

# Pay Policy Statement 2024/25

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## 1. Purpose

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council believes strongly in transparency and accountability. In addition to publishing the huge range of information we are required to provide by statute, we have always sought to provide additional information in an accessible fashion. In respect of pay, we have always included a table within our statement of accounts that sets out senior officer salaries in bands comparing pay with previous years. From April 2012 all councils are required under Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 to provide an annual pay policy statement.

The Act specifies that the following must be included in the statement:

- The level and elements of remuneration for each chief officer
- The policy on the remuneration of chief officers upon recruitment
- Any increases and additions to their remuneration including performance-related pay, bonuses, charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind and termination payments
- A definition of the 'lowest paid employees' and the policy on the remuneration of this group
- The policy on the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and other officers

The purpose of this statement is to enable local taxpayers to take an informed view of whether local decisions on all aspects of remuneration are fair and make best use of public funds.

## 2. Chief Officers

This term is defined as including both statutory and non-statutory chief officers and their deputies. Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has interpreted this as meaning the following roles:

- Chief Executive (Head of the Paid Service)

- Director of Change and Communities
- Director of Finance, Policy and Development (Section 151 Officer)
- Mid Kent Services Director, is a partnership employee, employed by Maidstone Borough Council and information regarding their pay is published by Maidstone Borough Council
- Heads of Service
- The Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer) is a partnership employee, employed by Swale Borough Council and therefore information regarding their pay is published by Swale Borough Council

### 3. Remuneration of Chief Officers

Chief Officer	Grade	Market Median (salary at 100% of the grade) £pa	Bonus	Additional benefits and allowances
Chief Executive	CEX	143260	0	Election fees as Returning Officer
Director of Change and Communities	DIR	108620	0	
Director of Finance, Policy and Development (Section 151 Officer)	DIR	108620	0	Market Supplement £4,936 and Election fees as Deputy Returning Officer
Head of Housing, Health & Environment	SM1	91220	0	
Head of Economic Development & Property	SM1	91220	0	
Head of Planning	SM1	91220	0	
Head of HR, Customer Service & Culture	SM1	91220	0	
Head of Finance & Procurement (Deputy S151 Officer)	SM1	91220	0	Market Supplement £4,936
Head of Digital Services & Communications	SM2	78760	0	
Head of Governance & Democratic Services	SM3	67760	0	
Head of Facilities & Community Hubs	SM3	67760	0	

The above are effective from 1 April 2024.

## 4. Salaries on recruitment

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council is committed to the principles of contribution pay (as set out in a report to the General Purposes Committee on 19 April 2010) and appoints all new starters to the entry zone of the grade (95 per cent) with one exception. The same principle applies to posts that are re-graded to a higher grade through the job evaluation process.

## 5. Lowest paid employees

This term is defined as meaning those employed on the lowest pay scale in the Council's pay structure. The lowest pay scale is Grade C. Following a review of salaries and a desire to keep pace with the living wage, from 1 April 2023, Grade C will start at 100 per cent of the grade and not at 95 per cent.

## 6. Pay determination and pay progression

The Council's contribution pay scheme and severance policies apply equally to all staff, as does the career average pension scheme. Salary ranges are based on the Southeast Public and Not for Profit sector (excluding London). With the exception of Grade C, each grade runs from 95 -105 per cent, where 100 per cent is the market median. The Council reviews its pay scales annually and undertakes a formal benchmarking exercise at least every 3 years and will continue to do so. A market review of pay has been undertaken and the mid-points of each grade have been increased to reflect the benchmarking exercise. No contribution pay scheme will operate in 2024/25, instead the funding for this has been included in the updated mid-points.

## 7. Pay multiplier

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has calculated the mean and median salaries of its staff, and the ratios between those and the highest paid member of staff as follows:

Mean Salary 2024/25 = £37,587

Median Salary 2024/25 = £33,535

Chief Executive as a ratio to Mean Salary = 4.00

Chief Executive as a ratio to Median Salary = 4.49

Chief Executive as a ratio to Grade C 100% Salary = 6.59

This Council believes that, as a general principle, the Chief Executive's salary should be no more than ten times that of the lowest paid member of staff.

## **8. Grade determination**

The Council uses the HAY job evaluation scheme to evaluate the grades of all its jobs from the lowest to the highest paid. The scheme was introduced in 2001. In 2010, the Council commissioned a review of its grading structure and pegged its pay to the market median for the Southeast Public and Not for Profit sector (excluding London). It was also agreed that the Council would consider on an annual basis whether it should re-commission a benchmarking exercise to ensure that the Council remains aligned to the market mid-point of the Southeast Public and Not for Profit sector (excluding London). This was approved by the General Purposes Committee on 19 April 2010. The Council's benchmarked position was reviewed for the first time in 2014 and again in 2017, 2019 and 2022. The method for this was to adjust individual grades to reflect their market rate. This ensures that salaries are above the National Living Wage.

## **9. Market supplements/Retention allowance**

Where the evaluated grade of a particular job results in a salary which is below the market mean for that specific role, there is provision for the salary to be increased by the addition of a market supplement or a retention allowance. Market supplements and retention allowances are reviewed at regular intervals as agreed by Management Board and may be withdrawn by giving appropriate notice.

## **10. Leave**

Senior Staff listed in this pay statement are entitled to 32 days annual leave, with three further days after five years' continuous local government service and an additional 5 days after 30 years' continuous local government service. In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to pay for annual leave for which it has not been possible to take and where the balance exceeds the maximum permitted to carry forward.

## **11. Benefits and Allowances**

The Council's benefits and allowances apply equally to all staff, regardless of grade. Benefits for Senior Staff listed in this policy include (in common with all staff): career average pension scheme; a cycle to work scheme; car loans; a day off a year for volunteering activities within

the borough (either individually or as a team-building event); discounted membership of local sports centres; free car parking and an Employee Assistance Programme giving access to up to six free counselling sessions free of charge. Staff that are required to hold membership of professional bodies because of their employment are entitled to reimbursement of their membership fees. Normally this is confined to membership of one professional body only.

In respect of elections, the Chief Executive has been appointed as Returning Officer under Section 35 of the Representation of the People Act 1983. This is a personal appointment separate from his other duties and the Returning Officer fee is calculated in accordance with an agreed Kent Scale of Fees. All Council employees can volunteer to carry out additional duties associated with elections and will be paid separately for this in accordance with the Kent Scale.

## **12. National Living Wage**

From 1 April 2024 the hourly pay for casual workers will be £11.44 which is the equivalent of the national living wage for those aged 23 and above.