

PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2026/27

Introduction

This statement of Pay Policy is provided in line with **Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011** and is authorised by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority.

Purpose

The purpose of this statement is to provide transparency to the Pay Policy adopted by Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Accountability

The Fire Authority is responsible for establishing the Pay Policy for the employees of Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The Fire Authority is directly responsible for reviewing the pay structure for Principal Officers.

The Chief Fire Officer has delegated responsibility to establish appropriate grading and salaries for all other employees of Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Pay Negotiating Bodies

The Authority applies the annual pay settlements negotiated by the:

- National Joint Council for Local Government Services;
- National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services;
- National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services.

The Authority undertakes negotiation with its recognised representative bodies on local agreements which affect the terms and conditions of its employees and which may include agreement of local allowances.

The representative bodies recognised for negotiating purposes are the:

- Fire Brigades Union;
- Fire Officers Association;
- Fire Leaders Association;
- Fire and Rescue Services Association;
- UNISON.

Section One - General Pay Policy

- 1.1 The Authority applies the pay scales adopted by the respective National Joint Councils (NJC) for all its employees up to the level of Principal Officer.
- 1.2 Local pay arrangements for Principal Officers are established through the provisions of the NJC for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services and are reviewed annually by the Fire Authority. Further details are set out in Section 2.

- 1.3 The number and level of roles within the Service are determined by the Fire Authority on advice from the Chief Fire Officer.
- 1.4 Pay Policy reflects the different roles, duties and responsibilities undertaken by service employees. This is reflected in pay differentials between different groups of workers and between workers in the same pay group. The pay bands established are based on nationally applied role maps (operational employees) or grading bands established through a job evaluation process (professional support services employees).
- 1.5 Pay Policy reflects adherence to the principle of “equal pay for work of equal value.” Since April 2018 the Service has complied with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and reported on any gender pay gaps; it will continue to do this annually and is committed to taking relevant action to reduce any such gaps.
- 1.6 In applying its policy, the Authority will work to eliminate any elements which may, directly or indirectly, discriminate unfairly on the grounds of sex, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, age, marital status, having dependants, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, trade union activity, disability or any other factors. Part-time workers receive the same pay and remuneration as full-time workers undertaking the same job role on a pro-rata basis.

Generic Pay Information

1.7 Pay multiples

The idea of publishing the ratio of the pay of an organisation's top earner to that of its lowest earner has been recommended to support the principles of Fair Pay (Will Hutton 2011) and transparency.

The current lowest ratio is 1:7.37; this will be monitored each year within the Statement of Pay Policy.

Section Two - Pay Policy for Principal Officers

2.1 General Principles

- 2.1.1 National pay awards negotiated by the NJC for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services are applied by the Authority on an annual basis. This represents a cost-of-living increase.
- 2.1.2 The Performance Review Committee undertakes an annual review of performance, in accordance with the performance system in place for Principal Officers (Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer). Members of this Committee agree a series of objectives at the start of the financial year; these objectives are formally assessed by the Committee at the end of the financial year.
- 2.1.3 Performance related pay for Area Commanders was paid in 2025/26 at a rate of 4% of their basic pay plus flexi and Group Commanders were paid 3% of their basic pay plus flexi, weekend resilience and positive hours.

2.2 Establishing the Pay of the Chief Fire Officer

2.2.1 The base salary for the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer role at Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service is currently set at £185,490.65 per annum. This is established through a local pay review, details of which are set out below.

2.2.2 Additionally a car is provided for operational and business use and where applicable, pension contributions are paid at the appropriate rates as detailed in Paragraph 3.7.1.

2.3 Local Pay Review

2.3.1 In 2008 the Authority, through its Performance Review Committee, approved a methodology for the review of Principal Officer pay based upon a comparator for the role of Chief Fire Officer. The review compared the pay levels of fire and rescue authorities and established a benchmark salary; this was updated in 2016.

2.4 Other Principal Officer Pay

2.4.1 The Authority has established a policy that Principal Officer roles below that of Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer are paid as follows:

- Deputy Chief Fire Officer - £161,720.59
- Assistant Chief Fire Officer - £150,541.45

Salaries of newly appointed Officers will be reviewed and determined in line with the conditions of the local pay review.

2.5 Publication of Principal Officer Pay

2.5.1 Details of Principal Officer Pay are published on the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service internet site and can be found by clicking on the section Home – Transparency – Senior Officer Pay.

2.6 Principal Officer – Internal Pay Comparators

2.6.1 In 2025/26, the lowest paid role within the Service was £25,185 (full time equivalent); the highest paid role within the Service was £185,490.65. The Service does not have a policy of direct correlation between the highest and lowest paid roles (it does not apply a pay multiple in establishing Principal Officer pay).

2.6.2 The ratio of pay between the highest paid employee of the Service is set out in Paragraph 1.7 above.

2.6.3 The pay, including rota allowances, of the most senior officer below Principal Officer (Area Commander) is 53% (with CPD) of Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer pay.

