and any annual cost of living increases negotiated in the pay spine and will implement any amended pay or grading structure that may arise from such national negotiations.

The grading of job roles is determined by reference to the NJC Job Evaluation Scheme, and the Hay Evaluation scheme as adopted by the Council. The exception to this is circumstances where, as part of shared service arrangements or other relevant transfers of personnel, employees have transferred to Stafford Borough Council under the TUPE regulations with protected pay and terms and conditions of employment. Those terms and conditions will remain in place until such time as there is an economic, technical, or organisational reason for changing them, as is required under the TUPE legislation.

The level of remuneration is not variable dependent upon the achievement of defined targets, except for progression through any incremental scale of any relevant grade being subject to overall satisfactory performance. There is provision for the acceleration of increments within any grade to take account of changes to duties and responsibilities or outstanding contribution.

All other pay related allowances are the subject of either national or local determination having been determined from time to time in accordance with national collective bargaining machinery and/or as determined by local negotiation with local trade union representatives.

In determining its pay and grading structure and setting remuneration levels for all posts, the Council takes account of the need to ensure value for money in respect of the use of public expenditure, balanced against the need to be able to recruit and retain employees who are able to meet the requirements of providing high quality services to the community, delivered effectively and efficiently and at times at which those services are required.

New appointments will normally be made at the minimum of the relevant grade, although this can be varied where necessary to secure the best candidate and to respond to variations in regional or national pay rates. From time to time, it may be necessary to take account of the external pay market in order to attract and retain employees with particular experience, skills and capacity. Where necessary, the Council will ensure the requirement for such is objectively justified by reference to clear and transparent evidence of relevant market comparators, using appropriate data sources available from within and outside the local government sector.

## **Local Government Pension Scheme**

Subject to qualifying conditions, all employees have a right to join the Local Government Pension Scheme. In addition, the Council operates pensions 'Auto Enrolment' as required by the Pensions Act 2008. The table below sets out the employee pension contribution bands which will have been in place from 1 April 2025. At the date of writing employee pension contribution bands have not been confirmed for 2026-27.

## 2025-26 rates

Band	Whole-time equivalent pay range	Main Section Employee contribution rate (%)	50/50 Employee contribution rate (%)
1	Up to £17,800	5.5%	2.75%
2	£17,801 - £28,000	5.8%	2.90%
3	£28,001 - 45,600	6.5%	3.25%
4	£45,601 - £57,700	6.8%	3.40%
5	£57,701 - £81,000	8.5%	4.25%
6	£81,001 - £114,800	9.9%	4.95%
7	£114,801 - £135,300	10.5%	5.25%
8	£135,301 - £203,000	11.4%	5.70%
9	£203,001 or above	12.5%	6.25%

The Employer contribution rates are set by Actuaries advising the Staffordshire Pension Fund and are reviewed on a regular basis in order to ensure the scheme is appropriately funded. The Employer contribution rate for Stafford Borough Council for 2026-27 is 19%.

In relation to payments to the Local Government pension scheme, these are made up of two separate elements, these being the primary rate (19%) which is paid as a percentage based on actual salary costs and a secondary contribution which is a fixed element payable each year notified by the pension authority as part of the triennial valuation of the pension fund.

## Senior Management Remuneration

For the purposes of this statement, senior management means 'chief officers' as defined within s43 of the Localism Act. The posts falling within the statutory definition are those officers who comprise the senior management team of the Council (the Leadership Team) reporting to the shared Chief Executive and whose salary exceeds £50,000 per annum (as required by the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) Regulations 2015). The national conditions of service, which apply to Chief Officers of the Council, and which are incorporated into contracts of employment are those set out in the Joint National Council for Chief Officers / Chief Executives terms and conditions of employment. Details of their annual salary and other additional payments as of 1 April 2025 (1 April 2026 pay award pending) are as follows:

Post	Range/Fixed Salary (£)	
Shared Chief Executive (Note 1 and 1a)		153,838
Deputy Chief Executive Place (Note 1a)	104,390	115,379
Deputy Chief Executive Resources and Section 151 Officer (Note 1b)	104,390	115,379
Head of Operations (Note 1a)	82,413	93,402
Head of Economic Development and Planning (Note 1a)	82,413	93,402
Head of Law and Governance (Note 1a)	82,413	93,402
Head of Business Support and Assurance (Note 1a)	82,413	93,402
Head of Wellbeing (Note 1b)	82,413	93,402
Head of Housing and Corporate Assets (Note 1b)	82,413	93,402
Head of Regulatory Services (Note 1b)	82,413	93,402

**Notes:**

- Note 1 - Single fixed salary pay point.
- Note 1a - These posts are employed by Stafford Borough Council but also provide services to our Shared Services Partner, Cannock Chase Council. The salary costs of these posts are shared with Cannock Chase Council.
- Note 1b - These posts are employed by our Shared Service partner, Cannock Chase Council. The salary costs of these posts are shared with Stafford Borough Council.

Stafford Borough Council and Cannock Chase District Council agreed to share all services (except for Housing HRA functions and Elections) with effect from 1 April 2023. This agreement also included the implementation of a Joint Leadership Team structure and the associated agreement of revised Terms and Conditions for Chief Officers. These terms and conditions offer an all-inclusive salary package.

The pay structure for Chief Officers is determined by reference to Hay Job Evaluation, benchmarking of comparable roles and responsibilities and recruitment and retention issues.

The Council does not apply any bonuses or performance related pay to its Chief Officers or any other employee.

## **Additions to Salary of Chief Officers**

In addition to basic salary, as set out below are details of other elements of potential 'additional pay' which are chargeable to UK Income Tax and do not solely constitute reimbursement of expenses incurred in the normal course of work.

