



Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service Principal Officer Team Pay Review

REQUEST FOR DECISION BY THE STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

	Policing:	Crime:	Fire & Rescue:
This decision relates to:			✓

APPROVAL (for completion by Staffordshire Commissioner only)

Rationale for approval

This review has been undertaken in line with national and local policy.

STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

Signature

Date 11 July 2025

Date decision required by:

If an urgent approval is required, please state reasons:



For completion by Staffordshire Commissioner's Office only:-

Decision Number: SCF/D/202526/002

Date Received: 12 July 2025

	Yes	No
Has the required decision been considered under the guidance of the Staffordshire Commissioner's Decision-Making Policy?	✓	
Has the required decision been deemed to be a Key Decision as defined within the Staffordshire Commissioner's Decision-Making Policy?	✓	
Who is empowered to make the required decision? Staffordshire Commissioner		

Title	Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service Principal Officer Pay Review						
Summary: To recommend pay levels for the principal officer team in Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service from 1 July 2025 in line with national policy and the local Pay Review Policy.							
Recommendation: In line with national and local policy, Hays Executive were commissioned to carry out an updated benchmarking exercise in May 2025 covering the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy and Assistant roles. Their report has been prepared following an extensive review of pay and reward data, industry intelligence, and market information against specific relevant organisations. Overall, 127 data sets were gathered for the sample across all 3 roles. This has provided a robust enough sample to evaluate and compare against. The Hays report recommends median salaries benchmarked with similar fire and rescue services. The report was based on pay data prior to a national increase recommended by the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services. The recommended median figures from the Hays report have therefore been uplifted by £1,500 from 1 January 2025 and 3.2% from 1 July 2025 to ensure the comparison is made on up to date data. This would result in the following ratio: <table><tr><td>Chief Fire Officer</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>Deputy Chief Fire Officer</td><td>86.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Assistant Chief Fire Officer</td><td>76%</td></tr></table>		Chief Fire Officer	100%	Deputy Chief Fire Officer	86.5%	Assistant Chief Fire Officer	76%
Chief Fire Officer	100%						
Deputy Chief Fire Officer	86.5%						
Assistant Chief Fire Officer	76%						



For simplicity, it is proposed that the ratio should be rounded to:

Chief Fire Officer	100%
Deputy Chief Fire Officer	85%
Assistant Chief Fire Officer	75%

Taking the recommended median benchmark from the Hays report for the Chief Fire Officer of £167,841 and uplifting it by £1,500 (from 1 January 2025) and a further 3.2% (from 1 July 2025) results in a revised salary of £174,760. This has then been reduced by 2% to reach a recommended salary for the CFO of £171,265. Applying the new ratio above results in the following recommended salaries:

Chief Fire Officer	£171,265
Deputy Chief Fire Officer	£145,575
Assistant Chief Fire Officer	£128,449

It is recommended that these salaries are implemented with effect from 1 July 2025.

Chief Executive

I hereby approve the recommendation for consideration.

Signature Date 11/07/2025

REPORT AND ADVICE TO THE STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER

1. Introduction and background

The Principal Officer Team at Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) consists of the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Director of Resources.

The conditions of service for Principal Officers within SFRS (with the exception of the Director of Resources) are largely determined by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services. The NJC seeks to reach agreement on a national framework of pay and conditions for Brigade Managers for local application throughout the Fire and Rescue Services in the UK. Collectively the agreements are contained within the "Gold Book".

The Gold Book makes the following statements with regard to salary and also gives advice and guidance to Authorities on pay determination:

"The NJC will publish annually recommended minimum levels of salary applicable to Chief Fire Officers employed by Local Authority Fire and Rescue Authorities."



There is a two-track approach for determining pay for Brigade Manager roles:

- (i) at a national level, the NJC shall review annually the level of pay to all of those covered by this agreement;*
- (ii) all other decisions about the level of pay and remuneration to be awarded to individual Brigade Manager roles will be taken by the Fire Authority locally who will annually review those salary levels” – advice on other considerations when setting salary levels has also been provided by the NJC and is included within Appendix A.*

Appendix A of the Gold Book sets out the considerations as follows:

- 1. When determining the appropriate level of salaries for all Brigade Managers, the FRA should refer to the relevant minimum salary of the CFO and the most relevant benchmark data.*
- 2. Normally the FRA will wish to begin by determining appropriate salary for their most senior manager.*
- 3. When deciding how these posts should be remunerated, the following factors are to be considered:*
 - (a) The CFO’s salary and that of any service staff not covered by the Scheme of Conditions of Service (Gold Book).*
 - (b) The relationship of current salary to the appropriate illustrative national benchmark*
 - (c) Any special market considerations.*
 - (d) Any substantial local factors not common to FRA’s of a similar type and size e.g. London weighting, complex local regional or national responsibilities which bring added value.*
 - (e) Comparative information to be supplied on request by the Joint Sec’s on salaries in similar Authorities.*
 - (f) Top management structures and size of management team compared to those other Fire and Rescue Authorities of similar type and size;*
 - and*
 - (g) The relative job size of each post, as objectively assessed through an appropriate Job Evaluation process or otherwise, and*
 - (h) Incident command responsibility and the requirement to provide operational cover with the employing authority and beyond.*

The process for setting salary levels should include consideration of the following criteria:

- *Minimum salary levels for COs in relevant sized local authorities.*
- *Market rates of pay for service managers in a range of private and public-sector organisations; and*
- *Evidence of recruitment and / or retention difficulties with existing minimum rates.*

Hays Executive were commissioned by the PFCC in 2021 to undertake a review and produce an independent report to help set the pay and benefits of the Director of Response and Director of Prevention and Protection, set against that of the Chief Fire Officer.