2.6.4 The pay of the most senior professional support services role below Principal Officer is 40% of Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer pay. The Service has one senior professional support services role that, with an allowance, is paid 41% of Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer pay.

2.6.5 It should be considered that the salaries of Principal Officers and other flexible duty officers include an allowance for the associated additional responsibility and hours of work required to provide duty cover on a 24/7, 365 basis.

2.7 Severance Payments

2.7.1 Principal Officers are subject to the same severance arrangements as other service employees; these are set out in more detail in Section 6.

Section Three - Pay Policy for Firefighters

3.1 This policy applies to wholetime and On-Call firefighters and combined control staff.

3.2 National pay awards negotiated by the NJC for firefighters of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services are applied by the Authority on an annual basis. In May 2025, the Service received notification from the NJC that it had agreed a pay increase of 3.2% effective from 1 July 2025.

3.3 Pay is based upon the role undertaken and the stage of competence of each individual for example, trainee, in development and competent.

3.4 A formal assessment of individuals is undertaken at each stage of development before moving to the next salary level. Maintenance of competence is a requirement at all levels of the Service and is reviewed annually.

3.5 Progression between roles is subject to a competitive selection process.

3.6 On-Call Duty System

3.6.1 Employees employed on the On-Call duty system are paid an annual retaining fee based on their availability and receive subsequent payments based on attendance at incidents and other activity including attendance at drill nights, disturbance fees, turnout fees, attendance and training fees, other authorised duties and compensation for loss of earnings. All payments are made in line with nationally agreed pay scales and rates.

3.7 Other Allowances and Payments

3.7.1 Pension contributions. The Service makes an employer contribution to the Firefighters Pension Scheme 2015 of 37.6% of salary. The employee made a contribution in 2025/26 of between 12.9% and 14.5% of pensionable pay for the scheme. Fire Control staff contributions are detailed at Paragraph 4.7.1.

3.7.2 Flexible duty payment. Under national conditions of service, a flexible duty payment is made to Station Commanders, Group Commanders and Area Commanders who provide flexible duty cover on a 24/7 rota basis and who are available to attend emergency incidents when required and provide Duty Officer cover. This is paid at an allowance of 20% of base salary.

3.7.3 Area Commander rota payment. Under local arrangements, Area Commanders are paid an additional 9% for additional responsibilities carried out under their shared operational duties rota with Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

3.7.4 Acting up. An allowance is paid on a daily basis where employees temporarily undertake the duties of a higher graded role. This is paid at the rate applicable to the role being undertaken; employees must be qualified to undertake the higher-level role.

3.7.5 Overtime rates. These are paid for roles below Station Commander at time and a half or double time on public holidays or time may be granted in lieu at the appropriate enhanced

rate. We also pay pre-arranged overtime which would be at single time for Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service meetings and voluntary development training courses or overtime rates for mandatory critical need courses.

3.7.6 Detachments. We pay overtime for travelling time for standby duties (when operational employees are required to provide cover at other stations) based on a matrix depending on station travelled to.

3.7.7 Recall to duty. These are paid at a minimum of three hours at double time rates.

3.7.8 Continuous Professional Development Payment (CPD). Under national conditions of service, a CPD payment is approved annually on an individual basis for employees with more than five years of service (since attaining competence in role). It is an annual payment of £742 for wholetime and for On-Call it is pro-rata based on availability bandings are 5%, 7.5%, 10%, 12.5% and 15%. The payment is made by application and authorised at middle or senior management level. To be eligible, an individual must demonstrate evidence of CPD over and beyond that required for competence and have a good attendance, performance and disciplinary record.

3.7.9 Additional Responsibility Allowance (ARA). We pay Training Centre employees 5% of basic pay (pensionable) for providing weekend training courses. We also pay Officers with a HDIM qualification £500 per annum and firefighters with the 'Safe to Ride' qualification £500 per annum (both are paid monthly and are non-pensionable). We pay On-Call Watch Commanders for additional administration duties, equivalent to one hour per week (paid monthly).

3.7.10 Local resilience payment. A local payment is made for employees, at Station/Group Commander level, volunteering to provide operational cover for periods when the Service struggles to provide an operational response owing to external factors for example, industrial action. Current payments are £1,265.38 per person per annum.

3.7.11 Travel allowance. A local allowance to cover additional travel costs when an operational employee is compulsorily transferred to another work base including substantive and temporary promotion. A payment is made of the difference in mileage undertaken and is paid for four years (compulsory transfer). We also pay our professional support service employees an excess travel payment for the mileage as well as a travelling time allowance.

3.7.12 Reimbursement of medical fees. This only applies to employees whose service commenced before November 1994. The reimbursement of fees covers dental, optical and prescription fees and is paid at NHS rates.