- (i) Where appropriate and subject to operational circumstances - for officers who are unable to utilise their full leave entitlement, payment for untaken leave is permitted. This discretionary provision applies to all Chief Officers. (Other employees have the option to buy additional annual leave).
- (ii) Recognition Payments (including honoraria, acting-up payments, ex-gratia payments) - subject to approval such additional payments are permissible to recognise additional duties and responsibilities which occur over and above normal contractual obligations. The provision of such payments is available to all Council employees dependent on circumstances.
- (iii) Returning Officer Fees - a range of fees are payable to the Chief Executive for his role as returning officer for local elections for Stafford Borough Council. The fees are based on indicative rates set by Staffordshire County Council for all Local Authorities in Staffordshire. The rates for 2026/27 are yet to be published and on this basis the rates set out below reflect the 2025/26 rates. Any agreed increase to these rates for 2026/27 is anticipated to be in line with the County Council's anticipated approach to budget setting for staffing costs.

Depending on the type of election, fees range from £121.14 per 1,000 or part, thereof, electors for either a standalone district or parish election, with a maximum of £484.58 per ward; to £160.45 per 1,000 or part, thereof, electors for combined district and parish elections, with a maximum of £641.81 per ward. Additionally, there are fees of £18.77 per ward for the issue and receipt of ballot papers; a supervisory fee of £40.41 per ward up to four wards, then £20.20 per ward thereafter, for poll cards; and £58.57 for every uncontested ward for which an election is held for a district or parish councillor(s).

## **Recruitment of Chief Officers**

The Council's policy and procedures with regard to recruitment/appointment of chief officers is set out in Section 10, Part 3 of the Council's Constitution

([www.staffordbc.gov.uk/part-4-section-10-officer-employment-procedure-rules](http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/part-4-section-10-officer-employment-procedure-rules))

When recruiting to all posts the Council will take full and proper account of its own Recruitment, and where appropriate, Redeployment Policies. This policy does not exclude the possibility of recruiting former Chief Officers either from this Council or any other provided that a valid business case exists to do so. However, such occurrences are unlikely to be approved without a break in continuity of service being affected.

The determination of the remuneration to be offered to any newly appointed Chief Officer will be in accordance with the pay structure and relevant policies in place at the time of recruitment and as agreed by Council.

Where the Council is unable to recruit to a post at the designated grade and/or salary, it will consider the use of temporary market forces supplements in accordance with its relevant policies, or review grades in light of market related information. Any decision as to the remuneration of chief officer posts is to be determined by Council.

Where the Council remains unable to recruit Chief Officers under a contract of employment, or there is a need for interim support to provide cover for a vacant substantive Chief Officer post, the Council will, where necessary, consider and utilise engaging individuals under 'contracts for service'. These will be sourced through a relevant procurement process ensuring the council is able to demonstrate the maximum value for money benefits from competition in securing the relevant service.

The Council does not currently have any Chief Officers engaged under any such arrangements.

## **Payments on Termination**

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 within its policy statement in accordance with the provisions of the 2014 Local Government Pension Scheme.

Any other payments falling outside the provisions, or the relevant periods of contractual notice shall be subject to a formal decision made by the full Council or relevant elected members, committee, or panel of elected members with delegated authority to approve such payments in line with any prevailing legislation governing termination payments.

## **Publication**

Upon approval by full Council, this statement will be published on the Council's Website. In addition, for posts where the full-time equivalent salary is at least £50,000, the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts includes a note setting out the total amount of:

- salary, fees or allowances paid to or receivable by the person in the current and previous year.
- any bonuses so paid or receivable by the person in the current and previous year; (not applicable) any sums payable by way of expenses allowance that are chargeable to UK income tax.

- any compensation for loss of employment and any other payments connected with termination.
- any benefits received that do not fall within the above.

## **Lowest Paid Employees**

From 1 April 2025 (April 2026 Green Book Pay Award pending) the lowest paid persons employed under a contract of employment with the Council are paid in accordance with the minimum hourly rate currently in use within the Council's grading structure. This is £12.85 per hour, which equates to £24,796 per annum. The Council, from time to time, employs other categories of workers who are not included within the definition of 'lowest paid employees' as they are employed under the Government's national minimum wage legislation dependent on age.

The relationship between the rate of pay for the lowest paid and Chief Officers is determined by the processes used for determining pay and grading structures as set out earlier in this policy statement.

The statutory guidance under the Localism Act recommends the use of pay multiples as a means of measuring the relationship between pay rates across the workforce and that of senior managers, as included within the Hutton 'Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector' (2010). The Hutton report was asked by Government to explore the case for a fixed limit on dispersion of pay through a requirement that no public sector manager can earn more than **20** times the lowest paid person in the organisation. The report concluded that the relationship to median earnings was a more relevant measure and the Government's Code of Recommended Practice on Data Transparency recommends the publication of the ratio between highest paid salary and the mean average salary of the whole of the authority's workforce.

The current pay levels within the Council define the multiple between the lowest paid (full time equivalent) employee (£24,796) and the shared Chief Executive post (£153,838) as **1:6.20** and between the lowest paid employee (£24,796) and the average shared Chief Officer post (£98,285.78) as **1: 3.96**.

The multiple between the median full time equivalent earnings (£32,061) and the Chief Executive (£153,838) is **1: 4.79** and between the median full time equivalent earnings (£32,061) and the average shared Chief Officer post (£98,285.78) is **1:3.06**.

As part of its overall and ongoing monitoring of alignment with external pay markets, both within and outside the sector, the Council will use available benchmark information as appropriate.

## **Accountability and Decision Making**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Council, and /or Cabinet are responsible for decision making in relation to the recruitment, pay, terms and conditions and severance arrangements in relation to employees of the Council. The Constitution sets out the various delegations to Chief Officers.