This led to the introduction of the Principal Officer Pay Review Policy in 2022 which made the following recommendations:

- a) That Principal Officers are kept within the mean comparators for similar Fire & Rescue Services through a benchmarking review carried out every two years to be undertaken by an external, specialist consultant. Whilst the Gold Book refers to annual reviews, it is felt that there would be insufficient movement annually to justify the exercise. The next review will take account of the recent changes to the Principal Officer Team structure.



- b) The White Paper on Fire Reform is likely to have a significant impact on operational independence and therefore the responsibilities held by the Chief Fire Officer and the Principal Officer Team. The next benchmarking review should therefore be undertaken in February 2023 when two years will have elapsed since the last review and the impact of the White Paper is known.
- c) That the Chief Fire Officer's salary remains in line with the NJC minimum salaries for the local population band.

Unfortunately, a benchmarking review was not carried out in February 2023 and the White Paper reforms have not been implemented.

2. Issues for consideration

LGA NJC for Brigade Managers Data Collection Autumn 2024

This survey highlighted a concern that there is a closing of the gap between Area Managers on Grey Book terms and conditions and Brigade Managers (Principal Officers) on Gold Book terms and conditions in terms of pay. This has been amplified by the result of the last three years pay awards which has seen the NJC reduce the percentage of pay awarded to Brigade Managers after more than a decade of parity between Grey and Gold book awards (pay percentage parity between Gold and Grey Book awards was agreed for every year from 2012-2022).

2025 Benchmarking

Hays Executive were again commissioned to carry out an updated benchmarking exercise in May 2025 covering the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy and Assistant roles. Their report has been prepared following an extensive review of pay and reward data, industry intelligence, and market information against specific relevant organisations. Overall, 127 data sets were gathered for the sample across all 3 roles. This has provided a robust enough sample to evaluate and compare against.

3. What other options have been considered?

The Commissioner has the option to retain the existing salary levels, applying only the uplift recommended by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services, however, the Hays report identifies that current basic salaries are starting to fall below market levels, the widening pay gap between Staffordshire's Chief Fire Officer and peers in similar roles would make it difficult to attract and retain top talent and that the disparity could also affect staff morale, organisational performance and the service's ability to compete with other public sector employers.

Consideration has also been given to retaining the existing ratio between the Chief Fire Officer, deputy and assistant roles of 100%/80%/75%, however, it is felt that this would result in an insufficient salary differential between the Deputy and Assistant roles which would not reflect respective levels of responsibility and negatively impact on the service's ability to attract and retain top talent into the Deputy role.



Consideration has also been given to accepting Hays' recommended salary in full, however, it has been decided to reduce these figures by 2% in order to achieve an increase which is affordable and acceptable to the individual postholders.

4. Consultation and Engagement undertaken

These options and the recommendation have been discussed fully with the Chief Officer Team and accepted by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer in his capacity as their Fire Leaders Association representative.

Report Implications

5. Monitoring Officer comments:

Robust and independent process underpins the proposal.

Signature

Date 11 July 2025

6. Section 151 Officer comments:

The agreed salary levels will now be implemented from 1 July 2025 for the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer following the recommendations of this review.

Signature

Date 10 July 2025

Yes

No

Has legal advice (outside of that provided by the Monitoring Officer) been sought on the content of this report?

✓

7. Legal Comments:

8. Risks - please give the details of any operational or strategic risks that are affected by this decision (add risk reference number and title below)



9. Equality Comments – please attach the completed EIA EIA attached, no issues identified.		
10. Background/supporting paper Not published		
Please answer the following questions	Yes	No
11. Public access to information?	✓	
12. Does this decision involve the processing of personal data? (If yes please attach a completed Data Impact Assessment) Note: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (Statutory Instrument 2015/234)23 (A&A regs) require local authorities to publish details of remuneration and job title of senior employees whose salary is at least £50,000.		✓
13. Is the publication of this form to be deferred? (If yes approx. how long?)		✓
14. Does this form contain commercial or operationally sensitive information which is to be redacted? (If yes, please provide details with the submission of this note)		✓

15. ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Author	Ralph Butler
Signed	
Date	10 July 2025



The purpose of this EIA is to ensure you consider any equality issues as part of your decision making when developing / reviewing your policy / procedure.