3.7.13 Holiday Pay. Any entitlement to holiday pay will be paid annually.

Section Four - Pay Policy for Professional Support Services Roles

4.1 This policy applies to employees covered by the NJC for Local Government Services and includes all non-operational staff.

4.2 National pay awards negotiated by the NJC for Local Government Services are applied by the Authority on an annual basis and represent a cost-of-living increase. For 2025/26 the NJC for Local Government Services agreed an uplift of 3.2% per full time employee be applied; pro-rata for part time employees.

- 4.3 The pay structure for non-management band professional support staff is aligned to a spinal column point system. Spinal column points are configured into groups to provide incremental pay points. The incremental rises occur on 1 April and employees progress incrementally through their respective grade until they reach the maximum point.
- 4.4 In 2020, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service implemented a new management band pay scale for professional support staff in order to replace the previous wide and significantly overlapping management pay bands with narrower bands which have no overlap and even, incremental steps, with an equal number of steps within each grade. The new management band pay structure resulted from the recommendations of an independent equal pay audit undertaken in 2019. Movement along the existing pay grade is not automatic but depends on assessment against prevailing market rates for similar roles and must be authorised by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer. A 3.2% pay award was applied by the NJC for Local Government Services from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.
- 4.5 Starting salary for non-management band roles may be uplifted along the incremental structure if experience and knowledge warrant this approach. Starting salary on management band scales (which each cover 16 scale points) may exceptionally be uplifted beyond the top of the lower quartile, if experience and market pressures warrant this, at the discretion of the relevant Chief Officer. Where this is the case, justification will be recorded by the recruitment team. Movement between grades is through a competitive selection process.
- 4.6 Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service apply the Hay analytical job evaluation process that systematically ranks each job objectively and fairly. The Hay Group evaluation system is a recognised best practice, non-discriminatory method of ranking jobs against a predetermined scale. The evaluation process assesses all roles and allocates an appropriate grade according to the duties and responsibilities undertaken. A review of the grading of a role is undertaken where permanent, substantial and material changes have increased the level of duties and responsibilities attached to the role. Any substantive changes to grade or pay scale must be authorised by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

4.7 Other Allowances and Payments

- 4.7.1 Pension contributions. The Service makes an employer contribution of 16.9% of salary for all members of the Local Government Pension Scheme. The employee will make a contribution of between 5.5% and 12.5% of pensionable pay depending on their salary band.
- 4.7.2 Additional responsibility. An allowance, at the discretion of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, may be requested and paid if an employee is required to fill a higher-level role.
- 4.7.3 Honorarium. A discretionary payment may be made, with the approval the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, for duties undertaken outside of the normal job requirements for an extended period of time.
- 4.7.4 On-Call. Employees required to attend work outside of normal office hours or to be on-call are paid an allowance depending on the nature of the arrangements.
- 4.7.5 Disturbance. An allowance is paid when an employee is required to move work location (see also Paragraph 3.7.11).
- 4.7.6 Holiday Pay. Any entitlement to holiday pay will be paid annually.

Section Five - Policy on Re-engagement and Pension Abatement

- 5.1 This applies where individuals retire from the Service, draw pension benefits and are subsequently re-engaged into the same or other role with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service. The policies set out below apply to all employees; re-engagement of Principal Officers is subject to Fire Authority consideration and approval.
- 5.2 The Service operates a Re-engagement Policy, which has been authorised by the Authority, for operational employees. This permits re-engagement if there is a tangible benefit for public safety. During any period of re-engagement, the employee has full abatement of pension i.e. when combined with salary their pension cannot make the employee earn more than in their previous role. This complies with the provisions of the Firefighters Pension Scheme and is in accordance with the revised National Framework for England.
- 5.3 The Service operates a Flexible Retirement Policy for employees in the Local Government Pension Scheme which allows employees to take their pension benefits and be re-employed on reduced hours or at a lower grade without abatement of pension. This complies with the provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- 5.4 Where employees who have taken retirement benefits (either as former service employees or employees of another public sector organisation) apply for a professional support services role with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service as part of a competitive selection process and are successful, abatement of pension could be applied.

Section Six - Severance Payments

- 6.1 In the event of redundancy, the Service applies statutory redundancy payments under the provisions of its Redundancy Policy. This applies to both compulsory and voluntary redundancy situations. All relevant legislative requirements are adhered to.
- 6.2 In 2025/26 there were two settlement agreements, when the employment of an employee was terminated by the Service, or in settlement of a claim. Such agreements are subject to confidentiality clauses.

Early Payment of Pension Benefits

- 6.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme employees aged over 55 who are made redundant, or who are retired from Service on the grounds of efficiency, are awarded early payment of pension benefits.
- 6.4 In this case, a charge is made against the Fire Authority by the pensions fund; this is referred to as actuarial strain.
- 6.5 In 2025/26 no agreements for the early payment of pension were made by the Service.