Equality Impact Assessment

Please complete the sections below and send to the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office to be quality assured. New / revised policies cannot be published on the policy database until the EIA has passed the quality assurance process.

Title of policy/procedure:	Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service Principal Officer Team Pay Review
Department:	Performance & Engagement
Date:	10 July 2025

1. Identify the aims and purpose of the policy

To recommend pay levels for the principal officer team in Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service from 1 July 2025 in line with national policy and the local Pay Review Policy.

2. Identify the individuals and organisations who are likely to have an interest in, or be affected by the policy.

SFRS Principal Officer Team

Wider SFRS staff, trade union and staff association representatives

3. Data

Summarise the findings of any monitoring data / information which you have considered regarding the impact of this policy on people from all or any of the protected groups. This could include national or local data.



3.1 Age

No issues identified

3.2 Disability

No issues identified

3.3 Race

No issues identified

3.4 Religion or Belief

No issues identified

3.5 Sex

No issues identified

3.6 Sexual Orientation

No issues identified

3.7 Transgender



No issues identified

4. Research

Summarise the findings of any research you have considered regarding this policy for all or any of the protected groups. This could include information you have obtained from other sources e.g. Home Office.

4.1 Age

These recommendations are based on an independent Pay and Reward Benchmarking Report carried out by Hays Executive. Their report has been prepared following an extensive review of pay and reward data, industry intelligence, and market information against specific relevant organisations. Overall, 127 data sets were gathered for the sample. This is anonymised data that provides objective results.

4.2 Disability

These recommendations are based on an independent Pay and Reward Benchmarking Report carried out by Hays Executive. Their report has been prepared following an extensive review of pay and reward data, industry intelligence, and market information against specific relevant organisations. Overall, 127 data sets were gathered for the sample. This is anonymised data that provides objective results.

4.3 Race

These recommendations are based on an independent Pay and Reward Benchmarking Report carried out by Hays Executive. Their report has been prepared following an extensive review of pay and reward data, industry intelligence, and market information against specific relevant organisations. Overall, 127 data sets were gathered for the sample. This is anonymised data that provides objective results.

4.4 Religion or Belief

These recommendations are based on an independent Pay and Reward Benchmarking Report carried out by Hays Executive. Their report has been prepared following an extensive review of pay and reward data, industry intelligence, and market information against specific relevant organisations. Overall, 127 data sets were gathered for the sample. This is anonymised data that provides objective results.



4.5 Sex

These recommendations are based on an independent Pay and Reward Benchmarking Report carried out by Hays Executive. Their report has been prepared following an extensive review of pay and reward data, industry intelligence, and market information against specific relevant organisations. Overall, 127 data sets were gathered for the sample. This is anonymised data that provides objective results.

4.6 Sexual Orientation

These recommendations are based on an independent Pay and Reward Benchmarking Report carried out by Hays Executive. Their report has been prepared following an extensive review of pay and reward data, industry intelligence, and market information against specific relevant organisations. Overall, 127 data sets were gathered for the sample. This is anonymised data that provides objective results.

4.7 Transgender

These recommendations are based on an independent Pay and Reward Benchmarking Report carried out by Hays Executive. Their report has been prepared following an extensive review of pay and reward data, industry intelligence, and market information against specific relevant organisations. Overall, 127 data sets were gathered for the sample. This is anonymised data that provides objective results.

5. Consultation

Summarise the opinions of any consultation for all or any of the protected groups. Who was consulted and how e.g. survey, discussion, forum.

If there was no consultation please justify why.

5.1 Age

This policy affects three people who have been consulted directly. No wider consultation is required.

5.2 Disability

This policy affects three people who have been consulted directly. No wider consultation is required.



5.3 Race

This policy affects three people who have been consulted directly. No wider consultation is required.

5.4 Religion or Belief

This policy affects three people who have been consulted directly. No wider consultation is required.

5.5 Sex

This policy affects three people who have been consulted directly. No wider consultation is required.

5.6 Sexual Orientation

This policy affects three people who have been consulted directly. No wider consultation is required.

5.7 Transgender

This policy affects three people who have been consulted directly. No wider consultation is required.

6. Conclusions

Taking into account the results of the monitoring, research and consultation, set out how the policy impacts or could impact on people from the following protected groups?
(Include positive and/or negative impacts)

6.1 Age

No impacts identified

6.2 Disability

No impacts identified



6.3 Race No impacts identified
6.4 Religion or Belief No impacts identified
6.5 Sex No impacts identified
6.6 Sexual Orientation No impacts identified
6.7 Transgender No impacts identified
7. Decisions If the policy will have a negative impact on members of one or more of the protected groups, explain how the policy will change or why it is to continue in the same way. If no changes are proposed, the policy needs to be objectively justified.
8. Monitoring arrangements If the policy is new what consideration has been given to piloting the policy? If monitoring is not already in place what arrangements have been made to monitor the effects of the policy on equality and diversity? No option to pilot as this is a permanent salary change.

This equality impact assessment will be published on the SCO website